Cross-border higher education and quality management

The applicability of the retrospective customer model in managing quality in transnational higher education partnerships

For the fulfilment of the degree
PhD Education

by
Vangelis Tsiligiris

Abstract

Several dynamics have contributed to the increasing conception of higher education as a service, universities as service providers, students as customers and quality as value for money. Quality management has been pursued as a means to promote accountability and is primarily driven by student satisfaction surveys. This has resulted in the dominance of the retrospective customer model for the management of quality in higher education (Biggs, 2001) with emphasis on accountability and 'value for money' for the student customer.

At the same time, decreasing public funding and a growing student demand for higher education programmes has increased the provision of programmes across borders. This has increased cross-border education activities, which involve the movement of people, institutions and programmes across borders. The latter, termed transnational education, happens when higher education institutions collaborate with institutions in other countries to offer their programmes offshore by forming transnational education partnerships.

The current quality management model in transnational education partnerships is dominated by concentration on 'risk mitigation' for exporting countries and 'sameness' of quality standards between 'home' and 'offshore' provisions. This is pursued by the exporting country's retrospective customer model, which takes no consideration of the difference of student expectations and perceptions in different locations of programme delivery. Thus, the applicability of the retrospective customer model in TNHE can be problematic, owing to the fact that students who study in different parts of the world on the same programme are very likely to have different expectations and perceptions of quality in higher education.

The purpose of this thesis was to explore the applicability of the retrospective customer model and to propose a prospective model for the management of quality in TNHE partnerships.

The research is pursued within a Critical Realist theoretical paradigm, considering that students, irrespective of their location, will form common expectations and perceptions independently of their own interpretations, but at the same time will be impacted, to a significant extent, by the deeper social and cultural dynamics of a particular time and space. The research strategy deployed in this thesis is a case study, using a mixed methods sequential design including a questionnaire survey followed by individual semi-structured interviews as the data collection methods.

The analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data showed that students appear to share a common 'customer' identity which is shaped by the prevailing quality discourse

in higher education. However, students appear to be immature as customers, contrary to the assumption made within the current quality discourse about students being rational decision agents. Students, irrespective of their location, seem to be less aware of the transformative role of higher education and appear to develop an instrumental approach in regard to their expectations and perceptions of quality in higher education.

The analysis of the data also showed that the expectations and perceptions of students who are studying on the same programme but at different geographical locations vary. Specifically, it was found that student expectations and perceptions are shaped by a range of contextual dynamics. A conceptual framework has emerged from the findings of the research which can be used as a framework for the analysis, discussion and evaluation of student expectations and perceptions in a TNHE context.

The findings of the research have significant ramifications for the applicability of the retrospective customer model in TNHE relating to both service quality (student satisfaction) and educational quality. Specifically, the findings of this thesis suggest that a retrospective customer model which has been designed in one country using the local contextual dynamics would not be applicable in another country without modifications and adjustments. Instead, the research justifies and proposes the adoption of a prospective model for the management of quality in TNHE which enables the acknowledgement and management of student expectations and perceptions prior to academic delivery.

Acknowledgements

Pursuing a PhD is said to be a life-changing experience. I could not agree more. During the course of this long journey a lot has changed, at a personal and professional level. There have been difficult moments where physical ability and mental motivation were not enough to help me continue. Without the help of certain individuals, I would not have been able to complete this journey.

I owe a great deal to my Director of Studies, Dr. James Williams. His deep and wide knowledge of the subject area always provided the best available pointers to producing high quality material. James is an excellent teacher who always looks on the bright side of things and provides his full dedication to students generously. James is a person who makes things look very easy and smiles even in the most stressful and difficult conditions. This charisma along with his strong research skills makes him the most appropriate person to guide research students. Thanks James – I will always feel indebted to you.

Professor Richard Hatcher, my second supervisor, believed in me and in this research project from the first day when I visited BCU to present him with the proposal of this research, as he was Director of Research in the School of Education at the time. Probably, if Richard had not believed so much in me during these early stages, this research would not have even been started. Richard's invaluable experience and extensive research expertise added tremendous value to my research effort. Richard, thank you for your support and your kind words.

Professor David Hellawell was the person who served as the Director of Studies of this project up until late 2010. David supported me during a painful and challenging 'MPhil to PhD' transfer process. David, I deeply thank you for standing by my side during that very difficult period. This period was the most critical in the entire journey of this research and I would certainly not have made it without your help. You have taught me integrity and fairness, probably the two most important attributes that academics and researchers should have.

This research would not have been realised without the contribution of the students involved in the case study. I want to thank them all.

Special thanks to my family and particularly my mother. Back in 1995 she supported me, despite the economic hardship of our family, to pursue my dream and go abroad as an undergraduate student. She has taught me to be proud of who I am and to always aim high. I will always be grateful to you.

I would not have been able to complete this thesis without the support and unconditional love of my wife Katerina. She has been by my side during the difficult times and has always acted as a motivator when I reached the point of physical and mental exhaustion. She spent endless hours taking care of almost everything around our little household, allowing me time and space to work undistracted on my research activities.

People like Juan Aspas and Professor Massimo De Angelis inspired me to become a teacher and a researcher. Juan, I have finally managed to write this, which may be considered a book, so I guess I won the bet we placed in London in 1995. Now, in exchange, you have to prepare one of your marvellous Spanish dinners. Massimo, unfortunately you were right in your predictions about the future of the global economy and sadly I lived to see the IMF's SAPs in Greece. I see this research as my own form of 'struggle' for equity and openness in higher education.

My great friends David and Arvil, Simon and Helen, and Angela have shared and supported my dreams and aspirations at both a professional and personal level. They will be relieved to know that my famous 'five-year plan' is now coming to an end, leaving room for other things to happen.

I want to dedicate this thesis to the teachers and institutions engaged in cross-border higher education who are devoted to helping students at the peripheries to materialise their dreams for a better future.

Table of Contents

List of figures

List of tables

Chapter 1- Introduction

“Even if we accept that students are the customers in contemporary higher education, how can we attempt to match student expectations using a common customer expectations-perceptions quality management model, if students at different countries have different expectations and perceptions of quality?”

This was a question which came into my mind in 2005 at a time when I was directly involved in collaboration between a UK university and a private college in Crete, Greece, as Director of Programmes at the college.

This was the time at which I first came across the issues of student satisfaction, quality management and assurance. My interest in the field of transnational higher education began and grew because I noticed that, despite the expansion of higher education partnerships across borders, the quality management and assurance models used mainly originated from the source countries.

As I am also involved in the teaching process, along with my managerial role in the college, I knew that there is diversity in students’ expectations within a single classroom - so I expected that there would be a much bigger difference between different countries. I therefore decided that this would be a good topic to research.

This introduction explores the background of this research project. It outlines the context of the research problem and provides a clear definition and justification of the research purpose. At the same time, this introduction identifies the research objectives and research questions which will be placed at the centre of the discussion in the later chapters of the thesis.

1.1 Internationalisation of higher education as a response to globalisation

In the past thirty years, higher education has been influenced by a range of factors. A few basic contextual dynamics have acted as the primary factors shaping contemporary higher education.

The first influences on higher education since World War II have been the advancements in technology and their contribution to an unprecedented process of globalisation (Varghese, 2011). Additionally, the demise of Keynesianism and state intervention economics and the adoption of neo-liberalism have contributed to the expansion of free trade and the liberalisation of the world's financial markets (Harvey, 2010). These developments have stimulated discussion about the role of knowledge. Indeed, the notion of the 'knowledge society' has become a popular one. As Wood has argued,

> *The realities of globalization (greater competition, relentless pressures to innovate, new worldwide markets and production options, growing concerns over cultural and environmental degradation) have resulted in a common perception that 'knowledge societies,' those that constantly develop new ideas, technologies, methods, products and services, are crucial for future prosperity.* (Wood, 2006, p.26)

This has led to an increased focus on the role of higher education as a 'key knowledge producer' in contemporary social and economic development. This, in turn, has increased the demand for higher education at a global level (Margison & Van der Wende 2007; OECD, 2009a). This has created what is described by Altbach et al. (2009, p.9) as a phenomenon of massification in higher education. Participation in higher education has increased significantly since the early 1980s. Altbach et al. (2009, p. vi) mention that the percentage of students enrolled in higher education grew from 19% in 2000 to 26% in 2007.

At the same time, the new economic policy regime, neo-liberalism, called for less government funding and intervention in the economy and a significant reduction of public funding for the provision of public goods such as higher education (Lynch, 2006). As a result, since the end of the 1970s, there has been an effort across Europe, especially in the UK, to introduce business organisation management practices, summarised under the term ‘managerialism’, into higher education, in an effort to increase efficiency (return on investment) and accountability (Deem, 2001; Schapper & Mayson, 2005). This was marked by two different developments: the introduction of business management practices and models into higher education; and the increasing role of the private sector.

Thus, there have been two developments, one demand-pull and the other supply-push. Globalisation and the transformation of higher education institutions as producers of knowledgeable workers acted as a demand-push factor. The reduction of public funding, the drive for accountability and ‘more for less’ contributed to an effort by higher education institutions to create alternative streams of income. These dynamics have contributed to shaping higher education as it currently stands and contributed to the creation of an internationalisation of higher education.

There are several views on what is defined as the internationalisation of higher education (De Wit, 2011a). The most commonly cited, and adopted in this thesis, is the one by Jane Knight, who sees internationalisation of higher education as the effort of higher education institutions to respond to the challenges and demands of globalisation (Knight, 2006). This effort is mainly concentrated in two streams: 1) making graduates more able to compete in the globalised environment; and 2) creating new streams of income and new markets to bridge the gap created by the reducing government funding. The first stream has been framed under the term ‘internationalisation at home’ (Knight, 2004) and the other as ‘internationalisation abroad’ or ‘cross-border higher education’ (Marginson & Van der Wende, 2007; Knight, 2007a).

1.2 Cross-border Higher Education (CBHE) as a form of internationalisation

One of the ways in which higher education institutions worldwide, especially in so-called developed countries, have attempted to generate additional streams of income is through their cross-border activities. These activities include a range of ventures and collaborations, with some examples being offshore campuses, franchise arrangements, programme validations, joint degrees, and distance learning provisions. The movement of people, programmes and institutions across jurisdictional borders has been termed cross-border higher education (CBHE).

However, this is not to suggest that cross-border activities are a new phenomenon in higher education, as universities have been international from the early days. Examples of CBHE can be found in ancient times with the School of Athens in Alexandria, as well as the Medieval period, when international students were a valuable source of income for England, and later, in the 16th century when Rotterdam and Paris were international university centres (Daniel et al., 2008). Specifically in the UK, the celebration in 2011 of the 153rd anniversary of the University of London External System[1] shows that CBHE has been active in the country for many years now.

However, most of these CBHE activities were about the movement of people, students and academics, and less about institutions and programmes. Today, higher education institutions are engaged in a great number and volume of activities across borders which involve the movement of people, programmes and institutions.

Another term which has often been used to describe cross-border activities in higher education is Transnational Education or Transnational Higher Education (TNHE), and some authors prefer this to CBHE. However, this term is mostly used to describe those cross-border higher education activities where the student is located in a country other than that of the awarding institution (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007). As such, this term describes best the type of international partnership, or partner supported delivery of

[1] The University of London External System has been renamed University of London International Programmes - http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/

programmes, which is the case study of this thesis. Thus, in this thesis the term TNHE will be used to describe offshore delivery of higher education programmes, whereas CBHE will be used to describe the entire range of cross-border activities, including international student mobility.

As the number of institutions and students participating in TNHE has grown significantly over the past 20 years (Baskerville et al., 2011), so have concerns from the academic community about the quality assurance and management of TNHE issues in the various writings of individuals and organisations (Foskett, 2005; Stella & Bhushan, 2011; UNESCO, 2005; Stella, 2006).

There are many views and critics of TNHE, ranging from those who argue that education is not like any other service that can be franchised across the world to others who believe that TNHE offers financial and academic benefits to both sides, the source and the receiving institutions and countries (Tysome, 1998; Hodson & Thomas, 2001; Foskett, 2005; Larsen et al., 2004; Stella, 2006; Knight, 2007b).

Specifically, there has been some controversy around the term ‘education as a trade commodity’, which has mainly been initiated as a reaction to the entry into higher education of for-profit providers who mainly act as local providers of TNHE programmes (Stella & Bhushan, 2011). Today, as many countries have gone a long way towards transforming themselves from importers to exporters of TNHE, the debate has shifted focus. Stella and Bhushan (2011) argue that countries that import students, such as Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong, are now focusing on addressing the quality issues of TNHE and not placing obstacles to its expansion (p. 248). It is also argued that the method of safeguarding the role of education as a public good within the TNHE context has been to separate the ‘low quality’ from the ‘good quality’ local providers. This shifting focus has been verified by the increased publications of relevant guidelines by international quality assurance bodies (Campbell & Van der Wende, 2000; Stella & Bhushan, 2011).

Overall, TNHE is increasing within a context of financial pressures on higher education institutions (declining public funding, etc.) resulting in extensive marketing efforts to promote higher education as a commodity (Naidoo, 2003; Molesworth et al., 2010). Hodson and Thomas (2001) argue that TNHE is seen by some higher education institutions as a source of extra cash, thus undermining both their current reputation and long-term quality maintenance. Even if higher education institutions use TNHE in this way, they need to ensure quality standards and the high reputation of the product (programmes), which is itself the main marketing attribute of TNHE (Hodson & Thomas, 2001).

At the same time, the increase in the demand for higher education at an international level has increased the number and the nature of providers of higher education. There have been instances of misleading local providers promoting non-existing collaborations (Varghese, 2009). Thus, ensuring quality standards in TNHE has become increasingly important for students in the importing countries (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007).

Assuring quality in TNHE is therefore important for all of the main stakeholders. Quality assurance is seen as a way to reduce the risk for exporting and importing countries, to maintain the credibility and status of source institutions, to increase the marketing/selling points of offshore providers, and to achieve service quality for students. For all of the above reasons there has been increased awareness about efforts and initiatives to assure quality for all stakeholders in TNHE.

1.3 The customer model in higher education

Reductions in public spending and the introduction of managerialism as the dominant management doctrine in higher education have increased the pressures for alternative resources of funding and increased accountability at national level (Pollitt, 1993; Schapper & Mayson, 2005). Harvey (2005, p.264) states that accountability has been the watchword under an effort towards ‘efficiency and effectiveness’ which has contributed to the quality movement.

Accountability remains a prime motive for quality in higher education today. As the UK Department for Business, Innovation and Skills states:

> *A poor quality service to students by any institution should not be tolerated and we support a more active and transparent approach to investigating complaints about standards.* (BIS, 2009, p.12)

This means that higher education institutions have been under pressure to align their provision standards with the demands of the ‘market’, which includes several stakeholders: the students, their parents and the government (Molesworth et al., 2010).

In parallel to marketisation and accountability, there was another reason for the rise of external quality systems in higher education. This was the incapability of internal peer review quality evaluation systems to cope with the volume and requirements of the new ‘value-for-money’ and ‘more-for-less’ conceptualisations of quality in higher education (Telford & Masson, 2005; Harvey, 2005). As Green (1993, p.1 cited in Telford & Masson, 2005, p.108) explains, “there is clearly a correlation between the breakdown of the traditional peer-review based assurance system and the increasingly market oriented culture of higher education”. In the same vein, Harvey (2005) argues that there has been a disparity between the development of internal peer review systems, which existed prior to the introduction of external quality assurances, and the growth, both in number and institutional diversity, of higher education institutions.

All of the above factors have contributed to increasing the pressure for the implementation of quality assurance in higher education at the national and international levels. This quality assurance is primarily based upon student satisfaction and standards set by external organisations (Telford & Masson, 2005, p.107). The shift away from the internal evaluation systems used in universities in the 1980s and early 1990s to externally assured and customer focused quality systems has been linked with the rise of a market orientated culture in higher education (Telford & Masson, 2005, p.108).

This has been converted into an increasing tendency for higher education institutions to adopt service quality management principles as a means to assure accountability and increase student satisfaction (Khodayari & Khodayari, 2011; Browne et al., 1998; Lomas, 2007; Williams, 2012). Service quality and customer orientation have been framed as components which will help higher education institutions to provide value-for-money educational services and assure the quality of their provision.

Many conceptions and measurement models of service quality exist. Parasuraman's model, developed in the 1980s, and that of Gronroos, developed in the 1990s, are the most widely used and cited (Clewes, 2003, p. 71). Within these models, service quality is primarily based on the matching of customer expectations with their perceptions of the quality of the actual service. In the higher education context, this means a 'student as a customer' quality management approach. Setting the students at the centre of quality management, quality can be achieved by eliminating the gaps between student expectations and perceptions (Gronroos, 1990; Parasuraman et al., 1988). The adoption of a customer model for the management of quality in higher education has led to a number of significant changes in the role of the student in higher education (James, 2007). Increasingly, the student's role has been associated with this role of the customer, and the meaning of quality in higher education has been associated with accountability and student satisfaction.

The role of students as customers has been heavily discussed and debated (Lomas, 2007; Sherry et al., 2004; Sax, 2004; East, 2001). Despite its popularity, the notion that the student is a customer is problematic, primarily because of the ideological underpinnings about the conflicting terms of the market with the public-good conceptualisation of higher education.

There are two purist poles in the debate about the role of higher education as a public good. One is aligned with the view of Bourdieu (1996 cited in Naidoo, 2007), about the 'inner life' of higher education institutions, which is independent from economic and political influences, thus pursuing activities which create academic rather than economic value. As such, universities should be governed by their own principles and not those of the market and, as Grace (1989, p.216-217) explains, higher education is a public good that promotes social justice and equity, while it strengthens the egalitarian features of society. Thus, for those at this pole of the debate, the conceptualisation of higher education as a service, along with the view of students as customers, is inappropriate and irrelevant.

The other pole sees higher education as being like any other service industry in the economy, where the adoption and application of principles such as accountability and service quality management are key in ensuring that stakeholders receive the maximum value for their money. Under this view, students should be treated as customers and the university as an organisation which is governed by market principles, and consequently higher education as a tradable commodity (Lynch, 2006; Molesworth et al., 2010; Naidoo, 2007).

Despite being heavily debated, the ‘student as customer’ conceptualisation dominates current quality management in higher education, and as such cannot be ignored.

1.4 Educational quality and the customer model

Unlike other services, higher education outcome is dependent upon the participation of the student and is irrespective of the performance of the service provider - the university, its academic and administrative staff. More specifically, the final outcome in higher education depends heavily on the student’s active role in the process of ‘service provision’ (Serenko, 2011; Kelso, 2008; Molesworth et al., 2010). So, the final outcome in higher education is not guaranteed to lead to student satisfaction (Browne et al., 1998; Hutton et al., 2011; Finney & Finney, 2010; Sax, 2004).

Thus, even if one accepts the relevance of the ‘student as customer’ conceptualisation, the particular nature of higher education (Telford & Masson, 2005; James, 2002) makes service quality considerations alone insufficient to address the issue of quality standards. This explains the acceptance by various stakeholders of educational quality as a reliable indicator of quality standards in higher education (Woodhouse, 2012; Farrugia, 2012). Educational quality relates to the teaching and learning process and outcomes, and has been primarily been explained within Biggs' 3P model (Biggs, 1989; 1993; 1996). The educational process consists, according to Biggs, of three stages: Presage, Process and Product.

The Presage stage consists of the factors which relate to students and the teaching context. The student presage factors, such as their prior knowledge, motivation and abilities, but most importantly their expectations and perceptions about higher education quality, will determine the actual learning approach that students will adopt during the learning process stage. Similarly, the teaching context, the second element of Biggs' 3P model presage stage, will impact both the learning activities in the process stage and the students' expectations and perceptions. The process stage relates to the learning-focused activities realised as a result of the presage factors, both student and teaching context related. Biggs (1998; 1993) distinguishes between two approaches to learning realised in the process stage, the surface and the deep. The former is described as a superficial, descriptive and based on a rote learning approach by students. The latter is described as an approach in which students feel the need to engage with the subject that they study in a meaningful and complete manner (Biggs & Tang, 2011). It is the deep approach that all education providers, including UK universities, seek to achieve during the educational process stage. This is because, to a great extent, the product of the educational process, which includes both quantitative and qualitative outcomes, will be subject to the learning approach adopted by students and realised in the process stage (Finnie & Usher, 2005).

What is clear from Biggs' 3P model, and directly relevant to this thesis, is that within the educational quality conceptualisation, student characteristics are not assumed as fixed, contrary to the prevailing customer model for the management of quality in higher education. Moreover, student presage factors, such as expectations and perceptions, would be of critical importance for the realisation of the desired educational quality standards.

Considering the strong association between student satisfaction and the levels of service quality perceived by students, the realisation of poor educational outcomes is closely associated with service quality. If student factors are not taken into account and lead to the adoption of an inappropriate learning approach by students (i.e. surface vs. deep), then it is almost certain that the educational process outcomes will be poor. This will lead to significant student dissatisfaction, which in turn will diminish the perceived level of service quality. Thus, the exploration and active management of student presage factors will be of critical importance for both service and educational quality. We can see that the customer model, the service and the educational quality conceptualisations are very closely related. Also, from the above discussion it is evident that it is not realistic to separate service quality and educational quality in higher education. Thus, in this thesis the two concepts are discussed together as being inseparable in a higher education context.

1.5 Retrospective vs. prospective quality management

The current quality approach in higher education can be best summarised by what Biggs (2001) describes as 'retrospective' quality management. Retrospective quality management emanates from neo-liberal practices to seek accountability via the adoption of managerial practices in the public sector, including higher education. Under the retrospective quality approach, quality is viewed as 'value for money' and its management is mainly driven by external stakeholders. The tactics of quality management under the retrospective approach focus on measuring end results and looking back to the outcomes of the educational process (Biggs, 2001, p.222), while considering student characteristics as 'non-relevant' and fixed. This fits with the customer model described earlier, which primarily seeks to measure student satisfaction via end-of-year surveys while being dominated by the external stakeholders' demands and guidelines. So, during this thesis the prevailing quality management model in higher education will be referred to as the 'retrospective customer model'.

The focus on the end results and the backward-looking focus of the retrospective approach are not sufficient to ensure quality standards of either a service or an educational nature. This is because, as described earlier in the context of the Biggs 3P model, student characteristics, and primarily expectations and perceptions, will actively influence the end result of the educational process. Also, considering the fact that student characteristics can vary considerably, different student cohorts will have different needs, thus quality management should be reflective of those needs. For this reason, Biggs (2001) suggests the adoption of a 'prospective' quality management approach which considers quality as fit for purpose and shifts the priorities towards those of educational quality. Prospective quality management adopts a reflective practice to student presage factors and identifies the best practices needed to actively manage these factors so that students adopt the learning approach which is necessary for the realisation of the educational outcomes. Here, Biggs (2001) clarifies that a prospective management approach should not be confused with a quality management model that is designed by students but is, rather, a model which is reflective of student characteristics. In comparison to a retrospective approach, adopting a prospective active approach for the management of student presage factors implies significantly more chances to achieve the desired educational outcomes. Considering the importance of educational quality in the context of contemporary customer driven quality management in higher education, a prospective approach seem to be more effective for delivering the desired service quality outcomes.

The retrospective customer model will be used across this thesis to describe the current prevailing approach of quality management in higher education while the prospective quality management approach will be used to discuss a proposed alternative model which leads to superior service and educational quality outcomes.

1.6 Quality management in TNHE

The existing quality management models in TNHE are dominated by the quality assurance guidelines of exporting countries and, despite the efforts by QAA (2010) and UNESCO (2005), these guidelines, as Smith (2010) concludes, concentrate on reducing the risks for exporting countries rather than enhancing the quality of TNHE partnerships. In TNHE importing countries, the quality assurance frameworks are either non-existent (for example in Greece) or concentrate on protecting the status of the national higher education system and higher education institutions: these policies are, as Smith (2010, p. 794) describes them, 'gate-keeping'. Overall, as studies by various intergovernmental organisations in TNHE show, the capacity of the national frameworks of both importing and exporting countries to deal with issues of TNHE is problematic (Stella & Bhushan, 2011, p.14). Stella and Bhushan (2011, p.15) explain that this is because national frameworks for quality assurance in TNHE are not well developed and because national quality assurance frameworks vary between different countries. As McBurnie and Ziguras (2011) explain, these problems arise because TNHE is expanding faster than the quality assurance mechanisms in the countries concerned.

As the entire higher education sector is affected by the dominance of the 'student as customer' quality management discourse, so is the management of quality in TNHE. However, the problems of the application of the customer model of quality in higher education are intensified in a TNHE context. Previous research (Arambewela & Hall, 2006; Niehoff et al., 2001; Schwantz, 1997; Tsiligiris, 2011a; Shank et al., 1996) on student expectations and perceptions in a multi-country setting has shown that students from different countries have different expectations from higher education. Another indication of student expectations comes from the factors influencing student choice, and studies (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; Jones, 2010) have shown that students are influenced by different factors when choosing a higher education institution and programme of study. Thus, across a range of research evidence it appears that students in different settings -

cultural, social and ethnic – form different expectations and perceptions about quality of higher education.

At the same time, the existing and prevailing quality management models in TNHE, as discussed by Farrugia (2012, citing Nie, 2008), are driven by a focus on equivalency of quality standards between exporting and importing countries. This has been heavily debated as to whether ‘sameness’, as discussed by Lawton during a recent interview with QAA’s Joanna Wynn (QAA, n.d.), would be sufficient to assure quality standards across different locations of programme delivery. The main line of criticism is that because students at different locations (countries) of higher education delivery, for a number of reasons, will have different expectations and perceptions about quality in higher education, a ‘home’ quality model would be problematic for application in collaborative partners ‘abroad’ (Lim, 2008). The criteria, procedures and performance indicators considered as appropriate for managing quality at ‘home’ institutions may not be appropriate for the cultural, social, and educational characteristics at institutions ‘abroad’ (Hodson & Thomas, 2003). Consequently, the attempt to bridge the gap between expectations and perceptions by using a common quality management model seems to be problematic in a TNHE (Levy, 2006).

The impact of different student expectations and perceptions in TNHE quality management goes further than the service quality element, as it affects the essence of the educational process. Reflecting on the educational quality model, as expressed by Biggs (2001) and Finnie and Usher (2005), the educational process consists of three stages: the presage, the process and the product. As discussed earlier, student expectations and perceptions (presage factors) will affect the learning approach (process factor) that the student will adopt, and consequently determine the educational quality standards (product factor). Thus, the differences in student expectations and perceptions imply problems in the applicability of a common retrospective customer model across borders, as it is not sufficient to assure the desired service and educational quality standards.

The purpose of the existing quality management approach in TNHE can be summarised as focused on 'risk mitigation' for exporting countries/institutions by seeking 'sameness' of student experience. This purpose is pursued within a 'student as customer' context and by adopting what Biggs (2001) describes as 'retrospective' quality management. The retrospective quality management approach, focuses on meeting external stakeholder needs and is aligned with the customer model of quality as 'value for money'. This approach, which dominates the existing quality management practice in higher education – both at home and offshore – is geared by reacting to results from student satisfaction surveys and other 'post-delivery' evaluations. This is problematic, considering the relative nature of student expectations and perceptions (presage factors) that make each cohort unique. The existing quality management approach aims to react, retrospectively, on issues that emerged within a specific student cohort and design solutions which will be applied to a different student cohort.

What appears to be more appropriate in a TNHE context is a prospective quality management approach (Biggs, 2001). A prospective management approach considers quality as 'fitness for purpose' and aims to respond to student presage factors by creating a quality management model which will be reflective of student expectations and perceptions. This approach fits the suggestions by a range of relevant international organisations, such as the UNESCO and the OECD, for a quality management approach in TNHE which will be reflective of student characteristics. The use of this system is justified in the context of service quality, but also in the context of educational quality.

In the service quality context, as Amabile (1996 cited in Bolton & Nie, 2010) argues, the user of a service must have a specialised knowledge of the service in order to be able to assess its standards and appropriateness. Also, the user of the service must have relative knowledge of the service in the specific context. For TNHE, this means that higher education institutions must be able to understand and take into account the relative knowledge of the students about higher education in the receiving countries. Also, in TNHEP, higher education institutions need to be able to understand the context within which the students will evaluate the quality of service – this in fact will affect their perceptions of quality. As Amabile (1996) argues, this is vital for the development of high-value TNHEPs for all stakeholders, including the students and the providers. It is vital because it facilitates the effort of higher education institutions to assure quality standards and match student expectations while achieving higher student satisfaction. It is also vital because it facilitates the utilisation of the social capital which is generated from these TNHEPs, something which is usually neglected in the contemporary TNHE quality assurance context (Bolton & Nie, 2010).

In the educational quality context, a prospective management approach is compliant with the view that understanding student presage factors at the earliest possible point in the teaching and learning process allows the active management of product factors (i.e. attainment, student satisfaction).

Irrespective of how TNHE is perceived, there is a consensus about the need to establish a different quality management framework for THNE (Altbach & Knight, 2007) which is based on an effort to understand the social, cultural and other local factors which shape the factors that affect student satisfaction (Bolton & Nie, 2010). There are two extreme poles in this consensus: those who see quality assurance as risk aversion for source countries; and those who see quality assurance as a way to generate social capital. In my view, which I aim to support with the necessary evidence in this thesis, a prospective and contextualised quality management approach for TNHE serves both poles of the quality management debate; it facilitates the effort of source institutions to minimise the risks, to create value for all stakeholders, while assuring the highest possible educational quality outcomes.

1.7 Research problem

It is evident from the discussion thus far that higher education is increasingly considered as a service and, as such, many international organisations promote it as a tradable service (Collins, 2007) and this shapes the quality management approach in higher education. Also, the ‘student as customer’ conceptualisation promoted by policy-makers and institutions affects and shapes student expectations and perceptions towards ‘value for money’ and ‘more for less’. As result of these developments, the retrospective quality management approach in higher education is based on a customer model, where the objective is the alignment of student expectations and perceptions (Lomas, 2007).

In the TNHE context, the retrospective quality management approach is pursued with a focus on ‘risk-mitigation’ and ‘sameness’ of standards between home and offshore provision. As such, the current quality management model in TNHE presupposes that student expectations and perceptions (presage factors) are fixed across different locations of programme delivery and/or that a quality management model design at ‘home’ will be applicable ‘offshore’. However, considering the research evidence about the influence of social, cultural and other factors on student expectations and perceptions, in a transnational higher education context, the applicability and validity of a retrospective customer model for quality seems to be problematic, thus would need to be explored. The research problem which emerges from the review of the literature and my professional experience as TNHEP manager is articulated as follows:

Considering the importance but also the variability of student expectations and perceptions in the realisation of quality in both the contexts of educational and service quality, the applicability of a retrospective customer model, which is designed ‘at home’, would be problematic for the management of quality in TNHE across borders.

1.8 Purpose statement, research questions, and research method

The purpose of this research project[2], is ***to explore and explain the student expectations and perceptions of quality in transnational education and evaluate the applicability of a retrospective customer model for the management of quality in transnational higher education partnerships.*** Also, the research purpose includes ***the consideration a prospective management model for the effective quality management in TNHE.***

The purpose statement above has been broken into four research objectives and certain research questions have been formulated for each of these objectives.

Objective 1 is to explore and explain the student expectations and perceptions of quality in higher education in two groups who are studying on the same programme but at different delivery locations. This includes the exploration of the factors that affect students' choice of programme and higher education institution, in both the university and the partner institution (research question 1)

> **Research Question 1:** what are the factors that influence the choice of programme and higher education institution of students who study on the same programme but at different delivery locations - the university or the transnational partner - and how do they compare?

Also, Research Objective 1 includes a direct exploration of what students expect in terms of the various elements of the provision (i.e. resources, teaching and learning, support, services), which is the subject of Research Question 2. Additionally, the research objective includes an exploration of what students perceive as being the necessary components of 'good quality higher education', which is covered in Research Question 3.

[2] The purpose statement provides the reader with a justification of the motivation of the researcher to conduct the research and the overall aim which is expected to be accomplished by the research (Creswell, 2009). Usually, the purpose statement is neglected in research and is incorporated into different sections of the methodology, such as the objectives and the research questions. According to Creswell (2009), the purpose statement is the central idea in the study and as such it is important to present it separately.

Research Question 2: what are the student expectations and perceptions of two student groups who are studying on the same programme but at different delivery locations (university and transnational partner), and how do they compare?

Research Question 3: What are the elements that students consider to be important for the provision of high quality higher education?

Objective 2 is to provide an evaluation of Transnational Higher Education Partnerships from a student perspective. This research objective includes the exploration of how students in the university and the partner institution consider the role of TNHE as a mode of study. This is covered by Research Question 4 below, and is included here to provide a 'student perspective' in the evaluation of TNHE, which is something that carries value for the fulfilment of the research purpose but also addresses the current scarcity of evidence about student perspectives in the evaluation of TNHE.

Research Question 4: How do students, both from the university and the transnational partner institution, evaluate Transnational Higher Education Partnerships?

Objective 3 is to evaluate the applicability of the retrospective customer model for the management of quality in TNHE. This objective is achieved by combining the findings from Objectives 1 and 2 and considering the ramifications of these findings on the existing quality management model in TNHE.

Objective 4 is to propose a prospective and reflective model for the management of quality in TNHE. This objective, along with Objective 3, represents the contribution to knowledge of this thesis and involves the consideration of Biggs' (2001) prospective management approach in the context of TNHE quality management. The fulfilment of this objective is achieved by synthesising the findings from Objectives 1-3 and theorising on how a prospective approach can provide superior quality management outcomes in a TNHE context.

The fulfilment of the purpose and the research objectives of this research are pursued through a case study mixed methods research sequential design. The setting of the research is a transnational higher education partnership between a UK university and a Greek private college. The population of the research includes two student groups, the university and the partner institution students, who are studying on the same undergraduate business degree programme.

The theoretical paradigm used is Critical Realism, which considers the common influence of universal contextual factors but at the same time acknowledges that student expectations and perceptions will be formed and influenced by factors grounded in the deeper social and cultural mechanisms in each location.

Also, the Critical Realist paradigm allows the adoption of a pragmatic epistemology which implies the deployment of methods for the collection and analysis of data that serve best the fulfilment of the research purpose. The use of a mixed methods sequential design, namely a quantitative approach via a questionnaire survey followed by a qualitative approach via semi-structured personal interviews, was selected on the basis of 'what works best' for fulfilling the research purpose (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). The research methodology is presented and discussed in detail in Chapter Five.

1.9 Expected outcome and significance of the research

The expected outcome of this research project is to show, by proving that student expectations and perceptions about quality in higher education are not the same in different countries, that the current retrospective customer model of managing quality in higher education is not applicable to a transnational higher education context. The evaluation and discussion of the evidence will be placed within an argument in favour of the prospective approach (Biggs, 2001) for the management of quality in TNHE.

The scope of this study is important because, as existing research has shown (Brandenburg et al., 2013; Lane et al., 2013; Chapman et al., 2013; Waters & Leung, 2013; Bolton & Nie, 2010) there is a disparity between the increasing role of TNHE in contemporary higher education and the underdevelopment of appropriate quality management policies reflecting and addressing TNHE-specific requirements, that is, despite the various calls from organisations such as the UNESCO and OECD for quality management models in TNHE that acknowledge different cultural and social contexts and are reflective of different student expectations and perceptions.

Also, as Smith (2010, p.803), who reviewed the collaborative arrangements quality assurance policy documents of three major quality assurance agencies, argues, “while all three documents highlight the importance of ensuring quality educational experiences for their students, opportunities for truly collaborative and culturally appropriate course design are muted”. This shows that the existing quality assurance policies are primarily concerned with assuring rather than enhancing the quality of transnational education partnerships. Furthermore, considering the importance of educational quality and its acknowledgement as the cornerstone of all higher education quality management systems, the existing retrospective approach is not certain to ensure even the minimum required standards.

Thus the significance of this research comes from the contribution of a new model for the management of quality in TNHE which is based on the prospective quality management model of Biggs (2001). The value of this model comes from the fact that it responds to the calls from contextualisation while placing emphasis on minimising risk by proactively managing the difference in student expectations and perceptions

In addition, this research project is significant because it provides an evaluation of TNHE from a student/participant’s perspective. This is a departure from existing practice where, reflecting on the existing literature and published research on the role of TNHE, the focus has been on evaluation by external bodies (UNESCO, AUQA, and OBHE) and academics, primarily regarding the effects for the source institutions involved. Overall, this research project is anticipated to make a contribution to the existing knowledge about quality management in TNHE using a student/participant’s perspective.

1.10 Limitations

Student expectations and perceptions are by their nature dynamic and subjective, as their formation is affected by a range of different factors (James & Beckett, 2006). Also, the issue of quality in higher education, as was briefly discussed in the introduction, is a highly contested concept (Harvey & Williams, 2010). Thus, the concurrent study of these issues is a challenging process which imposes certain limitations on the researcher and the research output. It is therefore appropriate to underline the fact that this research is considered as a starting point for further research in an effort to capture and study the social capital created in transnational higher education partnerships. Also, this study is limited to the subjective perception of participants (students) of reality (expectations and perceptions about quality in higher education) in the particular context (the case study) and at the particular moment in time.

Any claims about the generalisability of the findings from this research should consider the setting and the scale of this research. The focus of this study was on a single cohort of first year undergraduate students studying in the UK and Greece. This may impose limitations on the generalisability of the findings of this research in discussing student expectations at a different educational level, for example postgraduate, and/or between different countries which will have different contextual characteristics. Also, the population of the partner institution in this case study consists only of students from the local area. This, may impose limitations on the generalisability of the findings of this study in other TNHE contexts (e.g. Malaysia), where partner institutions attract students from other countries.

1.11 Outline of the thesis

This thesis is structured around nine chapters. The first chapter is the introduction which discusses the background of the research, defines the research problems and sets out the main research questions of the thesis.

The review of the literature about the main concepts and previous research which is relevant to the research objectives, takes place over two chapters, Chapters 2 and 3. The second chapter reviews the relevant literature about Cross Border Higher Education and the third chapter the issue of quality in higher education. The literature review concludes, at the end of the third chapter, with the conceptual framework which outlines the main concepts explored during the process of analysis and investigation towards the fulfilment of the research purpose.

The methodology, in Chapter Four, explains the use of Critical Realism as theoretical paradigm and provides the justification for the use of a case study mixed methods research strategy as the framework of research. Also, the chapter explains the mixed methods sequential approach and each of the methods, quantitative and qualitative, deployed to answer the research questions and fulfil the research purpose. The chapter concludes with a section on ethics and my dual role as researcher and manager.

The fifth chapter provides the discussion of the context of the case study. This context includes the two institutions of the case study and the higher education systems in the source and host country[3]. The discussion of the case study concerns the institutions involved: the university and partner institution. The methodological issues around the choice of case study as the research strategy are provided in the methodology chapter.

Three chapters, from Six to Eight, form the data analysis section of the thesis where the presentation, discussion and analysis of the primary research findings takes place. The chapters are organised according to the research objectives.

The final chapter of the thesis, Chapter Nine, includes the conclusions of the research which are presented in relation to the research questions and the fulfilment of the research purpose. It includes a section summarising the contribution to knowledge of this thesis, presented in the form of an emerging conceptual framework. This conceptual framework is suggested as the framework for analysis to be used in further research.

[3] Throughout this thesis I use the terms ‘exporting’ vs. ‘importing’ and ‘source’ vs. ‘host’ country to indicate the countries where the awarding institution and the partner institutions are located, respectively.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review: Cross Border Higher Education

I review the relevant literature with two clear objectives: 1) to explain the main concepts and dynamics that affect the two main areas of the research project –cross-border higher education and quality in higher education, and 2) to facilitate the creation of the conceptual framework which encapsulates the literature review findings, the research questions and the research purpose.

2.0 Introduction

Chapter 2 has two sections. In the first part (2.1) of the chapter, I discuss the contextual dynamics that define and shape the contemporary higher education sector. Specifically I review the impact of neo-liberalism and globalisation as the two major factors affecting higher education worldwide over the past 30 years, and shaping the development of both quality management and CBHE which are two main theoretical areas involved in this research.

In the second part (2.2), I analyse cross-border higher education (CBHE) as one of the dimensions of internationalisation, presenting its types and the rationales and critiques for its development. I also discuss the flux of definitions about CBHE and TNHE and clarify those preferred in this research. The discussion is concentrated on programme mobility and franchise partnerships, which is the type of TNHE that occurs between the Greek private college and the UK universities used as a case study in this thesis.

2.1. Contextual dynamics

This study is concerned with quality and CBHE, which are both dynamic elements of the contemporary higher education sector. Two main contextual factors can be distinguished that shape quality and CBHE, both at the practical and theoretical level: 1) Neo-liberalism and 2) globalisation. The former impacts higher education policy and particularly shapes the priorities in the agenda as well as the practices of the management of quality in higher education. The latter explains the increase of cross-border activities as part of the internationalisation of higher education, which is explained as a response to globalisation. It is therefore important for the reader of this thesis to understand the driving forces behind the two core elements of this study - quality management in higher education and cross-border higher education.

2.1.1 Neo-liberalism

The late 1970s and early 1980s were marked by a shift in the political and economic policy agenda. This shift had deep causes and was based on a departure from the social and philosophical perspectives existing at the time.

This shift has been given different definitions such as neo-liberalism, economic rationalism, neo-conservatism/new-right or monetarism (also Thatcherism in the UK, Reaganism in the USA) (Lynch, 2006). What is common to these terms is they are used to mark a departure from the existing political and economic policy ideology of the time, which was based on active government intervention in the economy (Harvey, D., 2007). This paradigm, known as Keynesianism, was based on the active intervention of the government in the economy to ensure full employment through public spending (Kindleberger, 2006).

Neo-liberalism emerged as the political solution to the economic problems emerging in the mid-1970s in most of the countries of the developed world (Brown et al., 2008). In particular the rise of stagnation - a situation of concurrent high inflation and high unemployment - was a new phenomenon that the contemporary Keynesian policy-making tools failed to tackle (Berend, 2006). Pursuant to this, the world economy experienced an economic crisis marked by the ‘oil crisis’ of 1972 and the ‘collapse of Bretton Woods’ in 1974 (Harvey, D., 2007).

The prevailing post-World War II economic ideology was based on the ideas of John Maynard Keynes. What later became known as Keynesianism was an economic doctrine arguing for active government intervention through public funding to ensure full employment in the economy (Keynes, 2006; Kindleberger, 2006). Keynesianism was based on the idea that what drives the economy and employment is the existence of a substantial aggregate demand for goods and services (Berend, 2006). Therefore, if government policies concentrate on managing aggregate demand by increasing or reducing public spending, full employment and an acceptable inflation rate can be achieved (Keynes, 2006). This ideology pioneered government policy-making in most of the developed countries around the world in the post war era and up until the mid-1970s (Berend, 2006). Additionally, under this doctrine the state should maintain full control of the so-called 'public goods' such as electricity, water, healthcare, and education (Berend, 2006). The rationale for this is that public goods primarily produce a public benefit, and to a lesser extent, or no, economic returns (Keynes, 2006). Therefore, if left to the private sector, they are most likely to become expensive and lose their public good character.

Neo-liberalism is based on classical liberalism and particularly on the view of the individual as a rational and autonomous agent in society (Kindleberger, 2006). As Harvey.D, (2007, p.2) defines it, it is "…in the first instance a theory of political economy practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterised by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade".

This doctrine promotes individualism as the source of the wealth of the economy and of society as a whole (Lynch, 2006; Harvey, D., 2007). Under neo-liberalism, the role of the state is to preserve and guarantee the existence and smooth operation of the markets by providing the appropriate framework (Harvey,D., 2007).

The adoption of neo-liberalism meant the renewal of classical economic liberalism[4]. The entire approach is based on the following (Olssen & Peters, 2005):

1. Individuals are rational seekers of their personal interests.
2. The free market is the most efficient mechanism to allocate resources and wealth within the economy.
3. Government intervention in the economy should be minimised. Instead the market should be left alone to regulate itself.
4. World trade and exchange rates should be freed to operate unregulated by any state or other organisational intervention.

2.1.1.1 Neo-liberalism and higher education

The rise of neo-liberalism turned the attention of public debate and policy towards the need to link education with the market. The role of education was conceived as central in the free market economy (Lynch, 2006), as education is responsible for providing the skills and knowledge which are necessary for people to become more competitive and succeed inside the free market economy. The argument was that only education programmes which have a substantial market value should be delivered by higher education institutions (Brown et al., 2008; Lynch, 2006; Olssen & Peters, 2005). This has created an extensive debate and discussion among scholars and the general public about the role of higher education in the economy and society.

An equally important change for education was the shift in the meaning of an educated person to being an individual who is market-driven, competitive, autonomous

[4] Neo-liberalism is usually parallelled with classical liberalism, but it is a different concept. The main difference between the two ideologies is to be found in the conception of the role of the state in the economy (Olssen & Peters, 2005). In classical liberalism, the role of the state in the economy has only negative effects on the effort of the individual to act as a free and rational agent. In contrast, neo-liberalism sees the role of the state as important in providing and preserving the conditions and framework necessary for the unhindered operation of the free market (Lynch, 2006). Another major difference between classical and neo-liberalism is the view of the individual. Classical liberalism considers the individual as inherently autonomous, liberal and rational by nature. However, neo-liberalism perceives the role of the state as vital in shaping the individual in such a way as to be capable of competing within the free market and developing entrepreneurial skills and instincts (Olssen & Peters, 2005).

and rational (Stromquist, 2007). This had direct implications on the strategic direction and operation model of the education system, its value and priorities (Brown et al., 2008). Furthermore, this change in the meaning of the ‘educated person’ initiated a discussion about the content of academic programmes and the linking of learning outcomes with employers’ needs (Lee, 2010; Yorke & Longden, 2004).

Pursuant to the rise of neo-liberalism, in the past decades, universities worldwide have been changing their focus and character. Universities, prior to the rise of neo-liberalism, were considered, to a lesser or a greater extent, as providers of a public good, thus having close ties with the state (Bergan et al., 2009; Deem, 2001; Trowler, 2010). However, this does not mean that universities in the past were vehicles for reducing social inequalities. Research (Deem, 2001; Gürüz, 2003; Lynch, 2006; Ng & Forbes, 2009) has shown that, even prior to the rise of neo-liberalism, university policies were not purely egalitarian.

Nevertheless, now universities have been focusing on increasing their market orientation by strengthening their links with business organisations (Amthor & Metzger, 2011; Taghian, 2010). These links include direct funding, joint research projects between business organisations and universities, and the redesign of academic programmes according to business requirements. Moreover, this increasingly frequent connection between businesses and universities has meant the adoption of business operations and performance management practices by educational institutions (Kay et al., 2010). This explains why quality management in higher education is increasingly pursued via policies and methods which can commonly be found in the service sector.

Particularly, as it is discussed in more detail later in this thesis (see Chapter 3, section 3.1.1), neo-liberalism means that students are conceived by the government as customers, and the universities as service providers, and quality is viewed as ‘value for money’ within a prism of accountability for public expenditure. This shapes the current quality discourse in higher education while driving and shaping the quality management approach of higher education institutions.

2.1.2 Globalisation

The second contextual factor that shapes quality and TNHE is globalisation, which itself is a misunderstood concept (Singh & Papa, 2010). Robertson (1992, p. 8 cited in Singh & Papa, 2010, p. 2) defines 'globalisation' as "… the process by which all people and communities come to experience an increasingly common economic, social and cultural environment; but globalisation as a theory, deals with the compression of the world and intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole". Knight (2004) defines globalisation as "… the flow of technology, economy, knowledge, people, values and ideas... across borders" (Knight, 2004, p.4).

Globalisation was initially analysed and studied as an economic phenomenon before its extensions to culture became apparent. Giddens identifies globalisation as the "… dialectic of homogenisation and heterogenisation" (1992, p.22 cited in Singh & Papa, 2010, p. 2). This short definition describes, aptly, the dynamic nature of globalisation, which promotes a homogenous global culture while at the same time intensifying the differences between individuals.

Most of the early writers about globalisation described it as either a very bad or a very good thing for the future of the world, particularly for the developing countries (Amthor & Metzger, 2011). At this early stage, most of the discussion was about whether to adopt globalisation, whereas today most of the discussion concentrates on how to eliminate the adverse effects and take advantage of the benefits of globalisation (Amthor & Metzger, 2011).

Globalisation is analysed and conceptualised by many as a process which makes the strong stronger. This is described as a 'core-periphery' relationship where there is a continuous transfer of wealth, knowledge and power from the weak countries (periphery) to the developed world (core) (Maringe & Foskett, 2010).

However, others believe that globalisation, in fact, is helping less developed countries to strengthen their economies (Nolan, 2007). The rise of the so-called BRIC

(Brazil, Russia, India, and China) countries as upcoming economic powers shows that globalisation does not only help the developed nations (Schuch, 2011).

What is commonly accepted in all the different views about globalisation is that it has two main components: information and technological innovation. Both components are necessary for the existence of globalisation and are highly knowledge intensive (Li-Hua et al., 2011). Thus, education and globalisation are closely interdependent. One of the great challenges introduced by globalisation is the need for appropriately educated people who will be able to work, communicate and socialise within the globalised environment.

2.1.2.1 Globalisation and higher education

Globalisation affects higher education in a number of ways. Altbach (2006) summarises two poles in the debate about the impact of globalisation on higher education.

At one extreme of this debate are those who see globalisation as an inevitable process which is driven and fuelled by economic forces and advancements in technology. Under this viewpoint, globalisation is considered as a liberating factor for higher education. The demise of national protectionism and the homogenisation of education systems facilitate the provision of higher education at the global level. Similarly, under this view, technology plays a central role in the globalisation process by providing equal opportunities for the weaker countries and allowing them to bridge the gap to the developed world. As presented later in this chapter, those who see globalisation as an inevitable process view the development of cross-border higher education as a positive development for importing countries. This implies a less critical, or neutral, position towards the need to contextualise the quality management approach when a programme is delivered across borders.

At the other extreme of the debate about the role of globalisation for higher education are those who argue against it, describing it as a medium which promotes the

‘McDonaldisation’ of higher education (Altbach et al., 2009; Altbach, 2006). Under this viewpoint, globalisation aggravates the existing inequalities between the rich and the poor. Specifically regarding higher education, many (Kwiek, 2000; Lynch, 2006; Brown et al., 2008) argue that the massification and the increased presence of private higher education institutions is an outcome of globalisation. This view of globalisation implies that cross-border higher education is a form of economic globalisation which has a range of adverse implications for the importing countries. This view also implies a highly critical position about the overall quality of education provided via transnational partnerships.

Without a doubt and irrespective of one’s standpoint in the above debate, globalisation has affected social and organisational structures (Stromquist, 2007). Additionally, globalisation has created a strong link between business organisations and higher education institutions. Within this context, universities tend to imitate business organisations in their pursuit of economic profit and their organisational forms (Stromquist, 2007, p.84). This has been summarised as the ‘marketisation’ of higher education, and is often linked to criticism about the shift of priorities in the higher education policy agenda from educational to financial objectives.

Among the academic community worldwide, there has been a consensus that globalisation has shifted the emphasis of educational management towards market driven initiatives (Stromquist, 2007, p.83). This is linked with the view that globalisation in education is summarising the neo-liberal approach of reducing public spending in the so-called public goods - including education. This has had a significant impact on the meaning of quality and its management. This can also explain why universities have expanded their international activities, including transnational partnerships, to generate alternative streams of income. This shows that neo-liberalism and globalisation are highly associated concepts which affect higher education policy-making at both the strategic and operational level.

Also, in a highly globalised context, higher education is increasingly viewed as a commodity which can, and should, according to some organisations (i.e. WTO), be traded globally, as with any other commodity (Whitmore, 2011). In some countries, education has been divided into exportable services and expenses. For example, countries like Australia and the UK consider higher education as an exportable service which is high on the ladder as a share of the economy (Altbach & Knight, 2007). The World Trade Organisation (WTO) has established the General Agreement on Trade Services (GATS) which in fact articulates the promotion of higher education as a 'service' which can be offered globally. This is seen as a major threat to the future role of higher education and, above all, the preservation of educational values (Altbach & Knight, 2007). The view of education as tradable service, particularly by the UK, which is the exporting country in this case study research, explains why quality management in transnational education has been pursued within a service quality framework.

Most of the authors who consider the relationship between globalisation and higher education seem to agree about the creation of a globalised fast-changing and challenging environment for higher education institutions (Altbach et al., 2009; Chapman et al., 2011; Varghese, 2011). Within this environment, new relationships and interdependencies between different agents are being created and constantly evolving.

Additionally, there is an agreement about the connection between globalisation and the increased demand for higher and further education courses (Maringe & Fosketteds, 2010). The switch of production from being labour intensive to knowledge intensive has created an inherent need to increase the level of education of the workforce. Globalisation has created a knowledge-based economy which is very much dependent upon innovation and new technology. This in turn creates a strong demand for a highly skilled and qualified workforce. The higher wages gained by those with higher education credentials further raise the demand for higher studies (OECD, 2010a). Consequently, there is increased pressure on higher education institutions to satisfy the increased demand for undergraduate and postgraduate study that in turn leads to a respective set of policies both at the national and international level (Brown et al., 2008). Students tend to associate quality with employment and higher salaries, whereas universities are increasingly concerned about graduate employability as an indicator of educational quality (see Chapter 3, section 3.2.2). This impacts the meaning of quality in higher education, both in regard to what students perceive as ‘good quality education’ and to what higher education institutions aim to assure as quality standards.

On the other hand, there is the argument that globalisation, along with the increase in the demand for education, increases also the drive for educational quality (Brown et al., 2008). The reason for this is the increase of global competition for employment, which raises the standards of candidates (job seekers). Within this competitive globalised marketplace, higher education institutions should be able to ‘produce’ well-qualified graduates. Nevertheless, here the meaning of educational quality is associated with employability, which is a highly debatable issue.

Another positive impact of globalisation relates to greater and easier access to higher education. The democratisation of societies around the globe enlarges the number of groups and the number of people within these groups who pursue higher studies (Brown et al., 2008; Connors, 2010). At the same time, universities are pushed towards allowing access to new groups in society, and especially those who did not traditionally have access to higher education.

So it can be concluded that within the globalised world, higher education is an increasingly transnational process (Connors, 2010). Globalisation is argued to allow easier and wider access to higher education while in its economic sense it is fiercer and higher education institutions are competing with each other to gain and maintain market share of the global market via, among other methods, transnational partnerships. Additionally, higher education institutions within the globalised context are under pressure to adapt their programmes and their educational provision to suit the new and fast-changing needs of the globalised employment market. This impacts students’ perception of the meaning of ‘quality education’ while altering higher education policy agenda priorities.

2.2. Cross border higher education (CBHE)

After looking into the wider contextual dynamics that affect both the two theoretical areas of this research - cross-border activities in higher education and quality management – I will now review the literature on CBHE with a particular focus on TNHEPs.

As discussed in detail below (section 2.2.1.1) TNHE is a form of CBHE which represents one of the two modes of the internationalisation of higher education. It is critical for the reader of this thesis to be able to understand how these different terms tie together and, also how they have been affected by the contextual dynamics mentioned in the previous section. Also, since the issue of quality is closely related to the rationale behind the establishment and operation of TNHE partnerships, I will review the main views in the debate about the rationale for the development of TNHE. Finally, it is important to consider the growing significance of TNHE in the international higher education market, particularly in the form of programme mobility, which is the type of TNHE associated with this case study research with reference to the UK and Greece.

In the light of the above, here the purpose is to 1) review the various definitions and concepts related to CBHE and TNHE, 2) understand the rationales behind the development of CBHE and TNHE, 3) review the different types of CBHE with particular focus on TNHE, and 4) reflect on the role of the UK and Greece as exporting and importing countries of TNHE, respectively.

2.2.1 Cross border higher education as internationalisation 'abroad'

Cross border higher education is described as the second dimension of the internationalisation of higher education or internationalisation 'abroad'.

The concept of 'internationalisation of higher education' has received great attention by scholars in higher education (Daun, 2011; Edwards et al., 2010; Maringe & Fosketteds, 2010; Hudzik, 2011; Stier, 2010; Svensson & Wihlborg, 2010) and has been described as the process which has shaped higher education institutions' polices and strategies in an effort to respond to the fast-changing social, technological, economic the political environment emerging over the past twenty or so years (Knight, 2007b).

Despite the wide acceptance of the importance of internationalisation[5] for higher education, there is still much debate about its meaning and definition, particularly around its different conceptualisations in the context of higher education. Additionally, much of the debate is around the implications of internationalisation for higher education.

According to the OECD, the internationalisation of higher education can be understood as both the concept and the process of integrating an international dimension into teaching, research and service functions (1999, p.3). This definition has been criticised (Qiang, 2003) for describing internationalisation as an aim in itself rather than a means to open up higher education and make it adaptive and responsive to the global environment.

Instead, several other definitions of internationalisation describe it as a response to changes in the global environment, particularly globalisation. These definitions describe the internationalisation of higher education as being the set of all of the systematic and sustained activities which aim to make higher education responsive to the changes and requirements brought about by the globalisation of the economy and society (Knight, 2006; Kalvemark & Van der Wende, 1997).

There appears to be a close relationship between 'internationalisation' and 'globalisation', which creates confusion in the literature about the meaning and use of the two terms.

Most of the literature sees globalisation as a process that is not directly related to higher education, but, instead, globalisation is affecting internationalisation. As Knight (2008) mentions, "internationalisation is changing the world of education and globalisation

[5] The purpose of this study is to explore one of the pillars of internationalisation – cross border higher education – and the applicability of a common quality management approach – the customer model – across different locations of delivery. For a more detailed study on the Internationalisation debate, see the work of Luijten-Lub (2007)

is changing the world of internationalisation” (p. 1). Scott (2005) sees internationalisation as a process which encapsulates the relationships between nation states, in contrast to globalisation, which is promoting economic and cultural movements that tend to overcome national identities.

Globalisation is often seen as a way in which to transfer wealth and power from the periphery to the centre, thus benefiting those countries which are already developed and powerful (Altbach & Knight, 2007), and so the internationalisation of higher education can be seen as carrying an element of power imbalance. Similarly, a range of authors see globalisation as a way of promoting the convergence and interdependence of economies through the liberalisation of trade and markets, while promoting a western-type global culture (Van der Wende, 2001, p.253 cited in Luijten-Lub, 2007, p. 26).

On the other hand, internationalisation is seen as a two-way process, where all parties involved benefit equally by respecting and leveraging national identity, culture, language, history and values. Thus, in higher education internationalisation activities, not only is national identity preserved, but it plays an important role in shaping the internationalisation process (Qiang, 2003). Contrary to this, globalisation of higher education implies the pursuit and emergence of a homogenised world system (Marginson & Van der Wende, 2007). Recently there has been a growing scepticism about the realisation of the benefit from internationalisation, and the concepts of globalisation and internationalisation are becoming difficult to separate (De Wit, 2011b). Both De Wit (2011a) and Knight (2011), probably the two most influential authors on the topic, consider the changing meaning of internationalisation, which is seen now to incorporate elements of globalisation such as the pursuit of standardisation in quality management and a focus on quantity rather than quality.

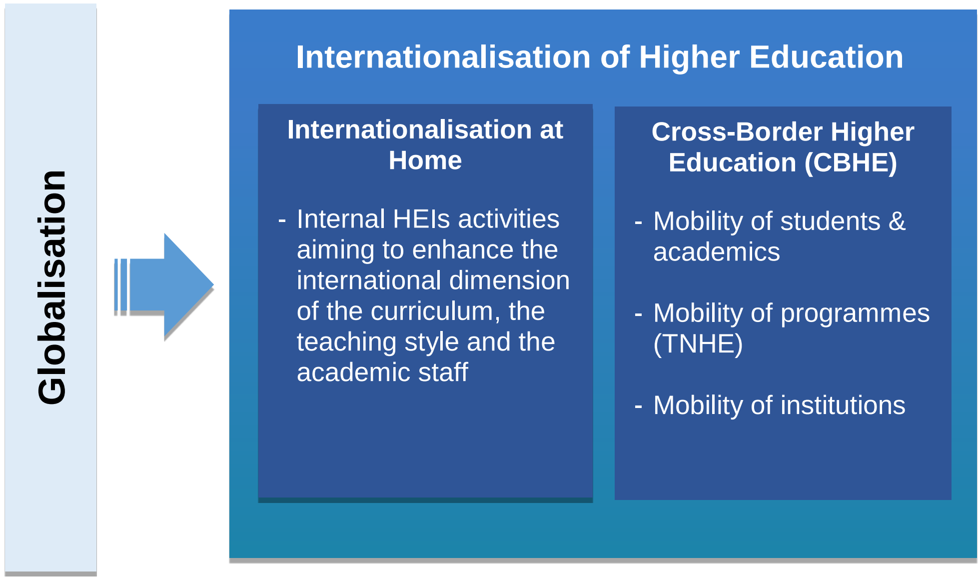
This has particular relevance to this thesis, because the transfer of a rigid customer model for managing quality in TNHEPs can be seen as part of this homogenisation effect of globalisation rather than the internationalisation of higher education. Thus one can argue that the replication across borders of a ‘one size fits all’ customer model for the management of quality in TNHEPs is not aligned with the strategic objectives of internationalisation.

Internationalisation activities are often summarised into three categories (Luijten-Lub, 2007). First, the mobility of academics, researchers and students, which was one of the very early forms of internationalisation, as can be found in Europe in the mid-1980s with the exchange of students under the Erasmus programme. Second, the collaboration between higher education institutions for the joint production of research and programme delivery. Third, the cross-border delivery of academic programmes where the student remains in the receiving country and the programmes and/or the HEI cross the national borders of the source country.

Knight (2004) sets out another categorisation of internationalisation activities, which is the one adopted throughout this thesis. As shown in Figure 2.1 below, the first dimension of internationalisation is termed ‘internationalisation at home’ and includes the activities undertaken internally by the higher education institution in an effort to enhance the international dimension of its programmes, teaching styles, research activities and assistance provided to students (Knight, 2004). The second dimension of internationalisation is ‘internationalisation abroad’ or ‘cross-border higher education’. This refers to the situation where the programmes, academic staff and/or higher education institutions move across national borders to a country other than that in which the awarding institution is based (Knight, 2004).

As shown in the graph below, a common dimension of both forms of internationalisation is the effect of globalisation and its implications on higher education as discussed in section 2.1.2.

Figure 2.1: Globalisation and Internationalisation of higher education



2.2.1.1 Cross-border higher education vs. transnational higher education

CBHE is not a recent development[6] and, despite the long existence of CBHE, there has been a flux in definitions and even today there no consensus about the difference between CBHE and TNHE. Van-Cauter (2013) concludes that several terms are used interchangeably to describe transnational education. Terms used to describe TNHE include ‘cross border’ in Canada, ‘offshore’ in Australia and the Netherlands, and ‘borderless’ in the UK.

Despite some authors arguing that the two terms mean the same, this rather simplified assumption will not be used during this thesis. Instead, I am investigating the various definitions, paying closer attention to those developed recently by prominent bodies and academics leading research in the field.

According to UNESCO (2005, p.7), CBHE

[6] Its existence can be found back in 7th century in India at Nalanda University, which is thought to have been the first international university. Additionally, the University of London External System (now International Programmes) started delivering distance learning programmes as early as the 19th century (Daniel et al., 2009)

> *includes higher education that takes place in situations where the teacher, student, programme, institution / provider or course materials cross national jurisdictional borders. Cross-border higher education may include higher education by public / private and not-for-profit / for-profit providers. It encompasses a wide range of modalities, in a continuum from face-to-face (taking various forms such as students travelling abroad and campuses abroad) to distance learning (using a range of technologies and including e-learning).*

Also, Knight (2004 cited in Van-Cauter, 2013) defines cross border education as “a subset of internationalisation and can be part of development cooperation projects, academic exchange programmes and commercial initiatives”. Hence, CBHE can be summarised as a movement of institutions, programmes, students and/or academic staff across borders.

However, other definitions separate TNHE from CBHE. These definitions use the term transnational higher education (TNHE) to describe teaching and learning activities that take place outside the country of the awarding institutions (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007). One example of this is the definition provided by the British Council (2006 cited in British Council, 2013, p.13), which defines transnational education as

> *… education provision from one country offered in another. It does not include the traditional international student recruitment market where students travel to another country for their studies. Trans-national education includes a wide variety delivery modes including distance learning and e-learning; validation and franchising arrangements; twinning and other collaborative provision.*

Another definition, which describes best the nature of TNHE, is that provided by UNESCO/Council of Europe (2001) which defines transnational education as

> *All types of higher education study programmes, or sets of courses of study, or educational services (including those of distance education) in which the learners are located in a country different from the one where the awarding institution is based. Such programmes may belong to the education system of a State different*

from the State in which it operates, or may operate independently of any national education system.

The definition by UNESCO/Council of Europe is the one I prefer to use throughout this thesis because it separates TNHE from other CBHE activities using the paramount difference of TNHE, which is the lack of degree awarding power of importing institution. The lack of awarding power has a direct impact on the quality management approach that will be used in the transnational partnership. When an awarding institution collaborates via a TNHE partnership with an offshore partner institution which does not have awarding powers, it is imperative that it will require the adoption of its quality assurance guidelines. Thus, TNHE creates a specific power imbalance between the exporting institution and the importing institution which is not captured under the definition of CBHE.

So, I prefer to use the term ‘transnational education’ to describe the specific case where the student studies in a location/country other than the country of the awarding institution. Also, I tend to use the term ‘transnational higher education’ (TNHE) instead of ‘transnational education’ (TNE) because the latter can include vocational or other forms of further education which are subject to a completely different set of contextual factors and regulations. Thus, during the thesis I treat TNHE as one of the types of CBHE. For this reason, in the sections below I review the main trends for the development of CBHE as well as its various types before concentrating on TNHE. This is important because the trends in CBHE shape the development of TNHE and the various CBHE types appear to be substitutes of TNHE and vice versa.

2.2.2 General trends

Cross-border higher education activities occur within the increasingly globalised higher education arena and are facilitated by several different factors and institutions. The growth of cross-border higher education, both in terms of participating students and the types of provision, has been facilitated by a range of policies and events at global level (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007; OECD, 2009a).

The growth of CBHE is fuelled by the increasing demand in countries where the national system is either not capable or not of a high enough quality to meet the existing demand for undergraduate and postgraduate education (Altbach & Knight, 2007). At the same time, reduced public expenditure and funding for higher education in the so-called developed countries, in particular the English-speaking and EU countries, has forced higher education institutions to look to expand their financial income bases and streams.

One of the facilitators of the expansion of cross-border higher education is the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and its efforts to liberalise trade of goods and services, including higher education (Lim & Saner, 2011). Specifically, the WTO's General Agreement on Trade Services (GATS) has been identified as a mechanism which facilitates and expands the globalisation of education (Stromquist, 2007).

Additionally the creation of new world university rankings and increased media coverage, along with political efforts towards the harmonisation of national higher education systems, have contributed to the notion of a new global higher education arena (Teichler, 2010). This new global higher education arena means greater student, programme and institutional mobility.

According to the Observatory of Borderless Higher Education (Olcott, 2010a), the demand for higher education will continue to rise and outperform the expansion of higher education provision. What drives universities to expand in the global markets is increasing competition and the need to find new sources of funding to replace the reduction in public funding (Brooks & Waters, 2011; Olcott, 2010a). Additionally, the prospect of English emerging as the global language for commercial and academic communication increases the attractiveness of higher education programmes from Anglophone countries (Olcott, 2010b). The increased interconnection between the economy and society is another factor which contributes to the expansion of universities' global activities (Lim & Saner, 2011).

Universities worldwide recognise the increase in numbers and diversification of the sources of international student mobility at international level.

The trends in cross-border higher education are not only shaped from the supply side but also from the demand side. Host nations become increasingly selective of the higher education institutions entering their system, via either branch campuses or other forms of collaboration (Olcott, 2010a; Varghese, 2011).

Recent years have witnessed a growing trend of regionalism in cross-border higher education. This takes the form of collaborations between hosting countries which establish common areas of academic mobility (Brooks & Waters, 2011; Lim & Saner, 2011).

Along the general trend discussed above, some specific developments have impacted on the demand and growth of CBHE.

2.2.2.1 Massification

The shift to a service-dominated and knowledge-based economy has increased dramatically the number of people participating in higher education (Connors, 2010). Mass higher education is evident in some regions of the world, where participation in higher education is above the world average (Chapman et al., 2011). The world average of people participating in higher education grew from 19% in 2000 to 26% in 2007 (OECD, 2010b). In terms of student numbers, between 2000 and 2007 there was an increase of 53% in middle and upper income countries (OECD, 2010b). The increase of student participation in higher education has not occurred evenly between the middle/upper and lower income countries (Brooks & Waters, 2011). The increase of participation in lower income countries was 5% from 2000 to 2007, whereas in the sub-Saharan region there have been only small traces of an increase (Lim & Saner, 2011).

2.2.2.2 Private providers

Overall in recent decades numbers of private providers of higher education have increased at both the national and international level. In 2011 the share of private provision was 30% of the total student population studying in higher education programmes (Lim & Saner, 2011). The participation of private providers in the total provision of higher education varies from country to country. In Spain and France, 10% of total enrolments in higher education were with private providers (Altbach et al., 2009; Lim & Saner, 2011; Olcott, 2010a). The share of private providers in some countries, such as Indonesia and the Philippines, is 75% of total enrolments (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007). Greece and other countries have a protectionist system of public higher education and no private provision is allowed by law.

Another trend in cross-border higher education is increasing collaboration between private for-profit organisations and public higher education institutions. Examples of this are the University of Phoenix, Kaplan International, and Laureate (Chapman et al., 2011).

2.2.3 Rationales for and critiques of CBHE

As discussed in the previous section, cross-border higher education (CBHE) means different things to different people and organisations. Different views about the rationales for CBHE are often linked to various philosophical standpoints in favour of or against CBHE. This section will discuss the major viewpoints. This discussion will provide the reader with the appropriate background information in regard to the drivers behind CBHE and the major views in the debate around it. The different views of CBHE are often linked to different views about what is perceived as quality in higher education. Thus the review of the main rationales for the development of CBHE will enable the reader of this thesis to understand the different philosophical conceptualisations that underpin the quality management model currently used in CBHE.

2.2.3.1 Internationalisation viewpoint

Many see CBHE as ‘internationalisation abroad’, which is about the cross-border movement of people (teachers and students), programmes, institutions and course material (see, for example, Stella, 2006; Knight 2004). Under the internationalisation viewpoint, CBHE benefits the higher education organisations of participant countries by enriching and stimulating academic programmes and research. Additionally, internationalisation through CBHE facilitates cross-cultural understanding and awareness. The main criticism (UNESCO, 2005) of this view is that rigidity in the qualifications framework among the different countries raises obstacles to the academic aspirations and benefits mentioned above. National policy frameworks need to be revised in order for CBHE to be effective. According to Stella (2006), in order to achieve the benefits of CBHE mentioned above, it is necessary to assure the quality of provision and qualifications. However, others (Altbach, 2006) within this viewpoint see CBHE as increasingly driven by profit-making rather than academic motives. In the same vein, Knight (2014) and De Wit (2011b) have recently expressed their concerns about the changing nature and focus of the internationalisation of higher education.

2.2.3.2 CBHE as a disadvantage to developing countries

For Santos (2006), the transnationalisation of the higher education market is seen as one of the pillars of neo-liberal policies for higher education. The reduction in public funding accompanied by developments in information technology and the opening up of global markets has contributed to the expansion of transnational higher education. The overall outcome of these developments is argued to contribute to the widening of the inequality gap between North and South higher education institutions. CBHE is seen as part of a neo-liberalist globalisation of core-periphery relationships where the core countries become stronger while the periphery weakens (Santos, 2006). This view is based on doubt about the ability of developing countries to participate equally and compete in the globalised higher education sector. The supporters of this view argue that developing countries would not have the capacity to challenge developed countries equally in a global arena of research and educational delivery (Stella, 2006). This happens because the major importing countries of CBHE are the developing and middle/lower income nations. The increased demand for CBHE collaborations in these countries is a product (consequence) of the incapacity of domestic higher education systems to meet a growing demand for university education. CBHE is thus mainly created by unsatisfied demand and provides access to those who could not otherwise attend post-secondary education. Additionally, the cross-border provisions in developing countries provide a student experience that leads to a less competitive award in the employment market. There are some extreme cases of institutions deceiving students by collecting fees and not providing what they have promised to provide. This view suggests that for CBHE to be beneficial for developing countries, it has to be accessible, available, affordable, relevant, and of acceptable quality (Stella, 2006). The criticism concludes that recent trade agreements used to promote CBHE would only benefit developed countries (Altbach, 2006).

2.2.3.3 Trade promoters' view

Based on the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), many argue for policies to help the aggressive expansion of CBHE provisions. According to this viewpoint, governments are negatively prejudiced against CBHE provision in regard to their quality (Stella, 2006). Therefore expansion of CBHE is held up by national policies or by the absence of the appropriate framework. Learners should be given the opportunity to choose the most appropriate educational provider, and the state should work on helping them to make the right choice. The supporters of this view argue for the need for appropriate national and international quality assurance and qualification recognition systems (Stella & Bhushan, 2011).

2.2.3.4 Mutual understanding approach

According to the OECD (2009), internationalisation activities have been promoted by higher education institutions and governments around the world on the basis of mutual academic, cultural, economic, social and political aspirations. Thus this view argues that all parties involved in internationalisation activities are benefited in some area or respect.

2.2.3.5 Revenue-generating approach

CBHE activities are seen as a way for higher education institutions in developed countries to reach offshore markets and, as Amthor and Metzger (2011) argue, to secure additional resources. In this approach to internationalisation, higher education is seen as being like any other service which can be exported to another country or used to attract students from other countries. This describes, to a great extent, the main motive of the exporting countries that see international activities as a "third income stream"[7] (Brooks & Waters, 2011). The 'income-generating' approach to internationalisation has been linked with countries such as the UK and Australia (Middlehurst, 2013), but the increasing demand for higher education has attracted non-traditional education providers to enter the international higher education market.

2.2.3.6 Skilled migration approach

Some OECD countries promote the internationalisation of their higher education systems in order to attract highly skilled students (Teichler, 2004). This creates a longer-term benefit for the 'receiving' country, as some of these students are very likely to produce high-quality and high-impact research and/or stay to work after the completion of their studies. Primarily, this strategy does not lead to immediate economic benefits like the

---

[7] The first stream of income in higher education is state funding, the second stream of income comes from student fees and the third stream of income is funding from other activities.

revenue-generating strategy, although it may have a long-term effect on the quality and quantity of a country's working population.

2.2.3.7 Capacity building

Some countries adopt policies and actions which aim to encourage their students to study abroad while at the same time giving incentives to reputable foreign higher education institutions to offer their programmes locally. The logic behind this policy is to increase and improve a country's capacity for higher education. This is summarised as 'capacity building'. This view has been promoted by organisations such as the OECD and UNESCO. There is evidence to suggest that this phenomenon is actually materialising in countries that have used partnerships between local education providers and foreign higher education institutions to convert them into private universities. Examples include Malaysia, Singapore, and Hong Kong (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007).

2.2.4 Types of CBHE

As shown in the Figure 2.1 previously, CBHE is about the transfer of students, academics and higher education institutions. However, similar to the flux in definitions about CBHE and TNHE there is a variety of taxonomies of the different types/activities of CBHE.

One of the most frequently appearing taxonomies in the relevant literature is based on the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) classification of cross-border supply/export of services (Tilak, 2011). Four modes are interpreted in the context of higher education:

> **Mode 1 – Programme mobility**. This implies that an awarding institution in the exporting country uses a range of options to reach students in their home countries in order to (fully or partly) deliver its programmes. This type of CBHE implies no physical presence of the awarding institution in the importing country.

The most frequent methods for programme mobility are 1) partner supported delivery and 2) distance learning.

Mode 2 – International student mobility. This implies that the student from one country moves to the country where the awarding institution is based and completes the programme at the home campus.

Mode 3 – Institutional mobility. This implies that the awarding institution moves across borders to reach students in their home countries.

Mode 4 – Staff mobility. This form of CBHE implies the presence of academic and administrative staff in importing countries for the delivery and support of programmes for a particular period of time.

The above taxonomy can be presented in the context of UNESCO's classification of the different modes of CBHE. In the Table 2.1 below, the main types of CBHE, with examples and market trend considerations, are classified according to the definition of CBHE by UNESCO (Larsen et al., 2004; Marginson & Van der Wende, 2007), about the movement of 1) people (students and academics), 2) academic programmes, and 3) Institutions.

Table 2.1: Types of CBHE

Movers	Types of CBHE	Examples	Trends / market share
People	Student mobility	• Move to another country to study towards a foreign academic qualification • Complete part of a home programme in another country • Move to another country as part of an exchange agreement between two or more education institutions	The largest share of cross-border education
	Academic staff mobility	• Complete short or longer professional development programmes (CPD) • Participate in the activities of an academic partnership • Work for universities in other than the home country • Teach, coordinate, verify, and/or moderate programmes in a branch/ franchise/partner institution in a foreign country	One of the oldest forms of CBHE. It is expected to grow following the increasing trend of mobility of programmes and academics
Academic programmes/ courses (TNHE)	**Academic partnerships / franchises** **Tuition support centres** **E-learning & Distance Learning**	• **Develop a franchise partnership with a foreign education provider** • **Validate programmes developed and delivered by a foreign provider** • **Develop joint delivery of academic programme(s) with a foreign education provider** • **Develop, promote and deliver E-learning & Distance Learning programmes** • **Sell/franchise programme(s) to a foreign institution** • **Establish tuition centres for the support of distance learning students**	**Fast-growing part of CBHE. The largest part of this cross-border movement is academic partnerships. New forms of delivery (e-learning) and franchises are growing fast.**
Providers/ Institutions	Abroad campuses Investment projects in other countries	• Well established / traditional universities open branch campuses in countries with large demand for higher education, e.g. the China Campus of the University of Nottingham • Acquisition of an existing local provider or the establishment of a new provider in a foreign country	A growing trend - many universities are now considering expanding into new markets using this method.

Sources: Larsen et al. (2004); Marginson & Van der Wende (2007); Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (2004).

The largest share of CBHE activities is found in the student mobility type where, according to OECD (2012a), the population of foreign students in the OECD area exceeded 4 million in 2010. During the past twenty years, there appears to have been greater mobility of academic staff and students, although there are different driving forces behind this trend across difference geographical locations. In Europe, following the Bologna Process, the increase in student and academic staff mobility was driven by political will. In Asia, an area with a great expansion of cross-border higher education activities, the drive behind this development was the significant demand for higher education.

The case study of this research project falls into the second type of cross-border higher education presented in the table above; that is, the movement of academic programmes across national borders, termed TNHE, as discussed earlier. As presented later in this section, the number of people who choose to study within TNHE provision is growing significantly and is gaining ground against traditional student mobility (Shepherd, 2013).

The third type of CBHE is institution mobility. This is articulated primarily via the expansion of international branch campuses (IBCs). IBCs are a fast evolving sector of CBHE and it is reported by the Observatory on Borderless Education that in 2012 there were 200 IBCs across the world and 37 more were planned to open by 2014 (Lawton & Katsomitros, 2012).

In the section below I review the existing data and trends for each of the above modes of cross-border higher education. However, one well-known problem is the lack of sufficient data to cover all of the modes of CBHE (Ziguras, 2012; Van-Cauter, 2013). With this difficulty in mind, I have tried to discuss the trends and numbers in the three categories where valid statistics and data were available: 1) International student mobility, 2) TNHE programme mobility, and 3) International Branch Campuses as part of institutional mobility. This three categories/types of CBHE can be considered representative of CBHE, using the taxonomy by Knight (2004), while providing a valuable consideration of TNHE which underpins the case study used in this thesis.

It is particularly important to consider the trends and numbers in the above three types of CBHE because they appear to be substitutes for each other (Wilkins & Huisman, 2012). TNHE partnerships were developed, partly, due to the increased demand in one country for the higher education programme of another country. Similarly, international branch campuses (IBCs) were seen by exporting country institutions as a more appropriate mode of covering the demand for their programmes in other countries.

2.2.4.1 International student mobility

Despite the rise of TNHE, the mobility of foreign/international[8] students has increased by 412% in the period from 1975 to 2010, and the total number of students who were studying outside their country of residence reached 4.1 million in 2010 (OECD, 2012a). International student mobility is anticipated to continue to increase in the future, and the OECD (2012a; 2012b) predicts that the number of international students will reach 8 million by 2020.

Student mobility occurs for a number of reasons. These reasons can be categorised as pull and push (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002). Push factors are all of the issues/characteristics of the domestic education system that deter a student from studying in their country. These factors can include poor quality and low reputation of domestic higher education, high barriers to entry, limited supply and high fees (Findlay et al., 2012). Pull factors refer to these elements/characteristics of a foreign higher education system or institution that are attractive to students from other countries. As pull factors are often stated to include: superior reputation of the foreign higher education system or institution, better quality and better prospects for employment and earnings after graduation (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; Brooks & Waters, 2011).

The main trend mentioned in most of the relevant literature is that today more students choose to move to another country to study or/and make use of new technology to study online or undertake distance learning for a degree (Brooks & Waters, 2011; McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007; OECD, 2010b; Santiago & OECD, 2008). As Lancrin (OECD, 2009, p.62) mentions, the major trends in CBHE can be summarised as 'Growth and Diversification'.

---

[8]Foreign students are defined in regard to their nationality, whereas international students are identified by their previous country of study or their residence. As mentioned by OECD (2009a), foreign students are generally an overestimate of genuinely international mobile students (p.66). This thesis concentrates on international students, as these are considered a more accurate estimate of the students who move to another country to study and can be considered under the student mobility type of CBHE.

However, as mentioned in the recent study by the British Council (2012b), there has been a shift of international student mobility destinations from the West to the East. Particularly there is the argument that international student mobility is currently changing patterns towards a south-to-south movement of students. Hence, there appears to be a qualitative change in international student mobility, which this study attempts to investigate.

In particular, new countries are emerging as either sources or destinations of international students. This section aims to provide some analysis of the data available in regard to the changing trends on international student mobility, with particular focus on TNHE exporting and importing countries.

Sending countries of international students

Table 2.2 below, complied using data obtained by UNESCO[9], shows that China, India, Republic of Korea, Germany and France are the top five sending countries of international students on the basis of absolute student numbers abroad. China has had a remarkable increase of 372%, in the number of its students aboard during the period 1998-2011, from 119.143 in 1998 to 562.477 in 2011. Similar trends have been followed by India (317% change) Vietnam (510% change), Saudi Arabia (326%), Pakistan (200%), Slovakia (630%) and Belarus (374%).

On the other side, there are countries with notable decrease in the number of their students studying abroad. Again on the basis of the absolute numbers of students abroad, Japan has a decrease of 29% in its student abroad population between 1998 and 2011. The other countries with the most notable decrease are Greece (-53%), the UK (-16%), Spain (-11%), and Singapore (-21%). Malaysia, which is considered a major TNHE host country, shows a relatively stable number of students abroad during the period of study.

[9] Data retrieved from UNESCO Institute for Statistics http://stats.uis.unesco.org/

Table 2.2: Top 30 sending countries by absolute number of students abroad (1998/2011)

Posit -ion in 2011	Posit-ion in 1998	Country	1998	2005	2011	% change 1998/ 2011	% of world's total (2011)
1	1	China	119.143	402.803	562.477	372%	18%
2	7	India	48.065	139.370	200.432	317%	6%
3	3	Republic of Korea	62.023	100.898	126.472	104%	4%
4	6	Germany	51.911	63.914	103.296	99%	3%
5	9	France	46.499	48.790	54.423	17%	2%
6	5	Malaysia	54.104	42.548	53.861	0%	2%
7	12	United States of America	34.597	48.793	51.562	49%	2%
8	18	Russian Federation	25.347	38.762	49.350	95%	2%
9	8	Turkey	47.435	52.274	48.820	3%	2%
10	41	Viet Nam	7.853	20.781	47.938	510%	2%
11	14	Canada	29.087	42.723	45.060	55%	1%
12	11	Morocco	37.141	45.809	42.800	15%	1%
13	35	Saudi Arabia	9.749	12.867	41.532	326%	1%
14	4	Japan	57.078	64.252	40.478	-29%	1%
15	10	Italy	42.770	34.216	39.775	-7%	1%
16	40	Nigeria	8.364	20.250	39.006	366%	1%
17	20	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	20.099	21.335	38.416	91%	1%
18	21	Kazakhstan	19.791	29.184	36.586	85%	1%
19	30	Ukraine	13.066	26.626	35.038	168%	1%
20	32	Pakistan	11.406	21.340	34.208	200%	1%
21	17	Indonesia	25.600	30.012	34.135	33%	1%
22	13	Hong Kong	31.870	33.953	32.841	3%	1%
23	27	Poland	15.766	30.572	30.895	96%	1%
24	49	Slovakia	4.224	18.435	30.835	630%	1%
25	**2**	**Greece**	**62.024**	**41.647**	**29.074**	**-53%**	**1%**
26	44	Belarus	6.077	11.290	28.794	374%	1%
27	26	Brazil	16.135	19.249	27.151	68%	1%
28	23	Thailand	19.616	23.675	26.018	33%	1%
29	28	Mexico	13.312	22.945	25.837	94%	1%
30	24	Cyprus	17.325	21.458	25.339	46%	1%

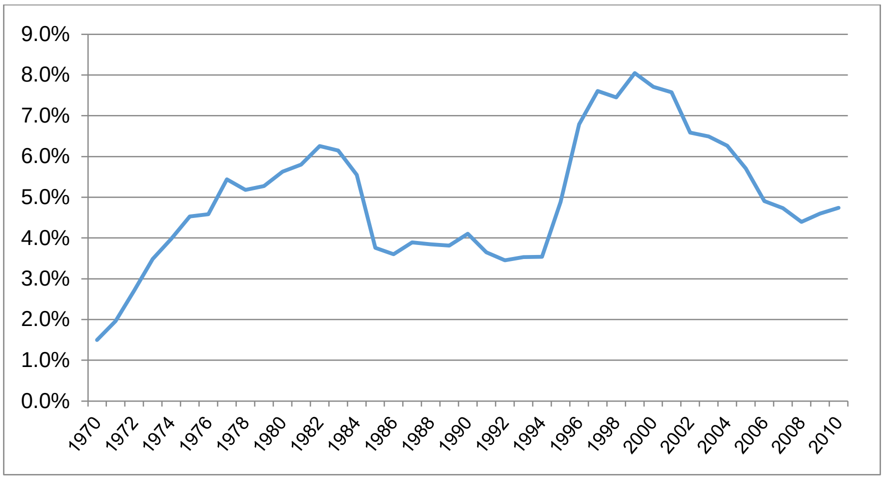
Overall there is an indication that countries like Greece, Malaysia, Ireland, Singapore and Hong Kong, which are engaged in TNHE have shown either a sharp decline or a stabilisation in their number of students abroad. This may be an indication that TNHE reduces the number of outbound students originating from TNHE host countries. Nevertheless, this may also be the result of demographic trends which are not considered when analysing the absolute number of international students.

Greece as a major exporter of international students

For many years up until the mid-1980s, Greece was amongst the world's top exporting countries of international students (Gürüz, 2008). This was an outcome of the shortage of capacity of the Greek domestic higher education system to meet the growing demand for access to higher education (Wächter & Ferencz, 2012). This limited capacity is attributed to fact that higher education in Greece is controlled and provided only by Greek public universities, and the establishment and operation of private and foreign universities is prohibited by the Greek constitution (EURYDICE, 2010a; Psacharopoulos, 2003).

However, shown in Table 2.2, the number of Greek students abroad has fallen from about 62,000 in 1998 to about 29,000 in 2011. However, as shown in Figure 2.2 below, exploring further the course of Greek student outbound mobility as percentage of the total tertiary population in the country, compiling data from UNESCO and OECD, one can see that there are fluctuations across the period of the past forty years.

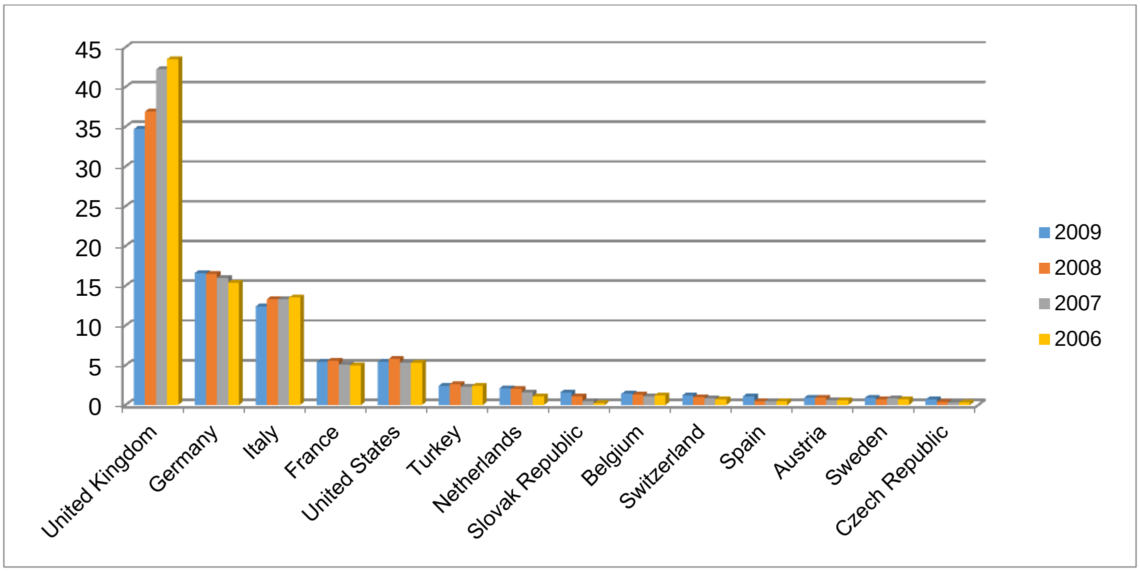
Figure 2.2: Greek students abroad as % of the total tertiary population



Sources: (UNESCO Institute for Statistics., 2010; OECD 2011a, 2009)

As shown in Figure 2.3 below, the UK has been the major destination of Greek students. However, there has been a continuous decline in the number of Greek students who move to the UK for undergraduate and postgraduate studies. This is attributed to the development of TNHE partnerships in Greece between Greek private colleges and UK universities (see Section 2.2.4.2).

Figure 2.3: Number of Greek students enrolled in tertiary education in a given country of destination as a percentage of all Greek students enrolled abroad, based on head counts



Destinations of international students

In 2010, OECD countries host 77% and G20 countries host 83% of all international students (OECD, 2012a). As shown in Table 2.3 below, the main destinations of foreign and international students are the US, the UK, Germany, France, Australia, Canada, Japan and New Zealand.

Table 2.3: Distribution of foreign students in tertiary education, by country of destination (2010) [10]

United States	16.6
United Kingdom	12.9
Australia	6.5
Germany	6.4
France	6.3
Canada	4.7
Russian Federation	3.9
Japan	3.4
Spain	2.3
New Zealand	1.7
Italy	1.6
China	1.8
South Africa	1.5
Austria	1.6
Korea	1.4
Switzerland	1.3
Belgium	1.3
Netherlands	1.1
Sweden	1.0
Other OECD countries	6.3
Other non-OECD countries	15.4

The concentration of international students in G20 countries and mostly English-speaking ones (the US, the UK and Australia) is primarily due to the fact that the choice of country of study for international students is linked to the ability of incoming students to speak the language of academic delivery. For this reasons, English-speaking nations attract the majority of students, as it is most likely that international students have studied English as part of their primary and secondary education in their home country (Varghese, 2011). Also, the flow of international students to developed countries reflects the existence of both push and pull factors depending on the situation in the sending country's domestic higher education system.

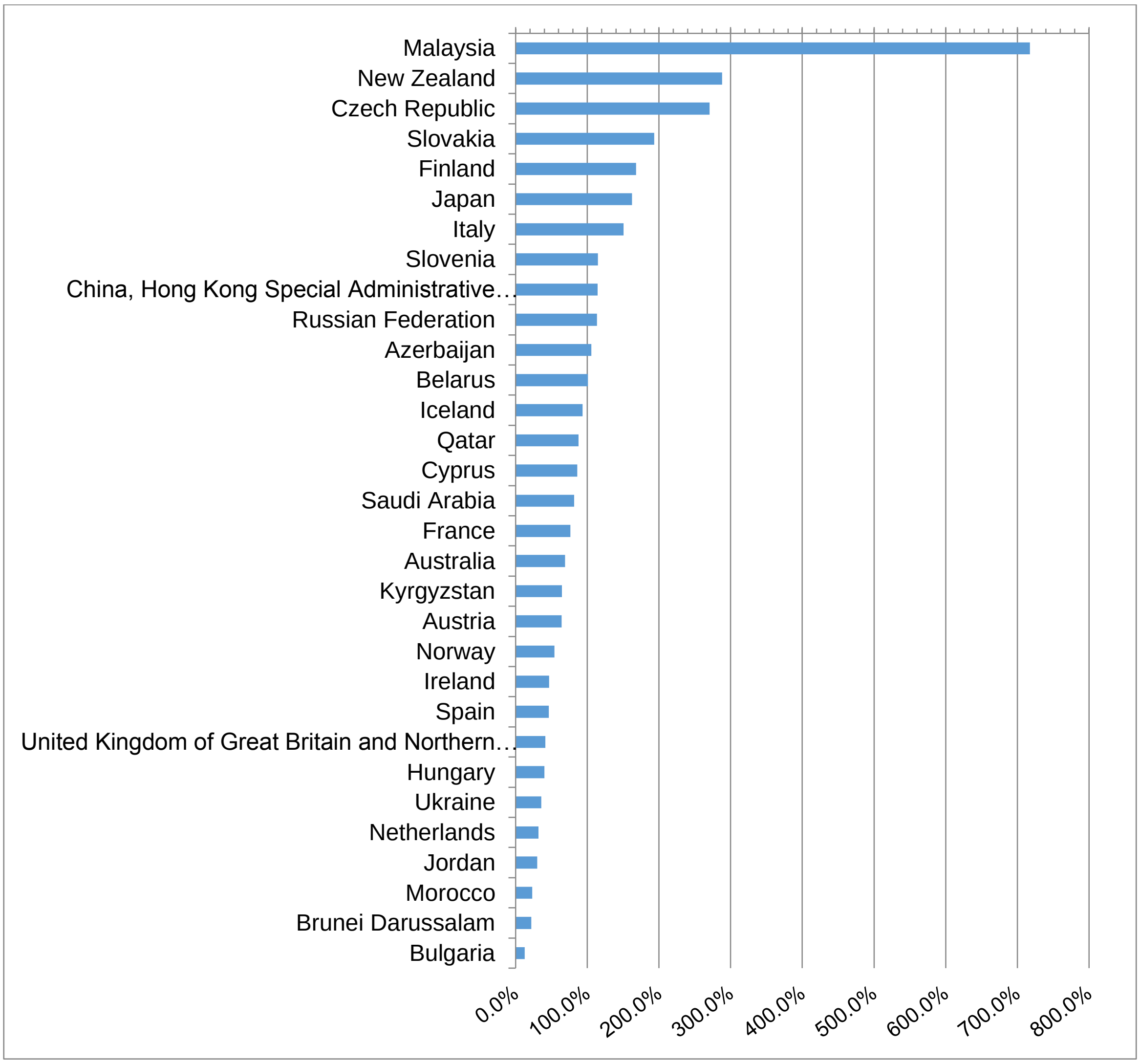
However, the comparison of recent data and the review of the relevant literature on international student mobility shows that the numbers of international students are

[10] Percentage of foreign tertiary students reported to the OECD who are enrolled in each country of destination. Data derived from OECD (2012) Statlink: http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932663188

rising in most of the so-called developed counties (Wei, 2012; Wächter & Ferencz, 2012; King & Raghuram, 2012). At the same time, there is a decline in the number of international students in traditional destinations. For example, the US lost a significant portion of the world's share of foreign students over the eight years, from 26% in 2000 to 19% in 2008 (Olcott, 2010a). The examination of the inbound student mobility indicators[11] during the period 1998-2011 in Figure 2.4 below shows that a number of countries experienced significant changes in their position as destinations for international students. The most notable increase is observed in Malaysia where the inbound ratio grew by 717.7% between 1998 and 2010. Other countries with increase in their inbound mobility ratio by more than 100% were New Zealand (288%), the Czech Republic (270.7%), Slovakia (193.3%), Finland (168.1%), Japan (162.4%), Italy (150.5%).

[11]The number of students from abroad studying in a given country, expressed as a percentage of total tertiary enrolment in that country,

Figure 2.4: Countries with a high increase in their inbound student mobility ratio between 1998 and 2011

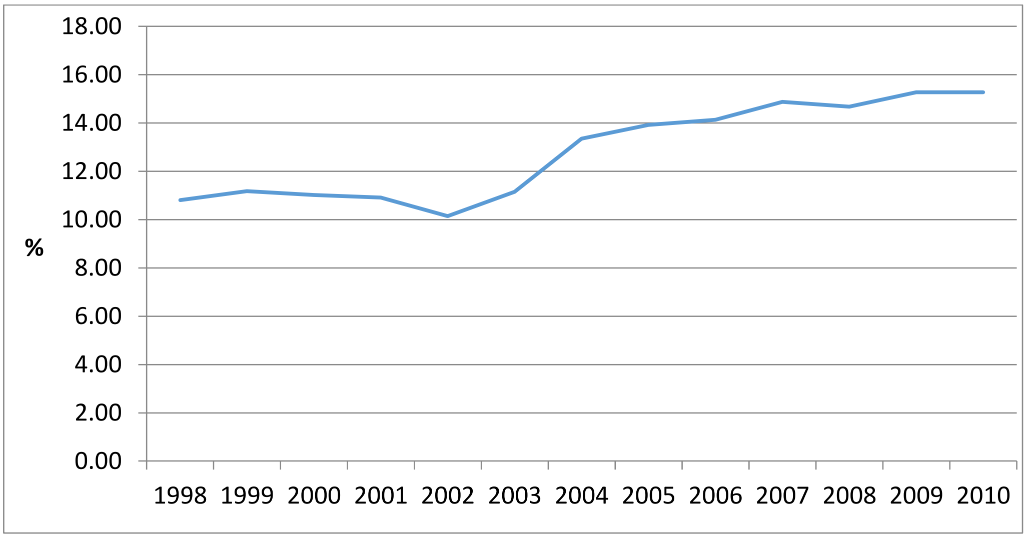


The data reveals the emergence of new countries as destinations of international students, with Malaysia and Hong Kong in the top ten countries with the highest increase in inbound student mobility ratio. Also, it should be noted that according to data from various sources (Khemka, 2012), which does not appear in the UNESCO data sets, Singapore has a substantial number of international students (more than 60,000). These findings are particularly relevant to the purpose of this study, as Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, Qatar and Cyprus are major TNE host countries, in regard to UK higher education programmes (HEGlobal, 2012). This is an indication that countries with significant TNHE engagement have improved their inbound student mobility ratios. This could be explained in the context of increased capacity of domestic higher education systems as well as provision of reputable programmes locally via TNHE provision, thus smoothing out the intensity of pull factors.

The UK as major importer of international students

Despite the rise of alternative destination countries of international students, the UK remains one of the top destination countries of international students. The percentage of international students in the total student population in UK has risen from about 11% in 1998 to approximately 15% in 2010.

Figure 2.5: Inbound mobility rate UK (1998-2010) [12]



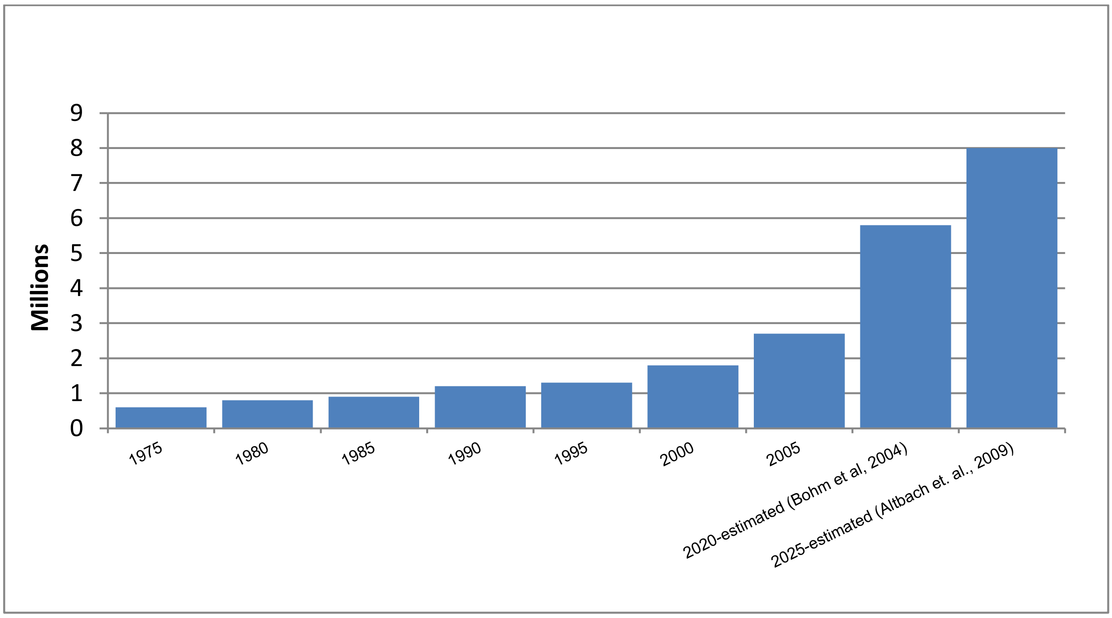
However, since 2011 there has been on-going discussion in the UK about the regulations for international student visas which has partially affected the flows of international students. This, along with the emergence of new countries as destinations for international students, has put pressure on UK higher education institutions to seek alternative ways to capture the international student market. The major alternative strategy to bridge the gap by the decline in the international student mobility is TNHE and particularly the development of programme mobility (i.e. franchises, validation and distance learning) and institutional mobility in the form of international branch campuses.

[12] The number of students from abroad studying in a given country, expressed as a percentage of total tertiary enrolment in that country.

Future trends of international student mobility and the implications for TNHE

International student enrolments tend to grow faster than the enrolments of 'home' students and total number of enrolments. As shown in Figure 2.6 below, it is anticipated that this will continue to increase and reach 5.8 million in 2020 (Lim & Saner, 2011) and 8 million in 2025 (Altbach et al., 2009).

Figure 2.6: Total number of international students



The OECD (2012b) predicts that student mobility is and will remain the main type of CBHE and that it is unlikely, in the medium term, that programme and institution mobility will replace student mobility. This prediction can be explained by developments in both the supply-side (higher education institutions) and demand-side (students).

On the supply-side, the expectation for the momentum of international student mobility is based on the increase of the activities and participation of public universities, in non-traditional international student destinations, to generate alternative streams of income. This can be explained within the context of neo-liberalism and austerity, which push universities to compete to attract international students who pay higher fees, owing to no or lower government subsidy of international student fees,(Brooks & Waters, 2011; Lim & Saner, 2011). Clearly, the main driver for international student mobility market development was, and continues to be, the higher profit margin for universities. Today, a significant stream of income for universities in countries like Australia, New Zealand, United States and the UK comes from international students (Olcott, 2010a; Varghese, 2011).

On the demand-side, the expectation for the future persistence of international student mobility is based on the fact that study abroad option seems to carry higher value for international students in comparison to the option of study in their domestic higher education system. This value is primarily associated with an expectation by international students of superior employment prospects over students who have completed a domestic higher education programme (Kahanec & Králiková, 2011; Min et al., 2012). Also, international students are forced to look for a study abroad option by the lack of sufficient supply in their home countries. However, this push factor is expected to diminish in the future because of the expansion of TNHE and capacity building in countries with a supply shortage of higher education. Thus, in respect of push factors, TNHE is expected to slow down international student mobility, but it is not expected to replace it, because of the existence of significant pull factors.

Overall, the international student market is expected to continue to grow but within a highly competitive environment. The intensification of competition in the international student market can have at least two direct implications which should be discussed in the context of this study.

First, campuses in the receiving countries are expected to be more cosmopolitan and ethnically diverse. This creates a further challenge for quality management in higher education in the light of different student expectations and perceptions as well as different education backgrounds and pervious schooling experiences. The ability of higher education institutions to understand and reflect the differences of their highly diverse student population is critical for their ability to maintain quality standards. This study attempts to do exactly that and, despite the fact that it is based on a TNHEP case study, its methodology as well as its findings can be useful in a 'home campus' context.

Second, as the above analysis of data shows (see Figure 2.4), non-traditional players are entering the market as destination countries for international students. This may create interesting, although difficult to manage, combinations of south-to-south movement of international students which might incorporate an element of a south-to-north mobility. For example a student from India may choose to study for two years in a partner institution of a UK university (south-to-south mobility) and then spend the final year in the UK (south-to-north mobility). Thus, reflecting on the highly competitive environment in the international student market, new forms of TNHE can emerge with the effort of higher education institutions in traditional destination countries to capture part of the student mobility which appears to be diverted to non-traditional destination countries. The outcome of this would be the blurring of boundaries between international student mobility and TNHE, making quality management of these provisions a difficult task. One can foresee an increasingly important role of TNHE in the future, either as a substitute or complement for international student mobility, and this is another reason why this thesis carries value.

2.2.4.2 Programme mobility (transnational higher education)

Transnational higher education, in the form of programme mobility, has been in existence for many years, although the commercially driven transnational higher education activities known today began in the late 1980s and sharply increased in the decade 2000-2010 (KPMG, 2012). The mass mobility of programmes is a relatively new trend which is explained within the 'internationalisation abroad' element of the internationalisation of higher education (Smith, 2010, p.793) as discussed in Section 2.2.1.

The number of students who are enrolled in foreign programmes offered in their country is growing fast and today there are hundreds of thousands of them (Wilkins & Balakrishnan, 2012). The majority of students in offshore programmes are in Asia and the majority of providers are UK, USA and Australian higher education institutions (Kell et al., 2012b; HEGlobal, 2012).

The most common types of TNHE programme mobility are (Baskerville et al., 2011, p.26-32):

- **Joint and dual degrees –** A higher education institution establishes collaboration with a foreign HEI to deliver a programme which leads to one degree (joint degree) or to two different degrees (dual degree).
- **Programme articulation** – a university acknowledges parts of a programme delivered by a foreign HEI as suitable to allow the students to continue in one of the university's programme by entering at an advanced stage (year).
- **Franchising –** this involves the licensing of the intellectual property of a higher education programme from the university to be entirely delivered offshore by a local provider. This type of arrangement represents the larger share of TNHE activities and it is also the type of partnership used as a case study in this thesis.
- **Validation –** this concerns situations where the offshore institution has the ability and know-how to develop and deliver higher education programmes but lacks awarding powers. Thus a HEI assesses the programme(s) and provides its awards for the students who complete it successfully.
- **Corporate involvement –** this type of TNHE activity includes a business (corporate organisation) which is involved in joint research, development of programmes for the training of employees in the workplace, etc.
- **Flexible and distributed learning –** this is based on the notion that the physical presence of the student is not compulsory in the awarding institution and there is no scheduled work with other students. A pioneering institution in this type of TNHE is the Open University (OU).

- **English language courses –** this includes preparatory courses in English language offered, for example, by UK higher education institutions for those students who wish to continue in undergraduate or postgraduate studies.
- **Study abroad –** this when a student of an HEI goes abroad to study for a year or other part of a higher education programme. This has been very popular among European higher education institutions and has mainly been framed inside the Erasmus programme.

From the above taxonomy, as well as from the review of the literature, two main categories can emerge. First, partner supported delivery includes the types of TNHE where the awarding institution delivers its programmes at offshore locations via a local partner institution. Second, distance learning delivery, which includes the types of TNHE where the student is studying wholly overseas but directly with the awarding institution and without the interference of a local partner institution.

Partner supported delivery

This type of transnational higher education involves partnership between the awarding institution and a local partner. The involvement and the range of services provided by the local partner vary. Local partners can be either for-profit or non-profit educational institutions. Their services can include full local face-to-face delivery of the awarding institution's programmes and full administrative support of the provision. So, local partners can provide all of the teaching and learning facilities (IT labs, library, teaching rooms) and deliver the programmes using a team of appropriately qualified academics. The variation in the involvement of the local partner and the extent of the above services creates a wide range of partnership modes.

One type of partnership is 'twinning', where students enrol on the programmes of a foreign provider at a partner institution in their country. The students complete part of the programme in their country and then move to the country of the awarding institution to complete the programme. Under this type of partnership, the curriculum either originates from the awarding institution or is developed by the partner institution and validated by the awarding institution. A variation of twinning is the articulation agreement. Under this type of partnership, the student is enrolled as a student of the partner institution on one of its programmes and only upon successful completion moves on to enrol in the foreign institution.

The most popular form of partnership is the franchise, which is the type of partnership between the university and the partner institution involved in the case study of this thesis. Under this mode, the awarding institution provides a licence to the local provider to offer the programme under specific conditions and requirements. These requirements usually include a minimum of contact hours, academic staff with appropriate qualifications and experience, and quality assurance mechanisms (e.g. double marking, moderation, external examiners). The latter forms the basis of the purpose of this research, which concentrates on exploring the applicability of a common customer model in managing quality in franchise TNHE partnerships.

The quality assurance systems in partner supported delivery aim, primarily, to assure comparable quality standards and eliminate the risk for the awarding institution. Thus a common quality management model is applied to all the partners of the awarding institution, irrespective of their location. This model is usually coupled with or shaped by the framework of the quality assurance agency of the awarding institution’s country. It is this universality of a common quality management system which is explored by the research enquiry of this thesis.

Despite the swift expansion of TNHE activities, there is lack of sufficient data in both exporting and importing countries. Ziguras (2011) identifies the UK and Australia as the two exporters of TNHE who publish data. Thus, reflecting on this limitation of available data, in this section I present and discuss data which refers to the UK. This is not only because of the limitations of available data but also because the UK is the exporting country in the TNHEP which forms the case study of this thesis.

The UK as destination of international students and TNHE exporting country

UK higher education institutions operate transnational programmes in 191 countries and the number of students studying wholly overseas towards a UK higher education award has increased from 338,135 students in 2008 to 503,595[13] students in 2010/11, an increase of 29.8%. According to HESA in UK and as shown in Table 2.4 below, in 2010 there were more students studying abroad on a UK higher education programme than international students studying in the UK (Morgan, 2012). This has created an increased interest in TNHE and particularly in the need to assure quality and look beyond a one-size-fits-all quality management model (Shepherd, 2013; QAA, n.d.). Also, TNHE is now a significant source of income for the UK, as the value of TNHE activities between 2004/05 and 2008/09 was approximately 211 million pounds.

Table 2.4: International provision – UK

International students studying in the UK	428,225
Student studying offshore on campus	503,795
Students studying offshore by distance learning	113,060

Source: (Clark, 2012)

As shown in Table 2.5 below, the majority of students in UK offshore provision are on undergraduate programmes. This explains why this research, which explores a TNHE partnership on the delivery of an undergraduate programme, can be considered as carrying value.

[13] However, UK data includes students studying in all of the various forms of TNHE, including distance learning and branch campuses. It is therefore not possible to separate students who study in TNHE partnerships. There appears to be controversy as to whether distance learning students should be included in the TNHE data series on the grounds that this mode does not fit face-to-face offshore delivery provision. This study takes the view that distance learning should be included in the TNHE data based on fact that it is one of the forms of transnational education, since the student is able to study in a location other than that of the awarding institution. Also, the inclusion of distance learning students is relevant in this study because it appears to be a main substitute for traditional outbound mobility and consequently relates directly to the aim of the study.

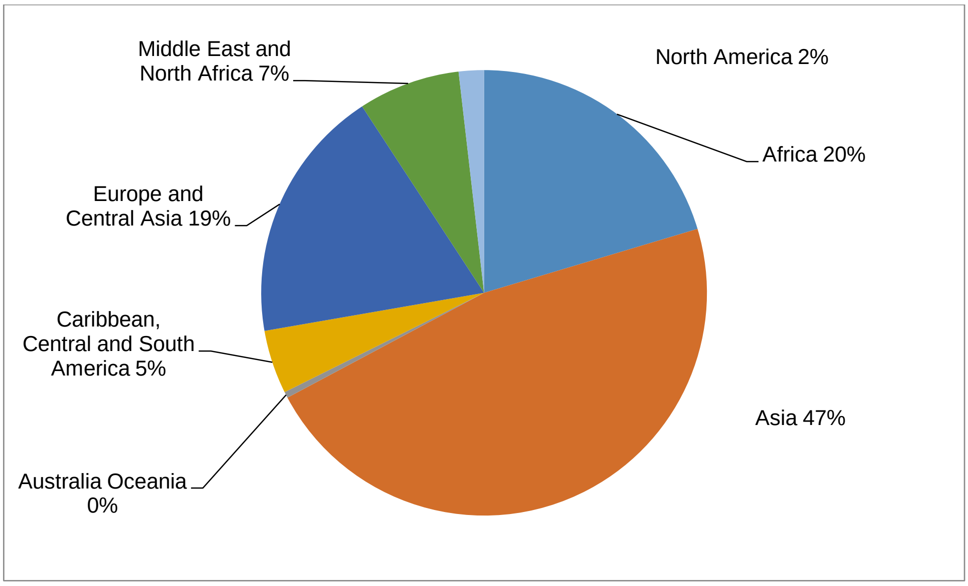
Table 2.5: Students studying wholly overseas 2008-2011 on UK awards

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Further Education	170	225	
First Degree	301700	310525	402000
Other undergraduate	12085	13155	12800
Postgraduate	74180	84775	88795
Total all levels	**388135**	**408685**	**503595**

Source: HESA

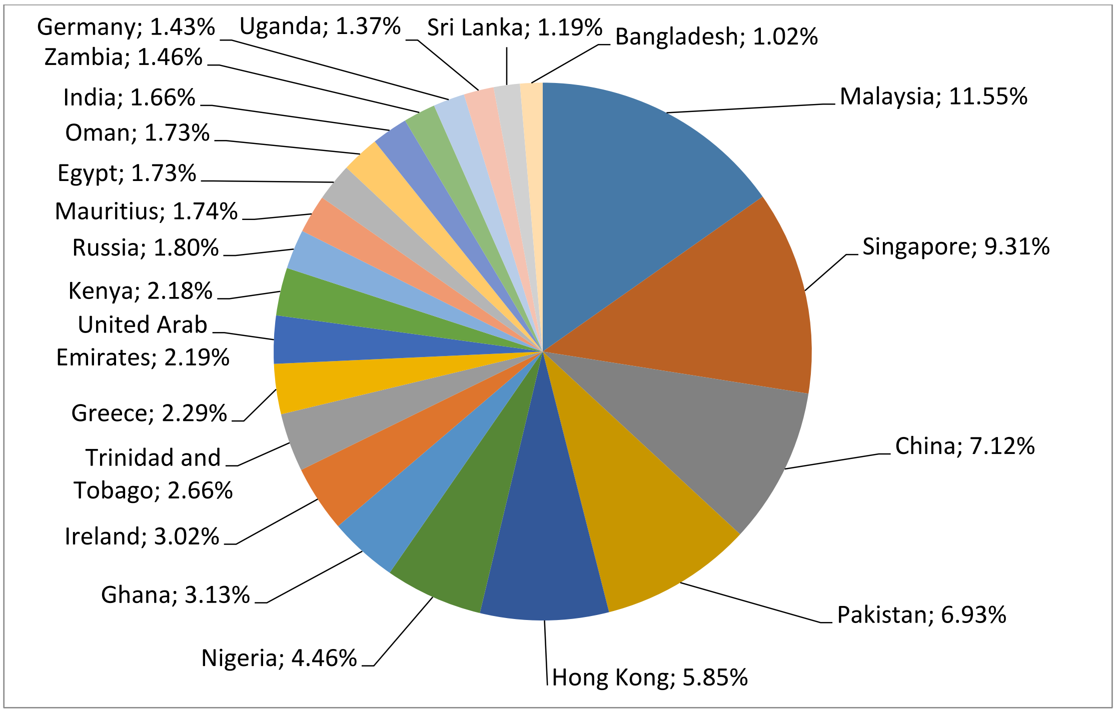
As shown in Figure 2.7 below, the TNHE activities of UK higher education institutions primarily take place in the Far East, particularly in Malaysia, Singapore, and Hong Kong, where their provision is 25% of the total TNHE activities at global level (HEGlobal, 2012). Also, HE-Global mentions that almost half of all TNE provision is in Asia and the rest is in Europe, Central Asia and Africa.

Figure 2.7: Breakdown of UK TNHE by region (2010/11)



The breakdown of students studying wholly overseas on UK HE programmes in Figure 2.8 below reveals that more than half of them (51.37%) are in eight countries: Malaysia, Singapore, China, Pakistan, Hong Kong, Nigeria, Ghana and Ireland.

Figure 2.8: Top TNHE host countries for UK 2010/11 (% of total TNHE enrolments)



Sources: HEGlobal (2012); HESA

As mentioned above, UK higher education institutions have been engaged in TNHE using a range of types/modes of delivery and collaboration (Baskerville et al., 2011; Olcott, 2009; OECD, 2006). Despite the large quantity of TNHE partnerships and activities, there is a lack of contemporary data for UK higher education institutions, which is a problem recognised in the relevant literature (Healey, 2013b, 2013a; Vincent-Lancrin & Pfotenhauer, 2012; Van-Cauter, 2013; Ziguras, 2011).

However, aiming to identify some basic understanding of the range, type and volume of the TNHE activities of UK higher education institutions, a report by the Centre for Research and Evaluation and the Centre for Education and Inclusion Research of Sheffield Hallam University was utilised. The report was published in 2008 (Drew et al., 2008) and titled “Trans-national Education and Higher Education Institutions: Exploring Patterns of higher education Institutional Activity”. A range of data was extracted and adapted from this report to serve the purpose of this chapter, which is to provide a contextual background for this research project.

As shown in Table 2.6 below, the report found that the most popular form of TNHE for UK higher education institutions is the franchise, and the second validation agreements, with distance learning following in third place. This is particularly relevant for this research project because the case study focuses on a franchise arrangement between a UK university and a Greek college. This shows the importance of this research project in contributing to the understanding of the most popular mode of TNHE for UK higher education institutions. In particular, the fact that the franchise appears as the most popular form of TNHE collaboration for UK higher education institutions supports my claim for the case study used in this thesis being a 'typical case' that can be used to gather valuable knowledge.

Table 2.6: TNHE by type/mode

Type of TNHE	Number of programmes	%
Franchise	430	28
Validation	309	20.1
Distance learning	213	13.9
Articulation agreement	147	9.6
Flying Faculty / Joint teaching	140	9.1
On campus provision overseas	89	5.8
No available data	86	5.6
Blended delivery	49	3.2
Dual degree	25	1.6
Other	25	1.6
Joint award	23	1.5
Total	1536	100

The data emerging from the report showed that the majority of the programmes in TNHE are at undergraduate level (55.2% of the total), as shown in Table 2.7 below. This, again, is relevant to this research as the case study concerns an undergraduate programme. Thus, the possible findings from this research project will have a great degree of generalisability and will contribute to the understanding of how undergraduate provision at TNHE level operates. The second most popular academic level of programmes is the taught postgraduate course, with 39.6% of the total. Overall, taught delivery at both undergraduate and postgraduate level constitutes the majority of the TNE activities of UK higher education institutions.

Table 2.7: TNHE programmes by academic level (as in 2008)

Level	Number of programmes	%
Undergraduate	848	55.2
Postgraduate Taught	609	39.6
Postgraduate Research	15	1.0
Other	44	2.9
Not Recorded	20	1.3
Total	1536	100

The greatest percentage of the programmes in TNHE are in the subject area of Business and Management (38.3%) followed by Mathematical and Computer Science (11.6%). Again, this is relevant to this research project as the case study is focusing on an undergraduate programme in Business. This increases the usefulness and value of the possible findings of this research project for the current and future understanding of undergraduate business and management provision as the most popular subject area of TNHE.

The data presented below (Table 2.8) shows that the case study of this research project has great value for the understanding and evaluation of TNHE from a student's perspective. This is because the case study is concerned with a franchise arrangement for the provision of an undergraduate programme in Business. It can be argued, therefore, that the case study examines areas where the majority of TNE activities are concentrated. Thus, the ability, along with the validity, to draw general observations from the findings this research is increased. Additionally, the value of the contribution of the findings of this research to existing knowledge around TNE is enhanced.

Table 2.8: TNHE Provision by subject (adapted*)

Subject	N	%
Business and Administrative Studies	587	38.3
Mathematical and Computer Sciences	178	11.6
Creative Arts and Design	157	10.2
Engineering	135	8.8
Subjects allied to Medicine	91	5.9
Social Studies	60	3.9
Education	58	3.8
Historical and Philosophical Studies	47	3.1
Law	37	2.4
Mass Communication and Documentation	32	2.1
Biological Sciences	28	1.8
Architecture, Building and Planning	27	1.8
Linguistics, Classics and related subjects	23	1.5
European Languages, Literature and related subjects	18	1.2
Physical Sciences	17	1.1
Technologies	10	0.7
Medicine Dentistry	8	0.5
Veterinary Sciences, Agriculture and related subjects	8	0.5
Eastern, Asiatic, African, American and Australasian Languages	6	0.4
Generic	5	0.3
Total	1532	99.9

* (Drew et al., 2008, p.44)

Greece as TNHE importing country

Due to the problems of the Greek higher education system, (see Chapter 5, Sections 5.2.1 & 5.3.1), Greece has been in the past one of the world's major exporters of students to other countries. As discussed in Section 2.2.4.1, in the 1980s Greece was amongst the top three source countries for international students, but this was reversed after the development of private colleges which acted as TNHE providers. Research has shown that the outbound student mobility of Greek students declined after 1999 as result of the development of TNHE provision in Greece (Tsiligiris, 2013).

TNHE programme mobility is facilitated in Greece by private colleges which are established as post-secondary education centres and are controlled and licensed by the Greek Ministry of Education. Twenty-one post-secondary education centres are currently licensed and operating in Greece at the time of writing (2013) (see Table 2.9)[14]:

[14] The list of institutions and programmes has been complied by combining data from a range of resources. These resources were: 1) The Greek Ministry of Education – list of licensed colleges available at: http://www.minedu.gov.gr/publications/docs2011/adeiodothmena_keme_100928.doc, 2)The Hellenic Colleges Association website : www.hca.gr

Table 2.9: Post-secondary education centres in Greece

	Greek Partner Institution	In Partnership with
1	Mediterranean College – Athens Mediterranean College - Thessaloniki	University of Teesside EDEXCEL International London Centre of Management University of Derby
2	KEPP - Athens	University of Central Lancashire University of Strathclyde European Association for Psychotherapy
3	UINDY ATHENS – Athens	University of Indianapolis
4	British Hellenic College - Athens	University of Wales
5	AAS College Applied Arts Studies - Thessaloniki	University of Lancashire
6	New York College - Athens New York College - Thessaloniki	University of Greenwich; State University of New York, Empire State College; Institute Universitaire Kurt Bosch; Ecole Superieure de Gestion Paris Graduate School of Management National American University; Lassalle University; Nova Southeastern University; University of Bolton Edexcel; Cisco Academy
7	City College (THESSALONIKI)	University of Sheffield
8	BCA College AE» (ATHENS)	London Metropolitan University American Hotel & Lodging Association
9	Alba (ATHENS)	
10	ΑΝΑΤΟΛΙΑ (THESSALONIKI	University of Wales
11	Athens Information Technology (AIT)	Aalborg University Carnegie Mellon University
12	ICBS – Athens ICBS – Larissa ICBS - Thessaloniki	Kingston University
13	IST Studies – Athens	University of Hertfordshire
14	ΒΑΚΑΛΟ Art & Design – Athens	University of Derby
15	Κολλέγιο Περρωτής	University of Wales Institute, Cardiff
16	Akto – Athens Akto - Thessaloniki	Middlesex University
17	Κολλέγιο Athens GSM	Nottingham Trent University
18	City Unity College	City University of Seattle Liverpool John Moores University Staffordshire University Vysoka Skola Manazmentu V Trencine Nish University
19	American College of Greece » «Κολλέγιο Deere	
20	Aegean Omiros College	Anglia Ruskin University University of Central Lancashire Edexcel/Btec
21	ΚολλέγιοAKMI Metropolitan – Athens ΚολλέγιοAKMI Metropolitan – Thessaloniki	University of Gloucestershire; University of Wales; Btec – Edexcel; Queen Margaret University; Roehampton University; University of Central Lancashire; Cyprus College
22	MBS College	Nottingham Trent University
23	The European College for Tourism Studies» - Corfu	The Manchester College The Roosevelt University The Glion Institute Of Higher Education
24	DEI College	University of Central Lancashire University of London External System Edexcel
25	Εταιρία Βιβλικών Σπουδών (Athens)	Liberty University
26	Fitilas – Patras	Wyzsza Szkola Menedzerska W Warszawie Ternopil State Medical University
27	Αθηναϊκή Εκπαιδευτική Ε.Π.Ε.» (Athens)	Conservatoire National Des Arts Et Metiers
28	Κολλέγιο Institution d´Etudes Francophones (IdEF) (Athens)	Universite Paris 13

In 2009-2010, the number of students studying at private colleges in Greece was approximately 17,500 (ICAP, 2010), while this number rose to approximately 25,000 in 2012 (Hellenic Colleges Association, 2012). It is estimated that the total expenditure on private higher education services in Greece is between 120 and 130 million euros (ICAP, 2010) and the majority of TNHE partnerships in Greece are in the form of franchise arrangements between private colleges and UK universities (Hellenic Colleges Association, 2012).

Greece appears in the relevant literature as a major importing country of TNHE services, particularly in the form of franchise arrangements (Van-Cauter, 2013; Tsiligiris, 2013; Baskerville et al., 2011; Ziguras, 2011). The fact that the majority of these franchise partnerships are between Greek private colleges and UK universities contributes to my claim about the value of this research, as it constitutes a ‘typical case’ in TNHE which can offer valuable knowledge to help researchers to understand the importance of student expectations and perceptions in other TNHE contexts.

2.2.4.3 Institution mobility - International Branch Campuses (IBCs)

Another emerging type of TNHE is International Brach Campuses (IBCs). An IBC is where the awarding higher education institution has a physical presence in another country (Baskerville et al., 2011). This type of TNHE has emerged because awarding institutions decide to build their own campuses in host countries in an effort to replicate the teaching and learning experience of the delivery which occurs at the ‘home’ campus. The reason why I review this type of TNHE in more detail below, is because there are concerns (Farrugia, 2012), similar to those about TNHEPs, about the appropriateness and the applicability of a one-size-fits-all customer model in the management of quality in IBCs.

International branch campuses are created in countries with a large number of prospective students; notable examples are China and India. These branch campuses attract a large number of students from the host country as well from countries in the wider area. Most of these campuses are located in the Middle East and Asia. This mode of transnational higher education is less expensive and students consider it, along with partner delivery, as a way to study for an international qualification while staying at home and working at the same time (Chapman & Pyvis, 2006).

The creation of IBCs, as the institution mobility dimension of transnational higher education, is constrained by the risk and costs to the mother institutions. Existing overseas campuses are not profitable, and the main reason for their existence is the pursuit of international prestige by the mother institutions (C-BERT, 2010). The motives for the host countries to promote the creation of international branch campuses is the capacity building of their national higher education systems and the reversal of the ‘brain-drain’ process caused by the migration of students to other countries. Additionally, host countries promote the creation of branch campuses as a process by which to transfer technology and innovation from developed countries.

Three particular recent developments in the dimension of institution mobility (Brooks & Waters, 2011; Olcott, 2010a; Varghese, 2011) have shaped the type and development rate of IBCs:

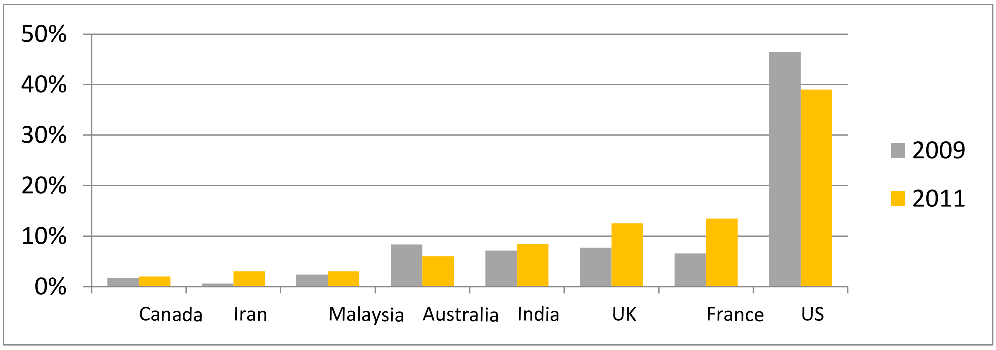
1) **Creation of regional clusters of offshore campuses**. Some hosting countries are making efforts to facilitate offshore campuses as an integral part of the country’s strategy for innovation and the knowledge economy, for example Qatar where IBCs are part of the country’s strategy for development (Abu-Ghazalah, 2013).
2) **Changing financial model for offshore campuses.** In the past, the financing of offshore campuses primarily came from the mother institutions. Today there is an increasing pattern of new sources of financing from local businesses and/or governments. This new model of financing reduces the risk for the mother institutions and shows that institution mobility is increasingly considered as a sound alternative to national higher education systems for the host countries. An

example of this can be found in Dubai's academic city[15] where the government provides substantial support for foreign universities to launch IBCs

3) **Mobility of programmes and institutions is increasingly extending to research programmes (doctorate).** Despite this remaining only a small portion of the total share of offshore education, research programmes are growing as part of the collaboration between source and host countries. This creates opportunities for the quality upgrade of national research in host countries and minimises the risk of academic quality assurance for source countries.

The above drivers for the development of IBCs has contributed in their growth, in both size and numbers, during the part the past decade. According to the report published by the Observatory on Borderless Higher Education, in 2012 there were 200 branch campuses around the world, up from 168 in 2009, while 37 were due to open in 2012 or 2013 (Lawton & Katsomitros, 2012). The majority of the source countries of these branch campuses were those countries which are considered as traditional exporters of higher education (the USA and the UK) while France has emerged as another top exporter. As shown in Figure 2.9 below, out of 200 branch campuses in 2012, 78 (39%) were of US universities, 27 (14%) of French, and 25 (13%) of UK universities.

Figure 2.9: Branch campuses by exporting country as % of total



Source of data OBHELawton& Katsomitros (2012)

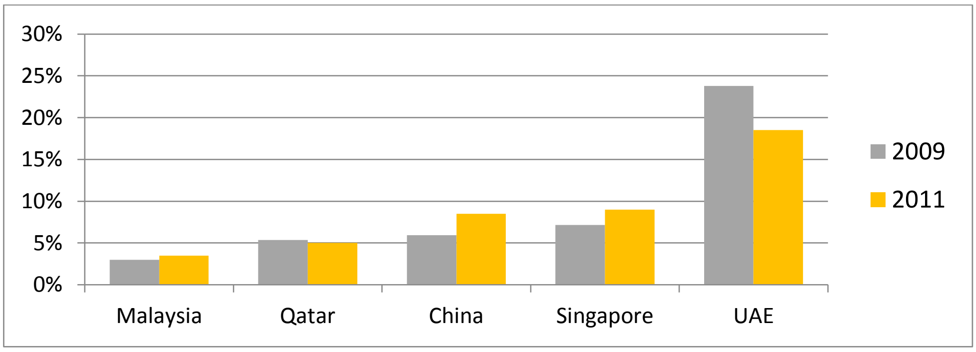
The report by OBHE shows that there is a north-to-south direction of the outward flow of higher education services. However, China appears in 2012 as the source country

---

[15] More information can be found here : http://www.diacedu.ae/

of one branch campus, while there is a shift from the Middle East to the Far East. For the co-called traditional exporting countries, the motives behind the north-to-south movement are the generation of income and the exploration of new academic opportunities. At the same time, the motives of the governments in the host countries are transforming their regions into education hubs and attracting international students (Lawton & Katsomitros, 2012, p.3). As shown in Figure 2.10 below, the main host countries of branch campuses are in the Middle East and Asia. In 2011 the breakdown of hosting countries of branch campuses was UAE 37 (19%) from 40 (25%) in 2009, Singapore 18 (9%) from 12 (7%) in 2009, China 17 (9%) from 10 (6%) in 2009, Qatar 10 (5%) from 9 (6%) in 2009 and Malaysia 7 (4%) from 5 (3%) in 2009.

Figure 2.10: Branch campuses by host country (as % of the total)



Source of data OBHE(Lawton & Katsomitros, 2012)

One of the challenges in the operation of IBCs is the flux in systems, bodies, organisations, and approaches involved in the quality management of the provision (Lane, 2011). Some host countries have developed their own national systems and agencies for assuring quality in IBCs, while others provide complete freedom to mother institutions in applying their quality assurance practices without further controls (Kinser, 2011; Farrugia, 2012).

2.2.4.4 Sameness and risk mitigation as a challenge in TNHE quality management

As discussed in detail later in this thesis (see Chapter 3, Section 3.3), TNHE activities are primarily covered by the exporting institution or/and country quality guidelines and management models. For many years now, the main objective of these policy guidelines has been to 1) mitigate risk as a reaction to cases of fraudulent offshore partners and as an effort to guard the reputation of the exporting country's higher education system, and 2) focus on equivalency, or sameness, of quality standards between the home and offshore provision.

However, recently there has been increased discussion about the need to go beyond the replica of the home university (Shepherd (2013, p. 9) and to enhance the student experience at offshore locations. This discussion is mainly concerned with the appropriateness of the current practice, which is about simply transferring quality guidelines muting, or ignoring, local cultural and educational differences (Bolton & Nie, 2010; Chapman et al., 2011).

This dialogue has developed at relevant international conferences, such as Going Global 2012 & 2013 as well as NASFA, and there appears to be a consensus about the importance of exploring student expectations and perception in offshore locations in an effort to enhance student experience in TNHE. This explains the gap in knowledge which this thesis aims to fill and why this carries value for the higher education management sector.

2.3 Summary of Chapter 2

The review of the literature shows that international student mobility is being slowly replaced by TNHE via the delivery of programmes in offshore locations either through local partner institutions or as part of international branch campuses. The development of cross-border higher education activities has been increasing in both volume and diversity of locations and types of provision. The offshore delivery of university programmes has been primarily treated as a market penetration activity, and little consideration has been given to addressing the specific needs of the local students. Instead, the model which is promoted is based on the replication of the 'home' provision and quality management systems.

Chapter 3- Literature Review: Quality in higher education

3.0 Introduction

This chapter will present the review of the literature on quality in higher education, which is the second major concept of this research. The chapter has five sections.

The first section (3.1) will include the review of the major definitions of quality in the higher education context. The section will also include a discussion of the current quality discourse in higher education which underpins the current quality management models. The second section (3.2) will deal with the various approaches used to describe the efforts by institutions and external bodies to manage quality in higher education. The section will include a separate discussion of the service quality management in higher education and of educational quality.

The third section (3.3) of this chapter will review and discuss the relevant literature about the current model for the management of quality in transnational higher education. Specifically it will review the quality assurance guidelines of international organisations such as UNESCO and ENQA as well as quality assurance agencies such as the QAA in the UK.

The fourth section of the chapter (3.4) will reflect on the challenges around the applicability of a one-size-fits-all customer model in the management of quality in TNHEPs which leads to the justification of the research purpose.

Finally, at the end of the chapter, in Section 3.5 I will draft the conceptual framework of this research as shaped by the literature review findings. The conceptual framework will provide a clear outline of the concepts which are explored in this study, the research problem, and the research purpose and questions.

3.1 The definition of quality in higher education

A review of the literature on the different definitions of quality in higher education is important and necessary because it will allow the reader to understand the relativity of the concept of quality and also conceptualise the existing prevailing definition(s) of the term.

Quality emerged as a natural inherent need for business organisations and people to do things properly every time. This was an initial working definition of quality, as mentioned by Jacques (1999, cited in Houston, 2008). A common conceptualisation of quality for business organisations is that quality is defined as the ability to satisfy, or even exceed, customer expectations of a service or a product (Gronroos, 1990). Thus, one may understand that the concept of quality can include different meanings around the standards of the product or service. This is also the case in the conceptualisation of quality in higher education.

Woodhouse (2012) provides a concise, review of the history of quality, and explains that quality emerged as a central issue in higher education after the mid-1980s following pressure from both the market and the government. Up until then, quality was primarily an issue internal to higher education institutions. This verifies the value of the discussion in the previous section about the impact of government policies on quality in higher education.

The early attempts to define quality have been based on the view of quality as an indication of excellence or outstanding performance. Vroeijenstijn (1991, cited in Harvey, 2012), sees quality as completely relative concept, thus argues against efforts to provide a universal definition for quality. In higher education, this view recognises that different stakeholders (i.e. academics and students) would have different objectives and priorities. Thus, it is very likely that they will perceive quality differently. Harvey (2012) provides the example that during a lecture, students tend to focus on their learning outcome while the academic may be thinking of performance indicators associated with their evaluation as an employee. Thus, in this view, quality cannot be defined in a single definition. Instead, there should be an effort to identify the criteria used by the different stakeholders to judge quality while also considering the relativity of the concept when making quality assessments. The problem with this definition and treatment of quality is that it leads us to a dead end or a chaotic operational state where quality is something abstract and therefore very difficult to manage. However, the above discussion is very relevant to the purpose of this research because it justifies why a common one-fits-all customer model is unlikely to be applicable in different contexts of delivery.

Another definition of quality in higher education is provided by UNESCO (Vlăsceanu et al., 2004, pp.46–48):

Quality (academic): Quality in higher education is a multi-dimensional, multi-level, and dynamic concept that relates to the contextual settings of an educational model, to the institutional mission and objectives, as well as to specific standards within a given system, institution, programme, or discipline. Quality may thus take different meanings depending on: (i) the understandings of various interests of different constituencies or stakeholders in higher education (quality requirements set by student/university discipline/labour market/society/ government); (ii) its references: inputs, processes, outputs, missions, objectives, etc.; (iii) the attributes or characteristics of the academic world which are worth evaluating; and (iv) the historical period in the development of higher education.

Although the above definition refers to the relativity of the quality concept according to the respective situation and the stakeholders involved, it identifies the various variables which affect quality and thus allows for the development of specific models to manage quality in the various contexts.

Similarly, in one of the most influential works on quality in higher education, Harvey and Green (1993) argue that quality would depend on the circumstances and the stakeholders, which implies that quality will be conceptualised differently at different times by different people. For Harvey and Green (1993), quality in higher education becomes a complex issue due to the diversity of stakeholders – teaching and non-teaching staff, students and their families, regulatory bodies, external accreditation bodies and government authorities – and their sometimes conflicting interests.

Harvey and Green (1993) have provided a range of different views of quality in higher education. In particular, their view of quality as 'fitness for purpose' is considered to be shared by the various stakeholders, both internal and external, of higher education institutions as the prevailing view of quality today (Woodhouse, 2012). Quality as 'fitness for purpose' places quality in the context of matching customer expectations, needs or desires. Nevertheless, Harvey (2012) has clarified that in other contexts, the view of quality as fitness for purpose relates to the fulfilment of the requirements specified by the customer, but in higher education it reflects a top-to-bottom view of quality and refers to the ability of an institution to fulfil its mission or a programme of study to fulfil its aims. This means that the matching of student expectations and perceptions remains the priority, but this is placed within the wider institutional quality framework which will be shaped by a range of factors.

Another view of quality, that of 'quality as value for money', is discussed by Harvey and Green (1993) and it appears to be the one that describes, to a great extent, the currently prevailing conceptualisation of quality in higher education. This view reflects a concern about the return on investment (Harvey, 2012) with quality a function of the relationship between returns and costs. Thus, quality can be defined as achieving a standard outcome with fewer resources or costs, or alternatively achieving better standards for the existing level of resources or costs. According to Harvey (2012), this is when the 'customer' gets a quality product or service. This notion of quality is particularly relevant in the contemporary context where governments seek to increase the level of accountability of higher education provision. Also, as students' financial contribution increases, they tend to embrace further the notion of 'value for money' as an indication of quality in higher education. This definition of quality accompanies 'fit for purpose' in describing the current calls for quality assurance in higher education, primarily by governments and other regulatory bodies (Woodhouse, 2012).

The above discussion provides a mapping of the prevailing definitions of quality in higher education today. This discussion allows the exploration of the different views of quality and the consideration of those which form the contemporary approach/view of quality in higher education. There are surely ideological and philosophical issues in regard to whether these definitions of quality are appropriate. Nevertheless, this is an issue which requires separate investigation.

The review of the literature reveals a consensus about the prevailing definitions of quality in higher education which is best described by the view of quality as fitness for purpose and value for money. At the centre of these views of quality is the view of the student as a customer whose expectations and perceptions should be met within an institutional quality framework.

At the same time, the various definitions acknowledge the relative nature of quality in higher education and particularly the importance of the perceptions of different stakeholders, including the students, as well as contextual factors. Thus, one can summarise that the existing definitions of quality in higher education agree on some degree of relativity, but within a wider context/drive for 'value for money' and 'fitness for purpose' and a view of 'student as customer'.

3.1.1 Current quality discourse in higher education

Despite the existence of various definitions about quality in higher education, there appears to be a range of dynamics that affect the ideological and practical elements of quality in higher education at any particular point in time. Apparently, the prevailing definition of quality in higher education is not simply a matter of theoretical evolution. Instead, as Filippakou (2011) argues, the current quality discourse is shaped by wider prevailing political and economic ideologies. These ideologies will shape the meaning of quality and drive policy objectives. An important implication emerging from the view of quality as discourse is that quality, both as a meaning and as a policy objective, will be subject to the wider socio-economical beliefs which dominate each particular setting at each particular moment in time. Considering this in a TNHE context, one can understand that the applicability of quality does not only have practical difficulties, due to the different student characteristics, but can also be ideologically incompatible across different countries.

In the UK, the TNHE exporting country in this case study research, the current quality discourse is driven by neo-liberalism, which is also the prevailing ideology underpinning the society and the economy in most exporters of transnational education. This explains why the current view of quality in higher education, which is shaped by neo-liberal policies as discussed in Section 2.1.1, has at its core the 'student as customer' approach.

Also, neo-liberalism has shaped the quality management policy agenda in the UK with the adoption of new managerialism/new public management[16] which has been used for the management of the public sector, including higher education. In the UK and elsewhere, new managerialism[17] was promoted "as an alternative model of governmental and institutional order for higher education to the one existing under the previous

[16] Before proceeding to the discussion of the elements of this approach, it should be clarified which term, new managerialism or new public management, is more appropriate in the context of this study. New managerialism, as a term, is considered to serve best the purposes of this study, as it encapsulates both the technical and ideological perspectives of the new management model for the public sector.

[17] According to Deem and Brehony (2005), there are differences between the two terms. NPM is used to describe the management reforms imposed by governments in an effort to regulate the provision of public services offered by public organisations (Hood & Scott, 1996 cited in Deem & Brehony, 2005). Thus the authors argue that NPM is more of a management practice and less of an ideology. In addition, those in favour of the term NPM argue that it is merely a technical administrative cluster of ideas which reflects developments at the international level. Those in favour of the use of the term 'new managerialism' argue that it represents an ideological approach to the management of the public sector. This ideology calls for increased manager power over the state organisation and its employees. Thus, new managerialism represents more of a political shift and ideology and less of a technical approach (Deem & Brehony, 2005, p.220). The different views of this evolution agree that, despite efforts to decentralise the management of the public sector and adopt market practices, the new managerialism/NPM has led to more government intervention.

compromise between corporate bureaucracy and professional self-government from the late 1940s onwards" (Smith & Webster, 1997; Jary & Parker, 1998, cited in Deem, 2004, p.112). Under this doctrine, managerial control and involvement were central in the effort to respond to the two main objectives, the increase of efficiency (excellence school), and the reduction of cost with the increase of output (Neo-Taylorist) (Politt & Baichaert, 1995) . Very relevant in the discussion of this research is the rise of accountability and performance measurement as inherent parts of the operational management of public sector organisations. This is relevant because the call for accountability and performance measurement is considered the starting point for the adoption of quality management practices in the public sector, in particular in higher education (Harvey & Askling, 2003).

The main components of new managerialism affect and shape quality in higher education, both at home and offshore in a TNHE context. Under this public management approach, quality in higher education is pursued within a context of accountability which is achieved through specific quantitative goals, targets, and indicators. This is articulated by the fact that new managerialism considers the users of public services, such as higher education, as customers who have rights, and should be treated as such (Walsh, 1994, p. 63 cited in Milliken & Colohan, 2004, p.382). This justifies the nature of the current quality management approach in the UK, which dominates the quality management process used in the case study TNHEP.

There has been extensive criticism of the appropriateness of new managerialism approaches in the higher education context. Lomas (2007) concludes that the government, rather than the academics, is enforcing the adoption by higher education institutions of systems, structures and policies present in commercial service organisations. Newton (2000) argues for the need to account for the importance of the conditions and context of academics' work in the effort to set and maintain academics as an important part of efforts to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Others (Clarke et al., 1994) argue that some important features have been left out of the above process.

Thus, new managerialism is considered as inappropriate to drive quality management in higher education primarily because its measures are not sufficient and relevant for capturing the complex dimensions[18] and elements of the educational process. Also, the focus on the ‘student as customer’ with the rights and obligation of universities to respond to these rights, has shaped different expectations by students. As Lomas (2007, p. 43) argues, the changes in higher education have created a changing culture within universities where students are more likely to ask “what can I get?” rather than “what should I do?”. This implies an expectation by students for a more passive role in the education process, which may challenge the effectiveness of the retrospective customer model in achieving the desired quality outcomes.

In addition to the above developments, the core of the educational process, that is teaching and learning, has been affected by the changes and developments in higher education funding. The use of central funding in higher education and FE, and the association of funding with benchmarks for performance, have legitimised and justified the intensification of red-tape control (Kirkpatrick & Martinez-Lucio, 1995), which is then expressed in quality assurance mechanisms. The government bodies sought the connection of funding for higher education providers with their ability to draft and implement specific strategies for teaching and learning. Consequently, under new managerialism, pedagogy is seen as a tool to achieve goals other than the delivery of a course, and decision-making about the specific teaching strategies and methods to be used is increasingly driven by managerial and less by academic objectives.

From the above discussion, one can understand the contestation about the appropriateness of the current prevailing perception of the term ‘quality in higher education’ and the approaches for its application. This contestation is primarily about the philosophical incompatibility of the concepts derived from the for-profit private sector when transferred and applied to public service organisations (Cullen et al., 2003, p.5). Although

[18]The issue of the dimensions of educational quality is discussed in detail later in this chapter.

the above debate is indeed important for higher education institutions and the discussion about quality assurance and management, this is an issue that requires separate investigation. The philosophical discussion about the different views of the relationship between private and public sector practices in higher education falls clearly outside the scope of this research, which is mainly concerned about the applicability of the existing model in a TNHE context.

However, what is relevant to this research is the implications from the prevalence of new managerialism, along with the marketisation of higher education as discussed in Chapter 5 (see Section 5.3.2.1), on UK public policy for quality management in higher education. Also, the view of students as customers reflects a deeper cultural development in higher education which has a number of reasons.

First, the government has actively and persistently introduced the idea of student as customer (Williams, 2012). For example, in the Browne report (2010), it is suggested that effort should be made to assure price quality and provide students with rich information about quality indicators of higher education institutions, thus portraying students as customers. Also, the Browne report (2010, p.56) describes higher education institutions as service providers that "actively compete for well-informed discerning students, on the basis of price quality, improving provision across the whole sector, within a framework that guarantees minimum standards". This clearly outlines students as customers whose ability to judge quality is paramount not only in the operation of the higher education sector but, surprisingly, for its quality assurance. The Browne report suggestions reveal a central policy intention towards: 1) a quality assurance approach which has at its heart the drive for accountability and 'value for money', and 2) the view that students are customers who are considered as rational individuals (see Figure 3.1).

Second, the increase in the demand for higher education has intensified the competition between higher education institutions and has led to the adoption of marketing practices which claim 'value for money' and differentiation by making various claims about unique value customer propositions (Lynch, 2006; Molesworth et al., 2010;

Cardoso et al., 2011). These claims are often non-academic (i.e. the existence of modern sports facilities), but these claims also relate to academic matters (i.e. employability of graduates) (Brown & Carasso, 2013).

The above two dynamics explain the view of Johanna Williams (2012), who argues that students view themselves as customers as soon as they start considering their options for attending higher education because of the claims made by government and higher education institutions. Under this conceptualisation of quality, students are encouraged to look for relevant information and compare higher education providers using specific indicators which are available via tools such as Key Information Set (KIS) in the UK[19]. This reveals a tendency to focus on outcomes as indicators of quality and to assume students, or prospective students, as able to judge quality in higher education. This clearly underlines a shift towards a customer model in higher education which has a range of implications, particularly on quality management in UK as a TNHE exporting country, discussed later in this section.

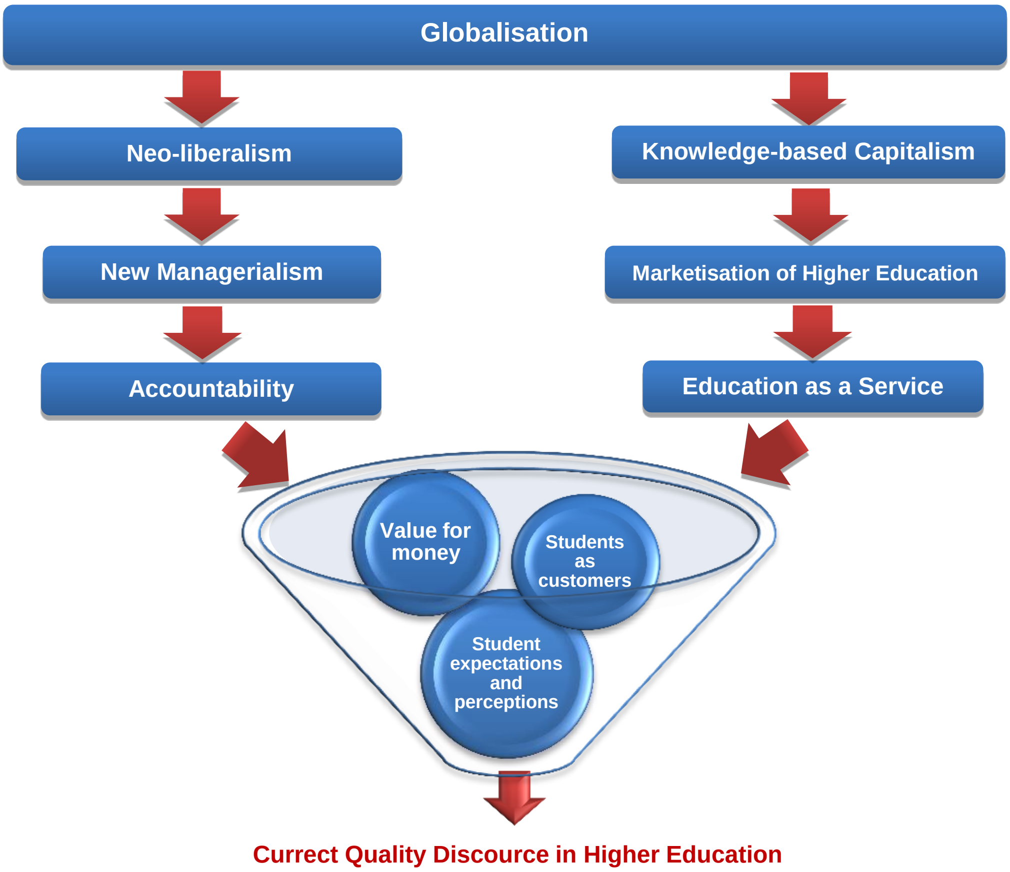
Thus, as summarised in Figure 3.1 below, the contemporary quality discourse in higher education globally is influenced by a range of forces and developments external and internal to higher education. Quality in higher education within the globalised context of contemporary higher education has been shaped by developments in management, funding and governance introduced by neo-liberalism.

At the same time, the increased requirement for knowledgeable workers from so-called knowledge-based capitalism has contributed to the marketisation of higher education and its evolution as a service and the student as customer. The basic principles of new managerialism and service quality have transformed quality in higher education to be a function of the factors of 'value for money' and 'students as customers'.

---

[19] According to the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) the aims of the policy for KIS are: "The development of Key Information Sets (KIS) forms part of our work to enhance the information that is available about higher education. It gives prospective students access to robust, reliable and comparable information in order to help them make informed decisions about what and where to study" http://www.hefce.ac.uk/whatwedo/lt/publicinfo/kis/ [accessed 2/5/2013]

Figure 3.1: Current quality discourse in higher education



From the above discussion, it is clear that, irrespective of how one defines quality in higher education, the central policy direction and the current quality discourse have at their core the customer model. Students are viewed as customers, and as such, their service expectations and perceptions play a central role in managing quality in the contemporary higher education context.

3.2 Quality management in higher education

The wider philosophical/ideological considerations about the definitions of quality, discussed in the previous section, affect the practical models and approaches for the management of quality at home as well as in TNHE. As seen earlier, new managerialism has shifted the focus on public sector management, including higher education, to practices driven by quantitative measures. However the measurement and management of quality in higher education is an issue of debate, which has resulted in a flux of methods and approaches such as quality assurance, quality control, quality audit, and quality management, to name but a few. In this this section I explain why the term quality management is used through this thesis as most appropriate to describe the system for the measurement and management of quality in TNHE.

The measurement of quality heavily depends upon the desired outcomes set by each of the different stakeholder groups (i.e. students, academics, business organisations, governments) which implies, as Barnett (1994 cited in Tam, 2001) describes, that quality measurement is a power struggle between these different stakeholders. This becomes even more complex in a TNHE context, where additional stakeholders are involved[20]. As a result of this power struggle, a range of different systems and models for the measurement and management of quality have arisen, the most commonly occurring systems being:

Quality control is a system which replicates manufacturing production standards systems. It focuses on checking whether higher education services have achieved the desired standards. This control takes place at the very final stage of production and is usually performed by an external individual or organisation. This practice is considered problematic in its applicability to higher education, as it does not take into consideration the environment in which the production takes place – the university and the academics in the case of higher education. I would also add that this is rather problematic as it assumes a standardisation process which is far from the real character of the educational process.

Quality assurance is about the assurance to stakeholders that the provision fulfils certain standards. Here, the fulfilment of standards can range from matching minimum thresholds to meeting the expectations of internal or external stakeholders (Harvey, 2012). However, this has been mainly pursued by external stakeholders, mainly quality

[20] The issue of quality management in TNHE is explored later in this section. Here, I start with the presentation of the various approaches which then leads to the justification of my preference for the quality management approach used henceforth this thesis.

assurance bodies such as the QAA in UK, as a means to assure minimum required standards rather than quality enhancement (Filippakou, 2011). Quality assurance appears as the prevailing approach for the measurement and control of quality standards across the world, but the exclusion of other stakeholders such as HEIs and particularly students makes it irrelevant to this thesis.

Quality audit is another approach for measuring quality in higher education institutions. This is a process of assuring that strategic objectives deriving from the mission statements of higher education institutions in regard to teaching and learning are accomplished. Quality audits are conducted by external bodies. The process involves the verification of higher education institutions' systems and the existence of the appropriate documentation. This process is sometimes criticised for its measurement of quality at one particular point in time – it provides a snapshot view of quality and ignores the interim period (Pearce, 1995 cited in Tam, 2001). Additionally, as Woodhouse (2012) argues, a quality audit presupposes that certain quality thresholds are already being met by the provider.

Quality assessment refers to a process of quality evaluation which involves comparing the actual performance of higher education institutions against a set of benchmarks/criteria derived either from the institutions' mission statements or from international standards (Tam, 2001). This process can be implemented by internal or external bodies. The main criticism of this process is the difficulty of agreeing on a universal set of benchmarks/quality criteria for higher education. Additionally, since performance is measured against the mission of higher education institutions, the lower the objectives are, the easier it is for higher education institutions to implement them. Thus it is likely that higher education institutions with low aspirations will achieve better results in the quality assessment exercise.

Quality enhancement is about improvement. This, mostly, manifests in an effort by higher education institutions to improve teaching quality via staff development practices. The problem with this approach is that it usually leads to qualitative and non-measurable outcomes.

Quality Management is the process, supported by policies and systems, used by an institution to maintain and enhance the quality of the education experienced by its students and the research undertaken by its staff. I have left this as the last approach of measuring and handling quality in higher education because it is the one which encapsulates all the others: that is, quality management seeks to assure and enhance quality using an expectations-perceptions model. This implies that the management of quality will aim to bridge the space between the expectations of the various stakeholders, including students and external quality assurance bodies, and the perceptions of these stakeholders of the outcomes/product of the provision. This is explained by Milisiunaite et al (2009, p. 5): quality management "covers all activities that ensure fulfilment of the quality policy and the quality objectives and responsibilities and implements them through quality planning, quality control, quality assurance, and quality improvement mechanisms". Thus, during this thesis, I refer to quality management meaning the policies and efforts internal and external to a higher education institution that aim to assure, maintain or enhance quality of education.

3.2.1 Service quality and the customer model in higher education

As explained earlier in this section, higher education is increasingly considered as a service by key stakeholders such as the government, while higher education institutions are portrayed as a service providers and academics are more often now seen as facilitators (Voss et al., 2007; Fegan & Fieldeds, 2009; Lomas, 2007). At the same time, the literature (Filippakou, 2011; Quinn et al., 2009; Sursock et al., 2010) suggests that students are increasingly considered by both the government and the higher education institutions as customers, who vindicate their desires and rights via student satisfaction surveys or/and other feedback systems in pursue of 'value for money'.

Despite the varied conceptualisations about the measurement of service quality, there is a consensus about the role of expectations and perceptions in service quality measurement (Abdullah, 2006). Overall, service quality management calls for the alignment of customer expectations with customer perceptions, and/or considers perceptions as indicating of the conferment of quality (Athiyaman, 1997; Barnes, 2007; Bebko, 2000; Beljulji et al., 2011).

Furthermore, customer satisfaction plays an increasing role in service quality. As Tsoukatos and Rand (2007) argue, service quality and customer satisfaction are two different, but inter-related, concepts. Following a review of the relevant literature, Tsoukatos and Rand (2007, p. 469) concluded that the alignment of expectations and perceptions is a key determinant of customer satisfaction.

Under the service quality paradigm, it is implied that identifying and exploring customer expectations is a critical priority for the realisation of service quality (Sander et al., 2000; Tricker, 2003). Therefore, the better customers' expectations and values are understood and interpreted, the better the results in managing quality (Hill, 1995; Sander et al., 2000). Consequently, higher education institutions can ensure the provision of high quality education services by knowing and meeting student expectations at the time that or before students enter the university (Kay et al., 2010).

So it is clear that quality, within the context of 'higher education as a service' and 'student as customer', is subject to the alignment of student expectations and perceptions. The expectations-perceptions gap theory, which measures service quality as a function of the difference between expectations and perceptions, dominates the quality management systems in higher education. The gap theory implies that service providers should do what they promise to do (Zeithaml et al., 1993) and this relevant for higher education for two further reasons: first, as an effort to assure the accountability of the higher education providers; and second as a 'value for money' view of quality.

Potentially, this could lead to increased attention by higher education institutions, governments and researchers to go beyond the measurement of service quality in higher education to explore and understand student expectations and perceptions. Nevertheless, as will be discussed later in this section, the existing quality management models appear to focus only on the measurement of service quality outcomes. For example, in the UK, the National Student Survey (NSS) focuses on student satisfaction and service quality indicators, while the Key Information Set (KIS), introduced in 2012, is criticised for promoting standardisation (Davies, 2012).

The applicability of the service quality model to higher education is debatable and has been the issue of many studies and publications by a wide range of stakeholders (Cheng, 2011; Hussain & Birol, 2011; Bebko, 2000; Zhao, 2012). The main line of criticism is around two issues: First, whether student expectations should be the landmark for higher education providers, on the grounds that students are not able to set the standards for higher education (Wiers-Jenssen & Stensaker, 2002). This reflects a view of quality as a top-to-bottom concept. Second, the perception of students is affected by their satisfaction, which should not be an indication of good quality higher education, since the educational process should not always be enjoyable for students (Letcher & Neves, 2010).

Despite this on-going debate about the appropriateness of the conceptualisation of students as customers and of higher education institutions as service providers, the service quality paradigm is today the dominant one in higher education quality management (Pratasavitskaya & Stensaker, 2010; Williams, 2012). This falls within the quality discourse presented earlier, which is driven by calls for accountability and value for money.

Thus, increasingly, quality management in higher education focuses on and/or relies on the measurement of student satisfaction. Whichever the approach or the system, the main objective of contemporary higher education policies is to manage quality in an effort to increase student satisfaction and gain or maintain competitive advantages (Hussey & Smith, 2010). As Arambewela and Hall (2011, p.144) discuss, “student satisfaction is the barometer of service quality in education and it has attracted greater attention of higher education institutions in their pursuit for competitive advantage". This has created an increased focus on the customer model - the expectations-perceptions model - for managing quality in higher education. Under this model, the quality of a service is subject to the fulfilment of the customer's expectations about that particular service (Gronroos, 1990).

3.2.1.1 Student expectations and perceptions

The literature review above reveals that the customer model, and specifically the alignment of student expectations and perceptions, plays a central role in the management of quality in higher education. In this section, I will review the literature with the aim to highlight the relative nature of student expectations and perceptions across different locations/settings of academic delivery. This will contribute to the emergence of my conceptual framework, presented at the end of the chapter, and particularly about the justification of the research purpose, which is to explore the applicability of a common one-fits-all quality management approach in TNHE.

Research in the field of student expectations and perceptions dates back to 1995, when Hill conducted one of the early papers on this issue. Both Hill (1995) and later Sander et al. (2000) conclude that student expectations are important for higher education managers and academics. Hill (1995) found that undergraduate students, since they do not have any prior experience of higher education, may form expectations which are very likely to be influenced by their schooling experience. Thus, they may form unrealistic or inappropriate expectations that need to be carefully managed by higher education managers and academics. The research by Hill (1995) also reveals that students who come from different education systems may have different expectations about higher education. This is clearly an issue to be explored during the analysis of the findings of this research.

A more recent study by Scutter et al. Scutter et al. (2010) found that undergraduate student expectations are affected by demographics and family orientation. They concluded that as the student body becomes more diverse, the more important it becomes for universities to explore and understand student expectations. Additionally, understanding and knowledge of student expectations can aid academics in developing appropriate programme content (Sander et al., 2000).

The above findings imply that students of different backgrounds would have different expectations from higher education. That said, the application of a common one-fits-all quality management model may not be sufficient to respond the expectations of different students.

However, Voss et al. (2007) show that students have a common expectation of knowledgeable, enthusiastic, approachable and friendly lecturers. This may mean that students, irrespective of their location and previous schooling experience, may possess similar expectations about certain elements of the academic delivery.

Arambewela and Hall (2011) explore the relationship between SERVQUAL elements and the country of origin and perceptions of international students who studied in Australia. Tangibles have been found to be the most important common element of student satisfaction; this coincides with the findings of previous studies about the influence of tangibles on student choice and satisfaction (Smith et al., 2002; Shanka et al., 2006). However, the most important finding of the Arambewela and Hall (2006) study is that the country of students' origin is associated with differences in expectations under the SERVQUAL model. It is therefore valid to assume that students who are of different origins are very likely to form different perceptions of the same provision of higher education. This explains a central difficulty in the applicability of a common model for managing quality at different geographical locations.

Culture has been also framed as another factor which affects student expectations and perceptions of quality (Tsiligiris, 2011a). Various studies show that culture affects an individual's epistemological beliefs (Alexander et al., 1998). Existing research across different cultures has identified a significant cultural influence which leads to a difference in expectations and perceptions of service quality (Smith & Reynolds, 2002). Kragh and Bislev (2005), using Hofstede's framework, found empirical evidence to support the idea that higher education is culture-bound and closely related to national socio-cultural conditions. Similarly, Tsiligiris (2011a) used EDUQUAL, a combination of SERVQUAL and Hofstede's framework, and found that cultural values affect specific aspects of student expectations. Other research by Niehoff et al (2001) suggests that students' expectations of teaching and learning provision are affected by their cultural backgrounds. This evidence provides a clear justification that cultural differences in student populations would make the application of a common customer model across different locations of programme delivery in a TNHE context problematic.

Student expectations reflect technological evolution and changes in the economic environment (Blasco & Saura, 2006). In a rapidly changing and evolving technological environment, the expectations of students now include flexible learning modes, modularisation and accelerated options (Hussey & Smith, 2010). Additionally, the increased financial contribution of students in the payment of fees has increased the portion of students working part time during their studies. This has increased students' demands for flexible learning environments (e-class facilities, Virtual Learning environments, etc.) and a less strict attendance and assessment policy. Nevertheless, it is not clear whether institutions of different sizes and types (i.e. private vs. public, for-profit vs. non-profit) within the TNHE context would be able to respond equally to these challenges.

Student expectations have also been affected by the massification of higher education (James, 2007). The development of a market-orientated higher education system encouraged by public policies and the expansion of new forms of provision has affected the relationship between students and higher education institutions. The need for students to contribute directly in the payment of increasing fees has transformed their expectations and has led them to act more like customers (Becket & Brookes, 2008). It appears that today students have a greater and more active role in assessing quality, and this will vary across different locations of delivery and in different education institutions. As shown by research, the intensity of ‘customer-minded’ student expectations is very likely to depend upon the student’s contribution to the payment of fees, thus this can be highly relevant in a TNHE context where public and private institutions collaborate.

The impact of changing student expectations as a result of the marketisation of higher education has put pressure upon higher education institutions to constantly redesign their curricula to maintain the competitiveness of their programmes (Middlehurst, 2001) and meet student expectations (Barnett, 2000). What used to be in the past an unwritten contract between the student and the university about a given ethical engagement in the learning process is today negotiable. McInnis (2002) has found that academics feel a growing pressure to modify coursework and delivery according to student expectations of a more relaxed engagement with the university. It is argued that today students expect to play a more passive role in the learning process, linking course components with cost (Hussey & Smith, 2010). However, this may be considered as a fear of academics themselves, as research has shown that academics believe that most students are instrumental in their outlook, seeking less intellectual assessment (Guo & Chase, 2011), while research evidence has shown that students remain motivated to learn despite their clearly changing mind-set which is now more consumer-like (James & Beckett, 2006).

Expectations are not the only element of the service quality model which are relative and subject to the background or demographics of the students. Hill et al. (2003) researched the perceptions of postgraduate students about the elements they consider key for the provision of high quality higher education. Students in Hill et al.’s (2003) research considered important the existence of “knowledgeable and enthusiastic” teachers who “cared about their learning” and help them to develop their knowledge further (p.19). In another study, Telford and Mason (2005) found that the way students perceive quality is affected by their values and expectations, which makes their perception about quality a context-bound issue. The research evidence shows that students' perception of quality can include some common elements, but are also heavily relative to the individual values and the context. This means that where students re in different delivery locations in a TNHE context, it is very likely that not only will their expectations deviate but that they will also perceive quality differently. This is a direct challenge to the applicability of a common model for managing quality across borders, because both parts of the gap theory, that is expectations and perceptions, are very likely to be relative to the student's characteristics and other factors.

Also, student perceptions and expectations are an important component of the development of relevant and effective programmes by higher education institutions (Harvey & Newton, 2004; Williams & Kane, 2009). This is because students' learning experience and largely their perceptions about quality are influenced by a range of factors, both internal and external to the institution and the student. Student perceptions about quality will depend upon the effectiveness of any institution in addressing these factors.

To achieve maximum quality and apply the best management of quality in higher education, one needs to thoroughly know and understand student expectations and perceptions of quality in higher education (Chatterjee et al., 2009; Pratasavitskaya & Stensaker, 2010; Quinn et al., 2009). Therefore, it is critical for higher education institutions to understand students' expectations and perceptions in order to plan and implement the most appropriate quality management strategy (Naidoo, 2003). Additionally, considering the disparity of student expectations and perceptions, it follows that an effective quality management system would be unique to each organisation and must be tailored to meet the contextual requirements of each setting. This justifies the research purpose of this thesis, which is the critical investigation of the applicability of a common customer model for managing quality in transnational higher education as this is currently pursued by exporting countries, which is discussed in detail later in this chapter (see Section 3.3).

Since each quality management model should be planned according to student expectations and perceptions, it is highly unlikely that a model which is designed to match the expectations and perceptions of students in the TNHE exporting country will also be appropriate to do the same job in the TNHE importing country. The recognition of the need to construct such contextualised quality management models in TNHE, as mentioned earlier, has significant value, because is relevant irrespective of whether someone agrees or disagrees with the 'student as customer' conceptualisation, hence the value of this research.

One may argue that exploring, understanding and responding to student expectations and perceptions can be inappropriate because education in not like any other service. The debate about the applicability and appropriateness of service quality in higher education derives from the essence of the educational process, which implies a different role for the customer (the student). There is increasing discussion about the need to separate educational quality from non-educational quality in higher education, following a debate about the extent to which an institution should be responsive to student expectations and perceptions when it comes to educational issues. Thus, efforts have aimed to identify the critical dimensions of education quality and propose a conceptual framework for their management.

In the section below, I will review the relevant literature so as to justify the idea that understanding student expectations and perceptions about quality is an important element of educational quality management. I will consider the main works on educational quality and set the framework for the use of the findings of these works in the analysis and discussion of the findings of this thesis.

3.2.2 Educational quality

As discussed previously, higher education has been considered as a service and students as customers. This implies an increased focus of quality in higher education as service quality. Nevertheless, it is argued that higher education has distinct characteristics which separate it from other services (Quinn et al., 2009). Primarily, this is based on the transformative nature of higher education, but also on the importance of active student participation for the final educational outcome. Also, the actual educational process may distress the student who, most likely, if left free to choose the characteristics of the education process may not select the most educationally appropriate route, but instead the less demanding one.

The literature shows agreement on the separation between educational and non-education processes/services in higher education. The former concerns the actual education-related activities and processes, such as teaching, assessment and attainment. The latter concerns the services provided to students outside the educational process, such as administration, student support services and recreation.

There appears to be a consensus among the different stakeholders about the value of educational quality as an indicator of quality in higher education (OECD, 2009b; Biggs & Tang, 2011). As the educational process is primarily explained within the Biggs 3P model and the recent studies on educational quality are based on that model, this section will start with a brief discussion of this model, followed by the presentation and discussion of the findings by two major studies. The first is by Graham Gibbs and is about the dimensions that affect or are associated with educational quality. The second is by Finnie and Usher, who provide a conceptual framework for the management of educational quality.

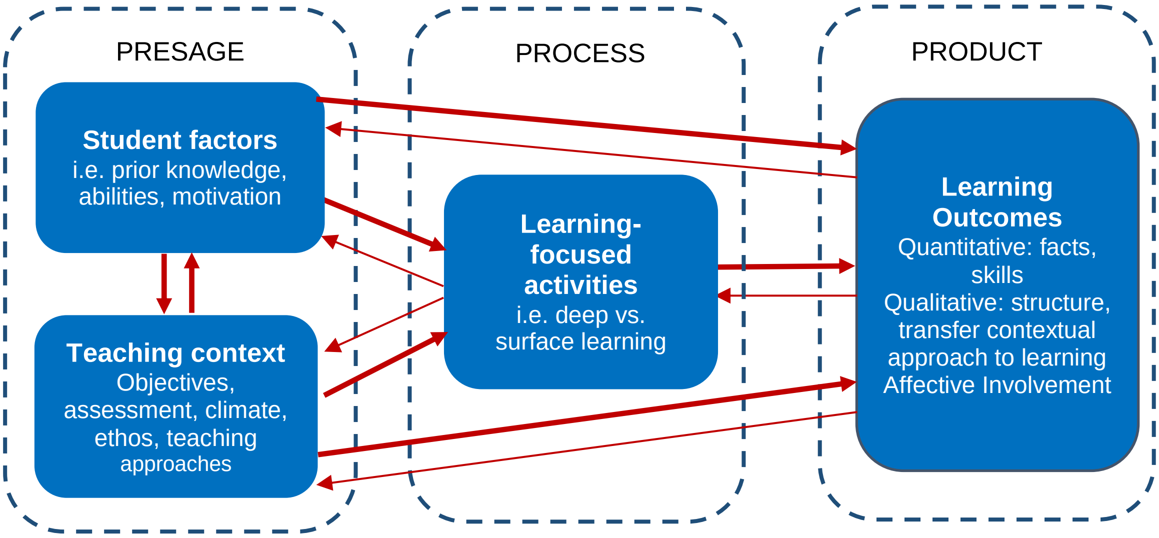
Whilst there are a vast number of studies on the subject (i.e. teaching and learning, educational process and quality), I have chosen to review and discuss these two works with two prime objectives in mind. First, I use Gibbs' work to identify the specific dimensions in each of the stages of Biggs' model that affect educational quality. Gibbs' work is widely accepted in the UK, which is the exporting country in the case study, thus its findings are directly relevant to this research. This will allow me to map the areas of interest that will then facilitate the discussion of my findings in chapters 6, 7, and 8. Second, I evaluate Biggs 3P model and Finnie and Usher's conceptual framework for the management of education quality in the context of this research to support the further development of my conceptual framework presented at the end of the chapter.

3.2.2.1 The education process – Biggs 3P model

In a theoretical model, Biggs (1988, 1989) explains learning as subjective process which is influenced by a range of different factors that are specific to each particular context of delivery. This is very relevant to the topic of this research, which aims to challenge the applicability of a common 'one-fits-all' approach to organising TNHE provision.

Biggs's model is central to the purpose of this thesis, as it justifies the value of exploring and understanding student expectations and perceptions as early as possible the students' academic journey. The importance of student related presage dimensions relate directly to educational quality and, as explained by Biggs, determine to a large extent the learning approach adopted by students. This implies that the efficiency of the teaching and learning practices pursued by an institution would not lead automatically to the desired results but would, rather, depend upon the individual student presage variables. Interestingly this fits both arguments of the 'student as customer' debate because it justifies the value of exploring student related variables such as student expectations and perceptions, irrespective of whether we conceive quality as a top-to-bottom or a bottom-to-top process. Biggs (1993) identifies that the educational process consists of three stages, the presage, the process and the product; this is known as Biggs' 3P model. It is important to consider this model because it forms the basis of most existing models for the measurement of educational quality. As shown in Figure 3.2 below, there appears to be a relationship between the so-called presage variables and the process and product variables. This implies that the actual educational process and product (outcome) will be subject to the specific presage variables.

Figure 3.2: Biggs 3P model



Adapted from (Biggs, 1996, p.62)

The **presage** stage refers to the student context and the teaching context. The student context includes prior knowledge, expectations, preferred ways of learning, values, motivation, and abilities. The teaching context includes the course structure, curriculum and teaching and assessment methods. According to Biggs (1988, 1993, 1996), students, on entering the education process, bring with them habits and predispositions which directly affect the education process. This is of critical importance for this research, as it justifies the fact that student factors would not be the same across different settings of delivery. Thus, in a TNHE context the replication of the home institution learning process would be subject to student factors in the partner institution. The teaching context refers to the environment which is provided to students by the institution; students will try to respond to the requirements of this context.

The **process** refers to the actual approach to learning which, according to Biggs' (1993) theory, is not fixed but is subject to the student and teaching contextual characteristics. This means that the learning approach will be the outcome of the combination of the student and teaching contexts and will range from deep to surface learning. This explains that the effectiveness of adopting the deep learning approach, pursued by UK higher education institutions will depend upon student characteristics and the teaching context. The latter is controlled by the awarding institution through validation of the teaching and learning infrastructure. However the former, is rarely explored, which explains the value of this research project.

The **product** refers to the learning outcomes after the completion of the teaching and learning process. This part attracts most of the attention of external and internal stakeholders. There is an over-concentration on measuring outputs and planning corrective actions on the basis of outcomes. However, very little discussion is undertaken about the proactive management of the previous stages of the education process in order to reassure appropriate outcomes.

It should be noted that Biggs' model is not articulated in the quality assurance guidelines of quality assurance agencies, but is primarily adopted at institutional level. One may argue that because the model is about contextualisation, it would not be possible to adopt it at quality assurance level. However, this is not because of the nature of the model but because of the objectives of the existing quality assurance which are primarily geared towards quality assurance as risk-minimisation vis a vis quality enhancement, as outlined by Smith (2010). This issue will be discussed across the thesis, as it lies at the core of the research purpose. Therefore Biggs' model will be used across the discussion of the findings of this thesis to explain the impact of student factors on educational quality.

3.2.2.2 Dimension of educational quality

Graham Gibbs (2010, 2012) has attempted to map the dimensions of quality utilising Biggs' 3P model and reviewing an extensive number of relevant studies. Gibbs, in his 2010 paper, aimed to test the validity of the presage and process variables in terms of their effectiveness as indicators of student learning outcomes and educational gains, whilst for product variables his focus is on examining their validity as a mean for quality comparisons. This can be seen as a response to the calls for comprehensive information for prospective students, something which derives from the view of 'government as information provider' articulated in the UK by the Browne report. Also, as Gibbs' work is commissioned by the Higher Education Academy (HEA), it can be considered as indicative of the main policy direction in regards to educational quality in the UK which shapes the quality management approach used in TNHE.

Critical to this thesis is the lack of consideration of the student-related variables in Gibbs' work, because this shows that 1) quality management is not fully aware of the importance of student factors, and 2) there is limited evidence on the nature of student factors and their relationship to educational quality. Both of these issues are central to the purpose of this thesis.

Nevertheless, Gibbs' work provides a starting point for the mapping of the various variables in each of the three stages of the education process, which are associated with educational quality. Below I discuss the findings of Gibbs' papers in an attempt to identify variables/dimensions which will be used for comparison and discussion of my own findings.

Presage dimensions

Gibbs (2010) reviewed four presage variables of quality: 1) funding, 2) student:staff ratios, 3) quality of teaching staff, and 4) quality of students. From this list, one can see that only one variable is student-related, which reveals a focus on institutional variables rather than student factors.

Funding appears to be a medium determinant of educational quality. This relates to the organisation and resourcing of the provision so as to promote student engagement and good quality teaching. In a TNHE context, this may mean that partner institutions, which are usually smaller and less financially capable than home universities, will be less able to support good quality teaching. This is an issue that will be explored during the discussion of the findings of this thesis.

Student:staff ratios are associated with educational practices such as close and frequent contact between students and staff that lead to high quality. Nevertheless, student:staff ratios are not accurate indicators without considering the quality of staff used in teaching. Increasingly, teaching is assigned to graduate students and other non-tenure teaching staff. This creates problems, as these members of staff are not entirely incorporated into the departmental or institutional quality strategies and may not be paid to support students outside the classroom.

Low student:staff ratios allow the efficient operation of teaching provision (i.e. appropriate and timely feedback) which, again, relates to better educational quality. TNHE providers, as usually smaller-scale institutions can be considered to be likely to have preferable student:staff ratios than home universities. This is something to be explored by comparing the student:staff ratios of the university and the partner institution of the case study.

Even more relevant for this research is the argument by Gibbs that “students bring more to higher education than their A-level scores. It is likely that their cultural capital, their aspirations, self-confidence and motivations all influence their performance and interact with teaching and course design variables” (2010, p. 18). It is striking that a range of important student-related factors are not explored in a major study like Gibbs’, considering the importance of student’s context as a key element in the presage stage of Biggs’ 3P model, as discussed earlier. At the same time, the above passage provides another clear justification for the value of exploring student characteristics across different locations of delivery, and identifying their relationship with quality.

It is important to note that in Gibbs' (2010) paper, only one variable, that of "quality of students", refers to what Biggs (1989) defines as the student context of the presage stage. This is important because it shows a bias by Gibbs towards institution related rather than student related variables of quality. Of course this may be simply because Gibbs utilised existing research data using surveys from the US that probably lacked a student dimension/perspective. In regard to the quality of students, which is relevant to this research because it provides a 'student perspective of quality', Gibbs analyses mostly quantitative elements from the US and the UK. Conversely, very little discussion is made of students'; approach or predisposition to learning, a key determinant of the learning quality in Biggs' model as discussed in the previous section and something which is explored extensively in this thesis.

Process dimensions

As process dimensions, Gibbs (2010) considers the effects on educational effectiveness of class size, in-class contact hours, independent study hours and total hours, the quality of teaching, the effects of the research environment, the level of intellectual challenge and student engagement, formative assessment and feedback, reputation, peer quality ratings and quality enhancement processes (p.19). He concludes that class size negatively affects student achievement, as does the physical environment and the quality of the education process. Also, Gibbs (2010) claims that larger class size affects the learning approach that students will adopt – students in large classes will tend to adopt a surface learning approach, focusing on memorising. Thus, it would be interesting to compare the above findings with the findings of this research and particularly to explore the relationship of class size and educational quality in a TNHE context as well as student expectations and perceptions about class size between different student groups at the university and the partner institution.

In regard to contact hours, independent study hours and total hours, Gibbs (2010) argues that these have little to do with education quality. However, one may argue that several factors affect the relevance of this relationship. The different subjects, pedagogical approaches, and education systems imply a different organisation and volume of contact hours.

Quality of teaching is discussed by Gibbs (2010) in three different respects: 1) experience and training, 2) research record, and 3) as judged by students. In regard to the experience and training, it has been found that students rate teachers higher who hold a relevant teaching qualification than teachers with no teaching qualification. Research activity has been found to have no impact on the quality of teaching or on students' learning. According to Gibbs (2010), students' judgement of teaching quality is a reliable dimension subject to the use of reliable questionnaires. He makes a distinction between student ratings of teacher activities which are linked to improvement of learning, and abstract judgements about 'good' teaching. This is claimed, correctly, on the grounds of students' sophistication as learners and their conception of knowledge, which is developing over time. Here it is clear that student perceptions about teaching quality are key determinants of quality. This implies that in a TNHE context, possible differences in student perceptions about teaching quality across different delivery locations might cause deviations in the actual educational quality. Thus the exploration of this relationship would be central to the discussion about the applicability of a customer model in TNHE.

The research environment is weakly associated with education quality (Gibbs, 2010). Moreover, on an institutional scale, institutions which are characterised as research-focused show a weak teaching approach, which in turn leads to student dissatisfaction. However, in particular cases where the research element has been incorporated in the undergraduate provision, there is a positive relationship between research activity and education quality.

The level of intellectual challenge is directly associated with quality; a low level of intellectual challenge is something attainable by most, thus low quality/value and vice versa. Gibbs (2010) splits this element into three dimensions: 1) the level of the curriculum, 2) the depth of the approach to studying, and 3) student engagement.

Gibbs (2010, citing the work of Marton and Wenestam, 1978) states that the students' approach to studying can be either surface or deep, and their choice relates to contextual factors. He argues that certain characteristics/elements of the provision foster one or the other approach. However, as mentioned by Biggs' original model, whether students will take a deep or a surface approach will also depend upon their presage experiences (i.e. culture, pre-university educational experience). Thus, in a TNHE context the consideration of student-related presage variables is critical for the intellectual challenge and in turn for quality both at home and offshore.

In Gibbs' study, student engagement is considered a crucial indicator of educational quality. Dimensions like the level of academic challenge, the extent of active and collaborative learning and the extent and quality of student-faculty interaction can increase student engagement. However, little consideration is paid to what drives student engagement and particularly the impact of student related factors such as their expectations and perceptions of the education process and quality.

Feedback timing and quality has a strong relationship with improvements in educational quality and student retention. Gibbs (2010) made note of the significant benefits of regular formative and summative feedback to students while noting the limitations currently imposed by the available resources per student. He fails, in my view, to acknowledge the use of new technologies[21] which allow the provision of assessment and feedback at much lower cost. Also, students' perceptions of the value of feedback are not explored, which is something that carries value, as different students may perceive

[21] Interestingly he notes the case of the Open University, which uses a consistent system of assignments and feedback without, however, explaining that this may be due to the new technologies used by this institution.

and make use of feedback in different ways. Thus, this will be explored during the investigation of the case study.

According to Gibbs, reputation is not associated with educational quality and the effect of student support services cannot be evaluated. However, other studies (Moogan & Baron, 2003; Nguyen & LeBlanc, 2001; Steiner et al., 2012) have revealed an increased importance for prospective students of institutional reputation as an indicator of quality, which explains the significant concentration of HEIs on rankings and other means by which to communicate their institutional reputation.

Finally, the existence of quality enhancement processes is assumed to be an indicator of appropriate quality standards. This, however, argues Gibbs, is subject to specific preconditions. There should be a range of quality enhancement processes which complement each other and close the loop between student feedback on teaching and implementing appropriate training programmes. Also, quality enhancement will have a different overall objective which will be shaped by institutional quality objectives.

Product dimensions

Despite the most common indicator of quality in UK and elsewhere being the degree classification of graduates, this appears to be an outcome of a range of factors, including grade inflation, thus cannot be trusted as a reliable indicator of quality, Gibbs argues. Several criticisms have been articulated in the UK about the use of degree classifications to draw conclusions about educational quality.

A very interesting and relevant to this study dimension of quality in the product stage is retention performance. So far, retention in UK is used as benchmark among institutions on the basis of the data collected by HEFCE, which is not sufficient to allow the measurement of educational quality (Gibbs, 2010). Nevertheless, student variables such as psychological (i.e. motivation and commitment), and social (i.e. location of student’s home, time available to study) affect retention and if these can be measured effectively then retention can be used as dimension of educational quality. This is interesting because it shows the importance of students' expectations and perception which, as I have argued previously, seems to be overlooked in Gibb's study while, at the same time, lying at the core of the research objectives of this thesis.

Employability and graduate destinations is another product dimension of quality evaluated by Gibbs (2010). He argues that despite its popularity, there are various problems with the use of this dimension. Employability is affected by variables, such as the reputation of the institution, which are not necessarily associated with educational quality or are not appropriately measured (i.e. students' social class). Comparisons on employability between institutions in the same or different countries are even more problematic because of the variation of subjects, course content, and job market characteristics. I will also add that employability refers to the perception of the propensity of students to find employment rather than a more tangible relationship to employment. Also, in order to be able to consider quality in the context of employability, it is critical to involve employers as they are the key stakeholders in that respect.

As summarised in Table 3.1 below, the findings of Gibbs' study provide a useful framework/benchmark of analysis for the dimensions of educational quality in various provision settings, including TNHE. These findings reveal an increased importance of student related variables, particularly those associated with presage dimensions. However these student related variables are not considered by Gibbs, and thus the research of these variables appear to carry value as a subject for further research.

Table 3.1: Dimensions of quality and effect on educational quality

Stage	Dimension	Effect on educational quality
Presage	Funding	Medium positive
	Staff:student ratios	Strong positive in conjunction with the quality of teaching staff
	Quality of teaching staff	Strong positive. Would depend upon student perceptions
	Quality of students	Some relevance but not enough evidence
Process	Class size	Strong negative
	Class contact hours	Strong positive
	Independent study hours and total hours	Some evidence for positive impact but it depends on teaching context and learning approach adopted by students.
	Quality of teaching	Strong positive. Would depend upon student perceptions.
	Effects of research environment	Negative
	Level of intellectual challenge and student engagement	Positive. Would depend upon student presage characteristics.
	Formative assessment and feedback	Positive
	Reputation	None
	Peer quality ratings	Weak
	Student support services	Unknown
	Quality enhancement processes	Some evidence for a positive impact but only under specific circumstances
Product	Student performance and degree classifications	None – no reliable dimension
	Student retention and persistence	Important if student variables are taken into account and measured
	Employability and graduate destinations	No reliable dimension

In a later study, Gibbs (2012) aimed to reflect on the implication of the above dimensions of quality for higher education policy and particularly quality assurance. In this study the analysis focuses on the improvement of measurements of quality dimensions and on the provision of information to prospective students. This shows a tendency in the public dialogue, particularly by higher education policy-making institutions, to promote and suggest the use of quality dimensions by higher education institutions as a means to build their reputation and attract new students.

Gibbs (2012) recognises that there has been a shift by institutions towards teaching quality and student experience which is due to the pressures for the publication of relevant data for use by prospective students. However, he suggests that there is not clear evidence that this alone is enough to improve quality. Also, Gibbs (2012, p. 43) concludes that there is no evidence to support the view that prospective students make use of the quality indicators during the decision-making process, and he suggests this as "an urgent area for research". The results of Gibbs' work outline the importance of exploring prospective students' behaviour, something which sits at the core of the research purpose of this thesis. The exact questions which derive from the above discussion are presented at the end of the section.

In Gibbs' papers, less effort is made to identify ways in which quality can be managed and enhanced. Instead, Gibbs discusses quality indicators in a non-dynamic context which focuses on identifying those dimensions which appear to have some correlation to educational outcomes and as such are suitable for recoding and reporting as a means to control and accountability. This reflects a retrospective quality management approach, using Biggs' (2001) classification, as discussed previously (See Chapter 1, Section 1.5) and will be further analysed later in this Chapter (Section 3.2.2.4).

There is an over-concentration on the student as a rational individual who is assumed to be an agent capable of performing judgements about quality. This is inappropriate for a good number of reasons. First, as education is considered a transformative process (Biggs & Tang, 2011) it is invalid to assume that students would be able to perceive correctly what is best described as educational quality early before entering higher education. Second, the above conceptualisation of dimensions and measurement of quality assumes that education provision is a static process. This is because it suggests using certain dimensions/indicators to inform prospective students about the quality standards of a higher education institution. However, these dimensions/indicators refer to the standards achieved in specific education provision contexts which, as mentioned by Biggs (1989), are always subject to the respective presage variables. This means that even when an institution reports good quality indicators, it is not assuring that it will manage to achieve and/or maintain them in the future.

Nevertheless, Gibbs (2010) recognises the importance of student related variables and he suggests that as an area for further research, which further justifies the value of this research. Thus, the investigation of students' expectations and perceptions about quality in higher education has value for a number of reasons. First, as Gibbs (2010) has found, presage variables are important determinants of product variables which have significant importance for the quality of teaching and learning. Second, in reflection of the gap theory and Biggs' (2001) prospective approach discussed previously, the identification of student expectations and perceptions allows an effective management of quality in higher education which will be responsive to student characteristics.

From the above discussion, it follows that the exploration of students' expectations from higher education as well as their perception about what constitutes good quality in higher education would serve both poles of the debate about quality in higher education. Understanding student related presage variables, including expectations, would be a key factor in achieving the desired outcomes irrespective of whether one considers educational quality as a top-down or a bottom-up process.

3.2.2.3 Educational quality management

Another influential study on educational quality is the one by Finnie and Usher (2005) which is relevant here because it is based on the principles of Biggs' 3P model, as with Gibbs' studies discussed previously, but foremost because it proposes a conceptual framework for the management of educational quality.

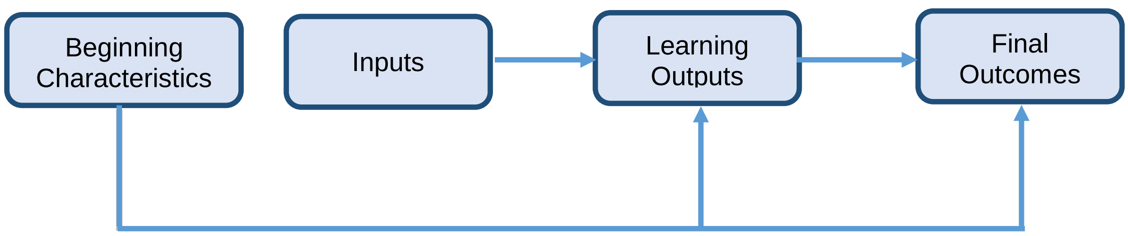
Their discussion begins by outlining quality management as a process of competing agendas and the existing practice as one which fits Biggs' (2001) retrospective quality management model. They suggest that the existing quality management approach leads to standardisation, as most institutions focus on specific dimensions/indicators, undermining diversity. This is crucial for the theoretical/conceptual discussion aligned to the research purpose of this thesis, which is based on the questioning of a 'one fits all', 'student as customer' quality management model.

Finnie and Usher (2005) propose a conceptual framework for the management and management of educational quality which will be applicable irrespective of the definition given to quality in higher education. This particularly relevant to the theoretical framework in this thesis because it is aligned with the purpose of this thesis which is to provide a framework to contextualise quality management systems in TNHE, irrespective of one's standing on the 'student as customer' debate.

The conceptualisation of quality for Finnie and Usher (2005, p. 19) can be summarised as "…the value added of educational experience, whereby 'higher quality experiences' are those that result in superior learning outcomes, and better final outcomes". According to their model, it is the input factors/dimensions that affect outcomes.

As shown in Figure 3.3 below, this general model implies that inputs which determine and comprise the schooling environment and students' educational experience will affect the learning outputs, which in turn will influence the final outcomes. Thus, the learning outputs and final outcomes will be subject to the students' beginning characteristics.

Figure 3.3: Structural Model of Quality in Higher Education (Finnie & Usher)



(Figure adapted by Finnie and Usher, 2005, p. 23)

The beginning characteristics (student-related factors) refer to the characteristics and abilities of incoming students that affect the quality of their educational experience and outcomes. These characteristics refer to the students' ability to think critically and form analytic reasoning, as well as communication skills, desire to learn and other student related variables, even gender, that can be considered to affect the learning process and outcomes. Here the authors discuss the existence of a direct association between the student variables and educational quality which is aligned with the initial Biggs 3P model.

The learning inputs (institutionally controlled and determined) are all of those factors that, somehow, affect the students' educational experience and are controlled and determined by institutional policy decision-making. The authors propose that this can include sub-categories of factors such as a) financing and expenditure, b) tangible resources and services available to students, and c) the organisation of educational and support provision.

The learning outputs correspond to the desired graduate attributes accumulated through the educational process and the students' beginning characteristics. These learning outputs include both the general and specific/technical skills knowledge produced during the educational process. It is important that the authors discuss the dynamic nature of learning outcomes, something that is usually iterated as static by the various quality assurance models. This also verifies the value of exploring the presage stage factors and primarily student characteristics.

The final outcomes include the 'ultimate ends', as defined by Finnie and Usher (2005, p. 20), which refer both to the direct outcomes following graduation such as employment and income for the graduates and the indirect benefits such as job satisfaction and the contribution of the graduate to society as citizen. Here it is important to identify the importance of students' perceptions about the final outcomes. One would expect that different students would perceive differently the various direct and indirect outcomes following graduation. This explains why the exploration of student perceptions about quality in higher education carries value.

The authors propose a conceptual model that can be used as the starting point for measuring educational quality in a variety of ways and contexts. This framework seeks to identify the relationships between specific inputs and learning outcomes, as well as how these would affect outcomes. The ultimate objective of the model is to aid the identification of those inputs that lead to better quality. Conclusively, the model helps us to "understand what we want to do, what we should do, and what we can do in terms of measuring quality in various specific circumstances" (Finnie & Usher, 2005, p. 22). Most importantly, the authors underline the importance of student beginning characteristics for the measurement of quality, and argue that if these are ignored, any estimates on quality will be biased (p. 22), which aligns with the suggestion by Gibbs about the need to explore student related variables. Clearly, this work provides a framework which explains the importance of student characteristics, including their expectations and perception about quality in higher education, for educational quality.

The proposed model by Finnie and Usher (2005) is fundamental in the formation of the conceptual framework of this research, as it justifies the importance of beginning characteristics and, most importantly, the relativity of the various dimensions of quality in different contexts of provision. This model, along with Biggs 3P and Gibbs' work (2010, 2012), discussed previously, will be incorporated into my conceptual framework, which is presented and discussed at the end of this chapter.

3.2.2.4 Retrospective vs. prospective educational quality management

As discussed above (Section 3.1.1), the current quality discourse in higher education is described as driven by 'value for money' and 'students as customers'. The current customer quality management model is best described by what Biggs (2001) calls the 'retrospective' quality management approach. According to Biggs (2001), the retrospective quality approach focuses on comparing outcomes with specific thresholds and considers quality as 'value for money' while it focuses on meeting external stakeholders' needs. The priorities in this approach are managerial, and quality is considered as a top-down process. The retrospective approach focuses at the end results and "looks-back back to what has already been done" (Biggs, 2001, p. 222). In the context of educational quality, a retrospective approach takes student presage factors as fixed and assumes that these are going to be adapted to those required in order for the institutional teaching and learning approach to function. This is best articulated by Biggs (2001, p. 222), who argues that despite retrospective quality management being pictured as concerned with quality as 'fit for purpose', "the procedures adopted address 'value for money', and are frequently counter-productive for quality in the sense of providing rich teaching contexts and enhanced learning outcomes".

Biggs (2001) introduces the term 'prospective' quality management as alternative to retrospective quality management. The prospective quality management approach considers quality as fitness for purpose and the educational process as transforming while its priorities are educational. Under a prospective management approach, Biggs (2001) argues, quality is considered as a bottom-up process pursued within the context of institutional mission and objectives. This bottom-up process implies a quality management approach which is reflective of student characteristics (i.e. presage factors), and not a quality management approach that is designed by students themselves. Interestingly Biggs' prospective management approach complies with the recent calls by several bodies and authors (UNESCO & Council of Europe, 2001; IIEP-UNESCO, 2011; Browne, 2010) for the need for quality systems to be reflective of student characteristics and to focus on quality aspects related to teaching and learning.

Considering the significant impact of student presage factor on educational and service quality outcomes (Nijhuis, 2006; De la Fuente et al., 2011; Ginns et al., 2007; Smimou & Dahl, 2012), a prospective approach appears to be more appropriate than a retrospective one in addressing the needs of the various stakeholders (Biggs, 2001). This is because the prospective approach focuses on eliminating problems before they occur by reflecting on the different student presage factors. In this context, the prospective approach can be considered as the best way to combine the fulfilment of the educational and service quality standards required by TNHE exporting countries, with the desired contextualisation which is currently absent in TNHE (Bolton & Nie, 2010; Farrugia, 2012).

Therefore the retrospective vs. prospective conceptualisation in quality management is particularly relevant to this research, because it provides the theoretical framework to evaluate the applicability of the existing customer model for the management of quality in TNHE. Also, it allows the use of the findings of this research to evaluate the adoption of a prospective model which will be responsive to specific contextual factors (i.e. culture, education system) and student presage factors (i.e. previous knowledge, expectations and perceptions about quality) in different programme delivery locations. Across the analysis and discussion of the findings in this thesis, I will reflect on the ramifications of the findings on the retrospective customer model (Research Objective 3), while considering whether the evidence justifies the adoption of a prospective quality management model for the management of quality in TNHE (Research Objective 4).

3.3 Quality management in transnational education

The increase in the volume and types of transnational higher education activities has initiated a growing interest and focus on quality. Most of the attention in managing quality across borders has been on assurance, which is articulated by two main objectives: 1) minimising the risks, reputational and economic, for exporting countries and institutions, and 2) offering consumer protection for students and their families. Overall, it is widely accepted that the focus of existing quality policies and systems in TNHE has been focused on assuring minimum required standards rather than managing quality under its meaning of 'fit for purpose'.

Also, quality management in transnational education is shaped by: 1) the exporting country's quality assurance guidelines, 2) the importing country's quality assurance guidelines, and 3) the guidelines of good practice proposed by international bodies. However, extensive evidence shows that quality assurance in TNHE is dominated by the guidelines of exporting countries (Smith, 2010). This has implications which drive the purpose of this research.

Additionally, the focus of the existing quality assurance guidelines has been subject to debate. Some argue (Van der Wende & Westerheijden, 2001) that these guidelines are necessary to maintain and reassure the status of awards and the reputation of higher education institutions worldwide, thus arguing for the replication of the ‘home’ institution standards offshore. Others (Stella, 2006) argue that quality assurance guidelines for offshore education should also reflect the cultural and contextual aspects of the importing country. This debate is central to the purpose of this research, which aims to justify the philosophical as well as the practical reasons which explain why the replication of the exporting country’s student-as-customer model is neither possible nor appropriate for managing quality in a TNHE setting.

This section will review the existing guidelines and policies for quality assurance in TNHE, aiming to identify their policy focus. I will review the guidelines of the exporting country of the case study used in this research, which is the UK. As there are no specific guidelines in Greece, the importing country of the case study, I will refer to the existing legal requirements for the establishment and operation of TNHEPs instead. Lastly, I will also analyse the guidelines of international bodies such as UNESCO and the ENQA.

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is used to review these guidelines. CDA is a type of analysis which aims to identify issues of power, dominance, and inequality that are included and conveyed by written or verbal communication (Fairclough, 1989, 2003). Additionally, CDA is important when the researcher aims to take a critical position and challenge the view of a ‘value-free’ world. Thus, this fits both the practical requirements for the analysis of relevant policy documents but also my ontological standing as researcher which, as discussed earlier in the introduction, is articulated through the interpretivist philosophy. This means that CDA allows me to present, within a consistent framework of analysis, my interpretation of the quality assurance policy documents in regard to their policy direction and implications for the quality management approach applied in TNHE.

The implementation of CDA can be a complex analysis tool. However, here the purpose is to identify the inherent policy direction and prioritisation of quality assurance policy documents in regard to their position in the debate about the scope of quality assurance in TNHE discussed in the previous paragraph. Thus, I am particularly focusing on identifying text which reveals a prioritisation towards quality assurance as: 1) meeting minimum standards, 2) equivalency, and 3) risk-minimisation for exporting countries. The words which reveal a particular discourse towards quality assurance and quality enhancement are presented in bold. Additionally, the findings of this review are discussed in conjunction with the findings from existing research, such as Smith (2010), who used a similar method to analyse policy documents.

3.3.1 Exporting Countries: QAA guidelines

For exporting countries and universities, cross-border higher education is a valuable source of income and expansion of student numbers (Naidoo, 2009). However, there are significant risks involved which include both possible financial losses and jeopardising academic reputation (Hodson & Thomas, 2001). There are several examples of fraudulent cross-border partners which in the past have negatively affected the reputation and financial position of many universities from countries like the UK, Australia and the US (Lane, 2011). This has contributed to the view of quality assurance as an essential mechanism for avoiding these risks.

As the UK is one the three major TNHE exporting countries, the USA and Australia being the other two, and also because it represents the exporting country in the case study of this research, the UK quality assurance agency's guidelines for collaborative provision are reviewed below.

At the end of 2012, the QAA (2012) published a revised version of its code of practice for quality assurance in cross-border higher education, titled *Managing Higher Education Provision with Others*. It is important to note that the previous version of this code of practice was titled *Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Collaborative Provision and Flexible and Distributed Learning (Including E-Learning)*. This change in the title by abolishing of the word quality assurance and introducing the concept of managing with others shows recognition of the need to reduce exporting countries' dominance in quality assurance and acknowledgement of the importance of including institutions in receiving countries in the process of quality management. Also, the fact that QAA replaces "quality assurance of academic quality and standards" with "managing higher education" identifies a shift towards quality management as identified earlier in the literature review and used throughout this thesis; that is the policies and efforts internal and external to a higher education institution that aim to assure, maintain or enhance quality of education.

It is explained that each chapter of the QAA quality code, such as the one referring to TNHE reviewed here, has one single expectation. This expectation, according to QAA (2012), articulates the single "key principle that the higher education community has identified as essential for the assurance of academic standards and quality within the area covered by the Chapter" (p. 1). The expectation for the delivery of transnational higher education is

> "Degree-awarding bodies take **ultimate responsibility** for academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities, **irrespective of where** these are delivered **or who** provides them. Arrangements for delivering learning opportunities with organisations other than the degree-awarding body are implemented **securely** and managed **effectively.**" (p. 9)

The expectation, and particularly the word "securely", reveals a focus of the guidelines on minimising risk for the UK institutions and the UK higher education sector. The word effectively reveals a preference towards accountability and value for money, which aligns it with the wider quality discourse in UK as discussed earlier in this chapter.

Specifically, the guidelines that articulate human and financial risks associated with transnational partnerships which can damage all participating institutions as well as the UK higher education sector. It is argued that these risks should be assessed and managed by "adopting a **risk-based** approach to commissioning, developing and managing arrangements for delivering learning opportunities with others…" (p. 6). The word "risk-based" reveals the ideological directions of the quality assurance discourse by QAA for transnational partnerships. The specific chapter of guidelines is dominated by a risk-avoidance objective which falls within a wider context of assuring minimum standards rather than taking a proactive approach to enhance quality in transnational delivery.

Interestingly, the QAA acknowledges the need for institutions to contextualise their approach for the development, approval and management of their partnerships but this is discussed as subject to risk rather than quality guidelines and remains only at an approval and, again, risk-minimising level. There is no acknowledgement of contextualisation in regards to the teaching and learning process, which seems to be a matter of secondary importance across the QAA code. The code continues to reveal the priorities of the existing quality discourse:

> "No single practice or procedure will be fit for all purposes, but institutions will need to satisfy themselves that they have adequately assessed the **financial, legal, academic and reputational risks** and have determined the appropriate due diligence procedures to provide the necessary information." (p. 4)

Again, it is clear from the order of the objectives that the QAA guidelines consider QA in TNHE as a primarily risk-minimisation rather than quality enhancement issue. It seems that financial and legal issues are of significant priority in comparison to teaching and learning, which are not directly mentioned. Also, the focus of the guidelines remains on risk-avoidance, as in the previous extracts.

What is particularly relevant to educational quality is the suggested indicator for "responsibility for, and equivalence of, academic standards" (p. 26). Indicator 11 reads:

> "Degree-awarding bodies are responsible for the academic standards of all credit and qualifications granted in their name. This responsibility is never delegated. Therefore, degree-awarding bodies ensure that the standards of any of their awards involving **learning opportunities** delivered by others are **equivalent** to the standards set for other awards that they confer at the same level. They are also consistent with UK national standards." (p. 26)

In the above indicator, it is made clear that the central direction in relation to academic standards is this one of equivalency, which leaves no room for contextualisation. Also, the use of the term "learning opportunities"[22] to replace the term "provision" used in the previous versions of the code implies a neutral standing on quality management. Exploring the general meaning of the word, it is implied that opportunities can be either exploited or lost. Thus, here it is implied that it is the students' responsibility to make the most out of the learning opportunities offered, given that the provision of these learning opportunities is secured by the exporting institution. No discussion is made of the steps/actions required to help students to take advantage of these opportunities, considering the importance of student-related presage variables in the learning approach taken by students, as discussed previously in this chapter.

The specific chapter of the code on TNHE includes an explicit statement about its objective: "ensuring that **robust** processes are in place to **secure** the quality of student learning opportunities, irrespective of where these take place or who provides them, is central to this chapter" (p. 2). Here the words "robust" and "secure" reveal a focus on assurance rather on enhancement and on meeting minimum standards instead of providing high quality experience to students.

The above discussion reveals findings in line with the claims made by Smith (2010), who has reviewed the quality assurance guidelines of exporting countries. These

[22] According to the glossary of the relevant chapter of the QAA code, learning opportunities include "the provision made for students' learning, including planned study programmes, teaching, assessment, academic and personal support, and resources (such as libraries and information systems, laboratories, studios or specialist facilities)" (p. 47).

findings are aligned with the observations made above about the focus of exporting countries' quality assurance guidelines on risk-mitigation rather than on quality enhancement. I will add that, taking into consideration Biggs' model as well as the findings of Gibbs (2010; 2012) and Finnie and Usher (2005), the focus of the QAA guidelines on equivalency is not enough on its own to actually reassure the desired standards considering the importance of contextual dynamics that affect educational quality.

Even if the exporting country views quality as equivalency, this is unlikely to be achieved by promoting the same presage, process, product model that is applied in the exporting institution. It is very likely that students would have different educational backgrounds and other student factors that, as explained by the original Biggs 3P model, will play a critical role in the learning process, in turn affecting the product outcomes. Thus, quality assurance systems which are designed according to the exporting country's student factors are unlikely to be effective in the importing country. This is the issue which will be explored further during the quantitative and the qualitative research.

3.3.2 Importing countries

Receiving countries have exhibited a range of different responses to transnational partnerships and the quality assurance of their provision; Verbik and Jokirirta (2005, cited by McBurnie & Ziguras in Stella & Bhushan, 2011) mention six categories of reactions, from the liberal to the extremely restrictive. The reaction of the receiving counties is concerned, mainly, with consumer protection from fraudulent providers, and very little comment has been made about the management of quality for the enhancement of students' learning experience and/or for improving educational quality.

There are cases of extreme regulation, such as with India, and of complete freedom, such as with France. There are examples of countries, like Malaysia and Singapore, that have moved on to create their own quality assurance frameworks and allow institutions from partners of foreign universities to become private providers of higher education.

Greece, which is directly relevant to this thesis, for several years avoided recognising the existence of TNHE partnerships in an effort to protect the domestic public higher education sector. This meant the absence of any control system on quality, something that implies higher risks for all stakeholders involved (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007). However, in the case of Greece, new legislation came into force in 2012 which articulates some basic regulations about the operation of TNHE partnerships. This includes the requirement for comparable student:staff ratios between the local provider and the awarding institution, the existence of facilities that comply with minimum health and safety requirements, and the obligation to inform the Greek Ministry of Education about the programme specification and syllabus (*Νόμος 4093/2012 (ΦΕΚ 222 Α')*).

3.3.3 International guidelines: UNESCO

There have been efforts to provide an international framework for quality assurance in transnational education. An initial framework for quality management in CBHE was developed by UNESCO in 2001. However, this effort has so far taken the form of guidelines for good practice rather than a universal code of practice.

In 2005 UNESCO published the *Guidelines for Quality Provision of Cross-border Higher Education* (UNESCO, 2005) which came to complement the previous *Code of Good Practice for the Provision of Transnational Education* published in 2001. The purposes of the UNESCO guidelines were "…to **protect** students and other stakeholders from **low-quality provision and disreputable providers**[23] as well as to encourage the development of quality cross-border higher education that **meets** human, social, economic and **cultural needs**" (2005, p. 7).

[23] Here this meant institutions which act as degree and accreditation mills.

The above extract shows that UNESCO guidelines set a priority to assure quality as protection and risk mitigation for students and other stakeholders, making an assumption about the existence of low-quality provision and disreputable providers. This indeed complies with the argument by Blackmur (2007) that the existing and dominating quality assurance approach in TNHE at international level concentrates on securing, rather than managing and enhancing, quality at the partner institution.

The proposed guidelines distinguish between six stakeholder groups (UNESCO, 2005, p. 13): 1) governments, 2) higher education institutions/providers including academic staff, 3) student bodies, 4) quality assurance and accreditation bodies, 5) academic recognition bodies, and 6) professional bodies.

It falls outside the purpose of this research to present and discuss extensively all of the guidelines for all the various stakeholders. Instead, a selection of specific guidelines is made here to show the overall policy direction of UNESCO guidelines about quality assurance in CBHE.

Probably the most important and relevant to the discussion of the available literature is one of the guidelines for higher education institutions/providers, which reads:

> "Develop, maintain or review current internal quality management systems so that they make **full use of the competencies** of stakeholders such as academic staff, administrators, students and graduates and **take full responsibility** for delivering higher education qualifications **comparable in standard** in their home country and across borders. Furthermore, when promoting their programmes to potential students through agents, they should take full responsibility to ensure that the information and guidance provided by their agents is accurate reliable and easily." (UNESCO, 2005, p. 16)

The above guideline is rather interesting as it actually suggests the management of quality according to the competencies of the internal stakeholders, however, it maintains a focus on comparability/equivalence rather than the enhancement of quality standards. The expression "full use of competencies" can be interpreted as an effort to promote the contextualisation of the provision, taking into consideration the specific student presage variables, as described in Biggs' model. Conversely, the suggestion in the UNESCO guidelines is to make use of the stakeholders' competencies to achieve comparable standards rather than enhance quality.

There are three guidelines for student bodies that primarily concentrate on ensuring accurate information for prospective and existing students. One states:

> "Take active part in promoting quality provision, by increasing **the awareness** of the students of **the potential risks** such as misleading guidance and information, low-quality provision leading to qualifications of limited validity, and disreputable providers. They should also **guide** them to **accurate and reliable information** sources on cross-border higher education. This could be done by increasing the awareness of the existence of these guidelines as well as taking an active part in their implementation." (UNESCO, 2005, p. 17)

The guidelines for student bodies are also aligned with the wider risk-mitigation focus of the UNESCO code. The use of words such as "awareness" and "potential risk" reveal a tendency towards consumer protection rather than educational quality.

UNESCO calls for a coordination of quality assurance agencies and accreditation bodies to address the challenges related to CBHE. In particular, the guidelines for quality assurance and accreditation bodies include:

> "Ensure that their quality assurance and accreditation arrangements include cross-border education provision in its various modes. This can mean giving attention to **assessment guidelines**, ensuring that standards and processes are transparent, consistent and appropriate to take account of the shape and scope of the **national** higher education system, and **adaptability** to **changes** and **developments** in cross-border provision." (UNESCO, 2005, p. 19)

The guidelines for quality assurance and accreditation bodies are primarily concerned with the need to establish a specific code for the assurance of quality in CBHE at national level. It is interesting to see that the guidelines suggest "adaptability" to "changes" and "developments" in CBHE, without however clarifying whether the phrase "assessment guidelines" refers to the importing or the exporting country.

The guidelines also suggest increased cooperation between the various agencies, something which has been criticised by Blackmur (2007) as an effort to achieve the international expansion of a regulatory framework aiming to reduce the risks, rather than adding value to higher education. Similar criticism has been made by a range of other authors (Stella & Bhushan, 2011; Smith, 2010) about the increased focus of existing quality frameworks on risk aversion rather than quality enhancement at the partner institutions. This is aligned with the previous discussion about the focus of the exporting country's guidelines.

3.3.4 International guidelines: ENQA[24]

The European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies has produced a review of quality assurance in TNE (Bennett et al., 2010), concluding that there is no need to create a separate set of guidelines for the quality assurance of TNHE, but instead "the same factors that apply to the QA of national higher education **should also be applied** to the QA of TNE, even though it is being offered in another country" (p. 31). This is aligned with the QAA code, which states that the same standards should be used irrespective of the location of study. The word "should" reveals a more pressing policy direction rather than a suggestion for good practice.

What is interesting in the review by ENQA is the suggestion that the above call for the application of the exporting country's QA across borders "implies that the cultural context in which TNE is being delivered is **taken into account** and **respected**" (p. 30). This may be interpreted as call for the contextualisation of the QA, but this is contradictory to the previous suggestion of the application of the same QA irrespective of the programme delivery location. The words "taken into account" and "respected" reveal a

[24] The European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies www.enqa.eu

suggestion of a passive or of minor priority consideration of the importing country's cultural context in the development of QA for TNHE.

Overall, it is clear from the above analysis that quality management in transnational education is primarily associated with quality assurance which, in turn, is dominated by the quality assurance guidelines of the exporting country. This is supported by the findings of the CDA analysis and also by Middlehurst (2011), who discusses the contemporary focus on quality assurance in cross-border higher education as an outcome of the concurrent evolution of accountability in higher education.

The findings from the CDA of the relevant quality assurance guidelines are aligned with the argument by McBurnie and Ziguras (in Stella & Bhushan, 2011) about the existing quality assurance systems consisting of a series of rules and regulations imposed on the partner institution, aiming to reduce the risks and safeguard the academic creditability of the awarding institution. Also, the existing quality management approach in TNHE, despite the calls for cultural and local contextualisation, is primarily attempting to isolate the partner institution from the local environment and transform it into just another site for programme delivery, as underlined by Altbach and Knight (2007).

The analysis reveals that there are calls for contextualisation of quality assurance which, however, are not addressed. Instead, the exporting country's quality management model is replicated across borders. This is very likely to be inapplicable, considering the difference of student expectations and perception about higher education of students who study at different delivery locations. This justifies the value of exploring and comparing student expectations and perceptions at different delivery locations (Research Objectives 1 & 2), which falls into the purpose of this research, as a means to evaluate the applicability of a retrospective customer model for managing quality in TNHE (Research Objective 3).

3.4 The applicability of the customer model in managing quality in TNHE

The problematic nature of the applicability of a rigid customer model to manage quality across borders is articulated excellently by Fallshaw (2003, p. 2), who argues that "when programmes are designed in one place and delivered in another country, ensuring quality can become problematic". This is justified on the basis of the diversity of organisational forms and structures of higher education institutions, the various cultural settings, the types of transnational partnerships, and the differences in the conceptualisation and measurement of quality (Fallshaw, 2003; Coleman, 2003; Chapman et al., 2013). Primarily, what makes quality management across borders a challenging process is the vast differences in the quality expectations and perceptions of various stakeholders, including the students (Lim, 2008). This is confirmed by the findings of relevant research (Wilkins et al., 2012; Stella & Bhushan, 2011), showing that different stakeholders, including students, hold different expectations from, and perceive quality differently in, transnational higher education partnerships.

Considering the variability of student presage factors (Hill et al., 2003; Wallace & Dunn, 2013; Ginns et al., 2007; Min et al., 2012), the applicability of the retrospective customer model for the management of quality in TNHE could be considered rather problematic in relation to its effectiveness regarding educational quality outcomes. Surprisingly, the need to explore student expectations and perceptions seems to be muted in the discussion about quality management in TNHE. Instead, the review of the quality assurance guidelines (see Section 3.3) revealed a focus on equivalency of standards without exploring how this can be achieved by considering the importance of student presage factors on the effectiveness of the educational process, as discussed by Biggs (1993), Gibbs (2010, 2012), and Finnie and Usher (2005).

The problems with the applicability of the retrospective customer model in TNHE appear to have ramifications on both the service and educational quality models. The existing retrospective customer model has at its centre the various student satisfaction surveys, internal and external to HEIs, which are considered of paramount importance in assuring acceptable standards of ‘value for money’ and accountability (Appleton-Knapp & Krentler, 2006). Consequently, despite the extensive criticism (Athiyaman, 1997; Zhao, 2012; Smimou & Dahl, 2012; Al-Alak & Alnaser, 2012) around the usefulness and the appropriateness of student satisfaction surveys, they appear to dominate quality measurement today. The current model, which concentrates on using student satisfaction as a guide for the assessment of quality standards, fails to recognise the impact of a possible difference in student presage factors, such as quality expectations and perceptions. For example, existing research has shown that student expectations and perceptions are affected by various factors, such as country of origin, values and previous education schooling experience (Hill, 1995; Telford & Masson, 2005).

Taking into account that student satisfaction is a function of the expectations-perceptions gap (Browne et al., 1998; Stukalina, 2012; Gruber et al., 2010), a difference in student expectations across different student cohorts (e.g. ‘home’ students and ‘offshore’ students) who study on the same programme, may be a source in itself of differences in student satisfaction between these cohorts. This will impact the effectiveness of the retrospective customer model to manage service quality in TNHE. At the same time, student satisfaction is also associated with educational quality. Research has shown (Lizzio et al., 2002; Nijhuis, 2006; De la Fuente et al., 2011) that students with inappropriate expectations which are unlikely to be met by the existing provision if left unmanaged, usually end in poor educational outcomes and this in turn results in poor levels of student satisfaction.

Additionally, the review of the literature reveals a consensus about the development of a customer minded approach for the process through which students choose higher education providers and study programmes (Molesworth et al., 2010; Williams, 2012). Considering the concurrent development of the contextual dynamics, such as the marketisation of higher education, across the world, it is expected that TNHE students would be impacted by such a ‘customer mentality’. However, a great body of literature, not only higher education related, reveals a great discrepancy in factors that influence customer decision-making, primarily in the service sector (Cronin Jr et al., 2000; Sheth et al., 1999). This implies a range of challenges for the applicability of retrospective quality management in TNHE, owing to the fact that different students would be influenced by different factors during their customer decision-making process (Maringe & Carter, 2007; Moogan & Baron, 2003). It is very likely, therefore, that students as customers who choose to study in TNHEPs will be influenced by different factors to those of students who decide to study at the main campus of the exporting institution. This in turn may imply a range of challenges for both the exporting and the importing institution in regard to the applicability of a retrospective customer model for the management of quality.

The applicability of a common retrospective model for the management of quality in TNHE thus appears to be problematic. This emanates from the focus of the existing TNHE quality management policies away from exploring and recognising the nature of student presage factors across different locations of programme delivery. Thus, an exploration of factors that affect student choice, as well as student expectations and perceptions about quality in higher education, would be important in evaluating the applicability and appropriateness of a retrospective customer model for the management of quality in TNHE.

3.5 Conceptual framework for research

The conceptual framework presented in Figure 3.4 below summarises the main themes as they emerge from the literature review and justifies the research problem that this thesis attempts to solve by fulfilling the research purpose and research objectives.

At the top of the conceptual framework is the current quality discourse in higher education, which is articulated via a drive for value for money and quality as fit for purpose. This, along with the development of the marketisation of higher education, has contributed in the dominance of the concepts of ‘student as customer’ and ‘higher education institutions as information providers' (Williams, 2012; Brown & Carasso, 2013; Molesworth et al., 2010; Lynch, 2006). The above has led to an over-concentration on the use of student satisfaction surveys as a means to measure quality, which is primarily linked to a conceptualisation of service quality in higher education quality management. Student satisfaction today is closely associated with efforts to match student expectations and perceptions, which has contributed to the emergence of a customer model for the management of quality in higher education. The current quality management model in higher education is best summarised by Biggs' (2001) 'retrospective' approach which, contrary to the 'prospective', considers quality as top-to-bottom process and focuses on measuring the end results with the use of managerial practices while being non-reflective of student characteristics.

Despite the vast range of definitions and conceptualisations of quality and quality management models in higher education, the review of the literature reveals a consensus by all stakeholders about the relevance and importance of educational quality. The model for the management of educational quality put forward by Finnie and Usher (2005), and Biggs' 3P model which appears at the centre of the conceptual framework figure, justify the connection between student beginning (presage) characteristics – these include student expectations and perceptions about quality but also factors that affect their formation - with the learning outputs and final outcomes. Thus, it is clear that student expectations and perceptions are directly relevant, not only in service quality management, but also in educational quality management.

In a transnational higher education context, as has been found in the literature review and is summarised in the conceptual framework figure below, the objectives of the existing quality management approach are identified as risk-mitigation and equivalency. These objectives are achieved primarily via the use of the exporting country's quality assurance guidelines, which has been identified as retrospective and customer focused. The pursue of TNHE quality management with the use of a retrospective customer model designed at the 'home' institution carries the assumption that such a quality model can be replicated across borders without considering the impact of differences in student factors or considering them as fixed.

However, this can be problematic, owing to the possible differences in student expectations and perceptions in different locations of programme delivery. Thus, the existing quality management model in TNHE implies problems in the reassurance of educational as well as service quality standards across different locations of programme delivery. This is articulated as the research problem that this research is seeking to answer: **Considering the importance of student expectations and perceptions in both the educational and service quality context, the applicability of a retrospective customer model, designed 'at home', would be problematic for the management of quality in TNHE across borders.** This problem would be relevant irrespective of one's standing in the debate about the appropriateness of the service quality conceptualisation in higher education and the use of the customer model to manage quality. Two examples can be provided.

First, let us assume that a higher education institution is considering students as customers and aims to respond to its customers' needs and wants using a retrospective customer model. It is imperative that as a service provider, the better you know the expectations of your customer the most likely you are to plan and implement service provision that will lead to satisfied customers, and consequently high quality within the gap theory conceptualisation of quality. If the higher education provider assumes that all customers have the same expectations and perceptions then, considering the relative nature of student expectations and perceptions, is very likely that it will fail to provide sufficient standards of quality.

Second, let us consider that a higher education institution is situated at the other extreme of the 'student as customer' debate. This higher education institution views quality as a 'top-down', non-negotiable issue. Primarily, the main argument for the 'top-to-bottom' approach is that education is a transformation process and students early in their academic journey are not in a position to understand/know what quality of higher education is. However, Biggs' 3P model and Finnie and Usher's (2005) framework for managing educational quality show that student beginning characteristics will determine, to a great extent, the effectiveness of the institutional strategy towards quality. This is because student presage factors will impact the learning approach that the student will adopt and consequently will determine the educational and service quality outcomes. So, using the retrospective quality management model, which implies a 'top-down' view of quality, HEIs ignore student beginning characteristics and/or assume that their students will adjust their expectations and perceptions about quality of higher education. Considering the diversity of student presage factors across different settings and their stable state during the educational process (Hill, 1995) if left unmanaged, the application of such a model in TNHE would lead to adverse quality results.

It is therefore clear that exploring and understanding student presage factors, and particularly their expectations and perceptions about quality, is an issue of vital importance for quality management in TNHE: this is pursued in this thesis with Research Objective 1.

Additionally, the literature reveals a controversial discussion about the role and objectives of transnational higher education partnerships. Some argue that their establishment and operation is based purely on an economic motive, which offers possible implications and risks for quality standards (Healey, 2013a). Others argue that transnational higher education partnerships are extensions of the 'home' universities, and their operations and provision are governed by the same rules and standards (Stella & Bhushan, 2011). In this debate, the students' perspective on quality has not been widely considered. However, reflecting on the importance of student expectations and perceptions, one may argue that students would be the stakeholders who are most appropriate to evaluate the role and standards of transnational higher education partnerships. For this reason, part of the research purpose (specifically Research Objective 2), explores how students at both the home campus and the offshore partner institution evaluate TNHEPs.

It is evident that if students at different delivery locations of the same programme have different expectations and perceptions about higher education quality, the applicability and effectiveness of a common retrospective customer model in a TNHE context would lead to significant ramifications for service and educational quality. This is explored in this thesis via Research Objective 3, whose fulfilment is based on the findings from Research Objectives 1 and 2.

Finally, reflecting on the findings from Research Objectives 1, 2 and 3, it is important to consider an alternative model for the management of quality in TNHE. Particularly, considering its reflective focus on understanding and actively managing student presage factors, the prospective management model of Biggs (2001) should be evaluated as a feasible alternative model for the management of quality in TNHE; this is pursued through Research Objective 4.

Figure 3.4: Conceptual framework for research

Current quality discourse in higher education

Quality as value for money and fit for purpose
Students as customers and HEIs as information and service providers

Dominance of customer model of service quality in higher education
Consensus about the importance and relevance of educational quality but use of retrospective quality management (Biggs 2001) with emphasis on student perceptions and satisfaction

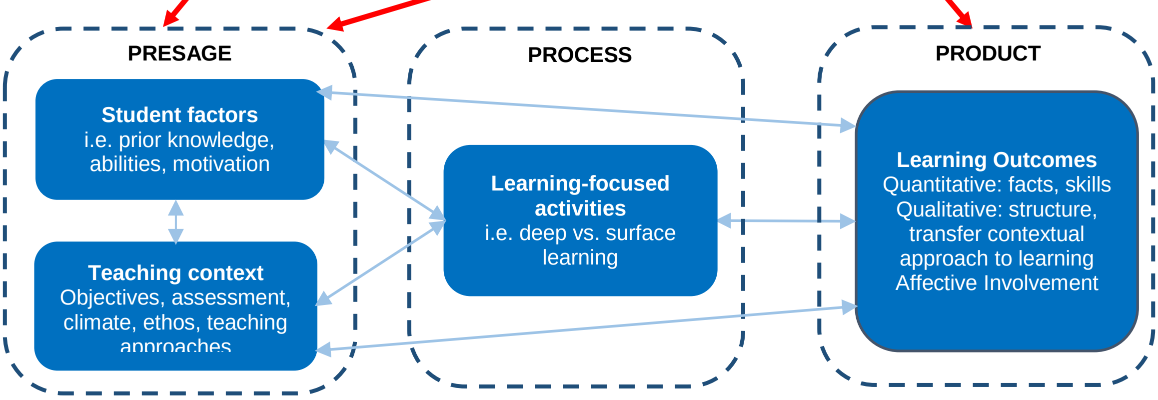
Current quality management model in TNHE

Dominance of the quality management approach of the exporting country
Quality assurance as risk mitigation
Focus on equivalency rather than enhancement

The current TNHE quality management model assumes / implies

Student expectations are the same across the different locations of delivery

Student perceptions about quality in higher education, both as term and as set of desired outcomes, are the same across different locations of delivery



Research Problem

Considering the importance of student expectations and perceptions in both the educational and service quality context, the applicability of a retrospective customer model designed 'at home' would be problematic for the management of quality in TNHE across borders.

Research Purpose

To explore and explain the student expectations and perceptions of quality in transnational education and evaluate the applicability of a retrospective customer model for the management of quality in transnational higher education partnerships. To consider and justify the adoption of a prospective management model for effective quality management in TNHE.

Research Objective 1 is to explore and explain the student expectations and perceptions of quality in higher education in the two groups who are studying on the same programme but at different delivery locations (*Research Questions 1-3)*

Research Objective 2 is to provide an evaluation of Transnational Higher Education Partnerships from a student perspective
(Research Question 4)

Research Objective 3 is to evaluate the applicability of the retrospective customer model for the management of quality in TNHE

Research Objective 4 is to propose and justify the value of a prospective and reflective model for the management of quality in TNHE

Chapter 4 – Research Methodology

4.0 Introduction and outline of research method

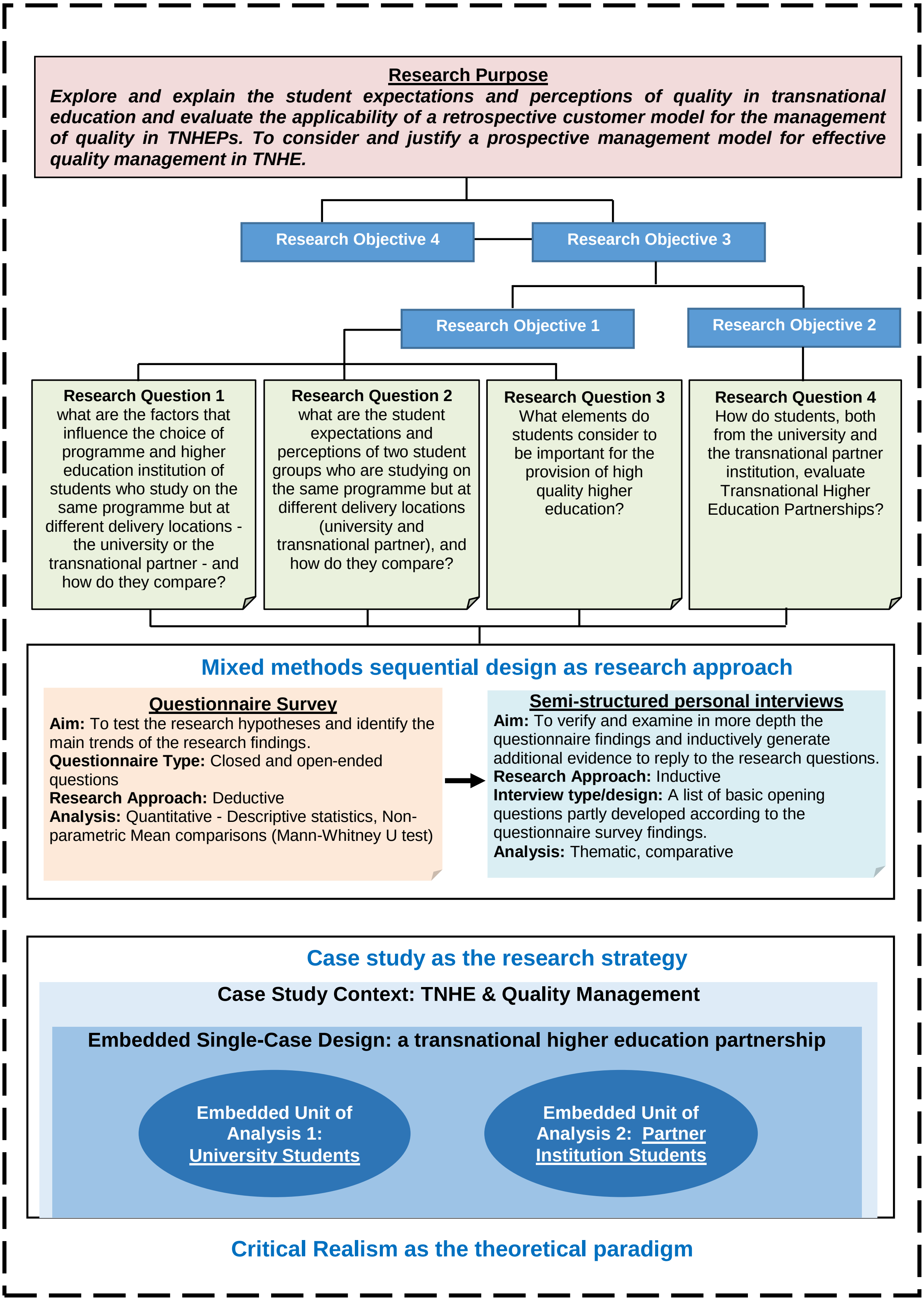
The conceptual framework presented at the end of the previous chapter identified the research questions which need to be answered in order to fulfil the research purpose. In this chapter I will explain how and why I approached the research in the way I did and the methods I used to tackle the research questions and fulfil the research purpose. This 'how, why and what' discussion represents the methodology of this research and has been shaped by the findings of the literature review, particularly about the nature of the research problem.

The research method used in this study and outlined in Figure 4.1 below, is a case study which incorporates a mixed methods sequential design approach for the collection and analysis of data, pursued within a Critical Realist theoretical paradigm. As will be explained in the following sections of this chapter, the selection of methods, approach and theoretical paradigm were driven by the nature of the research problem. This is why the research method outline figure starts with the research purpose and goes down to the theoretical paradigm.

In Section 4.1, I explain why Critical Realism, as the theoretical paradigm used in this research, supports my 1) ontological (how I see the nature of reality) and 2) epistemological (the nature of the relationship between the researcher and the known (or knowable)) stance. In Sections 4.2 and 4.3 I explain how as researcher I sought knowledge; this involves the research strategy, defined as the general framework (Crotty, 1998) in which I have conducted the research, as well as the research approach and the research methods used to gather and analyse data.

As the setting of this research is my place of work, in Section 4.4 I reflect on my positionality as both a researcher and a manager, focusing particularly on my own role in the data gathering and analysis processes. Finally, in Section 4.6 I explain the ethical considerations of this research with reference to the relevant ethical guidelines.

Figure 4.1: Summary of the research method



4.1 Critical Realism as the theoretical paradigm

Every researcher carries a set of values and beliefs that determine their approach, process and methods used to conduct research and seek new knowledge. This system of beliefs, known as a 'paradigm'[25] (Guba, 1990; Crotty, 1998), implies a distinctive ontology (the way someone perceives reality), epistemology (the way in which someone gets to know something) and methodology (the process of gathering and analysing data in the effort to create or seek knowledge). Moreover, in educational research, such as the study pursued in this thesis, the purpose is to explore and understand social phenomena, which are defined and theorised differently within different paradigms (Mertens, 1998). Before presenting and clarifying the research paradigm used in this research, I present a brief overview of the main paradigms as they appear in the relevant literature. Various paradigms and taxonomies of these paradigms appear in the literature about research methodology but three are referred to most commonly[26] (Matthews, 2010): 1) Positivism/objectivism, 2) Interpretivism/Constructivism, and 3) Realism.

Positivism reflects the natural scientific standpoint where, after undertaking experiments or observations, the researcher produces theories which are similar to those of natural and physical science (Gray, 2009). Positivism is based on the objectivist ontological position, which assumes that social reality exists completely separate from the researcher and those researched. As positivism presupposes that the researcher will be detached from both the research field and from the research data (Saunders, 2009), it is expected that the researcher is neither affected by nor affects the subject of research. As

[25] 'Paradigm' is closely associated with Kuhn (1962), who describes it as a system of beliefs, concepts, variables and problems which are associated with methodological approaches and methods. Others refer to researcher's assumptions and knowledge claims as "philosophical assumptions, epistemologies, and ontologies" (Crotty, 1998 cited in Creswell, 2009, p.6) and "research methodologies" (Neuman, 2000 cited in Creswell, 2009, p.6). Here I have used the term 'paradigm', as this appears to be used to capture the researcher's beliefs and assumptions at the three layers of the research process discussed here; that is ontology, epistemology and methodology.

[26] Across the various research methods texts we find several different categorisations of the research paradigms. Some authors separate the paradigms into four (Creswel, 2009) or even five (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). I have used Matthews' (2010) taxonomy because it allows the discussion of ontological and epistemological positions together and provides a clear contrast between the main philosophical stances which are used as the starting point for the additional paradigms presented in other texts.

a researcher who sees student expectations and perceptions as being relative to the different interpretations by different students and thus aims to gather evidence to support the need for a contextualised quality management approach in TNHE, I could not consider my ontological position as being a positivist one. At a methodological level, positivism calls for the use of a highly structured methodology and quantitative observations that can be used for statistical analysis and theory testing (Cohen, 2007).

Interpretivism, as the second major paradigm, has its origin in the criticism of the applicability of positivism in describing complex subject areas such as the social world (Jonker & Pennink, 2009). Interpretivists, as critics of positivism, argue that if this philosophy is applied to complex worlds, the richness offered by this complexity is lost in the attempt to produce law-like generalisations (Cohen, 2007). In contrast to positivism, interpretivist research places great importance on discovering the details of a case so as to understand the reality or realities behind those details (Remenyi, 1998, p.35). This is associated with constructionist or social constructionist ontology, where reality is considered as socially constructed and knowledge as relative to individual interpretations influenced by cultural, historical, and linguistic issues (Matthews, 2010). This implies the existence of ‘knowledges’ rather than ‘one universal knowledge’ as believed by positivism. In the social sciences context, this implies that as people interpret the situations they are in differently, their actions and social interaction with others will be affected by this: in the context of this research, this supports the argument about the relative nature of student expectations and perceptions across different student groups.

The above two research paradigms, positivism and interpretivism, are situated at the two extremes of the objectivism vs. constructivism debate (Zachariadis et al., 2010) which constitutes what Tashakkori and Teddie (2003) describe as paradigm wars. A third research paradigm, situated in the middle of the above debate, is Realism, which emanates from the foundations of positivism and recognises that reality is independent from human thoughts and beliefs (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004) but, at the same time, acknowledges the existence of deeper and invisible structures and mechanisms in the social world that shape social reality (Jonker & Pennink, 2010; Archer, 1998). Realism in the context of the social sciences can be interpreted as implying the existence of large-scale social forces and processes that affect people, sometimes without them knowing about either the existence or the effect of these forces or processes (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). Realism itself contains alternatives which can be categorised into two different sub-paradigms[27], Empirical Realism and Critical Realism. Empirical, or Naïve, Realism stands for the view that reality can be captured and understood with the use of the right methods and data. Empirical Realism is closely aligned with the foundations of Positivism regarding the researcher's ability to measure and understand reality and to create knowledge which is then generalisable in a context-free form (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Critical Realism, as the second sub-paradigm of Realism, refers to the view that reality is subject to deeper and more complex structures behind the phenomena observed by the researcher (Archer, 1998). Critical Realism believes that the researcher's understanding of reality is subject to the specific point of time and also to their viewpoint, which may not be aligned with the actual reality (Bhaskar, 1998). However, as Zachariadis et al. (2010) argue, Critical Realism maintains a strong emphasis on ontology, and does not commit to a particular research method or approach. Instead, Critical Realism works as the theoretical framework for the mixing of methodological elements from both positivism and constructivism so as to achieve 'what work' best for the researcher in their effort to address the research questions and research purpose (Cherryholmes 1992; Howe 1988, cited in Zachariadis et al., 2010)[28].

During the early stages of this study I conceived my ontological position and epistemology as being best described within an interpretivist/constructivist paradigm.

[27] There are several categorisations of Realism (Maxwell, 2012). Here I have deliberately selected two to discuss: Naïve Realism is the version of Realism nearer to the positivist/objective paradigm and this is thus to compared with Critical Realism, which is the paradigm used as a theoretical and analytical lens in this thesis.

[28] This view is associated by some authors with a pragmatist philosophical view of research which is against the dualism of quantitative and qualitative research (Saunders et al., 2012; Creswell, 2009). Here it is not discussed as a separate paradigm, because Pragmatism does not provide an ontological discussion but rather focuses on epistemological issues.

Nevertheless, after reviewing the literature on the two main theoretical areas involved in this study, that is, transnational education and quality in higher education, I discovered that wider forces exist which affect students' expectations and perceptions. Not only could one not ignore the effect of these wider forces - such as the marketisation of higher education and the dominance of the 'student as customer' quality discourse – on the formation of student expectations and perceptions , but reflecting on the findings of the literature review presented in Chapter 3, what is described by James (2002) as changing student expectations can be partly attributed to these wider contextual forces. At the same time, the main motive for this research was initiated by my view that students at different locations of the same undergraduate programme are very likely to form different expectations and perceptions because of their different interpretations of the meaning of quality in higher education as a result of deeper, or unseen, according to the Critical Realist paradigm, social and cultural factors and structures. This discussion enabled me to identify Critical Realism as the theoretical paradigm serving as my analytical lens, and also as the epistemological framework which allows the adoption of a mixed methods approach.

In this research, I use Critical Realism as my analytical lens to understand and interpret student expectations and perceptions with particular focus on exploring the similarities and differences between the two student groups. Specifically, Critical Realism is used here as the framework within which I explain why, despite the existence of wider contextual dynamics (i.e. marketisation of higher education, student as customer), the retrospective customer model in managing quality in higher education is not applicable in a transnational higher education context owing to the different student expectations and perceptions that exist in different parts of the world. As a Critical Realist researcher, the way in which I interpret student expectations and perceptions is, inevitably, shaped by the way in which I view reality, which is not necessarily aligned with actual reality. This goes back to Bhaskar's view that in Critical Realism there is the actual and the real truth (2008). The actual truth refers to the outcomes of the analysis of measurable data independent of human understanding. However, Critical Realism recognises that the way in which one individual, including the researcher, experiences and perceives an event will depend on that individual's personal beliefs and expectations (Da Silva, 2012, p. 8). Thus, my aim is to provide a better and deeper understanding of reality – referring to student expectations and perceptions of quality in this case study - within a Critical Realist paradigm while at the same time recognising that there may be different and/or better 'realities' (Willig, 2008 cited in Da Silva, 2012, p. 8).

Also, as a Critical Realist, my interpretations of reality would be subject to the specific point of time, which implies specific conditions, structures and mechanisms, in the setting of my research (Bhaskar, 1998; Archer, 1998); that is, the university and the partner institution. This means that my observations and conclusions represent the reality constructed by observing the specific social structures and mechanism at the specific point in time.

Critical Realism as a theoretical paradigm supports the mixed methods sequential design (Creswell, 2009) used in this study and explained in detail later in this chapter. This research starts with a quantitative questionnaire survey and continues with qualitative semi-structured personal interviews. The mixing of methods in this thesis was decided at the early stages of the research design, before considering in detail the philosophical issues discussed in this section. This was because the identification of the research approach was primarily based on the need to facilitate the best combination of quantitative and qualitative methods to tackle the research questions and fulfil the research purpose. This means that I have adopted a pragmatist methodology by looking at 'what works best' for the research, which fits well with the mixed method (Cherryholmes 1992; Howe 1988, cited in Zachariadis et al., 2010) and the Critical Realist theoretical paradigm .

Lastly, Critical Realism is suggested (Easton, 2010; Maxwell, 2012) as a suitable theoretical paradigm for case study research, such as that conducted in this thesis. The main reasons for the selection of the case study are analysed in the next section (Section

4.2). However, a case study research framework was selected because it allows the investigation of student expectations and perceptions in their real context (Yin, 2003) - that is the TNHEP and the different delivery locations of the same undergraduate programme. This serves the Critical Realist paradigm's call for access to the deeper social and cultural structures as a means to gather a better understanding of student expectations and perceptions.

4.2 Case study as the research strategy

The research strategy is the 'general plan' within which I, as the researcher, have chosen to answer the research questions and deployed the methods for the collection and analysis of data (Blaikie, 2009). My research strategy is a case study research incorporating a mixed methods sequential design for the collection and analysis of data. Before explaining the reasons for using a case study in more detail, it is relevant to consider the main characteristics of case study research.

The case study is a research strategy which is used to investigate a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context with the use of multiple data collection methods (Yin, 2003, p. 13) and allows the researcher to gather in-depth insights into participants' lived experiences with a particular context (Hamilton, 2011, p.1). This view is shared by a number of other writers (Neuman, 2007; Blaikie, 2009; Jonker & Pennink, 2010), who argue that the case study aims to capture and describe the participants' lived experiences of, thoughts about, and feelings for, a situation or a phenomenon. Finally, Stake (1995, p. 8) suggests that the 'real business' of case study is particularisation, i.e. knowing and understanding a particular case very well.

Reflecting on the characteristics of case study research, the choice of this form of research for this thesis was driven by the pragmatist claim (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003) that the research strategy should be chosen on the basis of 'what works best' for the research questions and research purpose. The purpose of this research was to explore the assumption, identified by the review of the literature and presented in the conceptual framework, of the sameness of student expectations and perceptions about quality in higher education among students who study on the same undergraduate programme but at different delivery locations, which meant that I needed to explore a case of a programme which is delivered both at the home campus of a university and at an offshore location. Thus, the case study research strategy emerged as the natural setting (TNHEP) of the research problem and the place where the research purpose could be accomplished. This complies with the argument by Platt (1992, p. 46 cited in Yin, 2003, p.13) that case study is a "… strategy to be preferred when circumstances and research problems are appropriate rather than an ideological commitment to be followed whatever the circumstances".

Also, pursuing the purpose of this research within the Critical Realist theoretical paradigm meant that I had to look deeper than what has been revealed by the literature review to be the impact of 'universal' factors - such as the marketisation of higher education and the view of 'student as customer' - on student expectations and perceptions, by striving to gain a more comprehensive and deeper understanding of the social, cultural and other factors embedded in the context of each location of the TNHEP. This is facilitated by the case study research strategy, as it allows me as the researcher to access the subject of investigation in its own habitat (Woodside, 2010) and real-life context (Eisenhardt, 1989), and consequently enables me to explore student expectations and perceptions within the contextual setting of each student group as 'being there' (Cohen et al., 2007, p.85).

Also, the case study research strategy allows the mixing of quantitative and qualitative approaches (Yin, 2003) which are required to tackle the research questions and fulfil the research purpose of this thesis.

Finally, the case study strategy was preferred because is useful when the subject under examination is "… the researcher's place of work" (Cohen et al., 1994, p.66), which links to my situation, as I am both the researcher and a manager who is actively involved in the TNHEP under study. This allows me a better understanding of the 'deeper' structures of the transnational partnership under investigation as well as in each of the two contexts of the case study – the university and the partner institution. This serves the Critical Realist paradigm used in this investigation which aims to look deeper for interpretations of student expectations and perceptions about quality in higher education. Nevertheless, my position as insider in this case study has a range of limitations which are addressed in detail in Section 4.4 later in this chapter.

4.2.1 The single case study design

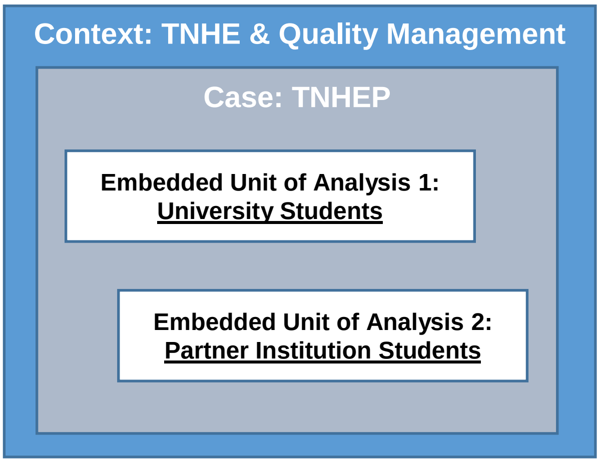
This research was conducted within a single case study but two site framework, focusing on the context of the transnational partnership and not on each individual institution separately. This is critical for the investigation, because the purpose of the research is to explore the applicability of a common customer model in the management of quality in TNHE and not in each individual institution separately. Additionally, the view of a single case study is supported by the fact that the students who study in the partner institution are registered students of the university and their studies are underpinned by the regulations of the UK higher education.

The use of a single case study design as the research strategy in this study allows it to capture and understand the particularity and complexity of transnational education at a much deeper level than would have been possible by looking at several different cases of TNHEPs. The transnational partnership under study, between a UK university and a Greek private college, is representative of what is generally portrayed as transnational education for two reasons. First, it is based on a franchise relationship, which represents the majority of transnational collaboration links between universities in TNHE exporting and institutions in TNHE importing countries (Healey, 2013b). Second, the UK and Greece are major exporters and importers of TNHE (see Section 2.6.2.1); Greece is a major importer of UK TNHE programmes, mostly in the form of franchise partnerships between

UK universities and private colleges (Tsiligiris, 2013). Thus, this case study provides valuable observations about the expectations and perceptions of students who study in similar TNHEPs across the world.

The context of this case study is best described by what Yin (2003, p. 40) calls embedded single case study, which contrary to a holistic case study, involves more than one unit of analysis (Yin, 2003). Units of analysis are often confused with different methods of analysis (i.e. quantitative, qualitative) or different case studies. However, Yin (2003) suggests that embedded single case study is when, within a single case study, attention is given to subunits of analysis. Here as shown in Figure 4.2 below, the context of the case study is TNHE and quality management and the case is a TNHEP between a UK university and a Greek private college. The research questions and research purpose are structured around the exploration, analysis and comparison of two distinctive sub-units within the case study: 1) the university students, and 2) the partner institution students.

Figure 4.2: Embedded Single-Case Design[29]



[29]Adapted from Yin (2003, p. 40)

4.2.2 Population, sample, and demographics of the case study

The purpose of this research was to explore the applicability of the retrospective customer model in managing quality across different locations of the same undergraduate programme. The population of the case study serves exactly this purpose, as the two student groups represent: 1) **the university student** who studies at the main campus of the UK university and 2) **the partner institution student** who studies on the undergraduate programme of the UK university but at the partner institution in Greece**.** The two student types identified here are students who are enrolled on the same programme of the university, thus are underpinned by the same quality management approach, which makes the comparisons of their expectations and perceptions valid and relevant to the research purpose. This is because TNHE quality management, as discussed in the literature review (see Chapter 3, Section 3.3), is striving for the equivalency of the learning experience between students who study at the main campus of the university (university students) and those who study at the offshore location (partner institution students)[30].

In this thesis, the data was collected from the entire population of the case study, which consisted of 395 students in two distinct groups: 1) the university students (n=245 students) who study at the main campus of the university in the UK, and 2) the partner institution students (n=50 students) who study at the partner institution in Greece. The sample for the semi-structured interview, which represents the qualitative part of this mixed methods approach, consisted of twenty students (n=20), ten from each student group. The decision to involve the entire population of the case study was based on the anticipated value of considering all students, in both student groups, as an inseparable part of the case study context, something that is relevant to the case study research strategy where the selection of a sample is not a usual practice (Yin, 2003).

[30] See UK Quality Assurance Agency guidelines, Part B, Chapter B10, available online here: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandardsAndQuality/quality-code/Pages/Quality-Code-Part-B.aspx

In the demographics of the sample, the country of origin of the population was something that it was not explored via primary data, for two specific reasons. First, the nature of the research purpose included elements such as student expectations and perceptions which required a lengthy list of items (questions) for their complete exploration. This meant that if a demographic section was to be included in the questionnaire survey its length would have created diminishing returns in regard to participant engagement. Second, the purpose of the research was to explore student expectations and perceptions between two contexts of academic delivery, 'home' and 'offshore', rather than between students of different ethnicities. Thus, the exploration of students' nationalities would have been relevant in the context of an 'international student' perspective, which refers to mobile students who choose to study outside their country of birth.

However, recognising the important influence of student's social and ethnical characteristics on their expectations and perceptions, I have sought to identify the citizenship, domicile, ethnic background, and socio-economic characteristics of the two student groups of the case study using secondary evidence, so as to facilitate the analysis of the case study findings. The sources of this secondary data included, 1) for the university students: the university's director of programmes, the university's published documents, and data held at the UK Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA); 2) for the partner institution students: the college's published documents and my access to the student statistics held in the database of the college. In all of the above cases, the information retrieved about students' demographic profiles was anonymous and not assigned to particular students. Also, in the use of publicly available information and data (i.e. HESA), the identity of the institution was kept anonymous and protected.

Demographics of university students

The university director of programmes identified that 90% of the university students who participated in this study were UK citizens: approximately 5% were European, 3% were Asian, and 2% were of African nationalities.

In regard to the domicile[31] of university students, the data available from the Higher Education Statistics Authority website (2013) and particularly in dataset 2009/10, Table 1, reveals that in this particular UK University in 2009/10, 93% of the total undergraduate student population had the UK as the region of domicile, 1.7% a country within the European Union, and 4.4% a non-European Union country.

According to the data provided by the university programme director (2013) and the university archives, the age of university students was between 18 and 21 years. The gender of the university students group was 53% female and 47% male. In regard to the ethnicity background of university students, according to the university's annual diversity report (2009), 76.9% are of white and 23.1% of black and minority ethnic backgrounds. This is comparable to the UK higher education sector average student ethnicity profile, which is 79.6% white and 20.4% black and minority ethnic background.

In relation to the socio-economic background of the university students, the data from HESA reveals that 93.6% of young full-time first degree entrants are from state schools, while the mean percentage for HEI in England is 88.4% (HESA table T1a). Also, the percentage of young full-time first degree entrants from low participation neighbourhoods was 12.2% while the mean percentage for HEIs in England is 10.5% (HESA table T1a). According to the university's access agreement[32], a third of its UK students come from the area around the university. The above findings in regard to the demographics of university students, comply with the evidence (Hall, 2012) that in the UK the post-1992 universities tend to attract a larger proportion of students from non-

[31] Country of domicile is defined as “"the students' permanent or home address prior to entry to the programme of study” (IIE, 2013).

[32] In the UK, any HEI which wants to recruit students and charge tuition fees needs to submit an access agreement and receive approval by the Director of Fair Access (OFFA, 2013).

traditional backgrounds in comparison to pre-1992 universities. Also, the relevant literature has evidence to associate the location of a university in the UK with the type of students it attracts (Galindo-Rueda et al., 2004). However, newer evidence (Baskerville & Arlecdon Consulting, 2013) show that nowadays students in the UK tend to choose to study near their home, with one third traveling less than 12 miles to their place of study[33]. This is relevant to the university of the case study, which lies in an urban area (Pointer, 2005) and attracts its student population largely from the local territory.

Demographics of partner institution students

Using the data available in the partner institution, it was found that the partner institution student group consisted only of Greek citizens aged between 18 and 22 years. The domicile for the entire partner institution student population is the island of Crete. The gender of the partner institution students group was 61% male and 39% female. The ethnic background of partner institution students was only of a white background.

The data available at the partner institution shows that the entire student population comes from the island of Crete and is of a middle to higher family economic background. This can be explained by the fact that TNHE is subject to the payment of fees, which are at the range of 8,000 to 12,000 euros per year (Kitsantonis, 2011). Considering that this amount of fees corresponds to approximately 70% of the average yearly income of a lower economic income family, it is rather difficult for students from a lower economic background to afford TNHE in Greece. This should be evaluated alongside the fact that in Greece, undergraduate higher education provided by public universities is free for all. However, the examination system requires candidates to take extra private tutorial classes which cost about 10,000 euros a year and this has been linked with widening social inequality in Greece as only families with high income can afford this preparation (Sianou-Kyrgiou, 2008, 2010).

[33] The urban vs. rural dichotomy is irrelevant here because the purpose of the research is situated in a transnational education context thus facilitated by the “home” and “offshore” categorisation.

4.2.3 The analytical strategy

The higher level analytical strategy used in this thesis is best described as retroduction, which is deployed to reflect on the findings from both the quantitative and the qualitative research methods used in the mixed methods sequential design. Retroduction is the analytical strategy used in the critical realist paradigm (Hartig, 2011; Meyer & Lunnay, 2012; McEvoy, 2006) and seeks to identify explanations as to why things happen in the way that they do (Meyer & Lunnay, 2012). According to Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003), retroductive analysis is based on both inductive and deductive reasoning, and its aim is to confirm and verify the best plausible representations of reality. Specifically, in this thesis I build on the findings from the deductive and inductive reasoning to provide explanations about the nature of student expectations and perceptions among the two student groups of the case study. The retroductive analytical strategy is also used to explain the ramifications of the existing quality management model in TNHE by building on the relevant models of education quality (i.e. Biggs 3P; Finnie and Usher).

The retroductive analytical strategy is facilitated by the researcher's 'expert knowledge', which is used to form plausible explanations of the research findings (Sayer, 2000; Maxwell, 2012). Thus, during the analysis of the findings I have used my prior expert knowledge to form interpretations/explanations about the findings of the case study. Specifically, I have leveraged my expert knowledge as the manager of the TNHEP used in this case study, while also reflecting on the knowledge as a researcher in TNHE that I have accumulated through my interaction with other scholars at international conferences (i.e. Going Global 2012 & 2013) and via social media[34].

The lower-level analytical strategy in this research is facilitated by a comparative approach that concentrates on discussing the findings of the two student groups in the

[34] Since the beginning of this research project I have curated on online newspaper http://www.scoop.it/t/cross-border-higher-education which has attracted the interest of many experts in the field of international higher education. Also, in 2012 I was included in the list of top Twitter picks for international education http://www.iie.org/en/Who-We-Are/News-and-Events/Press-Center/Press-Releases/2012/12-12-2012-IIE-2012-Top-Twitter-Picks-International-Higher-Education

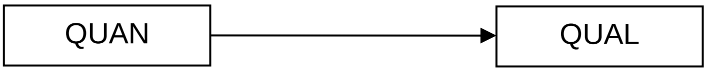
context of the assumption that emerged from the literature review (see conceptual framework in Chapter 3, section 3.5), about the sameness of expectations and perceptions of students who study in different locations of the same undergraduate programme.

However, it should be acknowledged that a comparative discussion can lead to operationalisation problems which relate to the wide and abstract nature of comparisons of the interpretation of reality, and the reasons behind this interpretation, in different social groups. For this reason, it is suggested (Bryman, 2001, p.54) that the comparative analysis and discussion of the data should be based on clear and very specific characteristics between the units of analysis – the two student groups in this research. For this reason, during the comparative analysis and discussion of student expectations and perceptions of the two student groups I reflected on factors that have been identified by existing research as responsible for shaping student expectations and perceptions. Specifically, I discuss and explain similarities and differences in student expectations and perceptions about quality in higher education between the two student groups, in the context of 1) the students' previous schooling experience, and 2) the cultural, social, and economic factors at the location of delivery. The comparative discussion is also facilitated by the institutional characteristics of the two education providers: the university and the partner institution. This meant that I discuss issues which relate to public vs. private providers, and include the difference in institutional objectives, institutional size and available resources, and marketing messages. All of the above are discussed in the context of evaluating how student expectations and perceptions are formed and influenced by the various institutional factors. However, the focus of this research was not the public vs. private debate but the exploration of 'home' and 'offshore' provision.

4.3 Mixed methods sequential design as the research approach

My approach for the collection and analysis of data in this research is a mixed methods sequential design consisting of a questionnaire survey followed by personal semi-structured interviews. As shown in Figure 4.3 below, the order of data collection was sequential, starting with the quantitative questionnaire survey and continuing with the qualitative semi-structured interviews.

Figure 4.3: Mixed methods sequential design[35]



According to the relevant literature (Blaikie, 2007; Neuman, 2007; Matthews, 2010; Crotty, 1998; Mertens, 1998), four main research approaches can be identified: the quantitative, the qualitative, the advocacy/participatory (emancipatory), and the pragmatic[36]. The pragmatic approach in the form of the mixed method sequential design was selected here because it is compliant with my theoretical paradigm, which requires multiple methods of investigation (Wynn & Williams, 2012), as well as being "dictated by the nature of the research problem" (McEvoy, 2006, p. 71), which in the thesis included both testing and developing theory. The testing of theory refers to the verification of the assumption, uncovered during the literature review, about the sameness of student expectations and perceptions across different location of programme delivery. If this assumption is rejected, then the applicability of a common customer model in managing quality in TNHE is problematic. The development of new theory refers to the deeper

[35] The capital letters represent that both methods carry equal value in informing the final findings towards the fulfilment of the research purpose (adapted from Creswell (2009, p.16)).

[36] The quantitative approach, associated with the positivist paradigm, uses the quantitative data to conduct hypothesis testing through deductive reasoning – this implies the process of moving from the general to the specific (Matthews, 2010). The qualitative approach, associated with the constructivist paradigm, qualitative data is used to explore reality as being socially constructed. The emancipatory approach supports the view that neither the quantitative nor the qualitative research is sufficient to cover the needs of people from disadvantaged and marginalised groups; it carries a bias as the researcher attempts to convey a particular stance/approach (Creswel, 2009).

comprehension of student expectations and perceptions across different locations of delivery, as well as the factors that justify similarities and differences between the expectations and perceptions of the two student groups. This will allow reflection on the ramifications for the existing quality management model in TNHE and justify the need for its contextualisation. Thus, a mono-method approach, either qualitative or quantitative, would not have been sufficient to allow me to achieve both above elements of the research purpose.

The mixed methods sequential design has been deployed within a Critical Realist paradigm and starts by using the quantitative method, in the form of a questionnaire survey, to "develop reliable descriptions and provide accurate comparisons" (McEvoy, 2006, p. 71) of expectations and perceptions between the two student groups. The quantitative part of the research methods follows a deductive reasoning process, because this serves best this part of the research purpose which is about theory testing (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). This refers to the applicability of a common customer model in TNHE by testing the assumption sameness of student expectations and perceptions between the two student groups of the case study. The deductive reasoning starts from theory, which is expressed in the form of a hypothesis; this is confirmed or rejected on the basis of the appropriate data and methods. In addition to testing the assumption about the sameness of student expectations and perception, the findings from the questionnaire survey and the deductive analysis will help to identify issues and areas which require additional exploration and explanation during the qualitative part of the research, the semi-structured interviews.

The qualitative method, in the form of personal semi-structured interviews, serves the explanatory stage of the research and, compliant with the Critical Realist paradigm, allows "themes to emerge …that could not have been anticipated in advance" and "illuminate complex concepts and relationships that are unlikely to be captured by predetermined response categories or standardised quantitative measures" (McEvoy, 2006, p. 71) in relation to student expectations and perceptions. Here, inductive reasoning is used, which is based on data to build theory (Zikmund, 2010) and follows the process: Observation -> Pattern -> Tentative Hypothesis -> Theory (Neuman, 2007). Thus, following an inductive reasoning process, the semi-structured interview findings were used to look deeper into the expectations and perceptions of the two student groups and identify similarities and/or differences which are then considered in the context of their possible ramifications on the existing model quality management model in TNHE.

The findings from both parts of the mixed sequential design are used to support the proposal for an alternative model (new theory) for the management of quality in TNHE by reflecting on Biggs' 3P and Finnie and Usher's (2005) models.

Apart from the relevance of the mixed method design to the research questions and purpose, its selection was also supported by the fact that it can increase the advantages and reduce the weaknesses of each individual method (Creswell, 2009; Saunders, 2009; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). This is referred as the "fundamental principle of mixed research" which, according to Johnson and Turner (2003 cited in Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004), is the ability of the research to grasp the strengths and weaknesses of both quantitative and qualitative methods.

Despite the clear advantages of mixed-methods design, there are weaknesses associated with the time required to collect data as well as with the separate phases of data collection (Creswell, 2009). To overcome these weaknesses, I have given equal importance to the design, implementation and analysis of the findings from each of the data collection methods. Additionally, I acknowledge the limitations of each method during their separate consideration below (see Sections 4.3.1 and 4.3.2).

4.3.1 Questionnaire Survey as the quantitative method

A structured questionnaire survey was developed and used with two clear objectives in mind. First, it was designed to statistically test the 'sameness' of expectations and perceptions between the two student groups. Second, it was designed to identify the main trends in students' expectations and perceptions and the factors affecting their formation, which would then inform the semi-structured interviews.

4.3.1.1 Content and structure

The content of the questionnaire was developed using a range of previous surveys on student expectations and perceptions (Broomfield & Bligh, 1998; Chen & Zimitat, 2006; Clewes, 2003; Jones, 2010; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; Parasuraman et al., 1991; Telford & Masson, 2005), with the aim of providing answers to the research questions.

The questionnaire included nineteen closed and open-ended questions. The first two questions were about demographics (Question 1: sex and Question 2: age). The questionnaire was divided into three parts based on the concepts it explored. A copy of the questionnaire is provided in the Appendix to this thesis.

The first part of the questionnaire, Questions 3 to 10, aimed at identifying **the factors affecting student choice of HEI and higher education programme**. In this research project, the factors affecting choice were considered as early student expectations which are unbiased by the teaching and learning experience that students begin to form as soon as they start their studies. The identification of factors influencing students' choice of an HEI and study programme is directly related to student expectations (Gronroos, 1990). Thus, the first part of the questionnaire is linked with Research Objective 1 (Research Questions 1 & 2 as shown in the outline of research method in Figure 4.1), which are about the factors affecting student choice and about student expectations. Questions 3 and 9 were replicated from the questionnaire developed by Mazzarol and Soutar (2002, p. 88) to identify the factors affecting students' choice of HEI and higher education programme. These questions were followed by open-ended questions which aimed to explore other factors not listed in the questions developed by Mazzarol and Soutar (2002).

The second part of the questionnaire, Questions 11 and 12, aimed at identifying **student perceptions about the elements that constitute high quality provision in higher education.** This reflects Research Objective 1 (Research Question 3), which is about the evaluation of the term quality in higher education from a student perspective.

The third part of the questionnaire, Questions 13 to 19, aimed at identifying **the perceptions of students about the quality of their current higher education experience**, which relates to Research Objective 1 (Research Question 2). This section contained both closed and open ended questions. Specifically, Questions 13 and 14 aimed at assessing the perception of students of the relevance of the programme to their career/employment aspirations. Question 16 reflected a typical SERVQUAL higher education adapted questionnaire (Arambewela & Hall, 2006) and was used to test statistically the comparability of the perceptions between the two student groups.

4.3.1.2 Pilot testing

A pilot test of the questionnaire survey was conducted to identify any problems in completing the questionnaire (time, language, clarifications, etc.). The pilot test was conducted only at the partner institution because of time and distance constraints. Nevertheless, this was considered satisfactory, as it allowed a substantial test of the questionnaire's appropriateness of design and content. The outcome of the pilot test was satisfactory as most students were able to complete the questionnaire in the expected time (15-20 minutes) without any extra assistance.

4.3.1.3 Conduct of the questionnaire survey

The survey took place at both sites of the case study institutions, that is in Greece and the UK. The questionnaire was distributed directly (by hand) to the students at both sites of the case study, the university and the partner institution. The questionnaire was anonymous and was not distributed by the researcher, to avoid influencing the participants. To increase the response rate, the researcher chose to distribute the questionnaire during normal scheduled lectures of compulsory modules. Appropriate members of staff from both institutions distributed the questionnaire at both sites, accompanied by a letter from the researcher explaining the aims and objectives of the survey. The required permission had been granted prior to the survey by both institutions.

4.3.1.4 Analysis of questionnaire survey findings

The analysis of the questionnaire survey findings follow the analytical strategy identified in Section 4.2.3, which is based on the theoretical propositions that drive the research. This strategy is applied here via a deductive approach which includes two stages. To initiate the analysis, descriptive statistics were produced and used to compare and rank the responses of the two student groups. This was followed by hypothesis testing as a means to test existing theory (Saunders, 2009), which in this research meant testing for similarities in the expectations and perceptions between the student groups.

The analysis of the findings proceeded through the following stages:

1) Descriptive statistics
    a. Calculation of means and differences between the responses of the two student groups
    b. Mean ranking to identify the major similarities and differences
2) Hypothesis testing using non-parametric statistics

4.3.1.4.1 Descriptive statistics: Mean comparison and ranking

The analysis and discussion of the findings from the closed questions (i.e. Part 1: 3, 7; Part 3: 13) had two stages. First, the statistical means (M) of the two groups were generated and the differences between them calculated. Second, mean ranking was then used to illustrate the differences between the two student groups. Mean scores were represented using MU for university students and MPI for partner institution students.

For closed ended questions, the response scale used is Likert 1-3 and 1-5. In Part 1 of the questionnaire the scale stands for 1=no influence and 3=major influence. In Part 2, the Likert values range from 1=completely disagree to 5=completely agree.

In the discussion of the two student group mean comparison, any difference above 0.5 is considered as an indication of a significant difference between the responses of the two groups. This is because a difference of 0.500 indicates that the group response falls into a different Likert scale category. For example, when the mean for one student group is 2.000 and the other is 2.500, the first group falls into the minor influence category whereas the second group is nearer the major influence category. Nevertheless, to test the existence of a statistically significant relationship, null hypothesis testing and the specific statistical calculation of the effect size were deployed, as explained below.

4.3.1.4.2 Hypothesis testing

Following the comparison of statistical means, mentioned above, hypothesis testing was used. To test the propositions derived from the research questions of this projects, two hypotheses were developed. A hypothesis is a testable proposition about the relationship between two or more concepts (Gray, 2009, p.15). The null hypothesis is an assertion which assumes either no relationship between two variables or no effect by a potential treatment (Saunders, 2009). It is therefore a structured way to test whether the outcomes of this questionnaire survey prove a similarity or dissimilarity amongst the two students groups' expectations and perceptions.

Thus, two null hypotheses were developed to provide a structured and controllable statistical comparison and validation of the survey findings. Two null hypotheses (H0) were developed assuming no difference in the responses between the two student groups of the case study, which reflects the assumptions behind the customer model for the management of quality in TNHE, as outlined in the conceptual framework figure earlier in this thesis (see Figure 3.4). The null hypotheses are for Part 1 and Part 3 of the questionnaire and reflect Research Objective 1.

Null hypothesis: Choice factors & student expectations (Research Objective1, Research Questions 1&2)

> *H_0= There is no significant difference in the responses between the university and the partner institution students about the factors influencing their choice of HEI and higher education programme.*

Null hypothesis: Student perceptions (Research Objective 1, Research Questions 2 & 3)

> *H_0= There is no significant difference between the perceptions of university and partner institution students*

Appropriate statistical methods were used to test whether these null hypotheses were verified or rejected. According to Field (2009), when hypothesis testing involves two independent samples (groups) the t-test independent samples is the most appropriate method. The t-test is a statistical method used to compare the difference in the mean scores of two groups. Nevertheless, to use the t-test for testing the null hypotheses, certain parameters have to be satisfied, including equal size of samples and normal distribution (Field, 2009). The research setting of the case study of this research project did not satisfy these parameters, as the size of samples was not the same. This in turn affected the normality of the distribution. So the use of the t-test was not appropriate for testing the null hypotheses.

According to the relevant literature (Field, 2009), when the t-test cannot be used, non-parametric alternatives can be used instead. Non-parametric statistics are statistical tools that do not require specific parameters for their application (Field, 2009). The non-parametric equivalent of the t-test independent samples is the Mann-Whitney U test (Siegel & Castellan, 1988, p. 134).

Thus, to test statistically the H_0 hypotheses about the equality of responses between the two groups, the Mann-Whitney U test was used. According to the theory

(Saunders, 2009) if the degree of significance[37] in the Mann-Whitney U test is 95%, then the event is likely to be true. This means that the probability (p) of the result occurring by chance alone is lower than or equal to 5% ($p<=.05$). Therefore if the p is equal to or lower than .05 then the null hypothesis is verified and vice versa. Using the $p<=.05$ criterion, the appropriate lines of the Mann-Whitney U table were highlighted in each relevant section of analysis.

To identify the magnitude of the relationship described in the hypothesis, the effect size (r) was also considered. The degree of significance (p), as explained above, shows whether the tested relationship between the two groups is true or not. Even in cases where the outcome of the calculations of the Mann-Whitney U is statistically significant (i.e. $p<.05$), this does not imply that the relationship has an important effect in practical terms (Field, 2005, p.294). Thus, to measure the strength of the relationship between the variables of the research (the two student groups in this project), the Pearson correlation coefficient (r) was used. The effect size (r) is the measure of the magnitude of the observed relationship between the two groups. This statistic is denoted r and can take values between 0 and 1. A value of r near to 0 shows no effect and a value of r near to 1 shows a perfectly strong effect of the observed relationship (Field, 2005).

The following equation was used to compute r (Rosenthal 1991):

$$r = \frac{z}{\sqrt{N}}$$

where N is the total sample of students in this study.

The criteria for effect size are:

r= .10 small effect

r= .30 medium effect

r= .50 large effect

The above criteria consist of a two-stage statistical testing of the relationships that exist between the responses of the two student groups in this study. First, the Mann-

[37] Significance in statistics shows how likely a result is to be due to chance.

Whitney U test shows whether the null hypotheses are accepted or rejected using the p<.05 rule. Second, the effect size of the observed relationship is calculated, aiming to identify the relationships with the larger effect.

If, for example, the null hypothesis between the two groups about equality of expectations is rejected (p<.05) for one of the expectation components, the calculation of r will allow us to identify how important (strong) this difference is. This statistic will also allow the weighting of each observed difference and facilitate the appropriate focused discussion of the findings. Overall, the statistical testing of the null hypotheses is deployed as tool for the triangulated verification of the findings derived from the simple comparison of means which takes place before the statistical testing.

4.3.2 Semi-structured Individual interviews

Semi-structured individual interviews were used as the qualitative part of the mixed methods sequential design deployed in this study. This method aimed to further investigate and verify, in the context of triangulation, the findings derived from the questionnaire survey. Also, the qualitative part of the investigation aimed to capture the richness behind students' view of reality and particularly behind their expectations and perceptions. Thus, the root questions of the semi-structured interviews were developed partly from the outcomes of the questionnaire survey and partly from the need to construct a deeper understanding of how students understand quality in higher education.

The semi-structured form of interviews was preferred to the unstructured form because it allowed (Bryman, 2012) fulfilment of the objective of this stage of the research, which is to gather rich and deep information about the deeper factors and relationships that affect students' higher education quality expectations and perceptions about quality.

4.3.2.1 Interview content

The individual semi-structured interviews were conducted using a list of nine root questions which were developed after the completion of the questionnaire survey and the analysis of its findings. The root questions were developed: 1) as a means to provide answers to the research questions, and 2) to explore the issues emerging from the questionnaire survey analysis and requiring further investigation. These root questions were used to initiate the discussion with interviewees concentrating on each specific theme of the research, as shown in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: The nine root questions used in the semi-structured interviews

Quest no.	Question	Research Theme	Relates to research question
1	*Why did you choose the university for your studies?*	*Factors of influence as early expectations*	**1**
2	*What were the factors that influenced your decision?*	*Factors of influence as early expectations*	**1**
3	*Tell me what you expect of the university/partner institution?*	*Expectations*	**2**
4	*What do you think as absolutely important to exist/be provided during your studies by the university/partner institution?*	*Expectations and Perceptions about quality*	**2 & 3**
5	*How can a Higher Education Institution achieve high quality in its programmes and generally in its operations?*	*Perceptions about quality*	**3**
6	*What do you think are going to be the most valuable attributes of your degree when you obtain it?*	*Expectations about the outcomes*	**2 & 3**
7	*How do you think your degree will affect your future?*	*Expectations about the outcomes*	**2 & 3**
8	*What do you think are the main advantages and disadvantages of being able to study on a programme which is offered in your country rather than in the country where it was originally designed and delivered?*	*Perceptions about TNHEP*	**4**
9	*Is possible to have the same learning experience studying in a collaborative partner of a university compared with the university itself?*	*Perceptions about TNHEP*	**4**

Each root question was followed by a range of secondary questions which were posed during each personal interview depending on the initial responses of the interviewee.

4.3.2.2 Interview population and sample

The individual semi-structured interviews were carried out with ten (10) students at each institution - a total of twenty (20) students in both institutions of the case study. The number of interviews was decided on the basis of the nature of the case study research strategy, which does not attempt to use sampling as a means to achieve statistical generalisability (Stake, 1995; Robson, 2002). Here, instead, the focus was on acquiring a deeper understanding of student expectations and perceptions, and how these are formed/influenced by the wider social, cultural or other factors within the context of the case study. Thus, the number of the interviews was selected on the basis of the volume of information that could be sufficient to inform the research process but also to allow me as the researcher to handle this part of the research effectively. The sampling method was self-selected sampling[38], as all interviewees became part of the research after their voluntary willingness to participate when asked during normal teaching hours. This allowed the interviews to be organise and facilitated more quickly and without disrupting students' participation in lectures and seminars.

All interviewees from the university student group were UK nationals. As a researcher, I did not aim to select only students who were UK nationals, however this occurred because the majority (80%) of the students in the university student group were UK nationals. This facilitated the qualitative exploration of the findings, as it allowed me to have two student groups which can be considered homogenous in regard to their country of residence, the education system they attended, and the other available options they had to continue their studies at undergraduate level. Nevertheless, the comparison between the two student groups is not concentrated on comparing ethnic identities but instead to grasp a deep understanding of how and why students in the two groups form similar or different quality expectations and perceptions about the same undergraduate programme.

[38] This is also called volunteer sampling and it describes a situation where participants become part of a study in response to a public notice.

4.3.2.3 Conduct of the interviews

In qualitative research methods such as semi-structured interviews, the researcher acts as the medium for the collection of data. Thus, as Kvale (1996, pp. 36–37) points out, the outcomes of the qualitative approach will depend upon the researcher's interview skills and the personal interaction between the researcher and respondents. Also, the effectiveness and validity of the qualitative research could be undermined by the 'human' factor and the researcher's subjectivity.

All interviews were conducted individually and recorded with the permission of the participants (students). Some interviews were conducted via Skype using the video call mode. Each interview averaged between 45 and 60 minutes and was conducted by the researcher.

As researcher, I was aware about the basic interview principles which I have also practised during my role as a manager when interviewing prospective members of academic staff and prospective students. I was aware that I had to give time to responders and not ask several questions at once. Also, I knew that I had to look further than simple "yes" or "no" answers, thus I had prepared secondary questions of a 'how' and 'why' type to facilitate seeking a deeper understanding of students' responses.

Another issue with conducting interviews in different geographical setting is cultural and language awareness (Bryman, 2012). Despite the UK and Greece not being very different in basic elements of culture, particularly in regard to social interaction (i.e. gestures, language use, interaction style, body language), I was aware about possible local differences, thus aimed to maintain a neutral attitude during the interviews. This practice is suggested when interviews are conducted in different locations (Gray, 2009).

The fact I have spent 6 years in the UK as an undergraduate and postgraduate student, and the past 11 years working closely with UK universities makes me believe that I am very familiar with UK culture. So, during the interviews with the university students, I was able to develop a friendly discussion in English about the themes of the research.

Similarly, as I am Greek and I was able to communicate with partner institution students in Greek I, while also being familiar with their culture, facilitated the easier conduct of the interviews. Here it is important to discuss the possible impact of my dual role as researcher and college principal when conducting the interviews at the partner institution.

Before going into detail on the reaction of the students, it is critical to mention the organisational and management culture at the partner institution. At the partner institution, we follow an open and democratised organisational structure and culture. This means that students are able to contact programme leaders and myself, as College Principal, without prior notice and meeting arrangements. Personally, I have frequent and close interaction with students, which has contributed to the development of a familiarity and good relationship with them. This meant that students at the partner institution were keen to contribute in this research by participating in the personal interviews. Also, during the interviews the students felt comfortable and did not express, either verbally or via their body language, any sings of uneasiness. The possibility that partner institution students' responses have been affected by my dual role cannot be excluded or overlooked. However, I believe that the benefits which emerged from being able to conduct the interviews myself outweigh the disadvantages/limitations which may derive from the possible bias of students because of my dual role. The issue of my positionality as research and manager is discussed in Section 4.4 below.

4.3.2.4 Analysis of interview findings

This analytical framework of semi-structured interviews evidence was driven by the analytical strategy identified in 4.2.3, thus it was structured around the theoretical proposition about 'sameness' of student expectations and perceptions. Here the aim was to generate deeper understanding about the nature of, and the factors behind, student expectations and perceptions, by comparing the interview findings for the two student groups of the case study. Thus, the interviews were transcribed and organised into themes according to their relevance to the research questions, as shown in Table 4.1 in Section 4.3.2.1. This analytical framework can be best described by what Grbich (2007, p. 16 cited in Matthews, 2010, p.373) calls thematic analysis, which is “a process of segmentation, categorisation and relinking of data prior to interpretation”. Here I recognise that categorisation itself is a process of interpretation of data and as such it was based on themes that correspond to the research questions. Thus, the main themes used to organise the data were:

- Factors influencing students’ choice of HEI and higher education programme (Section 6.2.1) – Research Question 1
- Student expectations (Section 6.2.2) – Research Question 2
- Student perceptions of quality in higher education (Section 7.2) – Research Questions 2 & 3
- Student perception of TNHE (Chapter 8) – Research Question 4

Then I looked for common answers and issues with each student group and identified sub-themes in each of the above main themes. This was conducted during the initial categorisation and preparation of data as well as throughout the analysis and the discussion of the findings. Sub-themes were identified and then merged into larger categories so as to provide a rich, but manageable in terms of presentation and space, interpretation of students’ view on the core themes of the research.

The interrogation of data was based on a comparative discussion on the most frequently reoccurring themes between the two student groups. During the interrogation of data, I followed a retroductive reasoning strategy and sought evidence to explain the students’ responses, particularly in the context of the Biggs 3P (1993) and Finnie & Usher (2005) models. Also, during the interrogation of data I tried to remind the reader, and myself, about the possible impact of my positionality on my interpretation of the data.

As suggested by Yin (2003), I aimed to look at the full range of the data available and leverage my ‘expert’ position in drawing evidence from existing research to aid the interpretation of data. Particularly for the partner institution student group, I used my personal insight to draw on relevant findings in published research which served the narrative of this thesis. This meant that I retrieved evidence from publications which I felt tied in with the findings of the interviews in a manner that added value to the discourse which was not necessarily for or against a particular side of the debate. The selection of these publications may have been ‘coloured’ by my duality as researcher and practitioner, an issue discussed later in this chapter (see Section 4.4 below).

However, I should acknowledge that during the interrogation of data I had a clear objective, as a Critical Realist, to consider the impact of universal factors (i.e. Marketisation of higher education) on student expectations and perceptions while pursuing to explain the complexity of the real world and argue for the need of contextualisation of the customer model in the management of quality in TNHE. In particular, I aimed to reflect on the interview findings to make links with and evaluate the ramifications on the educational quality model developed by Finnie and Usher (2005) as well as the 3P Biggs’ model on the teaching and learning process. This is critical for the purpose and value of this thesis, as it provides the basis for the justification of a contextualised model for the management of quality in TNHE.

It is important to note that I have a more practical familiarity with issues relating to the Greek context. However, my management role as well my research activity have allowed me to develop a comprehensive understanding of the operational and theoretical issues around the UK higher education context that are at least comparable to my knowledge of the Greek context. Nevertheless, during the interrogation of data, one may consider that I am allowing more space and depth in the in the interpretation of findings from the Greek partner institution. Despite the fact that this could be considered to be related to my positionality and wider knowledge of the Greek context, it is primarily due to my effort to provide a rich discussion of the partner institution student so as to fulfil the research purpose.

I have presented the analysis and discussion of semi-structured interviews data in chapters organised according to the main theoretical theme discussed (see above). At the end of each chapter, I will present the findings of the analysis using a table which allows a summary of the similarities and differences between the two groups.

Translation of data

Another issue which must be raised is the fact that interviews with partner institution students were conducted in Greek. Translation poses a range of problems and may be considered as having a direct impact on the reliability and the validity of the research (Birbili, 2000) . The quality of translation depends upon the ability of the translator to convey the real meaning of words by reflecting on the cultural, language and other contextual factors which may shape the conceptual meaning of the responder's words (Liamputtong, 2008). It is suggested (Liamputtong, 2008) that those who undertake cross-cultural research should be 'insiders' so as to understand the participants' linguistic and cultural characteristics. This meant that as an 'insider' in the partner institution, I came from a position of strength in regard to my understanding of linguistic and cultural issues.

The translation of the interview scripts could be performed with the help of an interpreter, however I completely share the opinion of Temple (1997 cited in Liamputtong, 2008, p.8) that "interpreters are often worked for short periods and they rarely become involved in the research" and "therefore, they do not have a full understanding of the research aims and questions" (Tsai et al. 2004, p. 8 cited in Liamputtong, 2008, p. 8).

For the above reasons, a) my insider's role and b) the possible problems with the use of an interpreter, I undertook the translation of transcripts from Greek into English. From my experience with the subject area, higher education quality management, I knew that some concepts did not exist in Greek and/or were difficult to convey using the same words in English. According to the literature (Wolcott, 1994 cited in Ahmed, 2012, p. 86) there are two extreme strategies for the translation of the interview transcripts: 1) use a free or 2) literal translation. The first approach allows the researcher to increase the conceptual alignment of the translated text but it can be considered to distort the original response of the interviewees. The second approach provides a more direct representation of the original text, which then can be used for direct quotations inside the analysis of the interviews, but it can lead to reduced readability due to the incompatibility of specific words or concepts.

With the above issues in mind I focused on translating the text so as to convey the conceptual meaning of the responses using a literal translation and changing only those words which did not make complete sense in English and/or impacted the readability of the quotes used. The quotes used inside the text are not far from the original responses of partner institution students, but are my own translations, which should be considered by the reader of this thesis.

4.4 Positionality

The idea of conducting this study emerged in 2005 when I was Director of Programmes in the partner institution (one of the two institutions in this case study). One of the main issues facing this sort of research was how to address the dual role of manager and researcher. I began to explore this dual role in the early stages of this study because it could potentially influence the responses of students to the questions that I asked during the data collection phases.

The work on the insider-outsider researcher conundrum by Hellawell (2006) has been helpful in this respect. Someone is considered as an insider researcher when he/she “possesses a priori intimate knowledge of the community and its members” (Hellawell, 2006, p. 484). Here, community is meant as something much wider than an organisation or a group of people and it does not imply that the researcher should be a member of either. This definition of insider researcher initially made matters more complex for me.

Before considering the insider-outsider concept, my perception was that I could be considered as influential or less objective only about my impact at the stage of data gathering and analysis with the partner institution student group. However, I could see that I could also be considered as an insider for both student groups, as I am familiar with both settings of the research (university and partner institution).

So clearly, I was an insider and that could be possibly seen as the source of two disadvantages for my research: 1) the possibility of influencing participants during their direct interaction with me when I conducted the personal interviews, and 2) the possibility of bias in my interpretation of data and my conclusions.

During my effort to seek ways through which I could justify my role as researcher and overcome the above challenges, I came across the concept of reflexivity, which is defined by Hamdan (2009, p. 378) as "…a metaphysical analysis of the researcher's account, one that examines the researcher's own input into the research process". Reflexivity aims to help the researcher to conceptualise and communicate their input and the motives behind this input during the different stages of the research. By adopting this practice, I could reflect on my motives, feelings and experiences as researcher which should not be excluded, as suggested by positivism, but instead are a valuable and vital element of the Critical Realist paradigm used in this research (Jones, 2001). Here, reflective practice helped to address issues of power, bias, and ethics while, at the same time, providing additional dimensions to the research; particularly in questions of a 'how' and 'what' nature (Jones, 2001). I have therefore deployed reflective practice during the discussion of the findings from the quantitative and qualitative research methods, focusing on the acknowledgement of issues of power and bias.

During the interviews with the students at the partner institution, I tried to be clear about my identity as researcher and explain them the purpose of the research. Many of the interviewees at the partner institution were keen to learn about the outcomes of the research and some expressed interest in the subject as a possible theme for their postgraduate studies. This shows that responders felt comfortable in their interaction with me, not only during the course of the interviews but also after their completion. Of course, students' bias caused by my role as College Principal cannot be ruled out, thus I will seek to remind the reader about this, particularly during the analysis of the semi-structured interview data.

The personal interviews with the students at the partner institution could be considered the most problematic part of the research, in regard to the influence of my dual role. This is owing to the fact that I chose to conduct the interviews myself. Thus, one may consider that students, during the interviews, could have been biased by the fact that they were being interviewed by their college principal. This may be true. However, in the context of the Critical Realist paradigm, the richness of the actual outcomes of the interviews as well as my ability to access and explain these outcomes in their 'real-life' context meant that the benefits arising from this direct interaction with students were far greater than the possible limitations. Also, the analysis of the interviews showed that students responded in an open and explicit manner, exhibiting no bias imposed by my presence. In the interviews sections, earlier in this chapter, I clearly explain the setting of the research, my communication with participants, and the history of the organisational culture at the partner institution which allows the reader to understand the extent of the possible bias of partner institution students during the personal interviews.

In regard to the possible bias during the analysis of the semi-structured interviews, as in every piece of qualitative research (Creswell, 2009), as researcher I could not argue that I was detached from my personal standpoint. Instead, using reflective practice about my possible bias and predispositions, I aimed to question my interpretation of data and particularly that emerging from the semi-structured interviews. Also, the fact that I have used a mixed methods sequential design starting with a quantitative survey allowed me to apply a triangulation strategy for testing and verifying my interpretation of data.

Nevertheless, one might consider that as an insider it could also be considered that I bring into the interpretation of data wider presumptions or what Hockey (1993 cited in Hellawell, 2006) calls "taken-for-granted assumptions". However, this was not against my epistemological stance and the theoretical perspective deployed in this thesis. Identifying my epistemology within the Critical Realist paradigm meant that I had to look at student expectations and perceptions and try to explain them in the context of the deeper social, cultural and other factors and mechanisms, and also by using my knowledge of the subject area and the context of the case study.

Overall, I share the view that for the researcher one way to overcome the disadvantages of being an insider is to "systematically reflect on who he or she is in the inquiry and is sensitive to his or her personal biography and how it shapes the study" (Creswell, 2003, p.182). During the analysis of the data, I continually reflect on my role, my standing towards the research themes, and the possible bias towards the interpretation of the data. Throughout the different parts of the thesis I aim to make known to the reader the personal lens of analysis through which I analyse and interpret the data, make connections with the literature, and evaluate the possible ramifications on existing theory.

4.5 Ethical considerations

All research has general and specific ethical considerations and here we must reflect on the key ethical concerns relating to this research. The research was conducted according to the *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research* (2011) published by the British Educational Research Association and the *Ethical Guidelines of the School of Education in the Faculty of Education, Law and Social Science of Birmingham City University* (ELSS, 2011).

4.5.1 Participants

This section explains the actions taken by the researcher to ensure compliance with the ethical guidelines about the treatment and information provided to the participants of this research.

4.5.1.1 Voluntary informed consent

Prior to the research, all participants were informed about the purpose, aims and scope of the research project. Also, all participants were introduced to the process, duration and content of the research methods. No deception was used for any reason. The participants voluntarily participated in both research methods.

4.5.1.2 Implications for participants' workload

During the design of the data collection instruments for this research, the researcher took into account the need to minimise the 'bureaucratic burden' on participants. The questionnaire survey was designed in such a way as to require between 15 and 30 minutes for its completion. Similarly, the personal interviews were semi-structured around core questions and were expected to last no more than 30 minutes each. This was clearly mentioned to all participants prior to their participation.

4.5.1.3 Right to withdraw

It was stressed to the students that participation was not compulsory at any stage of the research. During the questionnaire survey, participants were allowed to stop the completion of the survey at any point in time at which they felt uncomfortable. The questionnaire contained an introduction which explained in detail the purpose, duration and content of the survey.

The personal interviews were conducted using volunteers from the student population from both institutions. Also, during the personal interview students were offered the option to stop the interview at any time at which they felt uncomfortable.

The researcher ensured that the content of both the questionnaire survey and the personal interviews did not include any questions or other material that could be considered insulting or intimidating or would place the participants in any emotional distress.

4.5.1.4 Detriment arising from participation in research

The time and place of the conduct of the research aimed to capture the students' responses to the questions of the questionnaire survey and the personal interview without creating disadvantage or harm to the participant students. The questionnaire survey was conducted during a workshop in normal teaching hours and all students were invited to participate. The interviews were conducted with volunteers during normal teaching hours as well as through Skype at a distance and at a convenient time for participants.

4.5.1.5 Children, vulnerable young people and vulnerable adults

The population and the sample of this research were young adults (students) who can be considered as vulnerable. However since all of the students surveyed in this research were adults, there was no need to contact parents. Since the researcher has an active role in one of the institutions which formed the case study setting, it was acknowledged that participants may experience distress or discomfort during the research. During the planning and the implementation of this research, the researcher aimed to avoid creating a sense of intrusion for participants. Also, the researcher was prepared to discontinue any actions that participants may have felt as intimidating.

4.5.1.6 Privacy and disclosure

The anonymity of informants and participants was safeguarded and maintained. No names or other personal data were obtained. It was mentioned prior to the conduct of the questionnaire survey and the personal interviews that the data gathered would be used strictly for the purposes of this research. It was clearly explained to all participants that no information or data would be disclosed or used for any other purpose than this research. Participants were also informed that the data was to be kept in a password protected file which was used only in the personal computer of the researcher.

4.5.2 Permission to research

Prior to the research, the necessary written permission to conduct the above methods of research at both institutions, the university and the partner institution, were obtained. The researcher ensured that during this research on-going institutional activities were not disturbed by any means. Additionally, to avoid problems of public image, the name of the UK university and the Greek private college were not disclosed directly during the discussion of the findings.

4.5.3 Intellectual ownership, data protection and copyrights

Full responsibility has been taken for implementing and applying all the necessary measures for the protection of the confidentiality of both participants and data to the full extent provided by law. Appropriate reference has been made to the authors whose work has been used in this thesis. Hereby it is certified that this research does not conflict with academic freedom.

Chapter 5– Background of Case Study Context

5.0 Introduction

This chapter provides the background to the case study. It provides a justification for the choice of the particular case study context (franchise partnership between a Greek college and a UK university) and it offers a short description of each of the two higher education institutions, the university and the partner institution (Section 5.1). This is important as a means to grasp the motivation and rationale for the selection of this particular case study and to understand the institutional characteristics of the two education institutions as well as the wider contextual dynamics.

In regards to the contextual dynamics, this chapter includes a description of the two educational systems (Section 5.2) of Greece and the UK, which are involved in the case study, with particular focus on undergraduate provision, because of the nature of the case study, which is about a business undergraduate programme. This is important because the education system has been identified as a push or pull factor[39] for student mobility (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002) as well as a factor which indirectly influences student expectations and perceptions of quality in higher education (Khodayari & Khodayari, 2011; Sagu, 2009). Thus, the review of the structure, characteristics, admission system, and on-going issues (Section 5.3) of the higher education systems in each of the two countries will provide valuable insights into the process of analysing and interpreting the expectations and perceptions of each of the student groups.

Section 5.2 also discusses the higher education quality assurance systems of both countries. This is important because it relates directly to the research purpose of this thesis, which is to assess the applicability in the receiving country of quality systems designed in the source country. This is also valuable as an indication of the motive and rationale behind the quality assurance approach applied by the source country which,

[39] A push factor for student mobility is an unfavourable factor or condition within the domestic system which forces students to move to another country to continue their studies in higher education. A pull factor for student mobility is a favourable factor or condition which exists in the country abroad and attracts students to move there for their higher education studies.

according to some authors, has often focused on controlling and eliminating risk rather than enhancing the quality of the student experience in the receiving country (Stella & Bhushan, 2011; Coleman, 2003). However, the specifics on quality assurance in TNHE have been explored in more detail during the literature review in Section 3.3.

The chapter concludes with Section 5.3 where the internationalisation dynamics of each of the two education systems are explored. Internationalisation dynamics are considered to be the factors that affect the two dimensions of the internationalisation of higher education: the first dimension is internationalisation ‘at home’, which means the internationalisation of the curriculum and academic delivery; the second dimension is internationalisation ‘abroad’, which includes the movement of people, programmes, and institutions (Knight, 2004). The latter is important because it relates directly to the transnational higher education partnership (TNHEP) which forms the case study of this research. The review of Greek higher education internationalisation dynamics will contribute to understanding the reasons for the existence of TNHEPs and the way in which the Greek government treats and regulates them, something which affects the students in many different ways (Kitsantonis, 2011). Similarly, the review of the internationalisation of UK higher education will provide an understanding of the role of TNHE for UK higher education institutions and the increased interest in quality and student experience issues. This will contribute to the justification of the value of this thesis.

5.1 The case study

This research is based on a case study research design. The methodological justification of the case study as research design is made in the methodology chapter (see Chapter 4). Here the discussion is about the justification of the particular case study in the context of the university and the partner institution.

The case study examines a transnational higher education partnership (TNHEP) which includes two education institutions in partnership under a franchise agreement. The source institution is a UK university and the receiving institution is a Greek private college. This collaborative arrangement enables the college to deliver the university's undergraduate programme, Bachelor's in Business, on a three-year full-time study mode (The College, 2011a).

To ensure that the reputation of neither of the two institutions of this case study research is undermined, their anonymity has been maintained throughout the research. Throughout this thesis, the university is referred to as "the university" and the private college as "the partner institution".

The choice of this case study was based on my active involvement in the TNHEP, as Director of Programmes and later as College Principal at the private college. It was during this involvement that the research problem and research questions emerged as a result of my day-to-day engagement with the quality management of the TNHEP. Therefore, the case study is the setting in which the research problem emerged.

However, it is important to note that the case study is also justifiable for its value towards the contribution to knowledge for a number of reasons. First, the case study explores issues and areas which are important for the future of international higher education and are not yet well-researched. Second, quality management in higher education and, particularly the student as customer model, lie at the heart of contemporary academic and public debate about higher education. Third, the participation of students and higher education institutions in TNHE is growing fast and is expected to overtake current rates of student mobility by 2020 (Varghese, 2011).

The UK is a prime exporter of programmes and has a wide range and number of TNHEPs across the world (Baskerville et al., 2011). Thus, the study of a UK university TNHEP would provide valuable insights about student expectations and perceptions of quality in higher education from the point of view of a major exporting country. On the other hand, Greece is an example of a major importer of TNHE programmes and is the host of a large number of TNHEPs. Furthermore, Greece is an example of a country where the government's policy is one of extreme protectionism against TNHEPs, as described by McBurnie and Ziguras (2007, p. 90). Similarly, the study of Greece as a receiving country in the TNHEP of the case study would provide valuable knowledge about student expectations and perceptions from the receiving country side.

5.1.1 The university: Source institution

The UK source institution is one of the so-called 'post-92' universities. Like most of these institutions, it was a former polytechnic that was granted the right to become a university in 1992[40]. Today, according to its website, it is one of the faster-growing 'post-92' universities and its graduates have a high record of employability, quoting the HESA 2009/10 survey[41]. The university attracts students from over 90 countries and in 2011 it had 25,000 students and one of the largest collaborative provisions in the UK, with approximately 7,000 students studying at its overseas partner institutions (The University, 2011). The University has a structure comprising three colleges, each of which comprises a range of different academic schools (The University, 2011).

The size and organisational structure of the university will be important elements in the course of the discussion and analysis of university student expectations and perceptions in the later chapters of this thesis. This is important because it has been identified by existing research (Appleton-Knapp & Krentler, 2006) that student expectations and perceptions are influenced by what are termed 'institutional' factors, including the size and organisation of the teaching provision, which in turn depends on the size and organisational structure of the university.

Also, to facilitate the interpretation of the quality management standards of the University's provision, it is necessary to gather evidence about its strategic positioning and mission. This is because the approach of a university to quality management will primarily depend upon its strategy, which refers to the way the university operates and promotes

[40] Detailed discussion of higher education in UK is provided later in this chapter.
[41] More information can be found at: http://www.hesa.ac.uk/index.php?option=com_pubs&task=show_pub_detail&pubid=1709&Itemid=286

the implementation of its long-term objectives (Bonaccorsi, 2007). According to the university's website, the mission of the university is to be a leading professional university delivering education and research that shape lives and society (The University, 2011). At the same time its strategic plan, reveals that its mission is focused on fulfilling its students' ambitions and employers' needs (The University, 2010b).

The university's strategic plan articulates quality as 'value for money', stating clearly that since students are paying fees, they would expect universities to deliver their services as efficiently as private organisations (The University, 2010b, p. 22). This shows that the university's strategy towards quality is aligned with the prevailing 'student as customer' conceptualisation. This reveals the university's institutional policy priorities about quality management, including its transnational partnerships such as that explored in this case study.

Overall, the mission and strategic focus of the university recognise the importance of student expectations and employability, and both of these issues are very relevant to the research purpose of this thesis. The customer-focused university strategy, clearly expressed in the strategic plan document when it says: "we are customer-focused" (The University, 2010b, p. 5), is particularly relevant for this research. This is because the student as customer and quality as value for money form the heart of the retrospective customer model for the management of quality in higher education, whose applicability in TNHE is the research problem for which this research aims to find answers.

However, it must be noted that the university recognises the problematic nature of the customer model in higher education. The university, in its strategic plan, makes a distinction between the academic provision services (teaching, examinations and assessment) and the other services provided to students. According to the university, the academic provision should stretch students, and all other interactions between the university and the students should be governed by customer service principles (The University, 2010b, p.22). This complies with the view adopted in this thesis (see Chapter 1) that educational and service quality is equally important for universities and as such should be considered together. The exploration of student presage factors will be of significant importance for the realisation of both educational and service quality. This shows the importance and relevance of the purpose of this research, which aims to consider the applicability of the retrospective customer model in regards to its ramifications on both educational and service quality.

As this research focuses on the study of a transnational higher education partnership, it is imperative to explore the university's internationalisation strategy. The university describes itself as an international university (The University, 2010b, p.21) on the basis of its existing large body of students studying at overseas partners (The University, 2010b, p.21). Reflecting on its internationalisation strategy and activities, the university has embraced both dimensions of internationalisation[42], that is, 'internationalisation at home', which refers to the internationalisation of the curriculum and cross-border higher education, and 'internationalisation abroad', which refers to the movement of programmes, people and students (Knight, 2004).

As this research is concerned with the exploration of an existing transnational partnership of the university, the 'abroad' part of its internationalisation strategy is particularly relevant here. The partnership of the case study is a franchise arrangement which is defined by the university as a situation where "The partner delivers all or the greater part of an existing university programme to university students, usually offsite, and the partner is approved by the university" (The University, 2010a, p. 3).

The way in which the university manages quality at its partner institutions, including the one of this case study, is directly related to the research purpose. The university has specific quality assurance guidelines for its transnational partnerships but these are based on the same quality assurance guidelines and mechanisms as those used at the main campus (The University, 2010a). The aims of these guidelines are around: 1) assuring

[42] The university describes three internationalisation activities: 1) the recruitment of international students; 2) international research collaborations; and 3) the internationalisation of the curriculum. The university requires its existing international partners to support at least one of the above activities.

that the awards awarded via its partners satisfy the university and UK higher education expectations and standards; 2) assuring that the awards awarded via its collaborative provisions satisfy the university and UK higher education expectations and standards; 3) assuring the compliance of the university with the QAA guidelines on collaborative provision and other relevant policies on UK higher education; and 4) ensuring transparency of information and control over all of the university's collaborative provision, irrespective of its size and credit point contribution to a university's award (The University, 2010a).

From the above it is clear that the university quality assurance guidelines focus primarily on controlling and regulating the operation of the partner institutions on the basis of UK higher education expectations, and do not consider the partner institution student expectations and perceptions of quality in higher education. This reflects the work by Hodson and Thomas (2001) and Smith (2010), who have highlighted an intention by the source institutions to use their quality assurance policies, criteria and procedures for assuring quality within their partners without room for contextualisation. However, Hodson and Thomas (2001) and others (Smith, 2010; Farrugia, 2012) argue that these guidelines and policies might be appropriate at the main campus of the TNHE exporting institution but are not sufficient to address the different stakeholder expectations and traditions in the receiving country. In fact, the evaluation of the appropriateness and applicability of source institution quality management policies and practices to the partner institution is a controversial issue that this thesis aims to explore[43].

5.1.2 The partner institution: Receiving institution

The partner institution is a privately owned college located in the island of Crete, Greece. The partner institution was established in 1998 to fulfil the increasing demand for higher education courses in southern Greece (The College, 2011c). This reflects on the

[43] A comprehensive literature review about the quality assurance guidelines at national (UK), European, and International level is provided in Section 3.3.

existence of a persistent supply gap in the Greek higher education system to satisfy the growing demand, as described by Psacharopoulos (2003), which has been one of the prime factors for the creation of transnational higher education partnerships in Greece (ICAP, 2010).

The partner institution was created by a businessman who had been engaged with vocational and further education institutions previously, and has had a 30-year long presence in the education sector (The College, 2011c). This reveals that the college is a private organisation with long history in the local community. This is relevant to this study as it provides information about the institutional profile of the partner institution which can be comparatively discussed with the expectations and perception of students.

The partner institution operates under the control of the Greek Ministry of Education, and is fully licensed, holding both licences of establishment and of operation, as required by the law[44].

The partner institution collaborates with the case study university and with other UK universities to offer their programmes in Crete, Greece (The College, 2011c). Private colleges in Greece do not have degree-awarding powers, thus they need to collaborate with and offer the programmes of foreign universities (Lutran, 2010).This derives from Article 16 of the Greek Constitution, which prohibits the establishment and operation of foreign public or private higher education institutions on Greek soil (Hellenic Parliament, 2008). This is particularly important for the discussion and analysis of the research findings, as the expectations and perceptions of the students at the partner institution may be influenced by its profile as a non-recognised higher education institution. Also, this reveals a strong dependence of the partner institution on the collaborating universities, which may mean a reduced independence to form its own quality management systems. This is proved by the fact that the partner institution brochure states that “it is [the Partner Institution] subject to the annual quality monitoring cycle applied by the university and is

[44] The issues of private colleges in Greece are discussed in more detail later in this chapter (Section 5.4.1.1).

regularly reviewed through an institutional audit visit which is part of the university's quality assurance procedures" (The College, 2011a).

The partner institution, according to its brochure, is resourced and managed in alignment to UK higher education standards (The College, 2011a). This, as explained in the college's internal regulation handbook (The College, 2011b), means that the college uses UK QAA standards and more specifically the code for collaborative provision (QAA, 2010). These guidelines state (QAA, 2010) that "the academic standards of awards made under a collaborative arrangement should meet the expectations of the UK Academic Infrastructure" (QAA, 2010, p. 24). This touches upon the initiative for this research, which has been to explore the cross-border applicability of programme content, teaching methods and quality assurance systems designed in the source country to a receiving country. Also, all of its programmes are delivered, assessed and managed under the collaborating university's policies and procedures; this means that the college uses the university's teaching materials, methods, and strategy and content of assessment (The College, 2011a, p.12). The academics of the college are not allowed to make any changes to the teaching or assessment material without the approval of the university, as stated in the college's internal regulations handbook (The College, 2011b). This reveals the implementation of a quality assurance system which does not facilitate or promote the contextualisation of teaching and learning to reflect the local needs of students. Consequently, this relates to the research problem explored in this thesis, which is the applicability of a fixed retrospective customer model in managing quality in transnational higher education partnerships.

It is mentioned on the college website (The College, 2011c) that since 1998 the college has successfully developed its reputation and strengthened the reputation of the university's business school and of the university in Crete and in Greece. This shows that the college promotes its own reputation along with the reputation of the university, something which could be interpreted as an implied selling point for prospective students.

The existence of this reputation and the effect that it has on student expectations is something that is explored during the analysis and discussion of the primary findings.

The smaller size and range of academic provision at the college, which is not as large and as wide as that of the university, may affect the student experience. For example, in 2011 the college had a portfolio of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes which included: Business and Management, Accounting and Finance, Interior Architecture and Design, Psychological Science, Print Journalism and Graphic Design (The College, 2011c). A smaller range of provision, and consequently a more straightforward organisational structure, may allow the college to be more flexible and responsive to the needs of its students.

However, the college is far from being considered as a university or a higher education institution per se, something which may be a source of disadvantage for its students. Existing research (Waters & Leung, 2011; Stella et al., 2011; Zeng et al., 2013) has shown that students who study at TNHE partners at offshore locations tend to be disadvantaged in relation to their 'student experience' in comparison to students who study at the main campus of the source university. This is attributed to the smaller scale and range of available facilities and the lack of a multicultural environment (Cuthbert et al., 2008; Chapman et al., 2013; Waters & Leung, 2013). The small size and scale of TNHE partner institutions has been linked with a tendency of local communities to consider TNHE graduates as carrying degrees of inferior value in comparison to students who have completed their studies at a proper university institution (Waters & Leung, 2011; Li et al., 2013).

According to existing research (Arambewela & Hall, 2006; Athiyaman, 1997), academic staff and teaching standards are key factors in student satisfaction and quality management in higher education. Most importantly, these factors are central in the objective of this research to evaluate and discuss student expectations and perceptions. The college employs a team of 45 part-time academics who hold, at minimum, a postgraduate level qualification (The College, 2011c). In July 2011, 20% of college staff had a PhD or equivalent degree (The College, 2011c). In comparison with the university, a much lower proportion of college staff has a doctoral qualification. This is partly because there are not many PhD qualified academics in the island of Crete (Decentralised Administration of Crete, 2011). Also the college employs part-time academics who are working as professionals, thus holding a doctoral qualification is not relevant for their primary working position (The College, 2011a, p.13). This is a fundamental difference between the profiles of the two academic teams, at the university and the college, thus should be considered during the comparative analysis and discussion of the case study's primary evidence

Central to this research is the evaluation of the applicability to the partner institution of the university's quality management model which, as mentioned in the previous section, is aligned with the retrospective customer model. According to the college brochure (The College, 2011a), it is both the strategic objective of the college and its obligation under the conditions of the franchise collaboration to replicate the teaching and learning experience of students at the main campus of the university. According to the college brochure, it has organised its provision to reflect the teaching and learning methods and policies of the university requirements. The college outlines some of the main characteristics of its provision that reflect this. For example, it employs academic staff with previous experience and exposure to the UK higher education system, its teaching infrastructure (lecture rooms, IT systems, etc.) is similar to the university's and plagiarism is detected using the same software used by the university (The College, 2011a). Finally, the college states that it uses the same quality assurance mechanisms as those of the university.

From the above it is evident that the college relies on learning inputs (in the model by Finnie & Usher, 2005) or teaching context presage factors (in the 3P model by Biggs, 1993) as a means to facilitate the realisation of the desired teaching and learning outcomes. Nevertheless, considering the important contribution of student presage factors on the effectiveness of teaching and learning approaches (Biggs & Tang, 2011; Finnie & Usher, 2005), the alignment of college and university educational quality and service quality standards could not be realised on the basis of learning inputs alone. Considering the variability of student expectations and perceptions across different social and cultural settings, the realisation of the desired educational outcomes through the replication of a retrospective customer model would be problematic. The exploration of this issue lies at the heart of the research purpose of this thesis.

5.2 The higher education systems of Greece and the UK

Research indicates that the process through which students form their expectations and perceptions about higher education is influenced by a range of factors (De Jager & Du Plooy, 2006; Hill, 1995). These factors include the students' previous educational experience and the condition of the higher education system in their country. Specifically, research (Pimpa, 2003; Sander et al., 2000; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; Kara & Campus, 2004; Jones, 2010; East, 2001; De Jager & Du Plooy, 2006) about the factors that shape student expectations and perceptions[45] indicates the important role of the education system, both domestic and foreign.

Based on the above research, it is critical to explore some basic elements of the two education systems involved in the case study. Because the purpose and objectives of this research are closely linked with the evaluation of student expectations and perceptions about quality in higher education, it is important to consider the education systems, and specifically the higher education, in the two countries of the case study, Greece and the UK. Specifically, it is important for the reader to understand the issues acting as motives for the institution in the source country (UK) to establish TNHEPs and the demand in the receiving country (Greece) for higher education provision through TNHEPs. Furthermore, the examination of the main characteristics and issues of the education systems of the two countries is vital for the evaluation of student expectations and perceptions.

[45] It has been also found by existing research (Pimpa, 2003, 2003; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; Kelso, 2008) that these two factors can act as push factors for international student mobility.

Therefore, this section includes a comparative discussion of the two higher education systems, including their structure, policy frameworks, issues/problems, quality assurance policies and internationalisation trends.

5.2.1 The Greek higher education system[46]

Greek higher education[47] has largely adopted the Anglo-American model (Kyriazis & Asderaki, 2008). However, according to Kyriazis and Asderaki (2008), the Greek government only partially adopted this model; for example, Greek universities and higher education institutions were not given autonomy in their financial administration and all of them depended entirely on the Ministry of Education for funding. The system lacked the flexibility to allow operational efficiency and financial autonomy for Greek higher education institutions, which is linked with their contemporary problems of quality and reputation (Papadimitriou, 2011).

Also, the structure of Greek higher education, which consists of two sectors: 1) University and 2) Technological[48], has been considered by the Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency (HQAA) as lacking strategic focus towards employability. **The problems of the employability of Greek higher education institution graduates have been documented in existing research (Livanos, 2010) and this is something which acts as a push factor for Greek students to pursue studies in foreign higher education**

[46]This section has been based on information retrieved from the following sources:
EURYDICE (2010) *Organisation of the education system in Greece*. European Commission. Available from: <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/eurybase_en.php#greece>.
Kyriazis, A.& A. &Asderaki, F. (2008) *Higher education in Greece*. CEPES. Available from: <http://www.cepes.ro/publications/pdf/Greece.pdf>.

[47] The Greek higher education system has a long history which goes back to ancient times. However, the first university in the Modern Greek state was established in 1837 in Athens. Nevertheless, the majority of Greek universities were created in the post-World War II period. This shows that Greece has a relatively newly established higher education system in comparison to the UK where Oxford was established by about 1096 and Cambridge by 1226 (Gillard, 2011).

[48] The University sector includes the universities (AEI), the polytechnics, and the School of Fine Arts. The Technological sector includes the technological education institutions (TEI) and the School of Pedagogical and Technological Education (ΑΣΠΑΙΤΕ). In October 2011, there were 40 higher education institutions – 22 universities (AEI[48]) and 18 technological institutes (TEI) in 66 cities, with 511 academic departments. This structure and organisation of the Greek higher education sector is considered to be an outcome of political opportunism (Psacharopoulos, 1995; Patrinos, 1995; Katsikas & Dergiades, 2009), which has led to the creation of several identical programmes and departments in Greek peripheral cities and islands.

institutions (Lianos et al., 2004), either abroad or in Greece via a transnational higher education partnership (ICAP, 2010).

Greece has been in the past a major exporter of students to countries like the UK, USA, Germany and Italy, for multiple reasons[49] (Psacharopoulos, 2003). Student mobility in Greece has grown because of the inefficiencies and declining reputation of the Greek universities as well as the shortage of available places to satisfy the growing demand for higher education in Greece (Psacharopoulos & Tassoulas, 2004; ICAP, 2010). Thus, factors which have created a strong outflow of Greek students to other countries are primarily summarised as push factors rather than pull factors.

The creation and growth of transnational partnerships by private colleges in Greece was an outcome of these dynamics (ICAP, 2010; Papadimitriou, 2011). An exploration of the history and evolution of the Greek higher education system providers is therefore necessary to understand the environment in which partner institution students have formed their expectations and perceptions about quality in higher education.

At the same time, considering the impact of institutional characteristics on student expectations and perceptions (Astin, 1984; Ishitani, 2006), it is important to understand the institutional structure of the Greek universities and private colleges in an effort to evaluate and explain partner institution student expectations and perceptions of quality.

Higher education in Greece[50] is completely state funded and students do not pay tuition fees; higher education in Greece may only be provided by public institutions (Pesmatzoglou, 1994, p.292 cited in Papadimitriou, 2011, p.125). **Thus the establishment and operation of foreign private or public higher education providers**

---

[49] See section 3.3.4.1 for more detailed analysis of Greece as a major exporter of international students.

[50] The organisation, structure, management and overall governance of higher education in Greece have been subjects to the so-called Framework Act. The Framework Act is an extensive legal framework which governs the organisation and operation of higher education in Greece. From 1982 to 2010 several such Framework Acts have been enacted, both reforms of existing acts and new ones. A landmark in the process of reform and modernisation of the Greek higher education system was Article 16 of the Greek Constitution which was introduced in 1975 (Kyriazis & Asderaki, 2008). According to Article 16, Paragraph 5, of the Greek Constitution, higher education in Greece is completely state funded and students do not pay tuition fees; higher education in Greece may only be provided by public institutions.

is prohibited (Hellenic Parliament, 2008). This is very relevant to this research because the existence of transnational higher education partnerships was not recognised for many years by the Greek government. It is indicative that Greece has been used by McBurnie and Ziguras (2007) as an example of extreme protectionism against transnational higher education partnerships. The paradox is that the very existence of the TNHEPs in Greece was caused by the restriction of the constitution in allowing the establishment of private or public foreign universities in Greece (Psacharopoulos, 2003).

In Greece, 511 undergraduate programmes are offered by higher education institutions, including those offered by the Hellenic Open University and under collaboration with foreign higher education institutions[51]. To date (2013), the undergraduate programmes in the Greek higher education institutions are of four years' duration and in some cases even last five or six years. The new Framework Act for Greek higher education has introduced undergraduate programmes of three years; however this is still to be applied.

Students are able to graduate after successfully completing the attendance and examination requirements of all of the compulsory modules. Upon graduation, students receive the final award, the 'Ptyhion'. According to the Greek Ministry of Education, most of the undergraduate programmes of Greek higher education institutions comply with the European Qualification Framework (EQF) and lead to 240 ECTS. However, there has been wide criticism and scepticism about the compliance of Greece with the EU education framework and the Bologna Process (Asderaki, 2009; Pottakis, 2008).

The available places for undergraduate study in the Greek higher education institutions are determined by the government and are not enough to meet what Menon et al. (2007, p.709) call the extremely high demand for higher education in Greece. Saiti and Prokopiadou (2008) have shown that demand for undergraduate higher education is

[51] http://www.alfavita.gr/artro.php?id=6340 (accessed 18/8/2011).

shaped by a range of factors. For example, Greek students are influenced by three factors: the knowledge they are going to acquire; the employment prospects; and the influence of family. It has been also found by Livanos (2010) that Greek students associate higher education qualifications with better job prospects.

Also, as Menon et al. (2007) argue, the quantity rationing of available places for undergraduate studies at Greek public higher education institutions poses an obstacle for students to enter their preferred programme. This consistent gap between demand and supply for undergraduate provision in Greece has contributed to the large outflow of students abroad to pursue undergraduate study. This has made Greece one of the world's major exporters of students (Psacharopoulos, 2003).

5.2.1.1 Greece: Admission system and fees

A key issue in Greek higher education and particularly relevant to this research is the admissions system in Greek higher education institutions. The problems facing the admissions system are discussed in more detail later in this chapter. However it should be noted that the consistent gap between demand and supply in Greek higher education has contributed to the increased outflow of Greek students to other countries and, in the past 10 years, into TNHEPs that operate in Greece (ICAP, 2010).

In secondary education, students attend two types of lyceum (general and professional), which prepare them for the relevant higher education studies (Psacharopoulos & Tassoulas, 2004). The assessment of students in the lyceum is on the basis of participation in classes, tests, oral examinations, and final written exams. In order for students to receive the Lyceum Diploma (Apolytirion) they need to achieve an overall mark of 9.5 on a 20 point scale (EURYDICE, 2010b). A great contribution to the students' final mark comes from a written national examination, called the PanHellenic examinations (Psacharopoulos, 2003). Thus, final year lyceum students compete with each other to achieve the highest mark possible to achieve entry to higher education institutions. The examinations are organised and controlled by the Greek Ministry of Education as part of a rhetoric for a higher education entry system which *"guarantees the irreproachable and the meritocratic choice of the candidates"* (Sianou-Kyrgiou, 2008, p.175). However, long-standing problems have been caused by this examination system, which are discussed in detail later in this chapter.

The undergraduate programmes in the state higher education institutions are provided without fees for all students; something which has contributed to the consistent gap between demand and supply for places in Greek public higher education institutions (Psacharopoulos & Tassoulas, 2004).

5.2.1.2 Greece: Quality assurance in higher education

There has been on-going debate about the lack of accountability and the existence of quality assurance mechanisms in Greek higher education. It has been outlined in many reports by international bodies and researchers that Greek higher education lacks efficiency and quality standards (St. Aubyn et al., 2009; Pottakis, 2008; International Committee, 2010; Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency, 2009; Katsikas, 2009).

In fact, for many years, Greek higher education had no quality assurance mechanisms or practices (Papadimitriou, 2011). It has been argued that resistance to the adoption and implementation of quality assurance and evaluation mechanisms has been exercised by a number of stakeholder groups within Greek public higher education institutions (Papadimitriou, 2011; Katsikas & Dergiades, 2009). These groups, mainly administrative and teaching staff, in their effort to avoid competition and accountability, constantly refuse to discuss the proposed reforms by polarising the debate (Kerdis & Sfatos, 1998).

It was only after pressure from the EU, beginning in 1999 and escalated in 2004, which the Greek government decided to impose a quality assurance framework onto higher education. The pressures on Greece for the creation of a national quality assurance agency came from the European Union in an effort to assure that Greece remained in line with the Bologna Process objectives (Asderaki, 2009). In 2005, the Greek government introduced quality assurance policies into Greek higher education for the first time. The Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency (HQAA - ΑΔΙΠ) was established as an independent body in 2005. The operation of the HQAA was undermined by the lack of funding and the lack of willingness of the Greek higher education institutions to participate in quality assurance audits (Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency, 2009).

The difficulty in the application of quality assurance policies and mechanisms in Greek higher education institutions is indicative of the lack of accountability, which is partly related to the low reputation of Greek higher education. Also, the source of these problems is the uneasiness of the Greek higher education institutions, and generally of Greek society, with the issues of quality assurance and evaluation. As mentioned in the 2009 annual report of the HQAA, the introduction of QA policies and practices was not well received or valued at its early stages. As the HQAA mentions in the same report, the role of quality assurance in higher education has not been valued by the prime stakeholders, the students and wider society. This is because all of the participants in Greek higher education treat higher education as a springboard to acquiring qualifications and professional rights rather than knowledge (Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency, 2009). This would be a useful benchmark in the discussion of the findings of this research and specifically of the students' perception about quality in higher education.

5.2.2 UK higher education

The UK higher education system has attracted international students from across the world, including Greece, and is considered one of the most reputable globally. Its basic characteristics are discussed here in an effort to consider the driving forces behind the development of TNHEP and quality management.

In the UK, higher education is provided by a range of institutions, including universities and university colleges. In August 2011 there were 115 universities in the UK and overall 165 higher education institutions[52]. The Further and Higher Education Act 1992 has shaped UK higher education in its current state in England, Wales and Northern Ireland[53&54] and has enabled a number of polytechnics and colleges to be awarded university status. These institutions are often referred to as 'Post-1992' or 'new' universities, and the university of this case study is one of these 'Post-1992' universities. Within the UK higher education sector, there are several groups or categorisations of universities posing, or claiming, different characteristics in regards to their reputation and status. For example red-brick universities, the Russell Group[55], the 1994 group[56], and the new or post-1992 universities. The latter, which are of specific interest for this research, are considered to attract students from a more diverse socio-economic background in comparison to red-brick universities, which are associated with students from an upper middle class origin (Davis, 2010). This is verified in the case of the university of the case study which, as discussed in the demographics section in the methodology chapter, attracts students from a more diverse socio-economic background in comparison to the UK higher education sector average.

Also, 'post-1992' universities appear to be more active in TNHE, particularly via franchise and validation arrangements. This is evident in the data published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) in the UK, where the majority of franchise and validation TNHE activities are pursued by post-1992 universities (Drew et al., 2008; Healey, 2013b).

---

[52] The term 'higher education institutions' includes universities, university colleges, specialist higher education institutions and other higher education colleges. http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/UKHESector/Pages/OverviewSector.aspx

[53] The Scottish system has maintained its autonomy.

[54] The UK higher education expanded in the 19th century with the establishment of higher education institutions in the major industrial cities of the time. In the 1950s and 1960s, higher education in UK saw an increase in an effort to satisfy the post-war demand for education emanating from the increased population and the reconstruction period (Gillard, 2011).

[55] More information can be found here: http://www.russellgroup.ac.uk/

[56] More information can be found here: http://www.1994group.co.uk/

The UK also has two main categories of higher education institutions. The 'recognised bodies' include higher education institutions which have been granted the right to award degrees by a Royal Charter or by Parliamentary Act (Baskerville et al., 2011, p.6), and the 'listed bodies' are institutions without the right to award degrees. However, the 'listed bodies' do offer higher education courses which lead to the award of a degree from a 'recognised body'. The degrees and other qualifications awarded by these higher education institutions that have so-called awarding powers remain their property. The universities and other higher education institutions are able to create and manage their own higher education courses which lead to the award of a degree. This shows a more open and diverse higher education sector in comparison to the Greek higher education system, which is dominated by public universities. At the same time, this has increased competition between HEIs in the UK to attract students which in turn partly explains the development of the 'student as customer' concept.

Greek students, like many other foreign students, consider UK higher education to be reputable and of high quality and that it will enable them to be more competitive in the labour market after graduation (Livanos, 2010; Lianos et al., 2004). For many years, starting in the early 1990s and up until the early 2000s, Greeks studied in the UK and had their tuition fees fully subsidised by the EU, as they were considered 'home' students. However a range of reforms posing fees for home students have moved Greeks away from choosing the UK for their undergraduate studies and supported the development of TNHEPs of UK universities in Greece (Tsiligiris, 2013). At the same time, the introduction of fees has had an impact on student expectations and perceptions as well as the quality management policy agenda in the UK (Dearden et al., 2010; Filippakou, 2011). The impact of these reforms extents to TNHE development and quality management and as such is particularly relevant to this research.

Specifically, a range of reforms introduced in the past 15 years in UK higher education have gradually increased students' financial contribution to the payment of tuition fees and consequently have affected their expectations of participation in higher education, contributing to the development of a ‘student as customer’ identity (Williams, 2012; J. Holmwooded. , 2013). One of the most notable reforms was in 1998, with the introduction of tuition fees for ‘home’ students and, more recently, the set of reforms introduced by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) in the context of the *White Paper: Higher Education: Students at the Heart of the System* (BIS, 2011)[57]. According to BIS, its well-known reforms have been brought into public discussion in the wider context of the need to reduce public funding and increase the financial contribution of higher education stakeholders in funding (BIS, 2011). This directly reflects a ‘value for money’ view of quality in higher education. From the reforms proposed by BIS, it is clear that the tendency for UK government is to widely accept and promote ‘value for money’ as a measure of quality in higher education and adopt a quality management context where the student is perceived as a customer (THE, 2011).

From the above, it appears that the UK has gone a long way towards adopting a more customer orientated retrospective quality management approach in higher education, whereas Greece is at the early stages of introducing and implementing basic evaluation methods and establishing quality assurance policies (Papadimitriou, 2011). It is clear that the two education systems are currently at different stages of their quality management in higher education life cycle.

Students in the UK, unlike students in Greece, are commonly framed as customers in the public dialogue about higher education in the media (Williams cited in Molesworth et al., 2010). Also, elements such as the National Student Survey[58] and the university league tables published by British newspapers enhance the customer-like expectations of

[57] The reforms in the UK targeted three areas (BIS, 2011):

1) Reducing the public deficit by reducing the public funding of teaching grants. Student loans will replace public funding thus changing the debt from public to private.
2) Improving the student experience offered by institutions. This is to be achieved by improving teaching, assessment, feedback, and making graduates more employable. This indicates an increasing pressure by UK government on universities to match student expectations and enhance graduate employability.
3) Making higher education institutions responsible for increasing social mobility. Higher education should reduce inequalities and allow students to move across, along and up the social ladder.

[58] http://www.thestudentsurvey.com/

students in UK.

On the contrary, in Greece, higher education is primarily considered as a public good and the prevailing view is that discussed in the introduction of this thesis (Section 1.3). This is coupled with the resistance of academic and administrators inside the Greek higher education to adopting accountability and quality management systems (OECD, 2011b). Thus, in comparison to the UK, this uneven development of quality systems in the Greek higher education system could be considered likely to affect the formation of expectations and perceptions of students in Greece. Nevertheless, this does not mean that Greek students are expected to be less customer-minded. Taking into consideration the persistent gap between supply and demand in Greek higher education during the past 40 years, there has been a rise of private higher education provision via the transnational partnerships. Thus, elements of the marketisation of higher education, which imply a consideration of 'student as customer', are present in Greece irrespective of the situation in the public higher education institutions.

Here the question which arises, and fits to the research purpose of this thesis, is to what extent students who come from these two different education systems hold similar expectations and perceptions about quality in higher education. Reflecting on the importance of student presage factors in educational quality, this would be critical in the discussion about the applicability of a retrospective customer model for the management of quality in the TNHE export country (the UK) and the TNHE import country (Greece). Thus, the impact of the higher education sector contexts will be explored while analysing and interpreting the responses of the two student groups of the case study. During the discussion of students' responses, particular emphasis will be given to the impact of the higher education sector characteristics on the formation of students' presage factors.

5.2.2.1 UK: Admission system and fees[59]

Contrary to the Greek higher education admission system, in the UK admission to university is not controlled by an examination but is subject to the fulfilment of specific entry criteria. These criteria relate to the secondary education results of applicants and for students from other countries, their English language competency. This entry system, coupled with the European Union funding of fees for students from EU countries, discussed above, has been one of the prime reasons for the significant mobility of Greek students to the UK. Also, since the same admissions system and entry criteria apply to TNHEPs of UK universities, this explains why TNHEPs of UK universities have grown in Greece as an alternative route to entry higher education to the harsh PanHellenic examinations system (Tsiligiris, 2013).

However, the introduction of fees in 2011[60] created problems for both the universities and the students seeking to enter undergraduate study in 2012 (THE, 2011). It is anticipated that applications to UK universities will diminish significantly and students will seek alternative higher education providers in the UK or abroad (THE, 2011). This may increase the international student mobility of UK students as a push factor, which will be a significant difference from the usual motives for student mobility, which have been mostly associated with pull factors. For the universities, this may increase pressures to create new streams of income, thus leading them to seek to expand their TNHE activities and also increase their international student numbers.

---

[59] The student admissions criteria are solely the responsibility of each higher education institution. However, all of the higher education institutions in the UK are controlled by the same regulatory framework and quality assurance guidelines. The number of students allowed entry to higher education is determined by the government. For undergraduate study admission, the applicant is required to have two or three passes at GCE A-level (General Certificate of Education) and certain passes in GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education) with at least grade C. A wide range of alternative qualifications are also considered for entry into UK higher education. Additionally, mature students or students with prior learning or experience are considered for entry.

[60] According to the UK government (Directgov, 2011) the changes from 2012 are: 1) universities and colleges can charge tuition fees up to £9,000 per academic year; 2) students will receive tuition loans to cover their fees; and 3) they will pay back these loans only when they have income from employment of £21,000 per annum or more.

5.2.2.2 UK: Quality assurance in higher education

Quality in UK higher education is assured by a number of bodies and procedures both internal and external to higher education institutions, with the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) to be at the forefront[61]. The QAA was established in 1997 with the intention to become the single authority of quality assurance in the UK and as such to provide a consolidated assessment of the fulfilment of the academic standards and quality of UK higher education institutions (Hodson & Thomas, 2003). The QAA audit reports are available to the public, via the QAA website, and the results of these audits are usually communicated by higher education institutions to prospective students as an indication of sound quality standards. At the same time, each HEI has internal quality assurance processes for the validation and review of its programmes including the external examiner system.

The QAA is also responsible for overseeing the TNHEPs of UK universities, and it has a specific code of practice with which UK HEIs should comply when offering their programmes at overseas locations (a complete review is provided in Section 3.3.1). The purpose of these guidelines is to safeguard and protect the reputation and international standing of UK higher education institutions and much less to address quality assurance

[61] The literature (Hodson & Thomas, 2003; Harvey, 2005) shows that the development of quality assurance in UK has been influenced by a range of factors, with the emergence of a unified university sector in 1992 being the most critical in shaping the quality assurance system in its current form. Thus, the issue of quality assurance in UK higher education can be discussed within the timeframe of two different periods: 1) the pre-1992 and 2) the post-1992 period. During the pre-1992 period, quality in UK higher education, universities and polytechnics was maintained by a range of different practices and bodies. Quality in universities was assured by internal and external mechanisms, such as the peer review and external examiner systems respectively. In Polytechnics, quality was maintained by the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA). Despite these systems having been framed as effective and more appropriate than those of external validation (Harvey, 2005), in the 1980s the prevalence of neo-liberalism and the growing focus of UK public policy on privatisation, along with the introduction of market principles in the management of the public sector, gradually brought quality into the centre of higher education policy. At the same time, the binary higher education system in UK prior to 1992, consisting of the polytechnics and universities, meant a range of fragmented policies and actions to assure quality in higher education, something which was criticised as ineffective. In 1992, with the Further and Higher Education Act, the UK higher education sector was unified and polytechnics were renamed universities. This was accompanied by a significant shift towards a unified system of quality assurance, via the Higher Education Funding Councils (HEFCs) and later the Higher Education Quality Council (HEQC), which were responsible for conducting teaching quality assessments and the academic audit unit programme respectively.

on the basis of receiving country requirements. Also, these guidelines have been criticised for focusing on 'risk mitigation' by seeking to assure sameness of student experience and leave no room for contextualisation (Smith, 2010). This is central to the purpose of this research project, as the applicability and appropriateness of the quality assurance guidelines of the source country to partner institutions in receiving countries is questionable.

Overall, in the UK, the quality assurance systems in higher education are well-established and are considered by all of the stakeholders. In comparison with Greece, this shows a completely different level of stakeholder familiarity and engagement with quality assurance in higher education. Also, in contrast to the Greek HQAA, the role and work of the UK QAA is well respected by UK higher education institutions and is considered internationally as a reputable quality assurance body. It is therefore expected that university students would be more familiar with the issues of quality assurance and the university will have an established QA system, not only for its home programmes, but also for its collaborative provision.

5.3 On-going issues in Greek and UK higher education

The condition of the education system in a country is part of the macro environment in which students develop their expectations and perceptions. As mentioned earlier, the problems of the higher education system affect, both directly and indirectly, the students' choice of HEI and higher education programme. The shortcomings and inefficiencies of the domestic higher education system lead to a reduced reputation, and consequently students are either pushed or pulled to study in other higher education systems. This happens either through them going abroad as foreign students or through them studying at the TNHEPs of foreign universities which exist in their country. Thus, the examination of the main issues and problems which shape this macro environment is imperative in the effort to study and evaluate student expectations and perceptions of quality in higher education in the two different countries.

Also, the Greek and UK higher education systems are two cases which are worth exploring because of their special character. Greece is a case of a country in which higher education is solely provided and regulated by the state and the operation of other providers, private or public is prohibited. Higher education in Greece is considered a public good and is provided free to all Greek citizens (Stamoulas, 2005, p.41). In contrast, the UK has a highly market orientated higher education system where the number and the nature of higher education providers has expanded in the past twenty years (Brown & Carasso, 2013).

5.3.1 Greece

The issues discussed below have been considered as relevant to this research project because they are directly linked with the degradation of the reputation of Greek higher education institutions which leads to student emigration and the increase in the demand for TNHE, something which is directly linked with the recent expansion of Greek private colleges[62]. Also, the problems in the Greek higher education system are expected to affect the expectations and perceptions of Greek students in this case study research.

5.3.1.1 Reduced efficiency, structural and strategic problems

The efficiency of Greek higher education has been the subject of public debate for many years. It is indicative of the scale and importance of this issue that in 2010 the Prime Minister at the time, George Papandreou, said: "We are one of the first three countries in the world for the number of young people who go to university, but we are in 118th place as regards the effectiveness of our education" (Marseilles, 2010).

[62] The development of TNHEPs in Greece is discussed in more detail later (see Section 5.4.1)

In the same vein, the report of the International Committee published in 2010[63] states that:

> "Greece's system of Higher Education suffers from a crisis of values as well as out-dated policies and organizational structures. The tragedy is that leaders, scholars, students and political parties that aim to promote the public good have been trapped in a system that subverts the goals they seek, corrupts the ideals they pursue and forsakes the public they serve." (International Committee, 2010, p.7)

From the above two quotations, it is clear that the Greek higher education system has significant problems related to its efficiency and transparent operation.

Also, according to the report by the HQAA, there are problems at a strategic level in the Greek higher education (HQAA, 2009). For example, there is a lack of strategic objectives to establish a link between higher education and the employment market. According to the HQAA, this creates serious problems for the employability of graduates of Greek higher education institutions and puts at risk the scope for the existence of a number of schools and departments in higher education institutions. This is of particular relevance to this research as it is anticipated that the low employability of the Greek HEI graduates will affect the expectations of Greek students who choose to study at TNHEPs and, also, could explain the demand for student mobility.

The findings of the annual HQAA report in 2009 summarised the long-existing problems of Greek higher education. HQAA outlined as the source of the current problems in Greek higher education the unconsidered political decision-making prevailing during the

[63] In 2010 the Greek government created an independent committee composed of nine external members to assess the organisation of Greek universities (Tsiligiris, 2012a, p.16). Overall in this report the International Committee outlined the on-going problems of Greek higher education which derive mainly from the lack of accountability and efficiency. However, the same report mentioned the increased role of the political system and the other stakeholders in creating the Greek higher education in its current shape. Additionally, the International Committee mentioned the potential for Greek higher education to become a driver for economic and social development for Greece. The full report can be found at:
http://www.tsoukalas.org/attachments/313/INTERNATIONAL%20COMMITTEE%20ON%20HIGHER%20EDUCATION%20IN%20GREECE_EN.pdf

past thirty years (Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency, 2009). The influence of political decision-making has been outlined in previous studies (Asderaki, 2009; Pesmatzoglou, 1987 cited in Saiti & Prokopiadou, 2008) which have claimed that the number of places at Greek higher education institutions was not decided by the higher education institutions but was an issue of political manipulation by the Greek governments.

The lack of accountability along with the structural problems in the Greek higher education system have contributed to the degradation of the reputation of Greek higher education institutions (Tsiligiris, 2012a, p.15). Despite a range of reforms introduced with a new Framework Act in 2011, the problems of Greek higher education have remained unsolved. For example, a recent report by OECD (2011b) describes the Greek higher education system as “out-dated, centrally planned” and accountable for the high unemployment rates of its graduates as well as the high rates of student outbound mobility.

It could be considered that the state of quality of the Greek higher education system will shape partner institution expectations and perceptions about quality. This impact could be twofold. First, students could form expectations and perceptions about quality in TNHE using the Greek higher education system as a negative role model. Second, students at the partner institution may form expectations and perceptions, particularly about teaching and learning, using the word-of-mouth of either friends or relatives who have studied in Greek higher education institutions. In both instances, the quality standards of the Greek higher education system may contribute to the influence of partner institution students’ expectations and perceptions, and this is something to be explored during the analysis of the findings of this research.

5.3.1.2 Problematic system for admission to Greek higher education institutions

The admission system to Greek higher education institutions is highly competitive and has been heavily criticised for reproducing and worsening social inequalities (Sianou-

Kyrgiou, 2008; Psacharopoulos & Tassoulas, 2004). As places in Greek higher education institutions are limited, students place great emphasis on achieving a high grade in the so-called PanHellenic examinations. Preparation for these examinations is a process which is given great importance not only by the individual student but by the family and society as a whole. Tutorial support by private providers is considered as necessary for students who wish to achieve high marks in the PanHellenic exams (Psacharopoulos & Tassoulas, 2004). Preparation for the examinations in the form of personal tutorials starts as much as two years before the actual examination dates. It has been estimated that the cost of this preparation ranges between 10,000-15,000 euros per student (Marseilles, 2009). This has been linked with the widening of social inequality, as only families with high incomes can support the personal tutorials necessary to succeed in the examinations (Sianou-Kyrgiou, 2008; Psacharopoulos, 2003).

Despite reforms and the effort of the Greek government to increase the available places in Greek higher education institutions, the current system is criticised for reproducing social inequalities in a similar way to that explained by Bourdieu's theory of reproduction. This states that despite the widening access to higher education, the upper and dominant social class will seek to change the system in such a way so as to maintain its privileges (Bourdieu, 1988 cited in Sianou-Kyrgiou, 2010, p.23). This appears to be the case in Greece, with the PanHellenic examinations which can be afforded only by those at middle and higher levels of the socioeconomic ladder.

Other problems also derive from this system. For example, many candidates manage to pass the nationwide examinations but only gain access to programmes which are not relevant to their first choice (Psacharopoulos & Tassoulas, 2004; Menon, et al., 2007). This leads to reduced student engagement and performance which in turn diminishes the quality of the learning and teaching experience in some of the Greek higher education institutions (Karagiannopoulou & Christodoulides, 2005). Taking into consideration the significant role of social networks in the transmission of social capital (Burt, 2000; Bourdieu, 2008), such as expectations and perception about teaching and learning in higher education, it is possible that partner institution presage factors will be influenced by the norms of student engagement and performance that exist in the Greek higher education system.

At the same time, the existence of the PanHellinic examinations has been linked with the development of TNHEPs in Greece as an alternative route to access higher education. However, at least in the case of Greece, TNHE costs between 8,000 and 12,000 euros per year, which represents a significant portion of a lower-class family's annual income (Kitsantonis, 2011), thus constraining access to students from lower socioeconomic background families. This is verified by the demographics of the partner institution students, which are discussed in detail in Section 4.2.2 and reveal that most students in the partner institution are from a middle-upper socioeconomic family background: the inequality discussed in the previous paragraph is reproduced via TNHE in Greece. Despite the fact that TNHE is portrayed (Vincent-Lancrin & Pfotenhauer, 2012) as an alternative way for local students to access good quality and high reputation education, there is evidence to suggest that in the case of Greece it reproduces social inequalities.

This consistent inequality of access to higher education in Greece, both at public universities and in TNHE, creates specific expectations and perceptions about the social status of a graduate (Sianou-Kyrgiou, 2008). As such, this impact will be considered during the discussion and analysis of the findings of this research.

5.3.1.3 'Eternal students' and poor teaching and learning

The poor graduation record of the students who study at Greek higher education institutions and the lack of appropriate academic progression monitoring frameworks have contributed to the issue of the so-called 'eternal students' (Papadimitriou, 2011). The previous Framework Act introduced an examination system within higher education institutions which allows students to sit exams as many times they like. This has created the phenomenon of students repeatedly failing modules without any consequence to their student status, allowing them to remain on a course literally for as long they wish. These have been termed ‘eternal students’ (Katsikas, 2009). Despite the introduced reforms, this system remains the norm in Greek higher education institutions.

This is turn has led to the decrease in the reputation of the Greek higher education institutions and the increase in the demand for private higher education provision in Greece (Lutran, 2010; Pottakis, 2008; Tsiligiris, 2012a). The issue of ‘eternal’ students is directly related to the themes discussed in this research project, as it affects the perception of the public about the efficiency and status of Greek universities. To a great extent, families and students are sceptical about studying at a Greek public university because of the unclear progression pattern (ICAP, 2010). Families consider the greater length of studies as an additional financial burden (e.g. rent and living expenses of students) whilst the students are discouraged by the possibility of delaying postgraduate study, joining the army or entering employment (Livanos, 2010).

Additionally, the Greek higher education system is based on traditional modes of delivery such as lectures and general workshops. Students are given a set of notes and one basic textbook (called the core text), which form the sole material for supporting their study. As Katsikas identifies “… it is an exam-centred rather than learner-centred system leading to superficial learning” (Katsikas, 2010, p. 21). The outcome of such a system is a high failure rate of students in exams which is due to their diminished engagement with the subject. Katsikas (2010) has identified a strong correlation between the duration of studies and the marks of students. Students with lower marks tend to complete their studies much later than the normal time. The same study revealed that 30% of the Greek students studying at Greek higher education institutions complete their studies in a period of four years, which is the normal duration of undergraduate programmes. Around 70% of the total student population in Greek higher education institutions complete their undergraduate studies over a period of six years.

It is indicative of the problem that there are 578,479 enrolled students, of whom 360,762 are active (Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency, 2009). The remaining 217,717 have either dropped out or participate occasionally in the examinations. According to the International Committee, despite the large increase in students in higher education in the past ten years (2000-2010), the number of students who fail to complete their studies is now between 17% and 20% of the total number of those who gain a place at the Greek public universities (International Committee, 2010). For example, according to Katsikas (2009), between 2002 and 2006, the total number of new entrants to higher education in Greece was 40,000 per annum. The number of graduates in 2006 was 33,000, which means that 7,000 students dropped out or failed to complete their studies successfully.

All the above factors are contributing to the diminishing reputation of Greek higher education institutions, which in turn is increasing the demand for transnational higher education in Greece. For example, a recent story in EconoMonitor states:

> "Although higher education is not a scarce good, high quality is. The brain drain partly reflects a quality issue. Greek youths with rich parents or an entrepreneurial spirit study abroad because the value of a foreign diploma is higher. In contrast, the sun, the sea and ancient Greece do not tempt students from other EU countries to study in Greece." (Ivo, 2011)

As a result of the above factors, Greek families and students consider alternatives to the Greek higher education institutions, turning to the study abroad option or foreign universities which are offering their courses in Greece via the Greek private colleges (ICAP, 2010).

However, what appears to be directly relevant to the applicability of a retrospective customer model is the existence of 'superficial learning' as the norm in the Greek higher education system. 'Superficial learning' is incompatible with the teaching and learning model of UK higher education, and of the UK university in this case study, which is based on the adoption by students of a 'deep learning' approach. Thus, partner institution students may be influenced by the current norm of the Greek higher education system towards the adoption of an inappropriate 'surface' learning approach. This will pose serious problems in the realisation of both service and educational quality standards in TNHE under the current retrospective customer model.

5.3.1.5 Non-compliance with the Bologna Process

The reluctance of the Greek government to comply with the requirements of the Bologna declaration has isolated Greek higher education and Greek students from fully utilising the benefits of the common European Education Area. This not only affects the students of Greek higher education institutions but also affects the students of Greek TNHEPs.

Specifically, the delay in the adoption of the European Credit Transfer System and the National Qualification Framework (NQF) held up the expansion of the mobility of students and academic staff. Most importantly, this has created problems for those students who have completed their degrees in a TNHEP in Greece as well as the academics who wished to return to Greece after completing their studies abroad or working in foreign universities respectively.

The Bologna Declaration[64] in 1999 aimed at bringing the attention of the EU member states to creating the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) (EURYDICE, 2010a) as a means to increase the mobility of students and academic staff and promote knowledge and prosperity for EU members' populations. In order to facilitate this mobility through the compliance of all EU member states' national education framework, part of the Bologna Process included the establishment of a common academic credit recognition system, the European Credit Transfer Accumulation system (ECTS). However, not all countries have adopted the Bologna targets and policies to the same extent and with the same rigour. Greece is among those countries that have not moved fast in adopting the

[64] The Bologna Declaration aimed to create common policies for EU member states in an effort to respond to the increased international competition in higher education. The Bologna Declaration's objectives can be summarised under three areas: International competitiveness; mobility of students, staff and researchers; and employability (Lourtie, 2001).

proposed policies, and it has been criticised for its unwillingness to implement reforms[65] (Asderaki, 2009).

What is directly relevant to students studying in TNHEPs in Greece is Greece's refusal to recognise the degrees acquired via studies in a TNHEP in Greece. According to EU Directive 36/2005, EU countries are obliged to recognise the professional right of graduates who have completed a university degree awarded by an EU university in a country other than the country where the university is based. For many years, Greece has been cautioned by the European Commission for not recognising degrees awarded by private educational institutions operating in Greece and collaborating with European universities as equivalent to these of Greek universities (Kitsantonis, 2011). The resistance of Greece to recognising Greek private education institutions collaborating with EU member states' universities conflicts mainly with the EU legislation for the protection of free and fair competition and the movement of services across EU member states (Pottakis, 2008). In 2010, the Greek government introduced a Presidential Order for the adoption of EU Directive 36/2005 in the Greek legislation. However, this was an effort to delay the full implementation of this directive, as the Greek government has introduced a highly bureaucratic and complex system for the recognition of degrees awarded via TNHEPs of EU universities. For example, despite the fact that the EU directive has been adopted since 2010, up until the beginning of 2013, the relevant authority, called ΣΑΕΠ[66], had not yet issued any decision on the recognition of professional rights, albeit hundreds of graduates have submitted the required application.

[65] Law Framework 3374/2005 included a range of proposed reforms which aimed to align the Greek higher education system with the priorities and specific requirements of the Bologna Declaration. This law included comprehensive provision for the introduction of evaluation and quality assurance mechanisms in Greek higher education institutions. It also included provision for the establishment of the Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency (HQAA), a long-awaited development in the effort of Greece to align itself with the Bologna Declaration. However, despite the creation and ratification of a series of legal directives, Greece has failed to implement a range of core criteria of the Bologna declaration. For example, seven years after their introduction, evaluation and quality assurance are not fully implemented by all higher education institutions in Greece.

[66]ΣΑΕΠ: Συμβούλιο Αναγνώρισης Επαγγελματικών Προσόντων

The delay in the recognition of TNHE qualifications in Greece poses significant disadvantages for TNHE graduates who are not able to compete equally with graduates of Greek higher education institutions for a job in the private or public sector. This is in line with the findings of existing research (Waters & Leung, 2011; Kim, 2009; Li et al., 2013) showing that TNHE students are in many instances disadvantaged in comparison to students of the domestic higher education institutions.

5.3.2 The UK

Below is an overview of some of the main issues and developments in UK higher education. The issues covered in this section are: the marketisation of UK higher education (Section 5.3.2.1), the customer model in UK higher education (Section 5.3.2.2), and the White Paper 2001 reforms (section 5.3.2.3). The selection of the issues was made on the basis of their relevance to this thesis and as a means to facilitate the Critical Realist theoretical paradigm. Specifically, the consideration of these issues will enable us to understand the driving forces behind TNHE development in the UK as well as the emergence of the retrospective customer model for its quality management. Also, the discussion of these contextual issues will enable us to grasp the mechanisms behind the empirical evidence, thus contribute to the deeper understanding and explanation of the student expectations and perceptions in this research.

5.3.2.1 The marketisation of UK higher education

The marketisation of UK higher education, as the outcome of the reduced public funding which was coupled with the introduction of private sector management systems in higher education, has increased the competition between higher education institutions and, at the same time, increased the pressure for creating new streams of income (Altbach & Knight, 2007). One of these alternative income streams has been the TNHEPs (Knight, 2004), as with the one explored in this case study research.

Foskett (in Molesworth et al., 2010, p. 25) argues that UK higher education in the past twenty years has expanded in terms of both the number of higher education institutions and the number of foreign students, and the key to this expansion of higher education has been the adoption of market mechanisms. The adoption of a market approach in the management of the public sector is based on the view that markets are competitive and are pioneered by consumer choice. Thus, in a market system, suppliers are constantly seeking to create and maintain competitive advantage through lower prices, better quality or innovative products. In this context, the marketisation of higher education was anticipated to increase quality and choice, while reducing costs and public expenditure (Molesworth et al., 2010, p. 29).

Marketisation implies a continuous effort by higher education institutions to compete to gain and maintain a competitive advantage, as any other business organisation does in a market economy (Hussey & Smith, 2010). Thus, UK higher education institutions have focused on gaining a competitive advantage which helps them to attract more students and survive within a market or quasi-market system, as mentioned by CHERI (2011). Within the market context, the traditional theory by Porter (1998) says that competitive advantage is gained through the adoption and application of basic competitive strategies: lower price, better quality, differentiation, or a mixture of all three. So, most UK universities seek to differentiate themselves in various ways, for example promoting their long history, their location, their graduate employability record, and a range of various other elements. According to Molesworth et al. (2010), UK universities have several methods of differentiation, such as their reputation for quality, location, research excellence, graduate employability record and appealing facilities.

Within this highly competitive marketised context in the UK, higher education has been framed as a commodity or service which is a means to employment. This implies a greater emphasis, by both students and institutions, on the final product – the degree – rather than on the educational journey (Williams, 2012). So, within this there is a consensus amongst those who are critical about the role of marketisation in UK higher education that it affects the pedagogical relationship between the student and the teacher, which is becoming a customer–supplier relationship (Browne et al., 1998; Hutton et al., 2011; Finney & Finney, 2010; Molesworth et al., 2010).

To a growing extent, competitiveness of higher education institutions in the UK and elsewhere is affected by student satisfaction surveys, rankings, branding and other customer related issues (CHERI, 2011). This implies a growing focus on the student's preferences and satisfaction which in turn leads to the adoption of the student as customer model by UK higher education institutions (Clewes, 2003; James, 2002).

Therefore, the marketisation of higher education is linked with the development as and adoption, by many UK higher education institutions, of a 'student as customer' model for managing quality in higher education. The findings discussed above explain the emergence and prevalence of service quality and the retrospective customer model as key elements of quality management in the UK higher education sector. The applicability of this model in a TNHE context lies at the core of this research.

5.3.2.2 The customer model in UK higher education

The most significant consequence of the marketisation of UK higher education has been the alienation of the relationship between students and their teachers and universities (CHERI, 2011; Hussey & Smith, 2010). Thus, the rise of the view of the student as customer in UK higher education has been attributed to this marketisation and to the neo-liberalist view of accountability in higher education (Brown & Carasso, 2013). Within the neo-liberal paradigm, higher education institutions should be accountable to the taxpayers and offer a 'value for money' quality teaching and learning experience. This grew in the early 1980s and continues to dominate contemporary UK higher education.

These wider forces and changes at the higher education policy level in the UK have contributed to the fact that students increasingly consider themselves as customers. Williams (2012) argues that this can be attributed to a range of factors, including the introduction of fees, the marketisation of education and the overall shift from a Keynesian welfare state towards neo-liberal policies. Also, Williams argues that the more UK universities are promoted as institutions which set as their prime objective meeting student demands, the more students become customer minded (2012). By presenting students as empowered by their consumer status, the media in the UK also play an important role in the intensity of the claim by students to be treated as customers (Williams, 2012).

The development of the customer model in the UK higher education sector has also been considered to be the result of the widening participation which was based on the abolition of free higher education (Lynch, 2006). This has been criticised for forcing universities to abolish their character as a social institution and to transform higher education from a public good to a commodity (Working Party Academics, 2011). This leads to the further disadvantage of young people from lower socio-economic family backgrounds who cannot afford the cost of commodified higher education. As Hussey and Smith (2010) mention, students in the UK are now expecting to pay for their education and are also expecting to be in debt as a result. Students from less wealthy families or from disadvantaged backgrounds (e.g. mature students, single parents) are increasingly studying and working at the same time, many of them full time (Hussey and Smith, 2010). This creates problems, not only in their ability to repay their debts, but also in their educational attainment as it takes place during their course of studies. These issues are considered to be part of a wider set of implications of mass higher education, where existing inequalities are widened and new ones are emerging (Hussey & Smith, 2010).

At the same time, many commentators (CHERI, 2011; Hussey & Smith, 2010; Molesworth et al., 2010) consider that the student as customer model marks a deeper philosophical transition in the educational and pedagogical essence of higher education. Specifically, the customer model is seen as implying two inherent conceptions, first that the customer is always right and second that the customer is at the centre of the service provision. Thus, the increased focus by higher education institutions on student wants marks a significant change in the culture of higher education and a transfer of power from academics and higher education institutions to students. The consequences of this ‘power shift’ have been identified in a growing expectation from students towards more passive engagement in the learning process (James, 2007, 2002), and for academics, an expectation to please their customers (students) by awarding higher grades (Hall, 2012). On the latter, Laing and Laing (2011) argue that a result of the emergence of the customer model is that students now exchange their enrolment for passive rote learning.

Within customer driven education provision, teaching becomes a secondary priority because, as Furedi (in Molesworth et al., 2010) argues, the student as customer model marks a deeper change about the perceived purpose of higher education, from real educational value to fulfilling customer driven objectives. According this argument, students should not be framed as customers because this compromises their intellectual development. This is based on the view that the student as customer model increases the pressure on higher education institutions to compromise and accommodate, which is best served by a “conservative and instrumentalist pedagogy” (Furedi in Molesworth et al., 2010, p. 5).

Overall, within the marketised higher education system of increased competition between higher education institutions and increased financial contribution by students towards the payment of undergraduate programme fees, students’ perception of themselves as customers is intensified. This means that students, increasingly, consider higher education as a product which will give returns relevant to the investment made to acquire it. This has not only been the students’ perception (see Williams in Molesworth et al., 2010, chap. 14), but it has also been promoted by the UK government. For example, the recent report by Lord Browne[67] claims, “the return to graduates for studying will be on average around 400%” (Coiffaited, 2011, p.46). This identified focus on graduates’ return

[67] Full biographical information at : http://www.parliament.uk/biographies/edmund-browne/26573

on investment shifts the emphasis away from the academic purpose of higher education and more towards the possession of the qualification[68].

The reduction of public funding to UK higher education institutions has affected their ability to provide the quality and quantity of academic support to their students. For example, Hussey and Smith (2010, p. 47) argue that student:staff ratios in UK are increasing and lectures are being given to much larger audiences, which is affecting the fulfilment of the teaching objectives. The same study also argues that personal contact with tutors is difficult because of the large number of students, and the large number of students in comparison with the available academic staff affects the marking and feedback turnover. Finally, in UK higher education institutions, personal contact between students and staff is declining. Sastry and Bekhradnia (2007 cited in Hussey & Smith, 2010 p. 47) have found the situation of the UK in all the above areas to be problematic in comparison to other countries.

From the above discussion it is clear that the student as customer model has emerged within a marketised system and affects both the present as well as the future state of higher education provision in the UK. Specifically, as Furedi (in Molesworth et al., 2010, p. 4) argues, the dominance of the customer model along with the increased competition between higher education institutions has created an environment where universities are obsessed with pleasing, satisfying and avoiding complaints from their students. This is articulated with the prevalence of a customer model in quality management which is pursued within a framework of what Biggs (2001) describes as retrospective quality management (see Sections 1.5 and 3.2.2.4). Taking into consideration the use of the UK university's quality management approach and guidelines as a means to manage quality in its TNHE partners offshore, this retrospective customer model will be extended to the partner institution of this case study.

[68] This, according to Hussey and Smith (2010), accompanied by the wider reduction in public funding, contributes to a pressure on higher education institutions to offer their undergraduate awards over a shorter period of time, i.e. two years instead of three. Undergraduate provision in the UK is already shorter in comparison to other European countries, where it is usually four years.

5.3.2.3 The White Paper of 2011 – proposals and debate

This section discusses the reforms under the 2011 *White Paper for Higher Education in the UK*. These reforms had not yet been implemented at the time of the collection of the data presented in this thesis. However, their impact was already visible in UK higher education, articulated as an intensified emphasis on quality as retrospective and on the student as customer, as discussed in the previous section. Also, these reforms were, partly, the response to the findings and recommendation of the Browne report (2010) which recognises that students should be treated like customers by higher education institutions. Thus, these reforms are very relevant to this research because they are shaping the quality management policy agenda at strategic level which has a direct impact on the quality management practices both 'at home' and 'offshore'.

These reforms and particularly the introduction of fees could be used to explain the perception of UK students about TNHE as an alternative. It is expected that because of the higher cost of higher education, UK students will be forced to seek alternative providers of higher education (Dearden et al., 2010), this includes the TNHEPs of UK universities which are abroad. Also, UK higher education institution, primarily due to the restrictions in international student visa laws (British Council, 2013a), will see their international student numbers decrease, thus will seek to use TNHE as way to reach international students in their home countries.

In 2011 the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), the government department responsible for higher education, published the White Paper *Higher Education: Students at the Heart of the System* (BIS, 2011). Its title reveals an adoption of a customer focus by the BIS which reflects a 'market orientation' approach. The 'market orientation' approach is a term used in marketing to describe the contemporary strategic focus of business organisations where they direct their efforts towards satisfying the changing needs of the customer more effectively and more efficiently than the competition. It seems that the BIS is suggesting a similar market orientation approach for UK higher education institutions.

The white paper proposes a number of reforms and changes to the UK higher education sector. The most notable change is the imposition by UK higher education institutions of higher fees for all students and the subsequent elimination of direct public funding.

According to the publication, the proposed reforms in UK target three areas: 1) the reduction of the public deficit which is due to public funding of teaching grants - student loans will replace public funding, changing the debt from public to private; 2) the improvement of the student experience offered by higher education institutions - to be achieved by improving teaching, assessment and feedback and making graduates more employable; and 3) higher education institutions must become responsible for increasing social mobility - higher education should decrease inequalities and allow students to move across and along the social ladder.

According to BIS (2011), these reforms are brought into public discussion within the wider context of the need to reduce public funding and increase the financial contribution of higher education stakeholders to funding. The white paper proposes a 'pay as you earn' system where students are asked to pay for their tuition only after they find employment and can afford to do so.

The BIS claims that this effort to increase the financial contribution of students to higher education will ensure that no reduction in funding to higher education will be made and in fact this will lead to a 10% cash increase by 2014-2015 which will be made up of graduate contributions.

The publication of the white paper generated great debate in the UK[69], mainly concentrated around the notion of 'student as customer'. Counter arguments to this claim of BIS claimed that students are very unlikely to act as 'rational' decision-making individuals (Working Party Academics, 2011). Students' choice of a HEI will not be made

[69] See more about the public debate at http://discuss.bis.gov.uk/hereform/white-paper/

according to functions of quality, employability and other performance related indicators as is suggested by the white paper. Instead, students' choice of HEI is affected by their economic, family and social situation. As shown earlier, students already take fees into consideration, especially those from disadvantaged economic or social backgrounds experiencing difficulties coping with the fee payment. So, student choice would not be rational and the existing inequalities of the marketised higher education system would be aggravated.

A feature which is very relevant to the themes discussed in this research is the anticipated increase in UK student mobility to other countries as an outcome of the higher fees. As most UK higher education institutions have chosen to charge the highest fee amount possible of £9,000, this will push students to emigrate to other countries (Swain, 2011; Brooks & Waters, 2011) and will reduce social mobility (Universities UK, 2011). Also, the increase in the fees and the reduction in the number of students who go into UK HEI may affect TNHEPs. UK universities may wish to bridge the gap from their lost revenue by increasing the loyalty fee for associate students who study at partner institutions in other countries. Additionally, the increase in fees may increase the drive of UK higher education institutions to establish new TNHEPs in other countries as a way to create alternative streams of income.

Additionally, there are arguments (Working Party Academics, 2011; Universities UK, 2011) about the ineffectiveness of the proposed changes for the reduction of the public deficit. This is based on the argument that students will go into debt and be very likely not to pay back for a very long time after they graduate.

It is also argued that the increased competition among higher education institutions and the increase of higher education providers will not increase the quality. As Professor Les Ebdon[70] argued, "a White Paper that aims to put 'students at the heart of the system' is very welcome in principle. However there appears to be nothing new here for students

[70] Vice chancellor of Bedfordshire University and member of the think tank million +. Full biographical information at: http://www.beds.ac.uk/research/lirans/publications/lebdon/vcprofile

and absolutely no evidence that the competition Ministers are trying to inject will actually improve the quality of the student experience” (THE, 2011).

From the students’ viewpoint, the introduction of fees as high as £9,000 has been the main issue of concern. As Aaron Porter, the president of the National Union of Students, said, “to use proposals for more information as a justification for lifting the cap on fees to £9,000 is outrageous and will not fool students and their families. It's the price rather than educational standards that will have tripled” (THE, 2011).

Overall, these reforms in the UK have intensified the ‘customer’ sense of students and have legitimised the wide use of the retrospective model as a means to verify student satisfaction and ‘value for money’. Clearly, this will impact the quality management model used, or imposed, by the UK university of the case study to the partner institution for the management of quality of its offshore provision.

5.4 Dynamics of internationalisation in Greece and the UK

The dynamics of internationalisation in the two countries of the case study need to be explored because it is necessary to understand the source and receiving country motives for engaging in TNHEPs. It is anticipated that quality management and the intensity of how much students consider themselves as customers would be affected by the motives of each of the participant institutions in the TNHE. For example, if TNHEPs are developing in receiving countries as a result of the lack of capacity of the domestic system, it is very likely that students would have less power, as TNHE will appear as an inevitable option for them. Similarly, if source countries pursue TNHE activities primarily for financial reasons, quality management may become less important. At the same time, it is important to review the existing TNHE regulatory framework in the source and receiving country as this affects, directly, the operation of the TNHEP of this case study. Finally, the discussion of the dynamics of internationalisation will aid our understanding about the demand and supply issues in both countries which form the market in which the TNHEP under study is competing.

5.4.1 Greece: Dynamics of internationalisation

Greece up until now (2011) has been one of the countries whose higher education institutions have had limited exposure to internationalisation activities (Varghese, 2011). McBurnie and Ziguras (2007) present Greece as one of the countries with the least internationalised higher education systems. There are many reasons for this.

Greek higher education uses the Greek language exclusively. This has reduced the degree of internal and external internationalisation of Greek higher education institutions (Kyriazis & Asderaki, 2008). Also, Pottakis (2008) notes:

> "The Greek case is a prime example of a southern European Higher education system, in which universities are not autonomous, are heavily dependent on state funding, have not managed to establish a comprehensive method of evaluation and persistently remain far behind in terms of establishing synergies with European and international institutions compared to the universities in all the other EU member states." (p. 515)

From this, it is clear that Greek higher education institutions have a low internationalisation potential owing to the language limitation and the structural problems of Greek higher education. So, it is rather uncommon for Greek higher education institutions to engage in TNHE activities. This is based on the notion that public higher education institutions should not engage in entrepreneurial activities, as higher education is purely a public good (Tsiligiris, 2011b).

However there are some exceptions. For example, in 2007 the Greek government, in its effort to facilitate student mobility and increase the number of international students who study in Greek public higher education institutions, established the International

Hellenic University[71]. The IHU is based in the city of Thessaloniki and offers programmes taught in English in Economics and Business Administration, the Humanities, and Science and Technology. Other examples include the Economic University of Athens, which delivers an international MBA and attracts students from other countries (Tsiligiris, 2011b).

Also, since 2010, the Greek government has had a new focus on internationalisation, largely because of the escalating problems of the Greek debt crisis (Tsiligiris, 2011b). The Greek government proposed a new strategy for the internationalisation of higher education, proposing some radical changes such as the ability of Greek higher education institutions to establish TNHEPs abroad. However, the application of these strategic directions remains to be seen.

Nevertheless, it must be noted that internationalisation activities in Greece are not seen as being part of the formal higher education system. This creates problems of recognition for the awards obtained through transnational higher education partnerships. Also, the status of the institutions engaging in these activities is not the same as that of Greek higher education institutions (Lutran, 2010).

For many years, Greece has been a major exporter of students to other countries (Lutran, 2010; ICAP, 2010), with the UK being the top destination. According to OECD (2011, p. 337) 34.7% of all Greek students studying abroad are in the UK. This, as described previously, has been the outcome of the consistent gap between demand and supply in higher education in Greece. Partly, the reason for this gap has been the shortcomings of the Greek higher education system, which prohibits the provision of higher education programmes by institutions other than the Greek universities (Psacharopoulos, 2003; Psacharopoulos & Tassoulas, 2004; Tsiligiris, 2012b).

[71] The Hellenic International University website is at : http://www.ihu.edu.gr/

5.4.1.1 Greek private colleges as Transnational Higher Education Providers

In Greece since the early 1990s, following the continuous and persistent gap between demand and supply in access to higher education, a large number of private providers of higher and further education have emerged (Dimitropoulos, 2006; Katsikas, 2009; Psacharopoulos & Tassoulas, 2004).

As the Greek constitution prohibits the provision of higher education in Greece by any other than public higher education institutions, the private for-profit providers were established as further and/or post-secondary education providers. The legal entity of these institutions was as trading companies, hence falling under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Trade. These institutions, at their early stages called Centres of Liberal Studies (Κεντρα Ελευθέρων Σπουδών), created links with foreign universities, mainly European, in the form of validation agreements and franchise arrangements. By doing so, the private education institutions were able to offer locally the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes of foreign universities. The market for these provisions has emerged because of the consistent gap between demand and supply within higher education in Greece. Historically the number of applications for entry to Greek higher education institutions has exceeded the number of the available places by a ratio of around one available place for every three applicants. The TNHEPs operating in Greece were an alternative choice for the unplaced students.

The Greek colleges are private institutions which have emerged from other forms of educational institutions such as private vocational training institutes (IIEK). The private colleges started to operate in Greece around the end of the 1980s and the majority have expanded their operations over the past 5-10 years. Today there are approximately 30 private colleges in Greece and most of them have links with European universities. Most of these institutions employ academics who are graduates of foreign universities and/or are part-time academics at Greek public higher education institutions. In their effort to counter criticism about their inferior quality, the Greek private colleges have sought external accreditation. Today, most of these colleges have some form of external accreditation from bodies such as the British Accreditation Council[72].

According to Article 46 of Law 3848/2010 which reforms the existing Law 3696/2008, the private colleges in Greece are recognised as Centres of Post-Secondary Education[73]. These centres are recognised as providers of non-formal education and training in Greece. The diplomas and certificates awarded by these centres are not equivalent to the degree titles awarded by the formal higher education institutions in the Greek education system such as Universities (AEI), Technological Institutes of Higher Education (TEI), and Institutes of Professional Training (IEK).

The establishment and operation of these centres is regulated by the state through the Greek Ministry of Education and the Department of Post-Secondary Education Centres. The licensing process of these centres has two stages. First the candidate institutions apply for a licence for establishment. This licence is subject to the fulfilment of financial and legal criteria for the legal entity and its shareholders. When the candidate institution receives the licence of establishment, it is then able to apply for the licence of operation. This second licence is subject to the existence of physical resources and academic staff to fulfil some minimum requirements set by the Greek Ministry of Education. It is only when the institution has received both these licences that it is allowed to operate in Greece. Furthermore, the law permits the establishment of TNHE partnerships only with those colleges which are licensed centres of post-secondary education.

The Department of Post-Secondary Education Centres of the Greek Ministry of Education and the National Accreditation Centre for Continuing Vocational Training (EKEPIS)[74] are responsible for monitoring the operation of the Greek colleges. However,

---

[72] http://www.the-bac.org/
[73] Κέντρα Μεταλυκειακής Εκπαίδευσης – ΚΕΜΕ
[74] The National Accreditation Centre for Continuing Vocational Training (EKEPIS) was founded in 1997 under Law 2469/1997 (O.G. 38A/14-03-1997) and Presidential Decree No 67 (O.G. 61A/ 21-4-1997) and is located in Athens, Greece. EKEPIS is a statutory body supervised by the Minister of Employment and Social Protection with administrative and financial autonomy. It is administered by

their role is primarily to ensure the application of the statutory requirements and not to assure the quality of teaching and learning provided by the colleges. This reflects existing research (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007; Stella & Bhushan, 2011) which shows that receiving countries are not ready or willing to establish their own quality assurance mechanism for TNHEPs.

5.4.1.2 The recognition of professional rights of Greek college graduates

One of the major problems for the Greek private colleges and their graduates is the lack of either professional or academic recognition for their degrees (Kitsantonis, 2011). This is particularly relevant to this research for two reasons. First, it discourages students from enrolling at TNHEPs in Greece and is also expected to affect the expectations of those enrolled. Second, it reflects previous research by Naidoo (2009), Smith (2010) and ENQA (2010) arguing that one of the main problems in TNHE is the protectionism of receiving countries and the problems with degree recognition.

According to EU law, Directive 2005/36/EK, a European citizen who holds an academic qualification from an EU university, irrespective of the place where the studies were completed, has the same professional rights everywhere in the EU as in the country where the awarding institution is based.

Greece has refused to fully adopt the European Directive for the recognition of qualifications obtained by partners of European universities who are based in other countries (Kitsantonis, 2011). Overall, the Greek government has been heavily opposed to recognising these qualifications, mainly because of its perception that private colleges provide education of an inferior level and academic quality in comparison to higher education institutions, and also on the basis that the Greek constitution prohibits the provision of higher education by private institutions (Georgiadis, 2011).

---

the Board of Directors, the Chairman of the Board and the General Director (description by http://www.ekepis.gr/main/Aboutus/tabid/124/Default.aspx)

The motivation behind this reluctance on the part of the Greek government has been the anticipated political cost which derives from the vested interested of specific groups within Greek higher education (Lutran, 2010). For example, the association of professors of Greek higher education institutions have been publicly opposed to the recognition of the TNHEP degrees, as they think that this will diminish the role of Greek public higher education institutions (Kitsantonis, 2011).

There has been a series of legal disputes in the national and European Courts[75] between graduates of Greek Colleges, the Greek colleges, the EU and the Greek Ministry of Education, because of the refusal of the Greek government to comply with the EU legislation. The outcome of these disputes has been against the Greek government, which has been fined for the delay in adopting the EU directive (HCA, 2008).

Following these heavy fines by the EU and the pressures by Troika, in 2010 the Greek government made an effort to adopt Directive 35/2005 with Presidential Order 38/2010. According to Presidential Order 38/2010[76], graduates of Greek private colleges which operate under a valid franchise or valid collaboration agreement with universities from EU member states are entitled to seek recognition of their professional rights in Greece under certain conditions[77]:

- The profession for which the Greek graduates seek recognition is legally regulated in Greece.
- The college graduate is to have acquired professional rights in another EU country.
- The programme from which the applicant has graduated has been approved and validated by the awarding institution.

---

[75] Some examples of the legal disputes can be found in the following links : http://www.hca.gr/diafora12.php ; http://www.hca.gr/anag1_11.php ; http://www.hca.gr/anag1_9.php ; http://www.tanea.gr/ellada/article/?aid=4497781

[76] The full text can be found at : http://stat-athens.aueb.gr/~jpan/FEK78A-PD38-25ma10.pdf (accessed on 18/8/2011)

[77] Source: Greek Ministry of Education: http://www.minedu.gov.gr/dioikhtika-eggrafa/keme/28-09-10-kentra-metalykeiakis-ekpaideysis-keme.html

- The degree title is exactly the same as the degree that the graduate would have acquired if the studies had been completed at the university.
- The degree was awarded after successful completion of a programme at a Greek college that ascribe professional rights in the 'home' country of the university.

Apart from the above criteria, each application for the recognition of professional rights is examined on an individual basis by the Council of Recognition of Professional Rights[78] (ΣΑΕΠ).

According to the Hellenic Colleges Association (HCA), despite strong pressure by the European authorities in the context of the EU directives, the Greek government has not actually provided a solution to the problem of recognition. The HCA claims that the presidential order is refusing to simplify the processes for recognising the degrees awarded by partnerships.

Despite the adoption of the EU directive and the creation of the Council of Recognition of Professional Rights, very few acts of recognition have been issued to graduates of Greek colleges. The Greek government has refused up until now to recognise the academic and professional rights of the graduates holding degrees awarded after completing a programme offered in Greece by a validated or franchise partner of a foreign university.

The poor adoption by the Greek government of the EU directive has led to the inclusion of a relevant requirement in the Memorandum of Understanding which was signed between the Greek government and the IMF for the provision of emergency financial aid to Greece in the summer of 2011.

As the extract from the updated Memorandum published on 13, July 2011 shows:

"All the necessary measures are taken to ensure the effective implementation of EU rules on recognition of professional qualifications, including compliance with ECJ rulings (inter alia, related to franchised diplomas). Government updates

[78] Συμβούλιο Αναγνώρισης Επαγγελματικών Προσόντων (ΣΑΕΠ) (www.saep.gr)

information on the number of pending applications for recognition of professional qualifications, and sends it to the Commission.

Presents draft legislation amending Law 3328/2005 on the Hellenic Academic Recognition and Information Centre and other provisions in order to remove the prohibition to recognise the professional qualifications derived from franchised degrees. Holders of franchised degrees from other Member States should have the right to work in Greece under the same conditions as holders of Greek degrees." (IMF, 2011, p.141)

The above extract verifies the on-going problem of professional and academic recognition for the graduates of Greek colleges. This problem has been identified as the main factor which discourages students from attending Greek colleges (ICAP, 2010).

5.4.2 UK: Dynamics of internationalisation[79]

According to Universities UK (Baskerville et al., 2011), the student population of UK universities is among the most internationalised in the OECD area. By 'internationalised' it means the extent of international student and academic staff participation in the UK higher education system. In 2008, international students accounted for 14.4% of the total student population in higher education in the UK. The diversity of the UK higher education student population is very high, as it includes students from 190 countries. However, the report acknowledges that the existence of an internationalised student body in UK higher education institutions should not be confused with the internationalisation of UK higher education institutions.

It has been argued that UK higher education institutions have a long tradition in the internationalisation of their activities, both domestically and abroad (Hyland et al., 2008), and also that UK higher education institutions have embraced 'internationalisation at home', as it is termed by Knight (2004), by internationalising their academic staff community and their academic programme content. In the past 20 or so years there has

[79] This section provides an overview of the trends that govern internationalisation of higher education in the UK. In Chapter 3 (Sections 2.2.4.1 and 2.2.4.2) I provide statistical data about international student mobility and transnational education for UK higher education.

been an awareness and common strategy in most UK higher education institutions to respond to the challenges created by the globalisation of the economy by internationalising curricula, academic teams and the student experience (Baskerville et al., 2011). Thus, most UK higher education institutions have adopted an internationalisation strategy as an effort to make their graduates more competitive in the new globalised employment market and maintain a world-leading quality status (Universities UK, 2011).

Linked with the above is the criticism that in recent years many UK higher education institutions have developed a clear internationalisation strategy which has altered their mission statement. Under this view, higher education institutions in UK have attempted to provide a response to the demands of the globalised employment market by providing students with a cross-cultural understanding. Achieving this was helped by the fact that UK had a long tradition of being a top destination for international students, something which was seen as giving an opportunity to provide a multicultural learning environment for UK students (The Higher Education Academy, 2011).

Reflecting on the recent changes in the funding of UK higher education institutions, it is anticipated that internationalisation activities, mainly those which target international student recruitment, will intensify. Also, it is expected that UK higher education institutions will seek to establish an increased number of partnerships with a more diverse range of organisations from other countries.

5.4.2.1 Transnational Higher Education in UK higher education institutions

UK higher education sector has a large number of students who are classified as 'studying wholly overseas'. According to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) in the UK, students 'studying wholly overseas' are those who study overseas on a UK degree. This includes students who study on partnerships of the UK university which operate under franchise, validation or twinning agreements. This number also includes students who study on the so-called branch campuses, which are overseas campuses operated by UK universities[80].

In recent years there has been a significant growth in the number of students who study in TNHE provision for a UK higher education award. In 2013, 571,000 students studied overseas on a UK higher education programme compared to 488,000 international students who studied on the campuses of the universities in the UK (British Council, 2013b). Research by the British Council has revealed that transnational education activities for UK higher education institutions are due to increase at a significant level until 2020 (British Council, 2013).

The above developments have brought TNHE into the spotlight of discussions in the UK, with particular focus on how to assure the student experience at these offshore locations (QAA, n.d.). This has led to partnership between the British Council and the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) "in order to promote the value of British higher education on the international stage" (QAA, 2013). In the same vein is the establishment of a special interest group on transnational higher education by the Higher Education Academy[81] (HEA) in the UK, which is recognised as the key player in promoting quality of teaching and learning in the UK higher education sector.

The above developments justify an emerging mainstream role of TNHE for the UK higher education sector, along with an increasing awareness on quality assurance and the student experience. This, coupled with the lack of sufficient research evidence on TNHE and quality management, contribute to justify the significant value of this thesis, which aims to shed light on the quality management of TNHE partnerships.

[80] Section 2.2.4.3 provide a detailed analysis of the type of these transnational education activities and the data available for UK.
[81] http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/internationalisation/transnational_education

5.5 Summary of Chapter 5

This chapter has provided a discussion of the two institutions which form the case study of this research. The discussion focused on the institutional characteristics of the two higher education institutions and their connection with the research objectives of this thesis. Primarily, the chapter has discussed how quality is managed in both institutions and showed that the partner institution is implementing a quality management approach which is designed at the source country.

This chapter has also discussed the contextual elements which affect the two institutions and the two student groups of the case study. The discussion concentrated on the elements and issues which affect student demand, expectations and perceptions of cross-border higher education.

In the UK, the reduction in public funding, the introduction of market orientated management methods and the increased competition between higher education institutions have contributed to the creation of a ‘student as customer’ approach. This has affected quality management, placing great importance on student satisfaction, expectations and perceptions.

In Greece, long-standing problems of inefficiency and lack of accountability have contributed to the declining reputation of Greek higher education. This, coupled with the persistent gap between demand and supply in higher education in Greece, has contributed to the demand for transnational higher education provision. However, Greece has been less familiar with internationalisation activities in higher education and to a great extent TNHE is considered of inferior value. It was identified that in the UK TNHE is becoming a mainstream issue in higher education policy, with particular focus on quality assurance and student experience, which is something that adds to the justification of the value of this thesis.

Chapter 6 - Student expectations

6.0 Introduction

This chapter will deal with the presentation and discussion of the findings about the first key focus of this research, which is to identify, compare and explain student expectations between the two student groups of the case study (Research Objectives 1 & 2). This includes the exploration of the key factors that influence student choice, which are treated here as pre-entry expectations (Research Question 1), as well as the exploration of student expectations about quality in higher education (Research Question 2).

The presentation, analysis and discussion of the findings will be performed in a sequential order, as the mixed methods sequential design described in Chapter 4 (Section 4.3), starting from the quantitative data and then moving on to the qualitative data. The questionnaire survey findings, which represent the quantitative part of this mixed methods design, will be presented in Section 6.1, aiming to identify the main themes and trends between the two student groups. Then, in Section 6.2, the interview findings, which represent the qualitative part of the research, are presented and discussed so as to provide more concise and deeper explanations and reflections about the themes emerging from the quantitative and the qualitative parts of the research.

The discussion of the findings is made in the context of their ramifications on the applicability of the retrospective customer model (Research Objective 3) and the justification of a prospective approach as a more appropriate model to manage quality in TNHE (Research Objective 4).

The summary of the main findings of the chapter will be provided in Section 6.3, along with a comparative discussion about the similarities and differences of expectations between the two student groups.

6.1 Analysis and discussion of Questionnaire Survey findings

This section identifies the key factors that influenced students' decision to choose education provider (Section 6.1.1) and this particular programme of study using a questionnaire survey (Section 6.1.2). The presentation of the findings starts with the ranking and comparison of mean scores between the two student groups of the case study. Then, each factor is discussed on a comparative basis, and in the context of the higher level retroductive analytical strategy I aim to provide explanations as to why and how each factor has emerged as important or less important for each student group. Each sub-section (6.1.1 and 6.1.2) includes hypothesis testing that, as part of the deductive approach used in this part of the mixed methods sequential design, aims to statistically verify the assumption about the similarity of student expectations. In each sub-section of the presentation and discussion of the questionnaire survey findings, I assess the findings in the context of their impact on student expectations while seeking to identify those issues/areas requiring further exploration during the qualitative phase of the mixed methods sequential design approach.

6.1.1 Factors of influence for the choice of HEI as indicators of 'early expectations'

Using the idea of the impact of choice factors on the formation of students' expectations, students were asked a range of closed and open ended questions about the factors that influenced their decision to choose the particular HEI (Questions 3 to 6) and the programme, BA in Business (Questions 7 to 12). The factors influencing a customer's choice over a variety of alternative services or products can be used as a primary source of evidence to identify their expectations of this service or product (Zeithaml et al., 1993).

Particularly for higher education Gibson (2010) argues[82] that student expectations are formed, partly, from the pre-enrolment and, specifically for business programmes, this needs further research. The difference in the nature and priority of factors in the choice of a programme and education provider reveals, to a great extent, what students expect from the actual provision and impacts the effectiveness of the teaching and learning model (Ginns et al., 2007; Lizzio et al., 2002; Briggs, 2006). Thus, by exploring the factors of influence for the choice of the particular programme (BA Business) and HEI, I would be able to identify student expectations and evaluate their impact on the applicability of retrospective customer model.

6.1.1.1 Ranking and comparison of means

Students were asked to rank, from a pre-fixed list, the factors that may have influenced their choice of university/partner institution (Q3, questionnaire). Students replied using a scale from 1 to 3 (No influence (1), Minor Influence (2), Major Influence (3), Not Applicable (0)). In Table 6.1, below, the statistical means for the responses of the two student groups are produced and ranked. The mean difference was calculated between the partner institution student responses and the university student responses.

[82] Also, the research by Chen and Zimitat (2006) has shown that universities use consumer behaviour analysis as a means to better understand student expectations and then use this information to design more appropriate higher education provision. In higher education, several different factors may influence students' decision to choose one particular programme of study over another (Hill, 1995). Some students may be influenced purely by components of the programme and the core elements of studying and learning. Others may be influenced, either directly or indirectly, by factors external to the programme such as the family, the social status of the profession relevant to the programme of study, the reputation of the education provider or even the existence of recreational facilities (Telford & Masson, 2005).

Table 6.1: Factors of influence for choosing a HEI - Ranking of Means

University students			Partner institution students			
Order	**factors of influence for choosing a HEI**	**Mean**	**Order**	**factors of influence for choosing a HEI**	**Mean**	**Mean dif (Partner - University)**
1	Offers appropriate courses and programmes	2.736	1	Offers appropriate courses and programmes	2.609	-0.127
2	Offers qualifications that will be recognised by employers	2.569	2	Is high in university rankings	2.591	0.316
3	Has a large campus and excellent facilities	2.500	3	Offers qualifications that will be recognised by employers	2.560	-0.009
4	Has a reputation for quality	2.340	4	Has small class size	2.542	**0.734**
5	Was well known to me	2.327	5	Is well known for innovation in research and teaching	2.435	0.353
6	Is high in university rankings	2.275	6	Has a reputation for being responsive to student needs	2.375	0.243
7	Was willing to recognise my previous qualification	2.264	7	Offers flexible entry throughout the year	2.375	**0.695**
8	Has a reputation for quality and expertise of its staff	2.212	8	Has a reputation for quality	2.320	-0.02
9	Makes use of the latest information technology	2.151	9	Has a reputation for quality and expertise of its staff	2.320	0.108
10	Has a reputation for being responsive to student needs	2.132	10	Makes use of the latest information technology	2.250	0.099
11	Has links to other institutions known to me	2.104	11	Is financially stable	2.211	0.271
12	Is well known for innovation in research and teaching	2.082	12	In noted for its superior use of technology	2.130	0.418
13	Advertises and promotes itself strongly	1.980	13	Advertises and promotes itself strongly	2.083	0.103
14	Is financially stable	1.940	14	Has a large campus and excellent facilities	2.000	-0.5
15	Has small class size	1.808	15	Was willing to recognise my previous qualification	2.000	**-0.264**
16	In noted for its superior use of technology	1.712	16	Has reputable alumni through whom I learned about it	2.000	0.292
17	Has reputable alumni through whom I learned about it	1.708	17	Has links to other institutions known to me	1.917	-0.187
18	Offers flexible entry throughout the year	1.680	18	Was well known to me	1.818	**-0.509**

The questionnaire survey findings (Question 3) presented in the table above are discussed in more detail below. The sequence of the discussion of the items is based on their significance to the students' decision-making in each student group (using the mean score) along with the difference in the means between the two student groups (using the Mean dif score).

6.1.1.1 Appropriateness of programmes & employability

Both the university and partner institution students ranked factors relating to their future employment prospects as most influential in making their selection of institution (see Table 6.1 above, items '***offers appropriate courses and programmes' 'Offers qualifications that will be recognised by employers'***).

Both student groups consider the appropriateness of the course and programmes as one of the two top reasons for choosing the particular institution ('***offers appropriate courses and programmes'***, M_U=2.736, M_{PI}=2.609, M_{diff}=-0.127). It is possible to interpret programme appropriateness within a framework of the growing student expectation for a positive impact on their future employability after attending and completing higher education programmes. Nevertheless, the meaning of 'appropriateness' of courses and programmes remains an issue for further examination during the qualitative research of this project, which is conducted via personal semi-structured interviews.

Additionally, students at both institutions rank the factor ***'offers qualifications that will be recognised by employers'*** as very important (M_U=2.569, M_{PI}=2.560). The two student groups share similar views on this, as the group responses are almost identical (M_{dif}=-0.009). This can be interpreted as a common and shared concern of the students participating in this research project, irrespective of their country of residence, about their future employment prospects. Increasingly in higher education, employment prospects tend to be summarised under the term employability[83]. The findings of this research are in line with the growing focus of student on employability and on the 'return of investment' of higher education (Baker, 2011).

[83] Employability is a popular term which has received great attention by scholars and policy makers (Hillage & Pollard, 1999; Yorke, 2006), placing it at the top of the higher education policy makers' agenda worldwide. This has been the consequence of the higher competition between graduates for finding employment, which can be attributed to both the growing number of people with university qualification as well as the continuous recession in different parts of the world (Peach & Gamble, 2011). The most up-to-date definition of employability is given by Yorke, who argues that "... employability is a set of achievements – skills, understandings and personal attributes – that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy" (Yorke, 2006, p. 7). Although, as Yorke clarifies,"… employability does not mean simply employment but derives from the ways in which the student learns from his or her experience"(Yorke, 2006, p. 7). Thus, employability is not increased simply by completing a higher education programme but is more about the skills someone learns and develops during the process of studying. This complies with the fact that employers look beyond the qualifications of their prospective employees and into specific soft skills such as problem solving and team working (CBI, 2009). It is clear that the employability of graduates would heavily depend on their overall learning experience and on their active participation and engagement with the programme.

From the findings above it is evident that students, irrespective of their location, think of employability as an important factor for selecting an HEI. The fact that both student groups rated as the most important factor for selecting an HEI the employment prospects of the programmes and courses it offers, can be seen as having a significant effect on their expectations for the content and academic management of, and their role in, the programme of study. Previous research (East, 2001; James, 2002) has shown that student expectations are changing and students are seeking a more passive role in their participation in university activities. This, together with the increased pressures for the active participation of businesses in higher education[84] (BIS, 2009; CBI, 2009), can have notable implications for universities' autonomy to create and manage their programmes and courses as they have done so far. Within a student centred and employability driven higher education system, universities can be trapped in the formation of narrow and skills-focused programmes aiming to attract more students and respond to businesses' needs for a skilled workforce (CBI, 2009).

6.1.1.2 Higher education institutions' reputation for quality

Students in both groups rate the factor ***'has a reputation for quality[85]'*** as a major influence on their choice of higher education institution (M_U=2.340, M_{PI}=2.320). Also, when students were asked to rank, in order of influence, the factors that they considered the most during the selection of HEI, more than half (+65%) of students from both groups rated ***'university reputation'***[86]. It seems, therefore, that partner institution students are influenced to a great extent, at least in this case study, by the university's reputation and

[84] However, there is contestation about the role of higher education institutions in enhancing students' employability (Cranmer, 2006; Urwin & Di Pietro, 2005). Many argue for the need to develop highly skilled, employable graduates (CBI, 2009) and others argue for a 'different' role of higher education in supporting the decision-making of students in regard to their programme of study (Yorke, 2006).

[85] In the questionnaire, the question clarified that for partner institution students this refers to the reputation of the college, while for university students this refers to the reputation of the university.

[86] During the interviews, this was explored further and was clarified that partner institution students refer to the university's reputation and not the partner institution's reputation.

much less by the partner institution's reputation. Additionally, this could be partly explain why the partner institution promotes itself as a franchise of the university, placing great emphasis on the university's logo (The College, 2011a). This is in line with the findings of existing research (Pyvis & Chapman, 2004) that have shown an increased importance of the reputation[87] of the exporting institution in the rationale of students in transnational higher education.

From the findings above it is clear that students, irrespective of their location, seem to focus on indicators of the university's reputation and therefore share common expectations about the level of overall standards which are framed within the reputation of the university. One may interpreted this finding as an indication that students in both the university and the partner institution share common concerns about quality. However, the way in which students perceives 'reputation for quality' and 'university reputation' is key here. From the literature, it is evident that students are most likely to consider quality as a bottom-up process, seeing themselves as the 'customer' and, as Lomas (2007, p. 43) argues, asking what can they get rather than what they should do. Students are inducted by various means and media to be seekers of high-quality higher education (Williams, 2012), without being made equally aware of the fact that this requires their active engagement as higher education is one of the services in which the customer's participation and that engagement plays a vital role in the quality of the final product. This is because higher education involves an on-going transformative process of the participant, and is not a product that is ready to be consumed by the customer (Harvey, 1996, p .7). Also, the students' perception of quality affects the overall quality seen to be offered by an HEI (Telford & Masson, 2005).

Thus, here the degree of sameness in student's expectation about quality in the context of the HEI reputation will be subject to how reputation is perceived by students.

[87] Despite the fact that the meaning of reputation in higher education is debated and a subject for continuous research (Helgesen & Nesset, 2007; Nguyen & LeBlanc, 2001), existing research (Ressler & Abratt, 2009) has shown that, as competition in higher education grows, reputation is becoming an increasingly important element that shapes their competitiveness.

For this reason, the reputation for quality of the HEI was examined further during the qualitative part of this research.

6.1.1.3 University rankings & familiarity

Both groups rate as one of their major influences the factor ***'is high in university rankings'*** (M_U=2.275, M_{PI}=2.591). This shows that both student groups are highly affected by university rankings in forming their decision for choosing an HEI for their undergraduate studies. This is line with the findings of the literature that show an increased role of rankings[88] in prospective students' decision-making process and an extensive use by higher education institutions as a marketing/promotion element in attracting prospective students (Unesco, 2013).

In the UK, University League Tables have existed since the early 1990s and prospective students are increasingly using them for acquiring information on higher education institutions, despite the heavy criticism these tables receive (Clarke, 2007; Hazelkorn, 2013; Rust & Kim, 2012). In contrast, in Greece, there is no similar system or mechanism for ranking public universities. Greek prospective students are not very familiar with rankings and similar measures that affect the perception of university reputation. Nevertheless, a significant portion of Greek society is familiar with the UK and US higher education systems, as there is a long tradition, originating back to the early 1960s, of wealthy Greek students travelling abroad for their undergraduate and/or postgraduate studies (Leonadari, 1994). Additionally, graduates of foreign higher education institutions have better employment prospects and higher compensation in the Greek employment market compared with graduates from Greek public higher education institutions (Psacharopoulos & Tassoulas, 2004). The above factors, coupled with a range

[88] However, the actual role of rankings as an indicator of quality is heavily questioned (Rust & Kim, 2012) as a tool for distinguishing and choosing good higher education institutions (Hazelkorn, 2009). The main criticism is about the great differences in the various rankings in terms of their methodology, criteria and reliability and the purposes for producing and using them. The extent to which prestige coming from rankings is grounded in real differences in higher education institutions' quality is unclear (Hazelkorn, 2013).

of recent developments[89], have turned university rankings into an emerging decision-making element for prospective students in the Greek higher education market.

The findings of this research along with the literature findings on the increased use of ranking by students seem to comply with the view that students act like customers and therefore tend to be more instrumental in their decision-making process (Hazelkorn, 2013). This instrumental decision-making process by students can be seen as driving their quality expectations towards a more passive role in the teaching and learning process. The existence of this link needed further exploration and was considered in the qualitative part of this research. However, it is clear that students, irrespective of their location, use a primarily 'customer-minded' approach for the selection of higher education institution.

Familiarity with the HEI was a significant factor for university students who regarded the factor '***was well known to me'*** as being very influential *(*M_U=2.32), whereas partner institution students do not (M_{PI}= 1,818; M_{diff}=0.509). This may be a result of students' homes' proximity to the university and/or a result of word-of-mouth. This matches the demographics of the university students, which reveal that the university attracts students from the local area (see Section 4.2.2). Word-of-mouth is a function of many different variables and comes as a result of various actions and events (Ressler & Abratt, 2009) so it is impossible to immediately capture its source and nature in this case. Furthermore, with the widespread use of the Internet and social media, word-of-mouth in higher education is spread further than the local society. Thus, the way in which the

[89] In autumn 2010, following the publication of World University rankings (i.e. Times Reuters World 100, Shanghai) in which none of the Greek public universities were in the top 100 list, a debate began in relation to the overall standing of Greek public higher education. Greek government officials argued against the inefficiencies of the public higher education institutions, and on the other side, academics from public higher education institutions heavily criticised the reliability of these rankings (Greek Undersecretary of Education Ioannis Panaretos, 2010[a]). According to the Minister of Education "... despite the fact that the public expenditure for higher education as a percentage of GDP is comparable to other EU countries, Greece has one of the poorest records in league tables of higher education institutions" (Diamantopoulou, 2010). Following the recent ranking results, the Greek government announced a list of proposed reforms which were brought forward for discussion and public debate during the Greek higher education institutions Rectors' meeting on 23 October 2010 (Greek Ministry of Education, 2010[b]).

[a] http://panaretos.blogspot.com/2010_10_01_archive.html [accessed 8/1/2010]

[b] http://www.minedu.gov.gr/publications/docs/keimeno_diaboyleyshs_101023.pdf [accessed 8/1/2010]

university was well known to students before choosing it for their undergraduate studies remains an issue for deeper examination during the qualitative part of the research.

6.1.1.4 Expectations about tangible resources

University students rate as a major factor the existence of a large campus and excellent facilities, whereas partner institution students rate this factor as one of minor influence. It can be said that university students have higher expectations of tangible resources compared with partner institution students, who do not place the same importance on facilities (***'has large campus and excellent facilities',*** M_U=2.5, M_{diff}=0.5).

This contradicts the findings of existing research that show that students from countries with high uncertainty avoidance score, such as Greece, have high expectations about tangibles[90] (Tsiligiris, 2011a).

However, in this particular case the higher expectations of university students about tangible resources could be attributed to the fact that in 2010 the university has undergone under a major renovation project which included a range of building in its main campus. This was included in the marketing campaign of the university at the time.

At the same time, it should be acknowledged that the partner institution, as a small institution, could not attract students that place great emphasis on tangibles in the first place.

The influence of tangible resources has a direct impact on both service and educational quality. This is because the existence of tangible resources has been linked to high levels of student satisfaction (Becket & Brookes, 2008; Browne et al., 1998; Shekarchizadeh et al., 2011), but there is no evidence linked to superior educational outcomes. Thus, the higher expectations by of university students of tangible resources

[90] In the context of Hofstede's model of culture, tangibles have been closely associated with the 'uncertainty avoidance' (Tsiligiris, 2011a) dimension. This means that students from a risk-averse cultural background are more likely to expect significant tangible facilities at a university in comparison to students from less risk-averse cultures. This relationship is relative to the particular individual's cultural values, however it has been proven to be present across different cultural settings.

may create a difference in student satisfaction between the two student groups. The university will find it more difficult to satisfy its students' higher expectations whilst for the partner institution, achieving student satisfaction about tangibles will be an easier task. Considering the link between student satisfaction and student engagement and educational outcomes, higher or lower student satisfaction about tangibles will be indirectly related to educational quality differences.

6.1.1.5 Small class size

Class size is more important for partner institution students than for university students. Students at the partner institution are influenced significantly more (M_{PI}=2.54, M_{diff}=0,734) by the factor ***'has small class size'*** than are university students (M_U=1,808).

In recent years, universities all over the world, in their attempt to create and exploit economies of scale, have been organising their lecture delivery in large classes. Within this context, students are inducted to expect large classes when going to university. However, the findings of this research do show that both partner institution and university students value the existence of small classes. Moreover, as discussed in the literature review (Section 3.2.2.2) class size, as a process variable in the context of Biggs' 3P model (Gibbs, 2010; 2012) has been found to be negatively associated with educational quality. This means that the greater the size of a class, the lower the educational outcomes (Gibbs, 2010). Whether students at the partner institution know this link and express an expectation for small class size as a means to receive better teaching and learning experience is an issue that required deeper exploration during the interviews.

The issue of class size is explained and explored in detail during the interview section, but some preliminary discussion is relevant here. The higher influence of small class size for Greek students can be explained by the fact that the partner institution is a small organisation able to organise its educational provision into small classes of no more than 25 students per class. The partner institution promotes this as one of its competitive characteristics (The College, 2011a). Also, the great influence of small class size on partner institution students can be explained within the context of the Greek higher education market. One of the main problems of the Greek public universities is their operation at overcapacity, which severely diminishes the quality of teaching and learning provision (International Committee, 2010; Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency, 2009). Thus, Greek society, and primarily the prospective students, are negatively predisposed against large classes because they associate them with the Greek public universities, where overcapacity and poor resources dramatically affect the effectiveness of teaching and learning (Meghir et al., 2010). Therefore, partner institution students' strong preference towards small classes is associated with the perception that it is a component that assures efficiency and effectiveness in the teaching and learning.

It appears that the state of the domestic higher education system impacts students' expectations in the TNHE receiving country. This can impact student expectations in a number of ways, i.e. creating lower or higher expectations than those assumed by the exporting institution. Consequently, if this issue is left unexplored and student expectations unmanaged, it may lead to significant ramifications on service and educational quality.

6.1.1.6 Flexible entry throughout the year

The mode of entry is valued significantly more by partner institution students than by university students. Partner institution students regard the factor '***offers flexible entry throughout the year'*** as significantly more influential (MPI=2.375, Mdiff=0,695) than university students (MU=1.680). As can be seen in Table 6.1, for partner institution students, flexible entry is a high influence factor[91] (MPI=2.375 which >2), ranked seventh, while for university students it is a factor of no influence (MU=1.168 which is closer to 1) and ranked last. The high appreciation by partner institution students of flexible entry

[91] The influence of factors is measured on a scale of 1 to 3, where 1 =has no influence, 2 =minor influence and 3 =major influence.

should be analysed in the context of the Greek higher education system. In Greece, higher education is provided solely by the state, and the places available are very limited. As a way to select those who are suitable to enter higher education, the Greek state has established a nationwide written examination period which takes place once per year. High school graduates are able to sit this so-called 'Pan-Hellenic' examination to compete for a place in the state universities. This system has as its primary objective to eliminate 2/3 of the total applicants, as the places available are enough to cover 1/3 of the total demand (Marseilles, 2009). The result of the fierce competition between the applicants has led to the development of a new market for private preparatory tuition support, called 'frontisterio' (Psacharopoulos & Tassoulas, 2004, p.241). It is generally accepted that to be successful in the Greek nationwide exams, applicants have to attend two years of preparatory private tuition classes, at a cost which was estimated at around 8,000-10,000 euros in 2009 (Marseilles, 2009). The Greek system for entry into higher education has been heavily criticised for worsening social inequality and has been likened to a 'procrustean approach' by Psacharopoulos & Tassoulas (2004). As the authors conclude, the result of this approach is "to mould access to tertiary education in a way that perpetuates the state monopoly while deteriorating the quality of education" (Psacharopoulos & Tassoulas, 2004, p. 259).

As a result of this system, it is estimated that each year 30,000 students enrol at private institutions offering higher education programmes in Greece under collaborative arrangements with foreign universities (ICAP, 2010; Menon, et al., 2007). Additionally, many unsuccessful Greek applicants and others who wittingly choose not to sit the nationwide examinations go to countries with flexible/open entry systems to higher education (Liagouras et al., 2003). This partly explains why Greece is the leading exporter of students to other countries after China, with approximately 70 Greek students in foreign universities for every 10,000 members of the general population (OECD, 2011a).

However, research (Tsiligiris, 2013) has shown that the development of TNHEPs in Greece is closely associated with significant decline in the number of Greek students who move abroad to pursue undergraduate studies.

6.1.1.2 Null hypothesis testing

Non-parametric statistics were used to test statistically and verify the findings discussed above. This aims to test the assumption[92] about the sameness of student expectations across different locations education delivery. Using the Mann-Whitney U test, the probability value (Asymp. Sig. 2-tailed) was calculated and represented with p. This value (p) shows the probability of the result to be due to chance (Robson, 2002). The threshold for accepting that there is enough statistical evidence to support the existence of a relationship is at $p=<.05$ (Saunders, 2009), additionally, according to the guidelines proposed by Cohen (1988), the closer p is to .001, the greater the difference between the two groups.

After producing the relevant test (see Table 6.2) I have found enough statistical evidence to argue that the two student groups are not influenced in the same way by a range of factors. Specifically, the null hypothesis for equality of responses between the two student groups is rejected in 6 out of 18 factors. These factors are around **the existence of sizable and high quality tangible resources** ($p=.001$), **the size of classes** ($p=.000$), **the entry mode** ($p=.000$), **the existence of alumni** and **their role in informing prospective students** ($p=.025$), **the reputation of an HEI for its innovation in research and teaching** ($p=.044$) and **the familiarity of prospective students with the HEI** ($p=.005$). In Table 6.2 these factors, for which the null hypothesis is rejected, are highlighted in yellow.

[92] As presented in the conceptual framework (Section 3.5)

Respectively, from the Mann-Whitney U test there is enough statistical evidence to support that the students in both groups are influenced similarly in 12 of the 18 factors. Thus, students from both groups appear to be influenced in a similar way by factors which refer to **higher education institutions' graduate employability** (p=.865), **reputation for quality** (p=.932), **reputation for quality and expertise of staff** (p=.431), **ranking position** (p=.188), **responsiveness to student needs** (p=.158), **financial stability** (p=.995), **willingness to recognise previous qualifications** (p=.0.92), **links with other institutions known to prospective students** (p=.656), **use of the latest information technology** (p=.587), **strong advertising and promotion** (p=.188) and **reputation for its superior use of technology** (p=0.19). For these factors, the null hypothesis for equality of responses between the two groups is verified.

The outcome of the Mann-Whitney U test shows where enough statistical evidence exists to reject or accept the null hypotheses. To identify the strength of the relationships between the two groups, the effect size was calculated. The effect size is calculated using Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) which takes values from 0 to 1. The nearer r is to 1, the stronger the relationship examined.

In Table 6.2 below, the highest effect size is observed in the factors '***Has small class size*'** (r=.432, medium size), **'*Offers flexible entry throughout the year'*** (r=.416, medium size effect) and **'*Has a large campus and excellent facilities*'**(r=.375, medium size effect), where the highest mean difference is observed (M_{diff}=.734) from the mean comparison. This demonstrates the significant influence of small class size on partner institution students' decision to choose the partner institution, while at the same time class size seems to be irrelevant to their expectations from the HEI.

Table 6.2: Mann-Whitney U Test for testing the difference in the factors of influence between University and partner institution students (question 3)

Factor	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)*	null hypothesis	r**
Has a reputation for quality	655.500	-.085	.932		-0.010
Was willing to recognise my previous qualification	471.000	-1.687	.092		-0.191
Has a reputation for quality and expertise of its staff	595.000	-.788	.431		-0.089
Has links to other institutions known to me	623.000	-.446	.656		-0.050
Has reputable alumni through whom I learned about it	467.000	-2.234	.025	rejected	-0.253
Offers qualifications that will be recognised by employers	649.000	-.170	.865		-0.019
Offers appropriate courses and programmes	518.000	-1.647	.100		-0.187
Makes use of the latest information technology	594.000	-.544	.587		-0.062
Has a reputation for being responsive to student needs	522.000	-1.410	.158		-0.160
Is well known for innovation in research and teaching	460.000	-2.018	.044	rejected	-0.228
Has a large campus and excellent facilities	361.000	-3.311	.001	rejected	**-0.375**
Is financially stable	635.500	-.006	.995		-0.001
Offers flexible entry throughout the year	319.500	-3.674	.000	rejected	**-0.416**
In noted for its superior use of technology	445.000	-2.348	.019		-0.266
Was well known to me	396.500	-2.797	.005	rejected	**-0.317**
Advertises and promotes itself strongly	539000	-1.211	.226		-0.137
Is high in university rankings	526.000	-1.315	.188		-0.149
Has small class size	309.000	-3.814	.000	rejected	**-0.432**

*statistically significant at p<=.05
**r=.10 small effect
r= .30 medium effect
r= .50=large effect

The statistical analysis, both in terms of descriptive statistics and null hypothesis testing, showed that students are influenced by a range of similar factors when it comes to the selection of higher education institution and undergraduate programme of study. There appears to be a universal influence on students' decision-making by issues such as institutional reputation and employment prospects that can be attributed to the contextual factors that affect higher education at global level, such as the 'student as customer' and the marketisation of higher education.

However, there are areas where responses between the two student groups of the case study varied significantly. It appears that students are influenced to a different extent by specific factors, and that this is a result of the local specific conditions. This means that student expectations will vary in different locations of programme delivery in a TNHE context. In turn this will impose significant problems on the applicability of the retrospective customer model

6.1.1.3 Other factors (comment box)

In the questionnaire survey students were also asked to reply to an open question (comment box) about other factors not included in the pre-fixed list of factors of the closed question analysed previously. The analysis of the qualitative type data which emerged from this open question was entered into SPSS in string format (i.e. words) and then grouped in alphabetical order. The factors which emerged were the location of the higher education institution and family/parent advice.

The analysis of responses showed that the majority of university students (65%) have provided comments that identify **'*location*'** as one of the "other factors of major influence for choosing the particular university". University students felt that the location of the university was ideal as it was near to their home city (i.e. *"The location of the University Campus in the City Centre is fantastic''* and *"It is only 20 minutes from my home"*". Here the location of the university appears to be important for university students primarily for two reasons; first because it is near the city centre and second because it is near to their family home.

The preference for proximity to the city centre is linked with non-academic issues like entertainment (i.e. nightlife) which appears to be important for a portion (15%) of the university students. This coincides with the findings by Jones (2010) about the factors of influence of students' choice of HEI in Wales. Jones (2010) finds that students rate 'location' and 'social life' within the top ten factors for choosing a HEI.

The fact that university students tend to choose the university because of its proximity to their family home verifies the demographics of university students. As presented in section 4.2.2, one third of the university students come from the area around the university. Also, in the UK there has been an increasing trend for students to choose[93] a university near their home, due to cost concerns for younger students and work or family commitments for mature students (Baskerville & Arlecdon Consulting, 2013).

The majority of partner institution students (70%) provided comments in the open-ended text box that relate to ***'family/parent advice'*** as the other most influential factor in their decision to choose the partner institution**.** In contrast, university students do not mention the 'family/parent' factor within their list of other factors influencing their decision for choosing an HEI. This can be explained by Greek family and societal norms (Σιδηροπούλου-Δημακάκου et al., 2008; Tzani, 1983). In Greece, parents and family are thought to be responsible for providing all of the necessary help to youngsters for gaining entry to and completing higher education studies (Vitsilaki-Soroniati, 2001 cited in Arztmann & John, 2008). The failure or success of a student to either gain access to higher education or successfully complete an undergraduate programme is considered as a respective parent/family failure or success (Paleocrassas et al., 2002).

This reflects research by the British Council (Shepherd, 2013) which has shown that there is a variant role of family/parent advice on students' decision-making about TNHE across different countries. This explains why the transnational higher education context sees a great emphasis of marketing and promotion activities targeting parents and less the students directly (Bodycott & Lai, 2012; Kell et al., 2012a; Ziguras, 2011). At the same time, the important role of family and parents for partner institution students implies that they will be part of the student expectation formation mechanism/process.

The findings here show that the partner institution students are much less directly involved than university students in the decision-making regarding the choice of HEI. Consequently, if they have not been able to directly acquire information about the HEI and

[93] As Bowl et al. (2008, p. 10) have found, one of the first considerations made by undergraduate students before choosing an HEI is the location, or the 'home or away' dilemma as they called it. The factors affecting this decision are not only the extra costs for students for maintaining their own house. They extend to social-cultural factors such as experiencing a sense of family or being independent within a student community, receiving parental support, and feeling like adults (Bowl et al., 2008, p.10).

the particular programme, then is very likely that they will have formed less informed expectations and perceptions. This in turn impacts the effectiveness of a retrospective customer model for the management of service quality and education quality.

6.1.2 Factors of influence for the choice of programme as indicators of 'early expectations'

Students from both groups were asked to rank in order of influence a list of pre-defined factors (see Table 6.3) that have influenced their decision to choose the BA in Business programme.

Table 6.3: Factors of influence for choosing the BA in Business programme

Future employment prospects
Reputation of the particular programme
Content of programme
Social status of profession deriving from the degree
It was the only choice available to me
Just to continue studying for a higher degree
Advice of parents
Cost of attending
Advice of family
Friends studying on the same programme

Students ranked the factors using a Likert scale from 1 to 3 (1= no influence to 3=major influence). For each group of responders, the statistical means were generated, ranked and the differences were identified. Below the findings are presented and discussed thematically.

6.1.2.1 Ranking and comparison of means

The results from the ranking and comparison of means are presented in Table 5.4. The mean difference was calculated between the partner institution students' and the university students' statistical means of responses. The factors for which the highest and the lowest mean difference was found are discussed in the remainder of this section.

Table 6.4: Factors of influence for choosing the BA in Business - ranking and comparison of means (Question 7)

University students			Partner Institution students				
Order	**Factors of influence for choosing the BA Business**	**Mean**	**Order**	**Factors of influence for choosing the BA Business**	**Mean**		**Mean diff. (Partner-University)**
1	Future employment prospects	2.698	1	Future employment prospects	2.880		0.182
2	Reputation of the particular programme	2.566	2	Social status of profession deriving from the degree	2.680		0.378
3	Content of programme	2.359	3	Content of programme	2.520		0.162
4	Social status of profession deriving from the degree	2.302	4	Advice of family	2.320		0.603
5	It was the only choice available to me	2.189	5	Advice of parents	2.320		0.565
6	Just to continue studying for a higher degree	1.962	6	Reputation of the particular programme	2.200		-0.366
7	Advice of parents	1.755	7	Just to continue studying for a higher degree	2.080		0.118
8	Cost of attending	1.736	8	Cost of attending	1.880		0.144
9	Advice of family	1.717	9	Friends studying on the same programme	1.840		0.274
10	Friends studying on the same programme	1.566	10	It was the only choice available to me	1.800		-0.389

Programme's future employment prospects

For both student groups the major reason for selecting the programme, BA in Business, was its impact on their future employment prospects. Both the university and partner institution students ranked as the most influential factor **'*future employment prospects*'** (M_U=2.70, M_{PI}=2.88). It seems that students, irrespective of their location, share the same concern about their future in the employment market. This coincides with the findings in Question 3 and could be interpreted as an expectation by students for a link between the higher education programme they choose to study and a positive impact on their future employment prospects in the real labour market. This proves that employability related considerations by students go deeper than the institutional level (i.e. HEI), extending to include the programme of study. The discussion of the implications of this finding should be made within the current debate about higher education institutions' role in increasing the employability of their graduates (Yorke, 2006). Many, like the CBI (2009), argue that today a higher education qualification is not enough on its own to make graduates employable. Thus, students may have formed unrealistic expectations about the impact of holding a higher education qualification on finding and maintaining employment. This means that when they graduate and realise that their expectations were unrealistic, they are most likely to be dissatisfied by the return of their investment in studying the programme.

Moreover, the focus of students on the 'end product' rather than on the educational journey which is required to acquire a degree has implications for quality management. Part of the literature shows that students increasingly take for granted the acquisition of a degree which implies a expectations for less active participation in the teaching and learning process (Lomas, 2007). Nevertheless, it should be acknowledged that students' focus on employability and the 'end product' is something which is promoted by higher education institutions as well as government agencies, as discussed in the literature review (Sections 3.1.1 and 3.2.1). The focus on the end product shifts the attention of students from the essence of achievement in higher education which is based on the student's transformative and participatory role.

The social status of the profession deriving from the degree

The students' choice of higher education programme is affected by the social stereotypes that exist in their local societies, notably more so in Greece. Partner institution students rank as their second most influential factor ***'the social status of the profession deriving from the degree'*** (M_{PI}=2.680) with a notable difference (M_{dif} +0.378) from university students, who rank this factor fourth (M_U=2.301). Social status deriving from the profession seems to be an important factor (M>2) for students at both locations and may be a relevant consideration for young people choosing to pursue a degree programme. This may be linked with the recent findings about the impact of employment information on higher education applicants. Universities UK has published the findings of a study which shows that students tend to value the choice of a subject based on the weighting between the tuition costs and the likelihood of future earnings (Universities UK, 2010, p.

51). This could be used to explain the decline in the demand in Greece for traditional science programmes (i.e. Maths, Physics, Chemistry) whose employability is either low or not linked with socially advantageous employment (Paleocrassas et al., 2002).

Programme reputation

University students rank the ***'reputation of the particular programme'*** as the second most influential factor in making their choice (M_U=2,566) whereas partner institution students rate this factor notably lower at sixth (M_{PI}=2.200, M_{diff}=-0.366). It seems that UK university students are influenced more than partner institution students by the reputation of a programme during the decision process of choosing an undergraduate programme of study. Nevertheless, both student groups are influenced by this factor to a prominent extent, since the group mean is higher than 2, which represents the value minor influence. This could be interpreted as an indication of increased and common student awareness of programme content, ratings, league tables and overall programme profiles. This could be considered an outcome of the wider conceptualisation of student as customer, which is particularly evident in the UK and is articulated in a range of ways (e.g. the introduction of Key Information Sets[94] introduced to provide information for prospective students). Overall, students in the UK are inducted into the process of comparing different undergraduate programmes using a range of publicly available information. In comparison, in Greece, students have a very limited choice of programmes and therefore are not used to programme comparison and research. Nevertheless, in the case of the partner institution students, it is the marketing message of the college that has created the 'reputation' awareness about this programme (The College, 2011a).

At the same time, it should be noted that reputation as a process factor in the Biggs' 3P model has been found not to be linked to educational quality (Gibbs, 2010). However, students' expectation about the power of their degree in the employment market

[94] http://www.hefce.ac.uk/whatwedo/lt/publicinfo/kis/ (accessed 9 August 2013)

as a result of the reputation of the awarding institution or the programme may shift their focus away from the educational process and the acquisition of knowledge. Thus, the way in which different students perceive reputation and its role is an important issue that requires further investigation during the qualitative part of the research.

Programme content

The programme content is an important factor for students, irrespective of their location, in the process of choosing a programme of study. Both university and partner institution students rate the factor '***content of the programme'*** as the third most influential factor for choosing the BA in Business programme, as demonstrated in Table 6.4 (MU=2.359, MPI=2.520). This finding can be explained in the context of various factors but also can be considered as having a range of implications. First, shows that students are aware of the programme content and consider it seriously when making decisions as to which undergraduate programme they will select for their studies. Second, students irrespective of their location appear to place a great emphasis on the programme which means that they are not as instrumental and superficial as considered by some part of the literature (Hussey & Smith, 2010; Lomas, 2007). Third, students' awareness of the programme content contradicts the common claim in part of the literature that TNHEP students' prime motive for their decision to study 'wholly overseas' is the lower financial cost (Dwivedi, 2013; Healey, 2013a; Shepherd, 2013; Choudaha, 2012) rather than the qualitative elements of the provision.

Family and parental advice

Greek students' choice of programme is influenced significantly more by family and parental advice than UK students. As is shown in Table 6.4 above, partner institution students rank the factors '***advice of family'*** and '***advice of parents'*** fourth and fifth, whereas university students rank these factors seventh and ninth respectively.

Clearly, for partner institution students, family and parental advice play an important role, not only in the selection of education provider, as found earlier, but also in the choice of the specific programme of study. In contrast, for university students, family and parental advice are important factors for the selection of an HEI but not for the selection of the programme of study. This shows that university students have a greater degree of freedom and independence, compared with partner institution students, to choose the programme of study they prefer.

This could be explained by the different family norms between Greek and UK society. In Greece, families are child-centred and parents' full attention is concentrated upon their child's education and career perspectives (Piperopoulos, 2007). In Greece, higher education is considered as the basis for social advancement for the family as a whole (Kallinikaki, 2010). Also, it is increasing common for young Greeks to stay longer with their families, even up to their mid-30s, whereas in the UK and elsewhere in Europe, the norm is that children are expected to leave 'home' at the age of 18-19 (Piperopoulos, 2007). Within this context, in Greece, parents and family are expected to play an active role in supporting children before, during and after their higher education studies. In contrast, UK families are more detached from their children's studies and tend to only provide financial help when needed (Vretakou, 1989). Similar to Greece, in other TNHE importing countries like Malaysia, research has shown that parents play an important role in the decision-making process (Hill et al., 2013).

The greater involvement of parents in the selection process could have serious impacts on student expectations and perceptions. When the student is not directly involved in the selection of a programme, they have less opportunity to understand the content, requirements, assessment strategy and other important characteristics of the teaching and learning process. Thus they may form significantly higher or lower expectations which then will impact the effectiveness of the service quality and educational quality models. Also, in cases where parents make the decisions about HEI and the programme of study, the student may feel distressed or dissatisfied with this choice. This then will impact their perception about the HEI and the programme, which will have a great impact on educational outcomes and student satisfaction (Wiers-Jenssen & Stensaker, 2002).

Availability of alternative choices

The limited availability of alternative choices was a factor of influence for both student groups. University students are influenced more than partner institution students by the factor ***'it was the only choice available to me'*** (M_U=2.189, M_{PI}=1.800, M_{Diff}=+.389). University students are influenced more by this factor, as they rank it fifth whereas partner institution students rank it last. This contradicts the claims made by part of the literature as well as the undergoing common perception about the profile of TNHE students. Usually one of the motives for students who choose to study 'wholly overseas' on a programme of a UK university is said to be their inability to enter their home higher education system. This inability is framed either in the context of the limited capacity of the domestic higher education system or in the students' lack of appropriate standards to meet the requirements. The findings of this research show that for TNHEP students, TNHE was not their only option to enter higher education. Nevertheless, this is an issue that needs further exploration during the qualitative part of this mixed methods approach.

Continue studying for a higher education degree

The university students mention as their sixth factor influencing their choice of the BA in Business programme ***'just to continue studying for a higher education degree'*** and partner institution students rank the same factor as seventh. Students in both groups appear not to choose this programme simply as a way to get into higher education.

Cost of attendance

The cost of the programme seems not to be an influence on students when selecting the programme BA in Business. Both university and partner institution students rank this factor eighth. It should be noted that the data was gathered before the announcement in the UK in 2010 about the introduction of tuition fees. It is very likely that the cost of attendance will now rank higher in the factors influencing students' choice of higher education programme, for both student groups. Nevertheless, a clearer observation can be made on the finding that for partner institution students the cost of the programme was not a factor of major influence in their decision to study on the programme offered by the TNHEP of the case study. This contradicts existing research evidence (Marginson et al., 2011) and claims made in part of the literature (Choudaha, 2012), where TNHE is framed as a cheaper alternative to 'study abroad' at the main campus of the awarding institution.

Friends on the same programme

As shown in Table 6.4, the existence of friends who are studying on the same programme is not a factor which influences students' choice of programme. Both student groups in this study ranked this factor in the lowest (ninth & tenth) positions (M_U=1.566, M_{PI}=1.840).

6.1.2.3 Null hypothesis testing

In order to statistically test the hypothesis about the sameness of student expectations between the two student groups of the case study, the null hypothesis about student expectations[95], was tested using the Mann-Whitney U test.

---

[95] H_0= There is no significant difference between the expectations of university and partner institution students

From the statistical testing in Table 6.5 it is found that university and partner institution students are influenced in a similar way in five out of ten factors for the choice of the particular programme of study (Question 7 in the questionnaire). Students, irrespective of their location, consider equally the factors: **future employment prospects, the content of the programme, the cost of attending, the availability of alternative choices, the programme's relevance to their future career, and to continue study in higher education.** For these factors, students in both groups of this research have similar responses and no statistically significant[96] differences, therefore the null hypothesis is verified. From the statistical analysis, it is clear that students, irrespective of their study location, form similar expectations about employment. The extent to which this impacts their learning approach is subject to further investigation during the next section of the questionnaire survey where I investigate students' perceptions about quality in higher education.

On the other hand, the responses of the two student groups are not the same for the remaining five factors of Question 7. Students in different locations who study on the same programme are influenced to a different extent by the factors: **programme reputation, social status of the profession deriving from the degree, advice of family, advice of parents, and friends studying on the same programme.** There is enough statistical evidence ($p<.05$) to reject the null hypothesis for these factors.

To assess the magnitude of the statistical relationships identified by the null hypothesis testing, the effect size was calculated[97]. For the factors ***'advice of family'*** and ***'advice of Parents',*** as shown in Table 6.5, the effect size is medium ($r>.30$) and the difference between the means is significant ($p\cong .001$). This verifies the findings and the discussion presented earlier using the statistical means about the greater influence of parental and family advice on Greek students compared with UK students.

---

[96] Significance at $p=<0.05$

[97] The effect size, as described in section 4.3.1.4.2 of Chapter 4, allows identifying the relationships with the larger effect. Once the null hypothesis is rejected then the effect size will show how important (strong) is the difference between the responses of the two student groups.

Table 6.5: Factors of influence for choosing the BA in Business - Mann-Whitney U Test (Question 7)

	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	null hypothesis	effect size r**
Future employment prospects	597.0	-1.05	.294		-.12
Reputation of the particular programme	457.5	-2.47	.014	Rejected	-.28
Cost of attending	580.5	-.97	.330		-.11
Social status of profession deriving from the degree	476.0	-2.21	.027	Rejected	-.25
It was the only choice available to me	595.5	-.79	.431		-.09
Just to continue studying for a higher degree	590.5	-.82	.415		-.09
Advice of family	377.0	-3.25	.001	Rejected	-.37
Advice of parents	391.0	-3.09	.002	Rejected	-.35
Friends studying on the same programme	485.0	-2.14	.032	Rejected	-.24
Content of programme	576.0	-1.02	.306		-.12
Degree of programme content relevance to the future career	526.5	-1.25	.210		-.14

*statistically significant at p<=.05
**r=.10 small effect
r= .30 medium effect
r= .50=large effect

6.1.2.4 Other factors (open-ended)

Aiming to identify other factors that may have influenced students in choosing the BA in Business programme, an open-ended question was included in the questionnaire survey. To analyse the findings from this section of the questionnaire, all responses were entered in the form of text into SPSS and then grouped thematically. The most frequently occurring themes for each student group are discussed below.

For university students, three themes appeared more frequently in the open-ended responses, in regards to ‘other factors’ of that have influenced them in choosing the BA Business programme: 1) the placement year, 2) the international dimension of the programme, and 3) the number of elective modules offered.

The existence of the ‘placement year’ was identified by the university student group as a factor of major influence in their decision to enrol on the particular programme. University students, in this research, seem to be strongly influenced by the existence of a placement year when selecting a higher education programme. This is in line with the relevant literature (Marijana Sikošek & Borut Kodriè, 2011; Moorman, 2011; Moreau &

Leathwood, 2006) and previous research (Universities UK, 2010) about factors influencing students' choice of programmes and students' expectations in relation to employment work placements during undergraduate studies. Particularly in the UK, the introduction of work placements in universities has been an issue raised by several studies and later included in the Dearing Report (Dearing et al., 1997). Harvey et. al. (1998) and Bowes & Harvey (1999) suggested that year-long work placements are related to higher rates of graduate employment and higher incomes. This explains why the placement is an important factor for the university but not for the partner institution students. However, the reason why university students consider placement as important for choosing the programme of study remains an issue for further investigation during the semi-structured personal interviews.

The second theme, in order of frequency of appearance in university students' responses, was the '***international dimension***' of the programme. This could explained as an expectation by university students of a degree that will enable them to forge a career at international level. Alternatively, this could be perceived as an expectation by students for programme content that will incorporate international themes and issues that will increase the participant's understanding of the current internationalised world of business. Overall, this is another issue to be explored further during the qualitative part of this research project.

The third most influencing factor for university students in this open-ended section was the ***'number of elective modules available'*** with 42%. The UK students choose the particular programme because it offers a wide range of core and optional modules for studying. This could be explained as a tendency by UK students to choose programmes which incorporate a great degree of flexibility in regard to their content and is in line with the findings of previous studies (James & Beckett, 2006).

For partner institution students, two themes appeared more frequently in the open-ended responses, in regard to 'other factors' of that have influenced them in choosing the BA Business programme,: 1) ***superiority of the degree from a European university***

compared to a degree from a Greek public university' and 2) **3-year duration of the programme**

Partner institution students referred more frequently to the ***'superiority of the degree from a European university compared to a degree from a Greek public university'*** as another factor for choosing the programme. Partner institution students consider a degree from a university of another European country as more advantageous in the employment market than one from a Greek university. This is in line with the findings of similar studies (Goldbart et al., 2005; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002) about factors affecting international students enrolling at UK universities. These studies have shown that the major factor is the reputation of UK degrees in the home countries of international students. Similarly, Greek students consider a UK higher education programme offered by the partner institution in Greece as superior to similar programmes from Greek higher education institutions. This could be explained as a reflection of a negative predisposition of Greek society towards Greek public higher education institutions (Livanos, 2010). This may be ascribed to the low quality and overall weak status of Greek universities in comparison to other European and international universities (Meghir et al., 2010). Studies (Lianos et al., 2004; Livanos, 2010; Raikou & Karalis, 2007) have shown that graduates from Greek public higher education institutions find it difficult to enter the labour market, nationally and internationally.

This is a product of the long-existing organisation and management inefficiencies of the Greek higher education institutions and the serious delays in completing the harmonisation process with EU higher education directives[98]. Regular sit-ins, political parties' direct involved in student representation, old and out-dated programme content, and longer undergraduate studies[99] are some of the factors affecting the competitiveness and attractiveness of Greek public universities, according to research conducted by the

[98] By 2010 Greece had to adopt the following: 1) Establish and use a system of recognition of foreign academic and other qualifications, 2) Comply with the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) and 3) restructure its undergraduate and postgraduate cycles from 4+2 to 3+2.

[99] 4 years officially but usually it takes 5-6 years for a student to complete an undergraduate degree programme.

University of Athens on first year undergraduate students (UoA, 2007)[100]. All of the above seem to contribute to the declining reputation of Greek higher education institutions, which in turn diminishes the employability of their graduates (International Committee, 2010).

In regard to the impact of the above on partner institution student's expectations, it is evident that students place great emphasis on the exit award early in their education journey. This is explained in the context of the 'student as customer' where great emphasis is placed on return on investment and less emphasis on the educational process (Hutton et al., 2011; Lynch, 2006; Williams, 2012).

The second factor for Greek students in selecting the programme was the duration of the programme and specifically the comment that ***'it is only three years'.*** The Greek higher education system has a four year undergraduate cycle leading to the award called 'Ptyhion'. For many years now, the Greek government has refused to harmonise the national system with the Bologna guidelines for a three year undergraduate cycle in all EU countries (Sursock et al., 2010). Additionally, most students in Greek higher education institutions do not expect to finish their undergraduate programme before a period of five years due to frequent strikes by students or academic staff (Liagouras et al., 2003). Thus, students at the partner institution value the shortened period of the programme as one important factor for choosing it. Nevertheless, there is criticism about the structure of the UK higher education which is amongst the minority of countries in the European Community where the undergraduate cycle lasts for three years (Hussey & Smith, 2010) and therefore a shorter study cycle is does not imply superior educational outcomes.

---

[100] University of Athens (2007) *First Year Students' Expectation and Perception Research*. Available at: http://kapodistriako.uoa.gr/stories/100_th_01/index.php (*in Greek)* [accessed 30/09/2010]

6.1.3 Summary of questionnaire survey findings and issues which require further investigation during the qualitative stage of the study

The analysis of the questionnaire show that students in both groups share some common expectations about the impact of the HEI they attend on their future employability. University students have expectations about tangible facilities whereas partner institution students do not. In contrast, partner institution students expect small class size and flexibility of entry. Overall, students in different locations share the same concerns and expectations about the role and impact of HEI in their future career prospects and their ability to find employment.

Students, irrespective of their location, share common expectations about the future employment prospects related to the qualifications associated with the programme they choose to study. This is geared by the recent economic crisis and the on-going development of the so-called knowledge economy. Additionally, students are influenced similarly and to a major degree by the programme content and its relevance to their future career. This reflects the findings of a study of student choice in Welsh universities by Jones (2010) who has found the three most important influencing factors for the choice of a higher education programme by students are: course content, academic status and department reputation/status. Whether this is something that should be taken into account by higher education institutions when developing new programmes is still an issue that requires further discussion and investigation.

Family and parents play an important role in the process of programme selection by Greek students, whereas for UK students they do not have a major influence. Additionally, Greek students are affected significantly more by the social status of the profession associated with the programme of study they choose. Therefore, it seems that societal norms affect the choice of study destination and thus the future career path. This can influence students' expectations and perceptions about the programme and the HEI, as their choice is primarily affected by family and society related factors.

The following key issues emerged from the analysis and discussion of the survey findings presented in Sections 6.1.1 and 6.1.2.

Programme appropriateness. Both student groups identified the item ‘programme appropriateness’ as one of the most important influences on their choice of HEI. Because of the diverse meaning of the item ‘programme appropriateness’, its interpretation could vary. Thus, aiming to facilitate the most accurate discussion of the high influence of programme appropriateness, during the personal interviews the students were asked a relevant sub-question. Specifically, students were asked to explain what they consider to be the most important attribute/characteristic of the programme.

Meaning of quality in higher education. The questionnaire survey indicated that the students consider the higher education institution’s reputation of quality during the selection process. Nevertheless, the meaning of quality in higher education is itself highly debated, as discussed during the literature review (see Chapter 3). Furthermore, the way in which students conceive quality in higher education has been criticised and discussed in previous research (Cullen et al., 2003; Fenstermacher & Richardson, 2005; Harvey & Green, 1993; Quinn et al., 2009). Hence it was thought useful to use the personal interviews to explore further the students’ perception of quality in higher education, in an effort to reply to the relevant research question (Research Question 2).

Previous knowledge of the institution and familiarity with it. In the questionnaire survey, the university students identified their familiarity with the institution (i.e. the item, ‘was well known to me’) as a major factor for selecting it. This requires further investigation as ‘previous knowledge and familiarity’ can be a function of many different variables, such as word-of-mouth; the higher education institution’s proximity to the student’s home; the experiences of the student’s relatives or friends who have studied at the HEI, etc. Moreover, the university students mentioned one of the major factors for selecting the particular university as being the fact that it was the only choice available to them. Hence the process of selecting and choosing a university needed further clarification and therefore relevant questions were included in the semi-structured interviews (see Section 4.3.2.1, table 4.1, questions 1 and 2).

Placement year. The majority of university students mentioned the placement year as one of the principal reasons for choosing their particular higher education programme. This is in line with existing research, which has shown an important influence of the work placement on the choice of students (McCall et al., 2009; Briggs, 2006; Jones, 2010). However further investigation is needed to reveal how and why individual students value the placement year. The placement, along with the other expectations of students is discussed in Section 6.2.

The above issues were some of those explored further through the personal interviews with the students from both student groups. Other issues also emerged in the course of the discussion with the interviewees and were further explored during the interviews. The exploration of these issues was made either directly, by posing relative exploratory questions, or indirectly, by incorporating them into the discussion with each student.

6.2 Analysis and discussion of Interview findings

This section will present and discuss the findings of the personal semi-structured interviews conducted with students from the two student groups of the case study. The interviews were conducted to explore and explain the themes emerging from the questionnaire survey. During the presentation and analysis of the findings, selected responses of students from the two student groups are presented and discussed comparatively following the interview analysis process outlined in the methodology chapter (see Section 4.3.2). Students' responses have been reported verbatim where possible. Some quotations have been slightly edited to increase their readability, however no significant changes were made and the meaning has remained unchanged.

Section 6.2.1 will present the interview findings about the factors that affected university and partner institution student's choice of higher education institution and undergraduate programme. Section 6.2.2 will present the interview findings about the expectations of students about higher education quality. The section concludes with a summary of the findings presented in Section 6.2.3.

6.2.1 Factors influencing students' choice of HEI and higher education programme

During the interviews, students were asked to describe the decision-making process and identify the factors they considered for choosing the particular HEI and higher education programme. Factors of influence are considered relevant to the objectives of this research project because they are commonly accepted as representing early student expectations (Gronroos, 1990; Shanka et al., 2006; Harvey & Drew, 2006; De Jager & Du Plooy, 2006). The comparison of the factors that influence two different student groups to choose an HEI and a higher education programme will allow the discussion of the background of student expectations in each student group. Thus, the identification and discussion of the factors that influenced students to choose the particular HEI and higher education programme will add to the comparative discussion and enrichment of findings about students' expectations which are presented and discussed in Section 6.2.2.

6.2.1.1 The reputation of the university, the partner institution and the programme

The majority[101] of students from both student groups mentioned that a prime factor of influence for their choice of HEI and higher education programme was reputation. This complies with the findings from the questionnaire survey where reputation was identified within the top three factors for the selection of the university. For example, University student U1 mentioned that "*...I knew the University very well and specifically its Business programme"*. Similarly, Partner Institution Student P2 said:

> *"… I had heard about the particular University which is in Partnership with the College in Crete… There was a very good reputation about [University] quality and standards."*

Aiming to explore further the students' conception of the term 'reputation', additional questions were asked. These questions were about the specific ways students gathered information during their search for an HEI and a higher education programme.

One notable way in which students made their choice was by using league tables. Eight out of the ten university students mentioned that they had explored the university guides published on popular relevant websites such as the *Times* and *The Guardian* before deciding to apply to the specific university. Respondents mentioned that the overall position of the university in the university league tables played a major role in their final decision to choose the HEI and higher education programme. For example, University Student U10 mentioned, "*I looked in the Guardian university league table to see both the university's overall and the particular subject area position". * University Student U9 said, *"I had looked in the university league table in several different newspapers. I did a list with*

[101] Throughout the section majority signifies an occasion where the interview responses of students exceed 50% of the total samples of the interviewees – that is more than 5 students out of 10 in each group.

the universities which were high in these tables and compared them with the UCAS points they required".

The above findings confirm the findings from the questionnaire survey and the findings of existing research (Clarke, 2007; Hazelkorn, 2009, 2013) about the growing importance of rankings in students' decision-making process. From the quotes above it is evident that students are less critical about the meaning of league table position, which reveals an instrumental approach for the selection of higher education institution.

Some university students mentioned that they had also considered other indicators such as the 'student to staff ratio' and the employability rate of the university's graduates to decide in which university and programme to apply for. For example, Student U4 described how

> *"… together with my friend we were trying to find the best university by looking at the different statistics and indicators. A few of the things I have considered were the employability rate of graduates and how many academic staff per student."*

The finding above confirms further the focus of students in quantitative indicators, which is something that has been promoted in the UK as a means to provide information to prospective students (Williams, 2012). Most importantly, here students appear to focus more on the 'end product' rather than in the teaching and learning process something which confirm the criticisms about the problematic nature the 'student as customer' view.

All of the partner institution students mentioned that they had been influenced by the status and reputation of the university. Also, the partner institution students mentioned that they were aware of the university and its quality standards. During the exploration of quality standards, it became apparent that students perceived as indicators of quality standards the position of the university in the university rankings and word of mouth from their friends and relatives who had studied at the same university or knew someone who had done so. For example, Student P9 said:

"I was familiar with UK universities as many of my friends have brothers or sisters who have studied in the UK. I was told to look in the university league table… I did it through the Times website."

This complies with the wider accepted sociological notion that our perceptions are being created by other people as well as our own (Burt, 2000; Passy & Giugni, 2001). Also, this is in line with evidence from research in TNHE (Li et al., 2013; Waters & Leung, 2011; Shepherd, 2013) which has revealed an important role of family and social networks in the decision-making process of students in offshore locations. At the same time, the above findings reveal that students as customer are far less able than was assumed to form well-informed decisions (Lomas, 2007).

Greek students mentioned that before coming to the partner institution for more information they undertook a relevant search about the university on the Internet. Despite the fact that university league tables are not published in Greece, five of the respondents mentioned that the university's position in the *Times Higher Education* university league table contributed to their final decision to choose to enrol at the partner institution. An example is Student P7 who described using league tables:

"I have searched for the university on the Internet. I looked at several relevant websites to find its position in the rankings. I did not want to go to a University which was very low in the list … sometimes people associate that if you go to enrol in a foreign university you are not capable of enrolling in a Greek university or a good university. Thus I wanted to make sure that the university which collaborates with the local College was reputable and high in rankings."

From the above discussion it became evident that both student groups are influenced by the reputation of the university and the programme. The university students were very much influenced by university rankings and indicators like efficiency ratios and employability statistics. This corresponds with the findings from the literature review (Dill, 2006; Hazelkorn, 2009; Wedlin, 2011) which reflect the increased role of rankings and statistical information in the student decision-making process and the growing influence of league tables and national surveys such as the National Student Survey in the UK.

Partner institution students are also influenced by the reputation of the university, but their perception of this reputation is formed more upon the experience of previous students of the university, or other universities in the UK, and this is primarily communicated to them through word-of-mouth. However, they do show an awareness of university league tables and rankings. Additionally, the perception of Greek students about the HEI and higher education programme's reputation is shaped by the perception of the wider society about a particular university and/or programme.

An important factor for the selection of the particular college was personal contact or 'word of mouth' and the local reputation of the institution. Student P8 said, *"…my family knows well this private college and they were very keen to take me there for continuing my studies. They consider this institution as one of very good quality".* The reputation of the college and the reputation of the college owner are closely linked. For example, Student P2 reflected that, "*… the owner of the College is well-known in local society for his previous activities in education provision. He has a very good record of quality and reliability".* The reputation of the college and its owner is disseminated through word-of-mouth among the families and parents of the students. For example, Student P1 said, *"… before going to a personal meeting with the owner of the college my parents asked their friends about the reputation and the standing of the owner and the college".* This also indicates that parents and families in Greece are often active in the student's choice of higher education institution.

This is linked with the previous findings in this research (see questionnaire survey) about the increased influence of family and parents on partner institution students' decision making. Also, the findings of this research comply with the findings of existing research (Waters & Leung, 2011; Li et al., 2013) about the influence of university reputation as a strong factor of influence on TNHE student decision-making across different countries.

From the above discussion it seems that the university and higher education programme's reputations go beyond the national borders of the country where the source university is based. However, for students in receiving countries, the reputation of the university is communicated via social networks, which take the form of family, relatives, and friends. As shown from the analysis of the interviews, these social networks seem to play a central role in the decision-making process of Greek students for the selection of the local partner of a TNHE partnership. The existing knowledge and perception of these networks about the reputation and quality of the local provider is transmitted via word-of-mouth to the prospective students.

The interviews therefore reflect broad experience and research that Greek/Cretan society is governed by strong social networks. Family in Greece, as mentioned by Kallinikaki (2010), has been traditionally responsible for, among other things, the education of the children and is characterised by "traditional roles and strong solidarity" (Kallinikaki, 2010, p.189). In Greece there are strong social networks which are dominated by an extended family structure which is surrounded by a large network of relatives and family acquaintances (Lyberaki & Paraskevopoulos, 2002).

Thus the role of social networks as transmitters of social capital appears to be relevant in this case. The theory of social capital can be used to explain the influence of the wider society on students' choice of HEI and higher education programmes (Wells et al., 2011). The different social networks, which include all the different links between individuals in a society, carry information and beliefs which are transmitted to the individuals in the form of social capital (Bourdieu, 2008). Specifically, according to Coleman (cited in Wells et al., 2011), students are influenced by their interpersonal relationships with their parents, friends and others when forming expectations about their education.

From the above discussion it is clear that in transnational higher education, and specifically in this case study context, the selection of the university is influenced by local social networks in the receiving country which include the student's parents, relatives, and friends. The information inherent in these networks in the form of social capital is transmitted as word-of-mouth perceptions about the reputation of the university. In the case study of this research, these social networks appear to be influential for students in the receiving country but less influential for the students of the source country where the university is based. This is in agreement with the findings of previous research by Sianou-Kyrgiou (2008) about the strong and active involvement of family in the decision-making process, and in choices regarding higher education, of young adults in Greece. This is more intensive in the case of partner institution students who live in the Cretan community where the family size is more extensive than in mainland Greece and the UK.

The implications from this within a TNHE context and in an effort to adopt a prospective quality management approach could be that universities should consider the existence and power of local social networks when seeking to develop a presence in a different country. For example, in countries like Greece, where the local social networks are strong and directly influence students' decision-making, universities might consider including feedback from these networks in the due diligence process for the selection of the local partner/provider.

The influence of social networks on student expectation formation, particularly in the case of the partner institution students, is directly relevant to the applicability of a retrospective customer model in TNHE. This is because local social networks in different locations of TNHE programme delivery may hold a range of different conceptualisations about core elements that constitute quality in higher education. This means that students at different locations of delivery may enter the educational process with different expectations about quality due to the influence of the local social networks, such as family and friends. Considering the link between student beginning characteristics and the learning outcomes, the influence of local social networks will imply difficulties in the applicability and effectiveness of a retrospective customer model for assuring educational and service quality standards. This justifies the need for contextualisation of the quality management approach and the use of prospective management of student expectations.

6.2.1.2 The facilities

Responses from university students indicate that facilities are a major factor in their choice of university and higher education programme. All of the university students mentioned physical facilities within their responses as one of the most influential factors for selecting the university[102].

Additionally the university students mentioned that they expected the university to provide large and modern facilities. For example Student U3 noted that, *"… during the open day I have visited the library and the other facilities and I was impressed… this has played a major role in my final choice"*. Also, Student U9 mentioned, *"I was expecting that the University will have all these facilities. I think if you go in any uni in the UK you will find very similar facilities"*.

During the discussion, many university students felt that the recreation facilities are equally important as learning and teaching facilities to them. University Student U4 observed that, *"… I liked the campus and specifically the fact that it is integrated in the City centre"* and another example is Student U8, who said *"the [Name of building] is fantastic. There is space where you can socialise and study at the same time".* Many university students mentioned that during the process for selecting a HEI they considered issues other than academic related ones to a substantial degree. However, all the students (10 out of 10) reflected that teaching is more important than the available facilities.

This is also supported by existing research about service quality in higher education which has shown that 'tangibles' are considered as a major factor for students

[102] It should be noted that the particular university has recently completed a major renovation project of its main campus.

(Smith et al., 2002; Le Blanc and Nha, 1997; cited in Arambewela and Hall, 2006, 156). For example, Arambewela and Hall (2006) found that 'tangibles' are considered by students as being "… an extremely important dimension related to the quality of service delivery by universities…" (p.156).

In contrast, partner institution students did not mention facilities as one of the most influential factors for their choice of HEI. This coincides with the findings of the questionnaire survey, where partner institution students rated the tangible resources as a factor of minor influence over their choice. As mentioned in the relevant section of the questionnaire survey analysis chapter, this finding should be interpreted within the context of this study. Partner institution students have considered studying in a private college, which is a small organisation in comparison to a university; as mentioned in the contextualisation chapter, the partner institution has facilities of approximately 2,000m^2. Thus, students' expectations about facilities could not have been high. However, some of the students come from the area near the college and live with their families, which can imply that they tend to use the available facilities (i.e. public library, gym) in the nearby area with which they are familiar.

6.2.1.3 The proximity of the university to student's family home

Three university students mentioned that one of the reasons for choosing the university was its proximity to their home town and/or their current home. As Student U5 mentioned, *"… it is only 30 minutes away from my parents' home",* and Student U3 said,*"…I did not wanted to move very far away from my friends and family, thus the [university] was the best choice".* Also, Student U9 said, *"I wanted to stay near my family's home. I did not want to go to a major city like London because the costs there are enormous".*

During the discussion it became evident that the reason why university students looked for a university near to their family home was the reduced financial costs and lesser emotional issues. One example of this is Student U9, who said:

> *"It was the costs and less the fact of staying away from my family. Now I am staying on my own anyway – but is different to be very far away. Now I can still get home in the weekends and get some of my clothes washed or get some food."*

All of the above findings indicate that university students are conscious of the location, which is linked with their concerns about the financial cost of maintaining a home away from their home town. This is in line with the findings of the questionnaire survey and existing research, for example Jones (2010), which has shown an increased consideration by students of the location of the university during the selection process. In the past there has been an association of certain types of higher education institutions in the UK with certain student profiles, particularly in the context of social class and location. However, as the recent study by the UK Higher Education International Unit (Baskerville & Arlecdon Consulting, 2013, p. 13) found, students in the UK now increasingly decide to study near their home. In particular, the report suggests that "almost a third of full-time students travel no more than 12 miles to their place and may be regarded as local" (p. 13).

For partner institution students, the proximity to home did not appear to be a factor of direct influence. However, the partner institution students were influenced fundamentally by the existence of a TNHEP in their city. The partner institution students were affected by this 'location' element because of deeper issues which have to do with the living and learning environment. Thus this is discussed separately below.

6.2.1.4 The influence of family and parents

The majority of students at the partner institution reported that their parents and family had made a major contribution to their decision to study at the particular TNHEP.

For example, Student P1 said, *"...my father knew the owner of the college and he took me there to meet him", a*nd Student P4 said, "*… the decision to go to the particular college has been taken mainly by my parents who have always wanted me to study Business or Economics"*. Also, another indicative example is Student P8, who said, *"… it has been always a family dream for me to become a university student. I remember since I was a child my father would tell me that he wanted me to go to the university".*

This reflects the finding of the questionnaire survey that family and parental influence was a major influence factor for the selection of an HEI and higher education programme by Greek students. Both the questionnaire and the interview findings are reflective of the findings of previous research (Sianou-Kyrgiou & Tsiplakides, 2011) about the central role of family in Greece regarding the choice of and support for studies for young people. Specifically, this reflects a cultural element of Greece and is part of the family norms of Greek society, where the family remains in full control of their children's education even after adulthood[103] (Piperopoulos, 2007). In the case of the partner institution students, the above family norms have actually meant that the choice of TNHEP and undergraduate programme was to a large extent informed by students' family network. This implies that students are less informed about the TNHEP and the undergraduate programme, which in turn impacts their expectations from the educational process. Partner institution students who have their families making the choice for them will be likely to form inappropriate (i.e. higher, lower or out of context) expectations.

The above findings are in line with the findings of existing research which has shown the influence of family networks on student decision-making and expectations to be strong across a number of countries where TNHE is offered. For example, in India (Dwivedi, 2013), Singapore (Min et al., 2012), Hong Kong and China (Kwan & Ng, 1999), as well as across a large number of TNHE importing countries (Shepherd, 2013), the influence of family networks has been identified as significant. However, the nature and

[103] According to Piperopoulos (2007), this is the form of the Greek modern family, where children often remain living with their parents even after they reach their 30s.

intensity of the influence of family networks will be subject to the cultural, economic and social factors and conditions that exist in each country. Thus, the impact of family influence on student expectations will vary consequently and thus will create a challenge for the applicability of the retrospective customer model.

In contrast, for the university students, family and parents do not seem to be an important factor of influence. None of the responders mentioned that either family or parents had an influence on their choice of HEI or higher education programme. This aligns clearly with the previous discussion about the influence of social networks as transmitters of social capital (Sandefur et al., 2006). Previous research about the influence of family and parents on the higher education choices of students in the UK has shown a variable influence (Dalgety & Coll, 2004; Foskett et al., 2004; Byrne & Flood, 2005, cited in Trend, 2009). Trend (2009) described the influence of family and home on the choice of UK students as indirect and subtle and contextual rather than direct and taking place at one point in time (p. 263). Therefore, despite the weaker influence of social networks on the decisions of university students, a deeper influence of family and parents could not be ruled out.

What is clear from the above discussion is the direct and strong involvement of family and parents in Greece during the students' decision-making process. It seems that in Greece, social networks, especially in the form of family and parents, are conveying expectations and other values relative to education to children. In contrast, in the UK the social network seem to be less powerful, at least in regard to education expectations. This shows how a difference between two societies can affect student choice, and most likely expectation formation, in a TNHE setting. However, it should be acknowledged that this claim is limited to the scale of evidence of this case study. This, however, does not diminish the conclusion which can be drawn by these findings about the role of family in shaping student expectations. The influence of family on student expectations can affect quality management at least in the following way. Students in an offshore location may form inappropriate expectations which cannot be fulfilled by the existing provision, leading to a gap between student expectations and perceptions, and consequently low satisfaction levels. Also, students may form inappropriate expectations about the educational process as result of their family influence. This will impact the effectiveness of the educational process and result in poor educational outputs, or/and high drop-out/fail rates.

Considering the above in the context of the existing retrospective customer model, the management of expectations prior to or at the early stages of the educational process is not possible. However, in a prospective management model, universities and the partner institutions will be able to evaluate the influence of families and design the necessary corrective actions for re-adjusting student expectations.

6.2.1.5 TNHE as a way for partner institution students to avoid a change in living environment and a new study style

Four of the partner institution students had considered going abroad to continue their studies at undergraduate level. These students mentioned that they had considered countries such as the UK and Italy. However, it should be mentioned that students had limited choice due to the facilities available in Crete. For example, Student P2 said,

> *"One of the options I had was to go to the UK or to Italy. There are schools of foreign languages in Crete that offer preparatory course for entry to universities in these countries."*

Similarly, Student P10 mentioned:

> *"During my final year in high school I had considered applying to universities in other countries. The options I had considered were the UK and Italy because of the language. However, I did not do it because I was not very confident that I would be able to cope in a different environment."*

The responses of both students above reveal the preference of young Greeks towards the UK and Italy for their undergraduate studies. Experience shows that the preference towards these two countries is as a result of the familiarity with the language in the case of the UK and distance and climate in the case of Italy. This is confirmed by the fact the UK and Italy have been two of the most popular destinations of Greek outbound student mobility. The responses of the students above verify the significant problem of Greece, presented in Section 2.2.4.1, of being a major exporter of students in the past 30 years (Lutran, 2010). The main destinations of the Greek students have been the UK, Italy, Germany and the USA (OECD, 2010b). This preference towards western European countries and the USA by Greeks has been found to be linked with perceptions about better employability and salary prospects (Lianos et al., 2004; Raikou & Karalis, 2007). The prospects of easier access to employment and higher salary are also mentioned as one of the prime pull factors[104] for international student mobility (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002). Also, Greek students have been forced to move to other countries to pursue higher studies as a result of the shortage of places available in the Greek public universities (Psacharopoulos, 1995). This is also reflected in relevant research as a major push factor for international student mobility (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002). However, it should be noted that the establishment of TNHEPs in Greece has been found to reverse this outbound student mobility trend of Greek students (Tsiligiris, 2013; Findlay et al., 2012). This is also explained by the findings of the interviews, showing that partner institution students were able to stay ‘at home’ and avoid emigrating abroad to study.

Also, the responses of the partner institution students above (P2 & P10) reported the change in living environment and the different teaching and learning style as the main factors which prevented them from moving abroad. This appeared across the responses of other students also. Specifically, partner institution students reported the different climate, lifestyle and language as reasons for preferring to study at the TNHEP of the university. The partner institution students mentioned that they were able to fulfil their

[104] A pull factor is something which attracts students to move to another country or to choose to study on a particular programme. Similarly a push factor is considered to be something which forces students to move to another country – this refers to the conditions of the domestic economic, social, political, legal or other environment (Varghese, 2011, p. 22).

aspiration to enter higher education and study in a foreign university by choosing to study at a TNHEP in Greece and not go abroad. For example, Student P7 said,

> *"I was told that the college provides a very good quality of teaching and support to its students. I had considered going abroad but I was somehow scared by the different environment and study style."*

From the above, more observations can be drawn upon the maturity of students as customers, something which has been identified (Lomas, 2007; Williams, 2012) as one of the problems for the appropriateness and functionality of the student as customer conceptualisation. Partner institution students rely solely on 'what they were told' about quality standards at the College. The perceived "*very good quality of teaching and support*" implies a number of challenges for both the university and the partner institution. If this is left unexplored, it would probably imply higher or lower expectations about teaching and support, which in turn would create problems in the applicability of the customer model.

Another student, Student P10, was influenced indirectly by the negative experience of a friend, which contributed to his decision not to go abroad:

> *"I had friend who went to the UK but they returned after a few years without any positive result. The different system, the language of delivery and the different living environment were factors that discouraged me from going abroad."*

This reflects existing research (Brooks & Waters, 2011; Guo & Chase, 2011; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002) which shows that international student mobility is influenced by living conditions in the destination country along with education system comparability between the source and the destination country. Particularly for Greek students, the different environment and culture has been identified in existing research as the main problematic factor for their adjustment the UK (Katsara, 2004).

So far, the evidence from this research has shown that partner institution students choose to stay 'at home' (Crete, Greece) and study in a partnership of the UK university for a mixture of reasons including anticipated superior employability, and fear of the implications of a changing environment (culture, language, friends and family). This is line with the term ‘glocal students’ who are described (Choudaha, 2012) as students who have career aspirations and seek the quality of a foreign education system but cannot afford to sustain (due to financial, cultural, and academic reasons) going abroad to study.

Partner institutions in this research appear to share the ‘glocal’ student identity and the findings largely reflect the findings of existing research (Findlay, 2011) about the role of TNHEPs as an alternative means for local students to enter a foreign higher education system without moving abroad. Consequently, the existence of TNHEPs is linked with the reduction of international student mobility. This is verified by the fact that since the establishment of the TNHEPs in Greece between the Greek private colleges and UK universities, the total number of Greek students studying abroad has declined significantly (Tsiligiris, 2013). Specifically, according to the UK Higher Education International Unit (2010), between 2004 and 2009 there has been a decrease of 25.1% in the number of Greek students who move to the UK to enrol on undergraduate programmes at British universities. For the same period, the decrease for postgraduate programmes is 23.8% and for research degrees is 42.3% (UK Higher Education International Unit, 2010). Also, a recent research report by ICAP (2010, p. 117) mentioned that “the Greek students who study abroad from 55,000 in 2001 have been reduced to 35,000 in 2007, showing an annual decrease of 7%”.The same study concludes that the decrease in the number of Greek students abroad has been due to two factors: 1) the increase in the number of places offered at Greek public universities and 2) the existence and growth of private colleges that collaborate with foreign universities (ICAP, 2010, p. 117).

In addition to the above observations about the role of TNHEPs as alternatives to international student mobility, the findings above reveal information relevant to the student expectations. Students in the partner institution expect to study on a programme of a UK university via the partner institution. This can be explained as a tendency to expect a UK higher education rather than a contextualised educational experience. This is critical for quality management in the TNHE because it supports the view that students at the TNHE are not seeking a completely contextualised experience. However, considering the significant influence of family and social networks, their expectations about the actual educational process are likely to be inappropriate and pose significant problems in quality management via a retrospective customer model.

6.2.1.6 Higher education programme structure, content, and length as a pull factor for partner institution students

The majority of partner institution students mentioned that their choice of the particular programme was primarily due to its contemporary and diverse content, and its three-year duration. These students felt that programmes in Greek higher education institutions contain far too many modules that focus on one particular subject[105], while the material taught is often outdated. For example, Student P2 said,

> *"… I have friends who study in Greek universities. They have to take more than 60 different modules during their studies and most of the teaching is based on old notes which are circulated by older students. I did not want to go there."*

Again, partner institution students show how much they are influenced by social networks in their decision-making. Also, it is shown that the state of the Greek higher education system plays a significant role in the demand of TNHE in Greece.

A different focus is shown by some students who have gone deeper into elements of the programme content that that touch upon its contemporary nature. However, students remain focused on instrumental considerations such as the duration of the programme (4-5 years vs. 3 years). For example, Student P3 said,

[105]As discussed in the contextualisation chapter, one of the problems of the Greek higher education system is the lack of connection between the curriculum of higher education programmes and the demands of the real economy. This has led to programmes which specialise in a niche subject area, often without academic or professional justification (Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency, 2009).

"I did not want to go to Greek AEI[106] *or TEI. It takes at minimum four to five years to complete a degree and most of the times the subjects you are taught have not been updated since the 1980s."*

Exploring this further, it emerged that many partner institution students mentioned that by enrolling and completing a higher education programme of a UK university they are able to save time and money, as the studies last for three years instead of the four years in Greek public higher education institutions. This also linked with the 'eternal students' problem of Greek higher education as mentioned in the contextualisation chapter. For example, Student P7 mentioned, *"I wanted to do the same things as if I was in the main campus of the university in the UK. For me this is the main motive to study at this college".* Similarly, Student P8 mentioned,*"… I know people who study at the university in Greece for more than 8 years".*

The above findings are in line with the idea of 'glocal' students, as it appears that partner institution students choose TNHE due to a mixture of push and pull factors. The push factors appear to be related to the inefficiencies of the Greek higher education system and the pull factors relate to the employability aspiration associated with a UK qualification.

The programme content in relation to future employment prospects was another factor of influence for partner institution students. Many of them mentioned that they choose to enrol on the programme in anticipation of a competitive advantage in the employment market. For example, Student P10 said,

"I wanted to do something which will be very modern and allow me to be distinguished in the employment market. I wanted to be able to get a job after graduation."

These findings are in agreement with the findings of the British Council's (Shepherd, 2013) insight report which showed that programme content (12%) and time concerns (23%) were amongst the top six factors of importance for TNHE students.

[106]AEI is Higher Education Institution and TEI is Higher Technological Institution in Greece

From the above, it is clear that partner institution students value the efficiency and effectiveness of the foreign higher education programme's structure and content as against the programmes provided by the Greek public higher education institutions. More specifically, the Greek students consider UK higher education programmes to be modern and contemporary and to enable students to complete their undergraduate studies in a timely manner. Moreover, the lack of contextual changes in the programme structure and content is valued as an advantage by those students at the partner institution who expect to experience a UK higher education teaching and learning environment. There seems to be a link between the characteristics of the national higher education systems in receiving countries and the demand for TNHE. This reflects the argument that TNHE has emerged and developed, among other reasons, as a result of the inefficiencies of the receiving countries' education systems (Foskett, 2005; OECD, 2006). This view expands to the rationale for the promotion and expansion of TNHE as a 'capacity building' factor for the receiving countries (OECD, 2006). OECD (2006), Varghese (2011) and many others argue that receiving countries, like Greece in this case study, if they use their TNHE experience, would be able to reflect upon the structure and content of foreign higher education systems and programmes and implement changes in their national higher education systems. This has in fact worked, and examples of countries which have used TNHE to develop their own higher education systems include Malaysia, Singapore and Hong Kong (Stella & Bhushan, 2011).

In regard to the impact of the above findings on student expectations, it is clear that partner institution students value the core characteristics, and the challenges involved, of the UK higher education programme. That is against the argument which claims that students, particularly in TNHEP, adopt a superficial approach towards higher education. Nevertheless, this does not guarantee that partner students will adopt a 'deep' learning approach and this is subject to further exploration below. However, it is clear that the state of the importing country's higher education system shapes the expectations of partner institution students. This should be carefully considered by exporting universities, because it may reveal the nature of partner institution students' motivation, which, as identified by Biggs (1993) and Finnie and Usher (2005) affects the learning approach adopted by students and consequently determines the educational quality outcomes.

6.2.2 Student expectations

Students in both institutions of the case study were asked to identify what they expected from the HEI and the programme and what factors/elements they considered as absolutely vital to have during their studies. This aimed to verify and contrast with the respective questionnaire survey findings along with openly and deeply exploring the expectations of students in further detail. The following themes/expectations emerged during the analysis of the data:

- Appropriate facilities
- Teaching, learning and support
- Employability and academic progression
- Small class size

These findings are discussed in the context of their ramifications on the current retrospective customer model for the management of quality in TNHE. The ramifications are drawn in the context of educational quality and specifically in terms of the models by Biggs (1993) and Finnie and Usher (2005).

6.2.2.1 Appropriate facilities

Students at the university expected to find appropriate facilities which reflect all of the latest advancements in technology and provide a comfortable learning environment. Student U1 focused on a nice environment with good equipment:

“I was expecting from the university to have nice lecture rooms with modern equipment in order for me to be able to attend lectures and seminars and take the most out of teaching”.

Student U5 focused on IT facilities and considers them as critical for the learning process:

“… for me, IT facilities is the main issue. I think that if I am provided with proper IT facilities my learning can be made easier.”

Student U6 expressed expectations about the wider university environment:

“… I expected that the uni will have big buildings, socialising areas, sports club, and a pub. It is not only study but is pretty much about socialising as well.”

The above extracts show that university students expect sound tangible facilities from the university. This is linked with their reporting of facilities as one of the main factors of influence for their choice of HEI and programme. The university students considered the socialising facilities as being important. This reflects previous research by Yorke and Longden (2008) which shows that the social side of higher education is particularly important for new students in the UK. Also, the above shows a direct link between the factors influencing the student choice of HEI and higher education with their service quality expectations.

The findings of this research are in agreement with the findings of existing research about the importance of the size and variety of facilities, or tangibles, as described in the SERVQUAL construct of measuring service quality in higher education. For example, Hill (1995) and Schwantz (1997) have demonstrated the increased importance of facilities for students in higher education: in particular, facility size and overall condition is considered as an indication of the overall quality capacity of the HEI. Other research (Arambewela & Hall, 2006; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; East, 2001) has indicated that facilities play an important role in students’ satisfaction and service quality in higher education.

Despite the fact that the university students above (Students U1 & U5) have identified facilities as linked with better teaching and learning outcomes, the direct relationship of tangibles with educational quality has not been verified (Gibbs, 2010). Nevertheless, tangibles have been identified as an input variable by Finnie and Usher (2005) in their educational quality model, and therefore are identified as a determinant of educational quality.

6.2.2.2 Teaching, learning and support

Both student groups mentioned different elements of teaching and learning as a core expectation from the higher education providers. This coincides with the findings from the British Council (Shepherd, 2013) which identified the quality of teaching and learning as the factor with the greatest importance for TNHE students. Below I present the findings for each of the elements that have been identified by students as elements of teaching and learning quality.

Organised classes and approachable lecturers/tutors as an expectation for university students

University students mentioned that they expected organised classes and approachable lecturers. This is, according to university students, a normal attribute of the higher education environment. For example, University Student U2 said, "*I expect not much really. I want to have well organised classes and lecturers who I can approach in case I need help".*

Despite the fact that the student above explains their expectations as not high, they express a clear expectation for personal help by the lecturers. The question is how much this support should be and what availability of lecturers do students expect? The retrospective customer model is not concerned with this but rather focuses on measuring the satisfaction of students at the end of the academic year and reacting to problems that may arise by the results of this process. However, if student expectations about this particular issue are left unexplored and unmanaged, it is most likely that student satisfaction will be poor in the end-of-year student surveys. This will have an impact on student engagement and consequently educational outcomes. At the same time, any reactions based on the findings of the end-of-year survey student satisfaction survey will be planned retrospectively and applied to a new cohort of students who may have different expectations about the level of personal support by the lecturers. This explains why a prospective approach is necessary for the management of quality, not only in TNHE, but also on the main campus of the university.

Also, the university students expected to receive some personal help in adjusting to the new environment. For example Student U3 mentioned *"… I want to be able to get in touch with someone who can provide me with some help. The challenge for me is to cope with the programme and the change in the living environment".*

This is of critical importance in the context of the retrospective customer model. Students recognise the need for adjustment to the new environment, contrary to the common assumption that students expect the university environment to be adjusted to their needs/wants. Contrary to the common belief that the customer model is responsive to the needs and demands of the students, the current quality management system reacts in retrospect to the basis of end-of-year student surveys.

The university students expressed concern about the realisation of their expectations about personalised support by lecturers due to the size of the university. For example Student U9 said, *"I know that the university is very big and there are many thousands of students. So I am afraid that I will not get the attention I need from the lecturers and the seminar tutors".*

Thus, the organisational structure and size of the provision is considered by university students to be a factor which can affect their experience. Another example of this is provided by Student U10, who mentioned:

> "*…I have been told that lecturers never get to know you by your name, especially in very large modules which are taken by many students from different*

programmes. Thus I am concerned if I will manage to make myself known and have my performance appropriately assessed."

The above findings extend the university students' concerns that in a large university the assessment of their work, along with the level of personalised support, would be impacted. The university students express an expectation about 'appropriate assessment' of performance which could be explained within two extreme views, as either 'getting a good mark' or as 'applying fully the relevant assessment criteria'. Irrespective of the interpretation one adopts in the above finding, under the current retrospective customer model this significant student expectation is left unexplored and unmanaged.

University students seem to have formed specific expectations about elements of teaching and learning processes that existing research (IIEP-UNESCO, 2011) have shown to be associated with educational quality. University students' expectations about certain elements – i.e. tutorial support – seem to be informed by word-of-mouth from previous students. This can be interpreted in the context of social capital and social networks, and it seems that students are affected by the existing perception of their social networks about the current state of UK higher education institutions. This verifies the view adopted in the thesis that students form expectations and perceptions about quality in higher education influenced by a range of deeper social and cultural mechanisms. For example, in the UK there seems to be a perception that the large scale of educational provision in UK higher education institutions, coupled with the reductions in their budgets (Browne, 2010) creates problems with the ability of students to receive personalised tutorial support.

This is reflected in research by Clark and Hall (2010) which has shown that students in their first year find the communication and interaction between themselves and their tutors to be not as good as they would like it to be. As a result, new students during their pre-entry or early stages of higher education expect to face problems in receiving personalised tutorial and pastoral support (Harvey & Drew, 2006).

A ‘forward-looking’ observation about the impact of negative perceptions of university students towards tutorial support can be made in the context of the findings from existing research by Trigwell and Ashwin (2003). Students with negative perceptions about tutorial support appear less motivated and achieve lower performance in comparison to students with higher perceptions. Thus, if student perceptions are not actively managed by the university in the case study, this may lead to demotivation and consequently lower student performance. In a retrospective customer model, such management of student perceptions is not possible, considering the time-lag between student satisfaction survey implementation, the analysis of results and the implementation of action.

Instructional frontal teaching, extra tutorial support, surface learning, and descriptive study material as expectations of partner institution students

The qualitative part of the research showed that certain student beginning characteristics were significantly different to those required by the UK higher education system. This relates to inappropriate or unrealistic expectations of partner institution students about the teaching and learning approach and the assessment methods.

Many partner institution students mentioned that they expected a teaching style which was structured and would provide them with all the information required during the lectures and seminars. For example, Student P6 said,*“… I expect that the lecturers will explain clearly all the necessary elements of each topic in a way that will allow me to take notes and use them later to study”.*

This contradicts the learning approach required in the UK higher education system which is based on independent learning outside the class and with the use of multiple resources (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Fry et al., 2008; Biggs & Tang, 2011). However, this is theory and it is not certain that students even in the UK actually recognise this. There is evidence to show that students in the UK are increasingly expecting to be instructed and to take a more passive approach in the learning process (Hussey & Smith, 2010). At the same time, this is not fully attributed to students 'behaving badly' as customer but also due to universities' marketing strategies (Clinton, 2011) and the 'value for money' agenda promoted by the UK government (Browne, 2010).

It is clear across the interview findings that partner institution students expect teaching staff to provide them with all of the necessary information about the reading/study material during lectures and seminars. Moreover, this guidance should include appropriate explanation about what is required in each module and assignment. For example, Student P1 said "*… I want to leave the classroom knowing exactly what I need to read in order to cover the lecture or the seminar topic".*

From the above it is clear that what partner institution students perceive as appropriate explanation refers to fully instructional teaching and minimum requirements for study/reading outside the classroom.

Specifically, many partner institution students considered the supply of detailed written notes by the teaching staff to be an important element of the learning process in higher education. Partner institution students expected to be given everything by the lecturer, which is in direct conflict with the 'deep learning' approach pursued by the UK higher education system. For example, Student P8 mentioned, *"I want to have notes so I can then study at home. I want to be able to know clearly what is required from me in each module".* Student P10 said *"… lecture notes are important. The more extensive the notes, the better for me. It is difficult to look around for the material which is required to cover every week's lecturers and seminars".*

During the discussion it emerged that students were influenced by their previous education experience in the Greek secondary education system, which did not include individual or group assignments or independent study activities. Instead, students mentioned that they were more familiar with exams. For example, Student P6 said,

> *"… during lyceum we were assessed mainly via final written exams. We did not used to write any assignments like essays or do group work. I know that this is not the same system in the UK higher education."*

What is even more revealing of this problem is the finding, as shown in the student quotes above and below, that despite partner institution students expecting to find a different system of assessment in the TNHEP, at the same time they expect to be instructed in a way similar to the one they experienced in the secondary education in Greece. Student P9 said,

> "*I know that the system we had in high school is not the same as in the university. We were mainly taught everything inside the class by the teacher ... I was told it is not what the UK higher education system requires. However I do expect the college lecturers to provide some similar teaching that will fit the Greek system."*

The above findings show that partner institution students' expectations of teaching in TNHE is affected by their previous schooling experience. This confirms the importance of the prospective management of student expectations via appropriate induction programmes, where the teaching and learning approach of the university is explained. This is particularly relevant in TNHEPs of UK universities in countries like Greece, where the schooling system and student previous educational experience pose characteristics which are incompatible with the student presage factors assumed by the UK higher education model.

Specifically, the findings of the research showed that Greek students expect lecturers to use an over-instructional frontal teaching approach. This approach refers to a situation where the teacher has the main and active role and the student a passive role. The teacher or instructor's teaching style is characterised by giving instruction, often excessively, and having the giving of instruction as the main aim. The student is taught via a constructed presentation, mainly oral, by the teacher facing the class. This describes the teaching and learning system which has been used predominately in Greece. For example, Flouris and Pasias (2003) outline that the pedagogical methods used in Greek secondary education are structured around a single textbook and are based on memorisation learning or rote learning[107]. In particular, rote learning has been promoted within Greek secondary education and by the private preparation schools (frontisterio) as an effective learning practice towards the effort of students to succeed in the written examinations for entry to the Greek higher education institutions (Psacharopoulos & Tassoulas, 2004; Kerdis & Sfatos, 1998). The over-instructional frontal teaching approach has been criticised (Lytras et al., 2010) as being ineffective and not appropriate to address the needs of all the different learning styles. Another study by Karagiannopoulou and Christodoulides (2005) has shown that Greek students, when they enter university education, expect to be taught via a surface/passive learning approach, which negatively influences their educational achievements. Kazamias and Roussakis (2003, p. 17) also mentioned that Greek education is characterised by “formalism, authoritarian pedagogy, and anachronistic education knowledge”.

This is a significant finding, because it is directly related to the learning approach that partner institutions tend to undertake. From the above it is clear that students in the partner institution expect to be instructed in a descriptive manner and to adopt a surface learning approach. This has significant consequences for the applicability of the UK university teaching and learning approach, which will consequently lead to poor educational quality outputs. If students adopt a surface learning approach, and no proactive action is taken to manage this prior to or early in the delivery of the programme, then it is most likely that the output factors would not be those required to assure equivalent quality standards between the University and the partner institution. This reveals that student expectations about teaching and learning are heavily influenced by their prior educational experience, which complies with the relevant theory (Biggs, 1993; Finnie & Usher, 2005), while suggesting problems in the applicability of a retrospective customer model for the management of quality in TNHE.

[107] Rote learning is the memorisation of a large portion of text without any meaningful understanding and conceptualisation (Wholey, 1983)

The influence of prior education experience impacts the assessment expectations of partner institution students. Despite many partner institution students expecting to find an assessment system that was different to that in Greek education, they anticipated that the partner institution would contextualise this system to common practice in Greek education. For example, Student P2 mentioned

> *"… as I am going to write and present assignments, which is something totally new to me, I will need enough time to prepare them. I have heard that the British system requires students to prepare several different assignments at the same time. I do not want this to happen."*

This reflects previous research which states that education in Greece is exam centred and students have minimal exposure to in-class activities and/or independent learning methods (Katsikas, 2010; Kerdis & Sfatos, 1998). The ineffectiveness of this system has been heavily criticised (Psacharopoulos & Tassoulas, 2004; Karagiannopoulou & Christodoulides, 2005), not only for its inappropriateness in testing the knowledge of students but primarily for promoting rote learning and a surface approach by students. The interview findings suggest that the partner institution students were aware of the differences in the UK higher education assessment system in comparison to the Greek education system.

However, they have formed an expectation around the adjustment of the TNHE programme's assessment approach rather than them adapting into this approach. In the context of the retrospective customer model, if partner student expectations are not adjusted and managed early in the educational process, this may lead to problems with academic performance, such as high failure rates and low retention. This is because the retrospective customer model takes a passive approach to the management of student expectations about assessment (Biggs, 2001). Thus, it would not be certain that partner institution students will be able to perform as assumed in the requirements of an assessment system which is new to them. In addition to the significant impact of this on the output variables of the educational process, it will also potentially impact student satisfaction and therefore diminish the perceived level of service quality.

What appears to be appropriate here is the prospective management of assessment expectations of partner institution students, at the earliest point possible in the educational process.

Another expectation of Greek students is the provision of extra support in writing, research, and presentation skills which are required for the preparation of assignments and presentations. An example of this is Student P9, who mentioned, *"I think that lecturers should be able to answer my questions and provide one-to-one support".* Similarly, Student P10 said, "*It is important for quality to have teaching staff who explain clearly and answer the questions of students".*

Exploring this demand for additional support, it was found that this is linked with the type of ownership and organisational size of the partner institution. For example, Student P10 said, *"since this is a private institution I am expecting to have more support and guidance"* and Student P9 said, *"I am expecting to get more in this college than I was going to get if I had gone to the main campus of the university in the UK. I think that lecturers here should be more flexible as it is a private institution".*

Partner institution students, as shown in all of the quotes above, express expectations of one-to-one personalised and swift support by their tutors, which should be at a higher level because they are studying in a private institution. Clearly, the findings of the interviews show that there seems to be a link between private for-profit provision and higher student expectations about tutorial support. This is in alignment with the findings of existing research (Ramsden, 2008; Thomas, 2002; Voss et al., 2007) that has shown a link between higher student expectations and direct contribution in the payment of fees as well as with the increase in fees. This should be considered in TNHE context in several areas. First, when evaluating satisfaction survey results and making comparisons between student satisfaction scores between the university and the partner institution, appropriate consideration should be given to the possible influence of institutional size and type on the level of student expectations in the partner institution.

Overall, the findings of this research reveal that students' expectations about teaching and learning, part of student presage factors in Biggs' 3P model (2001), are significantly different to those presupposed by and required in the teaching and learning approach of UK higher education. The difference in student expectations originates in the characteristics of the secondary educational experience of partner institution students in Greece, which is significantly different to that in the UK. Consequently, the difference in student beginning characteristics implies problems in the applicability of the UK higher education teaching and learning model across borders. Also, considering that student expectations tend to be stable over time if not adjusted (Hill, 1995), the impact of inappropriate student expectations on educational quality could be severe for the education process outcomes. This justifies the application of a prospective quality management approach, as described by Biggs (2001), in order to adjust and manage TNHE student expectations in regards to teaching and learning at the earliest point possible in their educational journey.

Specifically, reflecting on Biggs' 3P model and Finnie and Usher's framework, student beginning characteristics, and particularly their previous educational experience, would determine their learning outcomes and, consequently their perceptions of the overall experience. This may mean that students whose expectations were significantly different or unreal to those required for the educational quality model to function effectively will end up dissatisfied with the outcome of the learning process. This has been identified as a problem of student satisfaction surveys; for example, Wiers-Jenssen & Stensaker (2002) mentioned that the student satisfaction surveys "usually do not take into account factors like the prior skills and abilities of students in the analysis" (p.184). Thus, student beginning characteristics should be prospectively managed here in the context of service quality management and student satisfaction.

The above findings reflect the importance of how students' previous educational experience affects their expectations of higher education. It seems that students' previous educational experience shapes their expectations and perceptions about their role and engagement in the teaching and learning process of higher education. The interviews indicate that Greek students expected to find in higher education a teaching and learning experience similar to that which they had during secondary education. This can have multiple effects on the quality management process of TNHEPs. Students who form unrealistic expectations about the core of the teaching and learning process may end up dissatisfied at the end-of-year student surveys.

6.2.2.3 Employability & academic progression

The students from both groups mentioned employability as an expectation from their higher education participation. This is in line with the findings of relevant research that shows persistence compliance in the expectations of students, irrespective of their location, about employability and academic progression (British Council, 2012a). Nevertheless, the sources or factors that students perceived to be linked with employability varied between the two student groups.

University students expect that the placement year will increase their employability

University students expect that the placement year will help them find employment after graduation. This coincides with the findings of the questionnaire survey, where the majority (90%) of university students mentioned the placement as one of the most influential factors for their choice of the specific HEI and higher education programme. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the issue of the placement year required further investigation. To achieve this, the discussion with the students concentrated on revealing their views about the mechanisms behind increased employability.

For the majority of university students, the placement is considered as a stepping stone for beginning a career in their area of interest. In line with the evidence from the questionnaire survey, this shows a rather instrumental approach to choosing a programme of study. For example, Student U9 mentioned,

> *"I came to this programme because I wanted to do the sandwich mode which includes the placement year. I expect that after placement year I will be able to stay in touch with the company [where the placement will take place] and start my career with them."*

University students expect that the placement year will create a competitive advantage for them against other graduates. Also they perceive the placement year as a way to understand the current needs of businesses. For example, Student U4 said

> *"… I believe that the placement year is giving me an advantage against other graduates and also enables me to know what companies want."*

The higher employability prospects perceived by students in relation to the existence of a placement year lead to high student satisfaction scores, as it research by Harvey et al. (1998) has shown. Student U8 said,

> *"I expect that after graduation I will have both the academic credential (i.e. the degree) and working experience obtained via the placement. This will put me in a much better position than the other graduates."*

The above evidence verified the findings of the questionnaire survey where employability through placement was the top expectation for university students. The university students consider that the placement will allow them to gain specific knowledge of the industry in which they have aspirations to make a career. Also, placement is considered as an easier way into a specific company. This is reflective of previous research, for example by McCall et al. (2009), which has shown that placement is a factor that affects student choice and expectations, as well as their satisfaction (Harvey, et. al., 1998). At the same time, the above finding reveals a rather simplistic and instrumental view of the quality of the degree. The university students place a great emphasis on the ‘end product’ without showing an appreciation for the development of actual skills.

For partner institution students, the placement year is not relevant, since the partner institution offers locally only the full-time version of the programmes and not the sandwich mode which includes the one year of placement. Nevertheless, this is not to say that if this placement year had been offered to partner institution students they would not have been keen to take it. The main reason for the college’s choice to provide only the 3-year version of the BA Business programme was to leverage its shorter duration in comparison to the Greek university programmes which are all of 4 years’ duration. This marketing consideration by the college may create a disadvantage for partner institution students in comparison to students who study on the main campus of the university. This is not uncommon in TNHE, where several types/forms of disadvantage exist for partner institution students (Bolton & Nie, 2010; Waters & Leung, 2013).

Employability, social status, and ability to continue to postgraduate study as an expectation of partner institution students

The partner institution students thought that the most valuable element was the reputation of an internationally recognised degree, such as the one they will obtain after successfully completing the programme at the partner institution. Greek students consider a degree from a British university as being superior to one from a Greek public university. Thus their expectations about employability are influenced by the reputation of the degree. For example, Student P3 mentioned,

> *“I think that the reputation of the university and in general of the British higher education system will be very important in my effort to find a job.”*

Student P10 said,

> *“I think that only the fact that I will have a UK higher education degree will put me in a better position in finding employment after graduation.”*

Student P9 said,

"my friend who studied and graduated from a public Greek university feels that his degree has less value for employers. Most companies now look for people who have completed their studies in European or American universities. These graduates are considered as more skilful. I anticipate being one of them."

The partner institution students expect their degree to have a positive effect on their effort to gain employment after graduation. There is an expectation that the 'superiority' of a foreign degree is valued more in the local employment market. The superiority of a foreign degree is seen by partner institution students as a source of social status and differentiation. This complies with the findings of research about the motives of international students to move abroad (Brooks & Waters, 2011; Chien & Kot, 2011; Findlay, 2011) as well as of students who choose to stay in their countries and study in TNHEPs of foreign universities (Choudaha, 2012; Shepherd, 2013; Dwivedi, 2013; Healey, 2013a). Also, this reflects previous research by Lianos et al. (2004), which has shown that, in the Greek economy, graduates of EU (other than Greek) universities have a higher employability record in comparison to graduates of Greek public universities. The same study also shows that graduates of EU universities enjoy higher salaries than graduates of Greek universities. Also, reflecting on my personal experience, in Greece the reputation of British and American universities is highly appreciated in the private sector. This explains why a large number of young Greeks have been emigrating to the UK and the US to study.

However, as the partner students mentioned, the 'superiority' of the degree is true only for private sector, and not for public sector jobs. For example Student P7 said,

"a degree from a foreign university will help me find a job easier in the private sector. In the public sector all graduates, either of Greek or foreign universities, are evaluated as being just university degree holders. Only the private sector is able to recognise the difference between a graduate from a reputable university and someone who has graduated from a low quality university."

The above findings can be explained in the context of the problematic nature of personnel selection process in the Greek public sector (Livanos, 2010; Lianos et al., 2004). For a long time, the public sector in Greece has been considered as the ideal employer, owing to the higher wages, the good working conditions and the pension schemes (Livanos, 2010). This has created an on-going increase in the number of applicants for public sector jobs which has intensified the competition. To deal with issues of corruption and transparency, in 1994 the Greek state introduced the Supreme Council for Civil Personnel Selection (ASEP)[108]. ASEP established a common set of formal criteria and written tests to handle the vast number of applications for employment in the Greek public sector. These formal criteria used by ASEP lack a qualitative element, so there is no distinction between a degree from a world class university and a university of low profile and quality. As a result, only the private sector in Greece evaluates the qualitative elements of a graduate profile during the selection process (Livanos, 2010).

The above finding about the partner institution students' expectation for the 'superiority' of a foreign degree is also line with the findings of research (Hoare, 2013, 2012; Shepherd, 2013; Waters & Leung, 2011; Pyvis & Chapman, 2004) showing that this is a common expectation of students who study in TNHE provisions across different parts of the world.

During the discussion, the partner institution students mentioned that Greek society considers foreign universities, and specially these of the western European countries and USA, as superior to the Greek public universities. Students mentioned that this perception of superiority derives from the higher reputation for quality of foreign universities as against the Greek public universities. The low reputation and quality standards of the Greek public universities was discussed in the report of the independent

[108] http://www.asep.gr/asep/site/home/customEnglishVersion.csp

International Committee[109] (2010) which was invited by the Greek government in 2010 to provide an external evaluation of the Greek higher education sector. For example, Student P10 mentioned,

> *"The Greek public universities have problems which have to do with the academics, their operation, and their buildings. Generally, in the society they have lost credibility."*

This is also reflected in the comments of Student P5, who said, *"when I finish I will be a graduate from a British university, which is considered as more prestigious and higher quality than the Greek universities".*

The above issues fall into the category of pull factors that have been identified in existing research (Bodycott, 2009), a term used to describe the motives and factors that make a HEI in another country attractive to international students. For example, one of the main reasons that influences international student destination is the "perceived higher standards of education and employment prospects" (Bodycott, 2009, p.354).

Also, for some of the partner institution students, a degree from a foreign university is considered as a means to pursue employment at international level. Student P10 mentioned, *"the economic situation in Greece is not very good so I am expecting to be able to find a job in another country more easily if I have a degree from a UK university and am able to speak and write in English".*

Another expectation of partner institution students from their degree was the ability to pursue postgraduate studies at international level. One example of this was the student who said,

[109] In September 2010, the Greek government announced the formation of an International Committee to assess the organisation of Greek universities. The committee was empowered to provide broad recommendations and advice on how to reform the Greek university system to achieve its mission to educate and improve quality of life, and align it with European universities. The committee included nine members from around the world who agreed to offer their advice and guidance. The members of the committee were international scholars with extensive experience as presidents of major universities from the EU, US, Australia and Asia (International Committee, 2010, p. 4).

"I expect that my degree will allow me to continue to postgraduate courses in a foreign university, maybe in the UK or USA. If I had studied in a Greek university this would have been more difficult as Greek higher education is not compatible with other countries." (Partner Institution Student 1)

Overall, students in the receiving country expect to obtain a degree which will be superior in comparison to that of a domestic public university. This coincides with previous research about the choice of international students to study in another country, which has shown that the perception of the superiority of the degree was a major expectation (Pimpa, 2003; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; Kelso, 2008; East, 2001). It can be argued that students in the receiving country choose to study in a foreign higher education programme because they expect to gain an advantage in the employment market by differentiating themselves from graduates of the national higher education system. Additionally, partner institution students are affected by the current economic situation in their country, thus expect to gain access to employment abroad. They expect a degree from a UK university to help them to achieve this.

6.2.2.4 Small class size as an expectation of partner institution students

Partner institution students expect to be in small classes and receive extra help from their tutors. This reflects a perception of Greek students about the link between class size and efficiency of teaching and support provision. This also became evident from the questionnaire survey findings (see Section 6.1.1.5). For example, Student P3 said, *"I expect classes to be of small size and not be the same as Greek public universities, where students usually exceed the capacity of the lecture rooms"*.

The Greek students associate large scale delivery of higher education with low quality and efficiency, reflecting on their existing knowledge about the current state of provision in the Greek higher education institutions. The inefficiencies of the Greek higher education system have been discussed widely in previous parts of this research as well as in various publications (Katsikas, 2009; Meghir et al., 2010). Specifically regarding the issue of the size and quality of the provision, it has been Katsikas et al. (2009) find that one of the reasons for the low performance and sometimes failure of students who study in Greek public universities is the large scale of their provision. Reflecting this, the partner institution students showed a positive perception about the ability of private education institutions to provide extra support and appropriate class sizes.

Many partner institution students mentioned that they consider a private education provider to be more efficient than a Greek public university. For example, Student P9 said,

> *"I wanted to come to this private institution because I have been told that the classes are of 25 students max. I wanted to avoid going to the Greek public universities where classes are overcrowded and sometimes there are more students than the seats available."*

In contrast, the university students did not mention any expectation about the size of the provision. During the discussion with the university students it became clear that they did expect to attend classes of different sizes depending upon the respective teaching activity.

For example, Student U10 said, *"I did not expect to see anything different in the uni than what I knew was happening in all other universities in the UK and US"*. Also Student U9 said, *"I knew that lectures were delivered in larger lecture theatres or lecture rooms with more than 100 students in some cases … in other cases I knew that I would have to work in seminar groups of 10-20 students max".*

This reflects previous research showing that students do not value small class size as a positive attribute of educational provision during the selection/decision-making process (Drewes & Michael, 2006, p.796 cited in Chapman & Ludlow, 2010, p. 107).

From the above discussion, it appears that the type of ownership (private vs. public) and organisational size (small vs. large) of the higher education provider do affect the expectations of students. In a small and private organisation, such as the partner institution of this case study, student expectations about the support, guidance and flexibility of academic staff seem to be higher than in a large university. This reflects previous work by James (2002) who discusses the effects of the marketisation of higher education and the increased financial contribution of students on a subsequent increase in their expectations. However, the changing nature and the rising level of student expectations is not something that is relevant only to small institutions. Molesworth et al. (2010), for example, provide a review of the relevant literature about the links between the notion of student as customer with higher and changing student expectations across the sector. In a TNHE context, however, this may mean that students of small private providers in receiving countries may have higher expectations and demands for personalised support in comparison to students who study on the main campus of the university. This is important in the context of comparisons of student satisfaction surveys, which is often one of the benchmarks used to identify comparability of student experience (Middlehurst, 2001). If student expectations are assumed to be static or irrelevant, in the context of the current retrospective customer model, then student satisfaction survey outcomes may indicate different levels of student experience between students in the exporting university and students in the partner institution. However, this difference in student experience may be due to different expectations rather than a difference in the standards provided at the partner institution.

6.2.3 Summary of interview findings

It is evident that students from both groups have been influenced by different factors. As shown in Table 6.6, the reputation of the university and programme of study is the only common factor for both student groups which has influenced their decision-making process. However, the meaning of 'reputation' varies between the two groups. For university students, reputation relates primarily to the position of the university in various league tables. For partner institution students, the reputation of an institution is much more dependent on personal recommendation from previous students and is therefore a much more local phenomenon. However, university rankings are important for both student groups.

Partner institution students are influenced by local social networks, which take the form of family and parents as well as word-of-mouth about the reputation of the local institution in the local community. Also a major factor of influence for them is the living and learning environment. Moreover, partner institution students consider programme content and organisation in anticipation of better employment prospects.

Both student groups are influenced by the location of the university or the partner institution. Lower living expenses and avoidance of a change in living environment are the prime reasons for university students to consider proximity to home as one of the major factors. In contrast, for partner institution students, the location awareness is linked with a desire to avoid change in the climate and study style, which are some of the main reasons for not going abroad.

Table 6.6: Summary of factors of influence as preliminary expectations

<table>
<tr><th>University students</th><th>Partner Institution students</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Reputation of the university and the programme
– Both student groups link the university and/or the programme reputation with employability</td></tr>
<tr><td>University students assess reputation by
– Rankings
– Employability statistics</td><td>Partner institution students assess reputation by
– Word of mouth and influence of social networks
– Rankings</td></tr>
<tr><td>Facilities
– Size
– However, “teaching more important”</td><td>Family and parents
– Strong influence of social networks</td></tr>
<tr><td>Proximity to family home
– Lower living costs
– Maintain contact with family and friends</td><td>Avoid living environment change and new study style
– TNHEP allows entry to a better higher education system without going abroad</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Programme structure, content, and length
– Higher reputation of the degree linked with higher aspirations for employability and academic progression (i.e. postgraduate studies)
– More attractive structure (i.e. duration, content, organisation) of programme in comparison to the Greek higher education system</td></tr>
</table>

From the discussion and analysis of the interview findings it is evident that students from the two student groups in this study have different expectations from both the HEI and the higher education programme (see Table 6.7 below). University students are more interested in the facilities and tangible characteristics of the provision, whereas partner institution students are more interested in the attributes of the final outcome of their studies (i.e. the degree). University students expect to have well organised teaching and learning provision with frequent and personalised support by their tutors. In contrast, partner institution students expect to find similarities to their secondary education teaching and support system, which involves a more structured and surface style teaching and learning approach and an intense tutoring system.

Table 6.7: Summary of student expectations

University students	***Partner Institution students***
Appropriate facilities	**Teaching and learning similar to Greek secondary education** - Over-instructional frontal teaching - Extra tutorial support - Surface learning - Descriptive study material
Organised classes and approachable lecturers - Institutional size can create problems in the realisation of this expectation	**The higher reputation of the degree will increase social status, employability, and academic progression opportunities** - Easier access to employment in the private sector and at international level
The placement will increase employability - Entry to the desired company - Better understanding of the needs of the particular industry	**Small class size**

Partner institution students expect that foreign programmes will be superior in value to those from Greece. This is primarily because Greek higher education has a poor reputation locally. Therefore, one of the reasons for the increasing demand for TNHE could be the inefficiency of local higher education systems in receiving countries, Greece in this research, in providing internationally reputable and high quality higher education. The long-standing problems of the Greek higher education system have been identified in previous research by the International Committee (2010), ICAP (2010), and McBurnie and Ziguras (2007), who see it as the major push factor for student mobility abroad and for compelling students to enrol at TNHEPs. This is also supported by the findings of previous research (Abubakar et al., 2010; Bodycott, 2009; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002) at an international level about the motives of international students who choose to study abroad.

6.3 Summary of chapter and ramifications on the applicability of the retrospective customer model

From the findings of this research presented and discussed in this chapter, it is clear that student expectations about quality in higher education are an idiosyncratic issue. Despite students sharing a ‘customer’ mentality, their expectations appear to vary owing to the influence of social and cultural factors embedded in the context of their environment. Also, students’ previous educational experience will significantly shape their expectations about teaching and learning in higher education. Considering the important role of student presage factors on the actual learning approach that students adopt during the educational process (Biggs & Tang, 2011), the findings presented in this chapter justify the claim of the problematic applicability of a retrospective customer model in TNHE. The significantly different student expectations, particularly about teaching and learning elements of the provision, will pose problems in the realisation of the desired educational outcomes. This in turn will initiate a vicious cycle of poor retention, along with low student satisfaction and service quality standards.

Chapter 7- Student perceptions of quality in higher education

7.0 Introduction

This chapter will consider students' perceptions of quality about the institution and the programme they are currently studying[110]. This allows the comparative exploration of the student satisfaction of students who study on the same undergraduate programme, but at two different locations, the main campus of the university and the partner institution. This relates to Research Objective 1 and Research Question 2.

Also, this chapter will explore what students at the two locations of programme delivery of this case study perceive to be the elements that constitute quality in higher education, which relates to Research Objective 1 and Research Question 3. At the same time, this contributes to the identification of students' conception of the term 'quality in higher education', something which varies considerably across different locations of the world (Quinn & Stein, 2013; De la Fuente et al., 2011; Bambacas & Sanderson, 2011) and as such carries value for this research, also because it has been identified as an under-researched area by Gibbs (2010).

The debate on whether to consider students' perception about quality is rich[111]. However in this thesis I take the view of Pratasavitskaya and Stensaker (2010) who

[110] The student perception of the necessary components of quality in higher education can be conceived as inherent factors (filters) that affect the formation of students' expectations. The mechanism behind the formation of student expectations is an issue that has been subject to previous research and debate. For example, McCallum and Harrison (1985) and Smith and Houston (1986), as cited in Hill (1995, p. 12), argue that the consumer of a service is able to develop a cognitive script about the characteristics of the service. The cognitive script is the "predetermined stereotyped sequence of actions that define a well-known situation" (Shank & Abelson, 1977 cited in Hill, 1995, p. 12). Thus students may form perceptions about the components of high-quality higher education based on an existing cognitive script which reflects their social, economy and family environment and values. This is justified by the findings of existing research (Min et al., 2012; Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham, 2008; Zhang, 2003), showing that student quality perceptions vary considerably across different cultural and social settings.

[111] As discussed in the literature review, there is debate about the appropriateness of students' perception of quality in higher education as a guide for HEI and policy makers. For example, many argue that customer-defined quality in higher education presents problems (Eagle and Brennan, 2007; Houston, 2007; Meirovich and Romar, 2006 cited in Houston, 2008, p. 62). Since the relationship between the customer and the service provider is governed by profit, it is inappropriate to apply a similar relationship in higher education, which, as a process, includes a moral dimension (Houston, 2008, p.62).

mention (citing Harvey, 1995) that “it is necessary to move beyond debates about whether quality management is relevant for higher education, by having less focus on the label and by paying more attention to the content and substance of such concepts” (p. 38). Furthermore, as discussed previously (Section 3.1.1), the prevailing quality discourse in higher education at political and policy level is one where the student is considered as customer, and the critical impact of this discourse on both the student and the quality management models, cannot be neglected.

Reflecting on the above discussion and within the Critical Realist lens of analysis I use in this thesis, the aim here is to explore and explain student perceptions in regard to their ramifications for the applicability of the retrospective customer model for the management of quality in TNHE. Particular emphasis is given to the impact of the differences in students’ perceptions of educational quality, considering that these are identified (Nijhuis, 2006) as a predictor factor for the learning approach adopted by students. Thus, students’ perceptions of quality are explored and explained in the context of educational quality and, specifically, on the implications for the realisation of the quality standards in TNHE. Also, the exploration of student perceptions is pursued here not only as a way to explain their ramifications for quality management but also as a way to understand the deeper mechanisms behind their formation and, in this way, enable the identification of a framework for their analysis.

The analysis and discussion of the findings will follow a sequential order, starting in Section 7.1 with the presentation of the quantitative survey findings which are used to identify the main trends in perceptions between the two student groups of the case study. This includes the presentation of descriptive statistics, null hypothesis testing and discussion of the similarity of perceptions between the two student groups of the case study. The analysis of the qualitative data from the semi-structured interviews in Section 7.2 aims to provide a deeper discussion and explanation of student perceptions in the context of the retrospective customer model.

7.1 Analysis and discussion of questionnaire survey findings

The analysis and discussion of the questionnaire survey findings will take place in three sub-sections. The first (7.1.1) presents and discusses students' perceptions about the quality standards of both the higher education institution and the higher education programme they are currently attending. The second (7.1.2) discusses students' perceptions about the relevance of the programme content to their future career plans. The relevance of programme content to employment prospects was considered important to include as a separate element because of the importance of employability found during the analysis of student expectations, and the need to explore further how students conceive this in terms of the programme they are currently attending. The third sub-section (7.1.3) presents what students consider to be the components necessary for the provision of 'high quality higher education'. The section is completed with a summary (7.1.4) of the questionnaire survey findings.

7.1.1 Students' perceptions of quality in the HEI and higher education programme they are currently attending

One of the aims of the questionnaire survey, which corresponds to Research Objective 1, was to identify students' perceptions of quality in the higher education institution and the programme they are currently attending and explore any differences between the two student groups. In the questionnaire (Questions 13 to 19), students were asked to evaluate (using both closed and open ended questions) the institution and the programme of study.

In closed questions, the statistical means of the two groups were ranked and compared, identifying and discussing the major differences (Section 7.1.1.1). The evidence was then statistically verified by testing the null hypothesis about the equality of perceptions between the two student groups of the case study (Section 7.1.1.2).

7.1.1.1 Ranking and comparison of means

Students were asked to rank, using a 1-5 Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree, 5=Strongly Agree), several aspects of the programme and the university/institution. This question aimed at identifying and comparing the perceptions of students from both groups about the programme and the university/institution in a more structured way. As shown in Table 7.1, university students are less satisfied than partner institution students. On a 1-5 Likert scale, university students scored an average satisfaction rate of 3.44 compared with the 3.77 of partner institution students. Also, as shown in the mean comparison, it is evident that student perceptions differ significantly between the two groups.

Table 7.1:Student Perceptions about the programme (ranking and comparison of means)

Item no.	**Item**	**Partner Institution students Mean**	**University students Mean**	**Mean diff. (Partner-University)**
1	**I have been able to contact my course tutor easily**	**4.56**	3.231	1.329
2	**Effective personal support has been available**	4.04	3.115	0.925
3	The course has been administered efficiently	3.96	3.346	0.614
4	I have been given clear advice about my choice of optional and/or free-choice modules	3.6	3	0.6
5	I have received clear information about the course structure and alternative routes	3.83	3.308	0.525
6	Overall I am satisfied with this course	4.2	3.769	0.431
7	The timetable has enabled me to take the modules I wished to study	3.84	3.431	0.409
8	I am pleased I chose this course	4.24	3.885	0.355
9	The academic content of my modules has linked together well	3.64	3.412	0.228
10	Overall I am satisfied with the university	4.16	3.962	0.198
11	I have been helped and encouraged to manage my own learning and development	3.64	3.481	0.159
12	The level of difficulty of work has increased from stage to stage	3.75	3.68	0.07
13	**The overall workload including assessment has been right**	**3.21**	**3.255**	**-0.047**
14	**There has been a reasonable balance of the total workload between modules**	**3**	**3.269**	**-0.269**
15	**The use of library resources has enhanced my studies**	**2.88**	**3.5**	**-0.62**
16	Total	3.77	3.44	0.33

Students, irrespective of their location of study, appear to hold similar levels of overall satisfaction with the provision (Mdiff = 0.33, see Item 16 in Table 7.3 above). Students show a similar level of satisfaction about the perceived level of workload in relation to level of study (Mdiff=-.07, Item 12 in the table above) and the overall programme workload including assessment (see Item 13, Table 7.3). This shows that in TNHE, the student experience across different locations of delivery is comparable, which in is line with the findings of existing research (Farrugia, 2012).

However, there are differences in the student perceptions about certain items of the educational provision. The perception of partner institution students about the level of access to personal tutorial support is substantially higher than that of university students (Mdiff = 1.329, Item 1 above). Also, partner institution students are more satisfied than university students in relation to the availability of effective personal support to them (Mdiff = 0.925). This can be explained in the context of institutional structure and size, which has been found to be associated with a higher flexibility/ability to provide personalised support (Know & Wyper, 2008). Organisational size has been identified in existing research as negatively associated with student satisfaction (Usher, 2012). Thus, the above findings can be attributed to the size of the institution and the staff:student ratio, which is more favourable in the partner institution.

At the same time, partner institution students appear to have lower perceptions in comparison to university students about the role of library resources in enhancing their studies. This can be explained by the fact that the partner institution has substantially smaller and limited library facilities in comparison to the university. This has been identified in existing literature as a common problem in TNHE, associated with the ability of small for-profit organisations, which represent the majority of TNHEPs, to provide appropriate facilities so as to create a comparable student experience to the one offered at the main campus of the university (Middlehurst & Woodfield, 2004).

7.1.1.2 Null hypothesis testing

To verify, statistically, the findings from the mean comparison and ranking, and as mentioned in the methodology chapter, a null hypothesis testing was used. The null hypothesis for this part of the questionnaire was:

H_0= There is no significant difference between the perceptions of university and partner institution students

From the statistical analysis of the student responses, there is enough statistical evidence (p>=.05) to support the rejection of the null hypothesis in 8 out of 15 aspects which concerned the student perception of quality of the current higher education institution and programme. This shows a substantial difference in student perceptions among the two groups. The Mann-Whitney test[112] outcomes verify the findings from the mean comparison conducted and are presented in Table 7.2 below.

The two groups rate significantly differently the aspects ***'I have been able to contact my course tutor easily'*** (p=.000, r=.60) and ***'effective personal support has been available'*** (p=.000, r=.41). University students appear to agree significantly less with these statements than the partner institution students. This may be because of the small size of the partner Institution, which facilitates a more flexible and informal student support by tutors. For example academic staff at the partner institution are available for students during most of the day and not during specific office hours as happens at the university: this is illustrated below in Table 7.2.

[112] The Mann-Whitney U test was used to statistically test the null hypothesis (equality of responses between the two student groups) and the effect size (r) was used to identify the magnitude of the relationships. A significant difference is shown when the score of the Mann-Whitney U is p=<.05.

Table 7.2: Student Perceptions about the programme - Mann-Whitney U Test, (question 16)

	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)*	Null hypothesis	effect size r**
I have received clear information about the course structure and alternative routes	444.000	-2.129	.033	rejected	-0.24
I have been given clear advice about my choice of optional and/or free-choice modules	444.500	-2.341	.019	rejected	-0.27
The course has been administered efficiently	424.500	-2.583	.010	rejected	-0.29
The timetable has enabled me to take the modules I wished to study	476.000	-1.877	.061		-0.21
The level of difficulty of work has increased from stage to stage	557.000	-.535	.593		-0.06
The overall workload including assessment has been right	598.500	-.161	.872		-0.02
There has been a reasonable balance of the total workload between modules	552.000	-1.116	.265		-0.13
The academic content of my modules has linked together well	539.500	-1.159	.247		-0.13
The use of library resources has enhanced my studies	442.000	-2.420	.016	rejected	-0.27
I have been helped and encouraged to manage my own learning and development	614.500	-.435	.664		-0.05
I have been able to contact my course tutor easily	186.000	-5.300	.000	rejected	**-0.60**
Effective personal support has been available	329.500	-3.654	.000	rejected	**-0.41**
I am pleased I chose this course	507.500	-1.648	.099		-0.19
Overall I am satisfied with this course	474.000	-2.099	.036	rejected	-0.24
Overall I am satisfied with the Institution	563.000	-1.042	.297		-0.12
Overall how satisfied are you by the programme BA in Business	412.500	-2.243	.025	rejected	-0.25

*statistically significant at p<=.05
**r=.10 small effect
r= .30 medium effect
r= .50=large effect

Overall, from the analysis of descriptive statistics (comparison of mean scores) and hypothesis testing, the perceptions of students about the standards of the provision are comparable. Students at both the university and the partner institution, have similar satisfaction rates.

The results indicate that students in both the university and the partner institution have similar perceptions about the standards of the higher education institution and the programme they are currently attending. However, there are specific areas where university students seem to be less satisfied than partner institution students. For example, university students appear to be much less satisfied with the level of personal support available to them, as well as their ability to contact their tutors. This can be explained as either a higher than appropriate expectation of students for this kind of support or as a deficiency of the university provision. Either way, within a retrospective customer model, where student expectations are left unmanaged, student perceptions cannot be adjusted early enough in the educational process. It appears that the small organisational size of the partner institution allows the provision of frequent and efficient tutorial support. Nevertheless, there are concerns as to whether this level of support can be sustained with a higher number of students, which will result in a dilution of the staff:student ratio.

7.1.1.3 Student perceptions about the most and least satisfactory aspects of their current education experience (open-ended responses)

An open-ended question aimed to identify the most and least satisfactory aspects of the students' current education experience in a unstructured manner and allow students to mention other aspects not included in the list of aspects explored in Section 7.1.2.1. The most and least satisfactory aspects which emerged from the open-ended responses are summarised below in Tables 7.3 and 7.4.

It appears that university and partner institution students perceive different elements as being the most and least satisfactory in their current education experience. Specifically, university students consider as the most satisfactory elements the quality of teaching staff, the library and IT resources and the range of modules available. In contrast, partner institution students consider as most satisfactory elements those associated with access to tutorial and academic staff support, as well as the module of accounting and finance.

Table 7.3: The three most satisfactory aspects of students' current education experience (from open-ended responses)

Rank	University students	Partner Institution students
1	Quality of teaching staff	Easy access to tutors
2	Library/IT	Support by academic staff
3	Range of modules	Accounting & Finance

The least satisfactory aspects for both groups are in line with the findings of the closed-ended question of the questionnaire survey analysed in Section 7.1.2.1 above. Specifically, university students appear to be least satisfied with elements associated with timetabling, support and clarity of information, which can be explained in the context of the institutional size of the university.

Table 7.4: the three least satisfactory aspects of students' current education experience (from open-ended responses)

Rank	University students	Partner Institution students
1	Timetabling	Coursework workload
2	Student support	Deadlines
3	Clear information	Quantitative methods

To gather further evidence and also get a sense of the prioritisation of factors students consider as needing immediate improvement, students were asked to take the perspective of members of the senior management team. This is useful because it provides an indication of the main problems which exist for the current education provision of students in this case study. Also, it allows verification and triangulation of the students' perceptions identified so far.

Students from both groups identified aspects (see below, Table 7.5) closely related to the programme content (i.e. specific modules in Year 1). These modules are of high mathematical orientation and appear to have the most challenging content. Research reveals that occasionally students are negatively preoccupied about the most demanding and difficult modules/elements of the programme (Beyers, 2008). Additionally, it should be noted that the survey took place relatively early in the academic year and maybe students would not have been able to form a complete opinion of specific modules.

Table 7.5: if you were a member of the top management team of the university, which areas/aspects would you concentrate on for increasing quality and student satisfaction (Question 12)

rank	university students	partner institution students
1	Module Managing Information & Money	Module Foundations of Managing and Organising
2	Module Marketing and Operations	Module Quantitative Methods
3	Timetable	Course workload

These observations on the research findings contribute to the conclusion that students who study at the main campus of the university and at an offshore partner institution hold different perceptions of the course content and workload. These perceptions are affected and shaped by students' previous educational experience. Considering the importance of students' perceptions for the learning approach they adopt during the educational process, it is critical for the effective management of quality in TNHE to explore the impact of previous educational experience on offshore students' perceptions.

7.1.1.4 Discussion

The main findings from the questionnaire survey about students' perceptions of their current education experience presented in the previous sections are grouped into themes and discussed jointly below.

Ability to contact the tutor & level of support

During the quantitative analysis it appeared that partner institution students are significantly more satisfied than university students about their ability to contact their tutors and the level of support provided by the academic staff at the partner institution. They rate these aspects as the most satisfactory elements of their experience, while the university students rate these as the least satisfactory.

This may be explained by the smaller scale of the educational provision at the partner institution and consequently the more favourable student:staff ratio. This allows the provision of more flexible and responsive tutorial support by the partner institution. Also, the partner institution is a private for-profit organisation which may consider the additional tutorial support as a means to ensure 'value for money'.

In contrast, university students are dissatisfied with the level of student support. This can be explained by the organisation size and student to academic staff ratio. The university student to academic staff ratio is 17.1:1 (The University, 2011) whereas the partner institution's rate is 6:1 (The College, 2011c). It seems that the satisfaction of students may have a direct relationship with the level, scale and speed of tutorial support. The ability of an institution to provide this type of tutorial support is linked with the institutional size and characteristics. This was an issue which required further exploration during the qualitative part of the research.

Quality of teaching staff

University students rate as the most satisfactory aspect the '***quality of teaching staff'***. However it is of critical importance to explore further the meaning of quality as university students perceive it. This is because there are evidence from existing research to suggest that students can often associate good quality of teaching staff with a relaxed and less demanding teaching and learning style (James, 2007), while, at the same time, research also shows that students' perception of good quality teaching will be significantly influenced by their cultural values (Bambacas & Sanderson, 2011). The way in which university students perceive good quality teaching staff will be directly related to the applicability of the retrospective customer model, and this will be explored further in the interviews section. In contrast, partner institution students do not mention the quality of academic staff as one of the satisfactory aspects of their current education experience. This is important, considering the importance of teaching quality in the context of the educational quality model. If partner institution students are not satisfied with the quality of teaching staff, this can be interpreted as either that partner institution students' expectations about teaching staff are inappropriate or the actual quality of teaching staff at the partner institution is poor. Here it is clearly the former, considering the findings about partner institution students' expectations (see Chapter 6 above), where it is clear that their expectations about teaching staff are mostly concerned with instructional frontal teaching and surface learning. It is clear, therefore, that partner institution students' expectations, when left unmanaged, lead to poor satisfaction scores and wrong perceptions about the teaching and learning context. These findings showcase the impact of student expectations on both the service and educational quality and make a case for the adoption of a prospective management approach.

Timetabling

University students appeared to be least satisfied with the 'timetabling of the programme' (see Tables 7.4 and 7.5). This again falls into the discussion about the effect of institutional characteristics, such as organisational size, on student satisfaction. The administrative team of the university has to timetable hundreds of modules using a centralised system. In contrast, the partner institution has only 8 programmes to administer, hence timetabling is a much simpler task. Moreover, the university has far more students than the partner institution, thus the university teaching facilities are operating at almost full capacity. Here the question is whether university students' perceptions about timetabling could have been prospectively managed through the management of their expectations. Surely, the dissatisfaction of university students about timetabling is an outcome of a retrospective customer model which does not lead to the desired service quality outcomes for the university.

Course workload & deadlines

For partner institution students, the least satisfactory aspects of the programme are the course workload, deadlines, and quantitative methods module. In contrast, university students do not mention the coursework within the factors they consider in need of management action to increase student satisfaction. This may be related to the findings of research which reveals that UK students find the actual coursework less hard than they expected (Yorke & Longden, 2008).

Partner institution students considered the course workload as problematic whereas university students did not. This could be explained by the difference in the previous academic experience of the two student groups. Partner institution students come from a different education system which has very few similarities with the UK or other Western primary and secondary education systems. As discussed in Chapter 6, in Greek primary and secondary education, students are assessed only through examinations, thus having limited exposure to group activities, presentations and the use of a wider range of learning resources other than textbooks (Giavrimis & Papanis, 2008). Additionally, Greek higher education[113] is based merely on final written exams, taking place once per semester, and attendance at lectures and seminars is not compulsory (Karagiannopoulou & Christodoulides, 2005). Thus, partner institution students are neither

[113] As explained earlier in the contextualisation chapter, Greek students are not familiar with coursework and meeting deadlines. Secondary and higher education in Greece uses written examinations for assessing student performance and the use of coursework is limited, if not absent. Due to this system of assessment, Greek students learn to read and memorise information, which they then write out in the final examinations. Also, as individual or group assignments are not widely used for assessing students' performance in Greek secondary education, Greek students neither expect nor are familiar with the methodology for completing this type of assignment.

used to a system as such, nor expect to find a different system in higher education. It is, then, worth arguing that their consideration of the course workload as heavy could be a reflection of the 'shock' they are experiencing during the first year on a UK higher education programme.

The impact of the previous educational experience is also evident in the expectations of partner institution students (see Chapter 6 above) where they express inappropriate expectations about course workload and assessment. This shows that previous educational experience affects the perceptions of students in relation to their satisfaction with a future educational experience. In this case, secondary education experience affects both the students' expectations and their perception of higher education. This issue was further explored through the qualitative part of this research.

However, it is clear here that the current retrospective customer model in TNHE is not able to manage partner institution expectations and perceptions formed due to their previous educational experience. This, as in the aspects discussed previously, leads to poor service quality outcomes while at the same time posing significant risks for the outcomes of the educational process.

Library resources

The partner institution students are significantly less satisfied with the role of library facilities in enhancing their studies. In contrast, the university students include library facilities among the most satisfactory factors of their current education experience. The significantly lower satisfaction of students at the partner institution is linked with the fact that the partner institution has far smaller library facilities than the university. This should be also discussed along with the fact that partner institution students have not mentioned the library as one of the top elements necessary for the provision of quality in higher education. This means that their dissatisfaction is most likely to occur because the partner institution library is not satisfying the basic expectations for library provision. This could be alarming for the university, as an indication that the partner institution is not providing the appropriate resources to support the students' learning process. In a transnational higher education context, this coincides with the evidence and suggestions of other publications (QAA, 2010; Drew et al., 2008) which state that universities should monitor the existing resources at the partner institution closely before and during the operation of a partnership to assure a minimum level of standards. Also, this is aligned with the claim of existing research (Waters & Leung, 2011) that students who study in offshore locations are somehow disadvantaged in comparison to students who study on the main campus of the university.

7.1.1.5 Overall satisfaction of students from the programme

The perception of the total satisfaction from a higher education programme is a function of many different variables as mentioned earlier. Students' perception of different aspects of the programme can be influenced by factors external to the programme or the HEI offering this programme, but also by their own presage factors (student beginning characteristics) (Telford & Masson, 2005). It was discussed earlier that issues such as previous educational experience and the influence of family can affect both the expectations and the perceptions of the students. In Question 19 of the questionnaire, the aim was to isolate students' perceptions about their total satisfaction from the programme. The findings from this question are used in comparison with the findings from the previous perception questions (i.e. 13-18) to access the overall satisfaction of the two student groups in this research. Students were asked to grade their level of satisfaction with the specific programme using a 1-10 scale.

As shown in Table 7.6, students from both groups reported an overall satisfaction rate of above average (>5). Partner institution students have a higher overall satisfaction rate (MU=7.84) than university students (MPI=7.08) regarding the programme of study (see below, Table 7.6). This is in agreement with the findings in Question 16 where the total mean score of all the aspects was higher for partner institution students (MPI=3.77) than for university students (MU=3.44).

Table 7.6: Overall how satisfied are you with the programme BA in Business – student group mean score

	Mean
University students	7.083
Partner institution students	7.840
Total	7.343

From the cross-tabulation of the two student groups and the overall satisfaction with the BA (Hons) in Business, it is evident that university students' responses are concentrated around the area of 7-8 (60.4%) whereas partner institution students' responses are concentrated around 8-9 (60%) (see below, Table 7.7). Overall, students from both groups are above average (M>5) satisfied with the programme. University students report a generally lower satisfaction score, which is explained by the lower satisfaction with specific elements/aspects of the programme and its management (i.e. tutor support, timetabling) as was identified earlier.

Table 7.7: Overall how satisfied are you with the programme BA in Business – breakdown of student responses

	Likert 1-10 scale	University students	Partner Institution students	Total
Overall how satisfied are you by the programme BA in Business	1.00	2.1%		1.4%
	4.00	2.1%	4.0%	2.7%
	5.00	8.3%	8.0%	8.2%
	6.00	14.6%	8.0%	12.3%
	7.00	27.1%	8.0%	20.5%
	8.00	33.3%	36.0%	34.2%
	9.00	12.5%	24.0%	16.4%
	10.00		12.0%	4.1%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

It is worth noting the absence of extreme negative views (1-3) in both student groups. This can be interpreted as an indication that students at both institutions regard the programme as being of above average quality and one that has few serious defects. Also, the absence of extreme negative views increases the validity of the students' comments, discussed previously, about the aspects they find less satisfactory. The student responses seem to be honest and modest, as their overall satisfaction coincides with the general overview of their responses in the previous questions about their perceptions of specific elements of the educational provision.

7.1.2 Student perception about relevance of programme content to future career

As found in this thesis (Section 6.1.1.1) one of the factors with the major impact on students' choice of higher education institution and programme is future employment prospects. For all of the above reasons, a question about student perceptions of the relevance of the programme content to their future career aspirations was included to gather specific evidence on this important matter. Also, in a world of increasing competition between universities in their effort to attract students, and between graduates for finding employment, and under increasing pressure from government and business to link higher education programmes with the 'real economy', the programme content's relevance to students' future careers is an important aspect. Today, the term 'employability' is trending, and one of the prime issues of concern for those responsible for writing and approving academic programmes in universities is the extent to which the content of each programme complies with the demands of business and increases the employability of graduates (Yorke, 2006; Lueddeke, 2010).

7.1.2.1 Ranking and comparison of means

Students at both locations rank the content of the programme as very relevant to their future chosen career**.** The statistical analysis showed a grouped mean of **7.7** (on a 1 to 10 scale) for university students and a grouped mean of **8.4** (on a 1 to 10 scale) for partner institution students (see below, Table 7.8).

There is a slight difference between the two groups (M_U=7.7, M_{PI}=8.4). This does not necessarily indicate that students at the university find the content of the BA in Business programme less relevant to their future career in comparison to the partner institution students. However, research suggests that young people in Greece tend to decide their future career even before they enter secondary education, under the influence of their parents, who see education as the means of securing a well-paid and comfortable occupation (Saiti & Mitrosili, 2005).

Table 7.8: Relevance of programme content to future career – student group mean scores

Type of Student	Mean
University students	7.7647
Partner Institution students	8.4400
Total	7.9868

7.1.2.2 Null hypothesis testing

To test the null hypothesis (equality of responses between the two groups) the Mann-Whitney U test was used. Table 7.9 below shows that there is enough evidence (p=.210, p>.05) to support the retention of the null hypothesis. This means that students from the two groups have similar views about the relevance of their degree to their future career.

Table 7.9: Relevance of programme content to future career- Null Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis Test Summary

	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The distribution of Degree of programme content relevance to the future career is the same across categories of STUD.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	.210	Retain the null hypothesis.
2	The distribution of Degree of programme content relevance to the future career is the same across categories of STUD.	Independent-Samples Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test	.565	Retain the null hypothesis.
3	The medians of Degree of programme content relevance to the future career are the same across categories of STUD.	Independent-Samples Median Test	.167	Retain the null hypothesis.

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05.

7.1.2.3 Open-ended responses

To explore further the meaning of the statement 'relevance to future career' students were asked, via an open ended question, to be more specific as to what aspect of the programme they consider as most relevant to their future career. The student responses were grouped according to the most frequently occurring terms/aspects and the three top points for each student group are summarised in Table 7.12.

The university students identified the placement year as the aspect most relevant to their future career. Partner institution students reported the module of Accounting & Finance as the most relevant aspect.

As mentioned earlier, in Chapter 6, the placement year is considered as a strong employability-related element of the BA in Business programme in the UK, whereas in Greece it is not offered. In general, the placement year has been established in UK since the late 1990s (Harvey et al., 1997) and particularly in this specific university. On the other hand, in Greece placement years are not common, thus not expected in undergraduate education.

The partner institution students value the Accounting & Finance and Qualitative Methods modules as most relevant to their future career, despite these being the most demanding modules of the programme, and similarly university students chose the modules of Accounting & Finance and Marketing.

Table 7.10: Ranking of programme aspects in regards to their relevance to the students' future career – open ended responses

Rank	University students	Partner Institution students
1	Placement year	Accounting & Finance module
2	Accounting & Finance module	Quantitative methods module
3	Marketing module	Management module

Students in both groups consider specific modules of the programme as relevant to their future career. This shows that students, irrespective of their location, value the programme content in similar ways, above all the modules with high numerical content. The inclusion of the module 'Accounting & Finance' in the top three aspects that students relate to relevance to their future career reveals that students acknowledge the value of challenging modules with high mathematical content in career progression. Also, the fact that students refer to specific modules of the programme as the aspects which are linked to their career aspirations can be explained as an indication that the programme content is relevant to meet student expectations across different parts of the world.

It can be concluded that students share similar concerns/perceptions in regards to their future employability, which in turn makes them value as more relevant the subjects considered to increase their employment opportunities.

Overall, the students who are enrolled on the programme, irrespective of their location, are satisfied about the relevance of the programme content to their employment aspirations. This also shows that within a transnational higher education context, the students, irrespective of their location, seem to have common career aspirations and/or their future career aspirations have common requirements which, they consider, can be fulfilled by common programme content. Within a globalised context, the employability and career aspirations of students seem to have communalities that common programme content is considered appropriate to address. So, to a certain extent, students in both groups share a common customer identity in relation to the value of ‘the end product’ they expect. They hold a common perception about the instrumental use and relevance of a degree to provide access to employment.

7.1.3 Students’ perception of the components that constitute quality in higher education

During the questionnaire survey, students were asked to identify the most important elements that constitute a high quality programme. This corresponds to Research Objective 1 and Research Question 3.

This was explored via an open-ended question aiming to capture the full range of elements and aspects that, according to students, affect quality in higher education. The three most important elements are outlined below in Table 7.11. This allows the identification of the top three elements considered necessary for quality in higher education, which are then explored and explained in more detail in the qualitative part of the research (Section 7.14.).

For university students, the most important elements are quality of teaching, appropriate lecturers and student support by teaching staff; for students at the partner institution, the most important elements are quality of teaching, facilities and content of programme.

Table 7.11: Three most important elements necessary for the formation of a high quality programme of study – open ended responses (Question 11)

Rank	University students	Partner Institution students
1	Quality of teaching	Quality of teaching
2	Appropriate lecturers	Tangible facilities
3	Student support by teaching staff	Content of programme

Quality of teaching, appropriate lecturers, and support by teaching staff

Students at both locations seem to share some common thoughts and perceptions as to what is necessary for a high quality programme. Both student groups rank as the most important element the ***'quality of teaching***'. Both groups mention elements closely associated with the main educational activities such as teaching, student support, and appropriate lecturers for achieving high quality. This justifies the emphasis given by various stakeholders, internal and external to higher education institutions, on educational quality.

Nevertheless, quality of teaching is in itself a relatively debated issue and one which cannot be defined with a single definition (Henard & Leprince-Ringuet, 2008). The review of the relevant literature reveals that quality of teaching is relative to the stakeholder (i.e. students, external quality assurance bodies) and it is not necessary that all stakeholders share the same conception about what is meant by quality of teaching.

However, the questionnaire survey findings shown above reveal that students rate those elements which are directly linked with academic staff as more important for quality in higher education. This is in line with existing research (Voss et al., 2007; Broomfield & Bligh, 1998; Wilkins et al., 2012; Zhao, 2012) which has shown the importance of teaching quality in students' overall satisfaction. This confirms a shared perception of students, across different locations of programme delivery, of the importance of quality of teaching in the overall concept of quality in higher education. This finding is opposed to the argument for the dominance of a "mass produced and commodified higher education[114] where tangible elements are considered as more important for 'satisfying the customers'" (Brinkworth et al., 2008; Hussey & Smith, 2010). However as mentioned earlier, quality of teaching means different things to different students. From the literature review (Fielding

[114] One way in which universities are attempting to become more attractive to prospective students is by investing heavily in tangible resources that go beyond the standard teaching facilities (Molesworth et al., 2010, p. 40). Additionally, the adoption of a 'more-for-less' management of resources in higher education institutions has reduced the academic staff:student ratios. Many universities currently focus on resourcing their programme delivery with adjunct and part-time teaching staff, trying to reduce costs and increase their profitability as for-profit organisations (Hill et al., 2003).

et al., 2010; Thomas & Galambos, 2004), it is evident that students are currently more likely to associate high quality of teaching with a more relaxed and a less intellectually demanding teaching model. It has been shown that overall student satisfaction from teaching is associated with the subject studied. For example, Fielding et al. (2010) found that students taking less mathematical subjects are more satisfied than other students taking subjects with an increased mathematical content. Thus, the way in which students consider the meaning of quality of teaching and of academic staff will play a significant role in their perceptions of quality. So, in order to be able to draw observations from the above findings, further exploration was needed at a qualitative level. For this reason, I prompted students with a relevant sub-question during the semi-structured personal interviews (see Section 7.2.2).

Overall it is clear that students, irrespective of their location, value the intangible elements more as important components of quality. This justifies the increased importance of educational quality in the agenda of the authorities at the national (Davies, 2012) and international level (IIEP-UNESCO, 2011). However, how exactly students conceive ‘quality of teaching’ remains to be explored during the qualitative data analysis in Section 7.2 later in the chapter.

Tangible facilities

The partner institution students rated tangible facilities as the second most important priority for the provision of high quality higher education. This finding contradicts the finding in Chapter 6 (Section 6.1.1) about the factors that influenced partner institution students in their decision to select the education provider and programme, where facilities were rated as a low influence factor. This could be explained by the fact that partner institution students were able to sacrifice the existence of a large campus and excellent facilities for access to a UK higher education programme without moving to the main campus of the university. However, it should be noted that in this case partner institution students were also impacted by fact that the partner institution is the only TNHEP on the wider region, thus their choices were limited.

The importance of tangibles can be attributed to the high score of uncertainty avoidance[115] of the Greek culture (Hofstede, 2013b) which affects partner institution students in holding higher expectations for tangible elements of the higher education provision. Existing recent research (Tsiligiris, 2011a; Bodycott & Lai, 2012; Volet & Jones, 2012) shows that higher scores in uncertainty avoidance are associated with assigning greater importance to tangible elements of the provision.

The emphasis on tangibles is an effort of partner institution students, in this research, and international students in previous research, to use tangibles as a means to assure quality. The importance that students give to tangibles will be subject to their cultural values. This means that in the TNHE the role of tangible facilities, may be of varying importance leading to either under or over-evaluation of the role of facilities for both service and educational quality. For example, TNHEPs with impressive facilities may be considered by students as being of high quality whereas those with less impressive facilities may be identified as being of inferior quality. In a retrospective customer model, where student satisfaction plays a central role in quality management, the above can lead to problematic outcomes.

Programme content

Partner institution students mentioned programme content amongst the three components that constitute high quality in higher education. This can be explained in the context of partner students' employability aspirations after graduation, as presented in Section 7.1.2 above. Partner institution students appear to be focused on the 'end product' and they interpret programme content in relation to the competitive advantage it

[115] According to Hofstede's (2013a) definition, uncertainty avoidance is defined thus: "Uncertainty avoidance deals with a society's tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity. It indicates to what extent a culture programs its members to feel either uncomfortable or comfortable in unstructured situations".

can give them as graduates in the employment market. How students perceive quality of programme content is an issue that requires further investigation and as such was included in the interviews (see Section 7.2.3).

7.1.4 Summary of questionnaire survey analysis and discussion

When it comes to the perceptions of students about the standards of the institution and the programme they are currently attending (Section 7.1.1), students from both groups rate different aspects of the higher education institution and the particular programme in different ways.

University students are less satisfied with issues relating to the choice of available modules, the tutorial support on a personal level, the ease of contacting tutors and the administration of the course. These aspects could be partly the result of the diseconomies and inefficiencies of scale related to the organisation size.

In contrast, partner institution students are mostly satisfied with aspects relating to personal tutorial support and the ability to contact tutors, which is the result of the small scale organisational structure of the institution. Thus, there is a relationship between organisational size and student satisfaction. These findings coincide with the findings of previous studies (Wiers-Jenssen & Stensaker, 2002, p.184) showing that "large, complex institutions probably have less satisfied students than small more transparent units". It is alarming for the university that the partner institution students are dissatisfied by the library facilities available at the partner institution, despite their overall high satisfaction with the programme and the institution. This may signal a possible problem for transnational higher education partnerships which is linked to the ability of the offshore institution to provide an adequate infrastructure to facilitate learning and teaching experience that is comparable to that of the university. In a transnational higher education context, students who study on the same programme but at different locations have similar career aspirations and/or their employability depends on common characteristics.

Students from both groups are satisfied about the relevance of the programme content to their employment aspirations. This reveals a shared focus by students, irrespective of their location, on the link between programme content and employment prospects.

Students from both groups share some common perceptions about the necessary elements that constitute quality in higher education (Section 7.1.3). Both student groups consider quality of teaching as the prime element of quality in higher education. In a transnational higher education context, this shows a common perception from students, irrespective of their location, about a link between the quality of teaching and the overall level of quality in higher education. However, the relativity of the definition of ‘quality of teaching’ requires deeper exploration of how students in the two student groups of the case study conceive it. This is implemented in the next section of this chapter (7.2), where the interview findings about students’ perceptions of quality in higher education are presented and analysed.

7.2 Analysis and discussion of interview findings: students’ perceptions of quality in higher education

This section will present and discuss the interview findings about students’ perceptions of the components that constitute high quality in higher education. During the interviews, the students were asked to identify in more detail the meaning of aspects, such as ‘quality of teaching’ which emerged during the quantitative part of the research as a component necessary for the provision of high quality in higher education. The emerging themes are discussed in separate sections and reference is made to the findings of the quantitative survey.

7.2.1 Modern facilities & flexible timetable

Overall, more than half of the students interviewed in both groups consider modern facilities as an important component of quality in higher education. For university students, the focus is on the size and diversity of facilities, whereas for partner institution students it is the functionality of the buildings and the availability of a modern IT infrastructure. Regarding partner institution students, this is in line with the findings from the questionnaire survey presented earlier in the chapter (Section 7.1.3). However, for university students, this did not appear in the questionnaire findings. Nevertheless, in the questionnaire survey, students were able to identify only three factors they consider to be associated with higher quality in higher education. So during the interviews university students were able to express more openly their perceptions about a wider array of aspects that they consider to constitute high quality in higher education.

University students believe that is vital to have appropriate facilities to support their learning and their recreation (e.g. large library, modern IT, gym). University students consider the size and diversity of facilities as important. For example, as Student U5 said,

> *"… the facilities must be at the top of the list. This is where most of the teaching and learning takes place. If students have appropriate facilities then they will be able to perform better."*

Student U8 mentioned

> *"… the universities must have proper teaching and learning facilities. Students should be able to have access to a large library, halls of residence, and socialising facilities."*

Partner institution students did mention the importance of facilities for the provision of high quality in higher education. However their emphasis was more on the functionality of the facilities and less on their size. For example, student P8 said,

> "*Lecture rooms have to be modern and provide a pleasant study environment for the students. What is definitely not appropriate is the current situation in the Greek*

public universities, where students sometimes cannot find a free seat in the lecture theatres."

Student P6 mentioned that,

"…it is crucial to provide facilities which are modern and provide access to new technologies like Wi-Fi connections and modern PC workstations."

The above findings verify the link between the factors affecting student choice, student expectations about quality in higher education and their perceptions of the necessary components of quality in higher education. This reflects previous research which has shown that tangibles have the highest impact on student satisfaction (Arambewela & Hall, 2006; Karagiannopoulou & Christodoulides, 2005). Tangibles were also underlined by Tomovick et al. (1996 cited in Arambewela & Hall, 2006, p. 154), who emphasised their importance for the perception of the overall academic quality provided by the institution.

The link between factors of student's choice influence and student expectations and perceptions is important because it links different parts of the existing research, which is currently divided in light of the different interpretations and various concepts involved in the quality management of contemporary higher education. This link is further developed and discussed during the conclusion of this chapter.

7.2.2 The standards of teaching & appropriate lecturers

In the questionnaire survey it was found that both student groups rate 'quality of teaching' as the prime element that defines quality in higher education. This was explored further during the semi-structured interviews as one of the elements that students from both student groups considered as a very important component of quality in higher education. Students mentioned the standards of teaching and the quality of lecturers and other teaching staff.

Specifically, students from both groups referred to the lecturers' ability to stay in line with the latest developments in their discipline and incorporate them in the teaching process. For example, Student U9 mentioned that,

> *"the world is changing rapidly and is really important to know that the lecturer knows what he is talking about – all disciplines exist for many years however there are constantly new things. If lecturers know all the new developments then is better for the students."*

Student P10 said, *"the teaching in higher education should be about issues which are new and probably will shape the future".* For some students, this means that during their teaching lecturers should be able to reflect on wider issues and themes which are currently on the news and/or concern real-life cases. For example, Student U3 said,

> *"Lecturers should know the latest developments in the subject they teach. This means that lecturers should be able to talk in the classroom about things that are now on the news and generally are more applied."*

Overall, the majority of students in both student groups mentioned that what happens in the classroom is a very important component of quality in higher education. Also some students mentioned that quality can be increased by investing in academic staff and that academic staff quality is more important than the existence of modern facilities. For example, Student P7 said,

> *"to have large facilities is useless when the teaching is not good. Universities should invest in their teaching staff more than they do for their facilities."*

University Student U3 reflected,

> *"…for me teaching is more important than facilities. I like nice buildings but what motivates me to continue studying is my professors and their teaching."*

This reflects previous research (Kelso, 2008; Gaffney-Rhys & Jones, 2008; Telford & Masson, 2005) which has shown that students consider the quality of academic staff and their ability to communicate and provide support more frequently as a very important factor in their satisfaction and quality in higher education.

Reflecting on the relative to the individual definition of the term ‘quality of teaching’ there was a need, identified during the discussion of the questionnaire findings, to explore this issue further. During the exploration of the above issues it became apparent that for university students, this meant the lecturers’ ability to provide students with an internationalised overview and insights into their subject area. For example, Student U10 mentioned,

> *“it is important for academics to be able to provide us with examples and cases of businesses from other parts of the world and not only from the UK.”*

Another example was Student U8, who said *“I want to work in a multinational company after I graduate. Thus I want to be taught at an international context”.* It can be argued that for university students, the acquisition of knowledge applicable at an international level is an important element of quality in higher education. This reflects recent research findings (Hyland et al., 2008) showing an increasing trend for students from the UK to move to other countries to complete parts of or even their entire studies. However, this shows an instrumental perception of higher education by students who are focusing on the end of the process and linking educational content with employment prospects.

For partner institution students, who also valued teaching staff and their support as one of the most important determinants of quality, this meant something different. During the course of the interviews, it became clear that for Greek students this meant a structured instructional style of teaching and support. For example, Student P7 said,

> *“… by appropriate teaching staff I mean someone who will be able to present the lecture each week and provide clear reading material …I think that the teacher has the major role and responsibility for the teaching in the class.”*

This shows that partner institution students hold a limited view of what a good teacher is. They do not comment about the teacher’s ability to intellectually challenge students in class and to promote ‘deep learning’. Instead they describe the ideal teacher as someone who is acting as the transmitter of information, with the student taking a passive role. This reflects the evidence from research showing that for Greek students the ideal teaching style is one where the lecturer acts as the transmitter of the knowledge and the student as the receptor (Katsikas, 2010). This is best described as 'transmission teaching', where the teacher decides what will be discussed and taught (Weiner et al., 2003, p.154). In 'transmission teaching', the teacher is expected to provide direct instruction of the content through a formal presentation of the material and discussion with one student at a time. As mentioned earlier, this teaching style is the norm in Greek primary and secondary education, something which affects the students' expectations and perceptions of teaching style in higher education.

This has significant ramifications for the applicability of the educational quality model of the UK university which is based, among other things, on the assumption that students will take a 'deep learning approach'. Practically, this means that the perceptions of the partner institution students in this case study, about the nature and meaning of 'quality of teaching', if left unmanaged, as the current retrospective customer model implies, will lead to the adoption of a 'surface learning' approach that will eventually create poor educational process outcomes (Nijhuis, 2006; Quinn & Stein, 2013). This in turn will impact service quality, as students will be dissatisfied with the poor educational results and by their probable failure to continue their studies (Min et al., 2012). This double impact on educational and service quality justifies the need for a prospective management approach. A prospective quality management model will allow proactive action for the adjustment of student perceptions and expectations about the teaching approach. This will allow the university and partner institution to take active steps to ensure that partner institution students are more likely to adopt a 'deep learning' approach and succeed in the educational process.

Both student groups mentioned that teaching staff must have good communication and presentation skills that will aid the understanding of the elements taught. For example, Student U2 said,

"… It is important for higher education institutions to have academic staff that can deliver classes in a way that students can understand and participate."

Student P10 commented, *"lecturers should be able to teach and keep the interest of the students … I remember in lyceum teaching was sometimes so boring".*

It is interesting to see that students in both student groups recognise the value of a good teacher who enables students to take a 'deep learning' approach. According to Biggs (1988), in a deep learning approach, the student is motivated and interested in the learning process by striving to satisfy their curiosity by "finding out what one can, and understanding, using and extending that knowledge" (p. 199). However, partner institution students, as found earlier, are not keen to depart into a 'deep learning' approach and perceive the ability of the teacher to keep students interested within the context of transmission teaching. Nevertheless, this shows that partner institution students are aware, even inherently, that their previous educational experience in the Greek secondary education was problematic. The students' responses in the interviews show that students, irrespective of their location, do look for a lecturer who will be able to ignite their curiosity and interest, which will then lead to a deep learning approach. Thus, if appropriate changes/accommodations are made in the teaching context presage factors (i.e. teaching approaches adopted by teaching staff) then there are increased possibilities for students to adopt a 'deep learning' approach. In order for such changes/accommodations to be planned, there is a need to explore student perceptions prior to delivery and this is possible only under a prospective quality management model.

7.2.3 Programme content relevance to graduate employability

Programme content relevance to graduate employability is an element that the majority of both student groups considered as very important for the provision of high quality in higher education. During the discussion, it became evident that students' perception of programme appropriateness refers more to employability prospects and is less about academic content. As Partner Institution Student P7 said, *"The programmes have to contain knowledge that is useful in finding a job… a high quality programme is one where its graduates are highly appreciated by employers."*

University Student U5 mentioned,

"The stuff we will be taught should reflect the needs of the employment market. I do not want to spend three years without knowing the possibilities of getting a job after graduation."

It is clear that students, irrespective of their location, take an instrumental approach towards the educational process and identify the programme value in relation to its relevance to employment market requirements. This raises significant implications for the effectiveness of the educational quality model, considering the need for students' participatory role in the teaching and learning process.

Some students mentioned that higher quality is also assured by the provision of programmes which are updated to reflect the changing demands of the employment market. An example of this is Student U10, who said

"For me it is important to be able to understand the current and future developments in the world of business. So, I think the important element of quality is programmes which are constantly updated."

From the above it is clear that students, irrespective of their location, evaluate as a determinant factor of quality in higher education the link between programme content and employment prospects. This finding coincides with findings of previous surveys, such as the survey by the National Union of Students (NUS) in the UK, which showed that 66% of participants in higher education were concerned about employment levels after graduation (Jameson et al., 2011, p. 2). This also verifies the previous findings in this thesis – in the literature review, questionnaire survey and personal interviews – about the increased focus of students and other stakeholders in higher education on employability.

The increased role of employability on students' perceptions presented above is clearly due to their focus on getting good returns on their investment, which in turn can be explained as an outcome of students' increased contribution to the payment of fees (Baker, 2011).

Also, the increased importance placed on employability by students of this case study can be seen as a result of the prevailing discourse which aims to shift the public focus away from employment into employability (Moreau & Leathwood, 2006; Finn, 2000). Thus, in a world of increased unemployment, particularly among young people, employability as alternative to employment has become a major factor for selecting a higher education programme (Tomlinson, 2008 cited in Jameson et al. 2011, p. 2)., This, as the findings of this case study revealed, seems to be present in the perception of students irrespective of their location of study.

Overall, students' perception about the link between employability and programme content has a range of ramifications for the educational and service quality management.

First, the drive to increase employability reflects the students' and their families' efforts to ensure a satisfactory return on investment (payment of fees, and other expenses), and reveals a perception of higher education as a common commodity. Thus, students, families, and also the government tend to assess the returns of higher education in a conventional market way and sense. This implies an increased emphasis and focus by students on the 'end product' rather than in the educational process itself. This can be explained as an underlying expectation of a passive role in the educational process by students, which in turn leads towards a 'surface' learning approach that leads to poor education outcomes. In turn, this creates a vicious circle of poor student satisfaction which worsens student engagement and motivation with the educational process and inevitably impacts retention rates.

Second, the increased importance of employability has legitimatised the active involvement of students and other stakeholders in the discussion about higher education programmes, which adds to the existing scepticism about the appropriateness of a customer approach in higher education. This is seen as challenging the traditional institutional values of higher education institutions. A programme content which is shaped according to the demands of the 'student as customer' and employers, lacks: 1) disinterestedness, which in the higher education context refers to the selfless criticism of ideas, actions and judgements; 2) communalism – the notion of knowledge creation as a process of social collaboration and belonging to the community; and 3) organised scepticism – referring to the generation of ideas on the basis of a continuous process of systematic analysis and testing (Coiffaited, 2011, pp. 66–67). Consequently, programme content that is developed as a result of pressures by the market and students as customers may lead to poor educational outcomes in the sense of the quality of knowledge produced.

7.2.4 'Value for money' provision

Both student groups mentioned that on aspect that constitutes quality is an HEI's ability to provide services and an environment which corresponds with the fees paid by the students.

Eight out of ten university students mentioned that, since students in higher education in the UK are paying large and increasing fees for their undergraduate studies, universities should provide more services, both in terms of quantity and quality. One of the most explicit comments is by University Student U9, who said,

> *"… in the next years universities will charge as much as £9,000 per academic year. This means that they should provide some additional and better services for that amount of money."*

University students mention a desire for 'more for their money', a perception of the meaning of value for money which emanates from the increase in the tuition fees. This is aligned with findings showing that the increase in tuition fees in UK, Germany and the Netherlands (Behrens, 2013) has had an impact on rising student expectations and increasing student complaints. The findings from the interviews are also linked with research (Voss et al., 2007) which shows a relationship between the introduction of fees and the rise of a 'consumerism' approach in higher education. It is alarming to see that students seem to want more, without being sure about what is that they want from the university. This, if left unmanaged, it is likely to lead to decreasing student satisfaction, primarily because universities will be unable to please the increasing student demands, and impact educational quality by decreasing student engagement.

Many partner institution students argued that higher education institutions should be treating students as customers and aim to increase their satisfaction as any other service provider is expected to do. For example, Student P7 commented:

> *"Today there is much on the news about higher education institutions and their inability to offer good services to students – at least in Greece. I think that higher education institutions need to run like businesses which provide services to customers. Since I am paying fees I want to receive good services for this money."*

Students from both student groups show awareness of the link between fees and returns in higher education. This reflects the view of quality in higher education as involving value for money, which according to Harvey (2007) is based on the view of quality in terms of return of investment.

The 'value for money' view of quality in higher education has links with the view of 'student as customer' which has been discussed in the literature review, and has been embraced by most universities. According to the advocates of the customer model in higher education, including the government, particularly in the UK, students are rational individuals who know what they want, thus their opinions should be taken into account. However, from the evidence of this research it is clear that students, irrespective of their locations, are immature as customers and are making decisions about their education merely on an instrumental manner and by focusing on the final product.

The findings of the interviews support the substantial criticism and scepticism about the applicability of a customer model in higher education[116] where the teacher does

[116] This goes as far back as Socrates' view of the problematic financial relationship between the students and the teacher. Socrates, and later John Stuart Mill, took the view that the relationship between the teacher and the student is compromised when money is exchanged for education provided (Molesworth et al., 2010).

not pursue the intellectual challenge of the students and instead attempts to please them. Also the critics of the customer model consider that the universities have lost their autonomy and role as knowledge producers and have been transformed into commercial entities which are focused on satisfying their customers.

Tricker (2003) reflects on this debate, mentioning that there has been a shift in the model of higher education following the increased financial contribution of students and the increased competition between higher education providers. He also argues that, irrespective of the view one takes in the debate about student as customer, it should be acknowledged that there has been a change from a supplier based model, which was based on a ‘take it or leave it’ perception, to a model which focuses on the student as a customer of a service.

During the interviews, many students from both groups mentioned elements of value for money and return on investment, and implied an awareness of considering their relationship with the university as a business transaction. The students in both groups were mainly concerned about the obligations of the higher education provider to them, showing an expectation of a more passive role in the actual higher education provision process. For example, Student U2 mentioned,

> “*I think that an indicator of quality in higher education is the successful progression of the students during the programme… the more fees students pay the more support universities will need to provide to students.”*

Student P5 said,

> *“the money I pay now at the college [partner institution] is too much… so for me high quality would be to get the most out of it. I am not saying that I want to buy my degree but I am expecting to get more than the students who study in the public universities.”*

The above examples reflect previous research by James and Beckett (2006), who argue that the shift towards a student as customer model has not only affected the management of quality in higher education but has also altered the expectations of students. The changing expectations of students include a tendency to equate value for money with contact time and with pass rates. Increasingly, students view the university as a business transaction, as research has showed that 75% of a sample of 20,000 undergraduate students see their participation in higher education as a way to improve their career prospects (Molesworth et al., 2010).

Partner institution students are also affected by the public debate and economic developments around the inefficiency of the public sector in Greece. This creates a drive for accountability of public funds and towards equating the payment of fees with the rights of students to ask for more. It is also interesting, and indicative of the impact of marketisation in higher education, that partner institution students consider something which is provided for free as being of no value. For example, Student P6 said,

> *"Now I am studying in a private organisation and I am able to see the difference in comparison with a Greek public university where my friends study ... many associate fees with the right to ask for more, while if education was provided free of charge then there should not be much of a control. I think this is wrong because by one way or another even if it is a public university, the student pays fees through the taxes paid by the family … we saw what has happened with the Greek debt problem now. This is an indication that nothing is free. So why not provide good education for the money spent?"*

The above relates to 'value for money' and specifically to accountability. As Harvey (2007) argues, at the heart of the view of quality as value for money is the idea of the accountability of public services, which includes higher education. However, in the case of the partner institution students, there is a link between the efficiency of the domestic national public sector and higher education system, with importance placed by students on value for money as a means for accountability. Also, as shown by the extract above, partner institution students remain unaware of the transformative nature of higher education. Partner institution students as customers seem to be rather immature, something which appears to be common with university students, particularly in the way in which they conceptualise themselves in the educational process.

Overall, from the above discussion it is also clear that students have formed a customer orientated perception of quality in higher education. This customer mentality of students penetrates national borders and is present in both parts of the TNHE: the university and the partner institution. However, the type of institution (private vs. public) does play a role in the interpretation of their ‘customer’ identity by students. Students at the partner institution consider that they ought to receive a higher level of service quality in comparison to students who study at a public institution. It is also clear that there is a link between the level of financial contribution of students towards the payment of fees with the intensity of their customer-minded approach. Even within a ‘student as customer’ and ‘quality as value for money’ framework, there are differences in the ways in which student perceptions are formed, and also in the nature of these perceptions. These differences derive from the influence of contextual factors which are unique in each TNHE setting. Thus, it is again verified that the applicability of a retrospective customer model would be problematic in a TNHE context.

7.2.5 Summary of interview analysis and discussion

As summarised in Table 7.12 below, both student groups discussed similar components as being necessary for the provision of high quality higher education.

Both student groups consider the facilities as important components of quality in higher education. University students place more emphasis on the size and diversity of facilities, while partner institution students concentrate on their functionality.

Both student groups consider as important the teaching quality and the ability of lecturers to provide good quality and efficient teaching. University students consider a necessary element of teaching to be the ability of lecturers to provide an international perspective, while for partner institution students it is the ability of academics to convey new knowledge. The communication skills of the teaching staff are equally important for both student groups.

The majority of both student groups mentioned that high quality higher education is achieved via the provision of a higher education programme whose content is linked with employment prospects. Location of delivery seems to be irrelevant for the importance of the link between the programme content and employability.

Both student groups showed a tendency to link quality provision with fees paid. Overall, students from both groups mentioned an element of ‘value for money’ in describing a situation of high quality in higher education.

Table 7.12: Summary of student perceptions of the components of quality in higher education

<table>
<tr><th></th><th>University students</th><th>Partner institution students</th></tr>
<tr><td>Modern facilities & flexible timetable</td><td>Size, diversity (university students)</td><td>Functionality of facilities (partner institution students)</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Standards of teaching & knowledgeable lecturers</td><td>Internationalised context</td><td>Transmission teaching is important</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Up-to-date knowledge</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Lecturers’ communication skills</td></tr>
<tr><td>Programme content relevance to graduate employability</td><td colspan="2">The programme content should be updated to meet the changing demands of businesses
Programme appropriateness means matching with employment market demands</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">Value for money</td><td colspan="2">There is a link between the financial contribution of students to fees with demanded returns from higher education</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">More for less</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Students should be treated as customers (both student groups, more intense in partner institution students)</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Private higher education providers should offer higher quality than the public universities</td></tr>
</table>

7.3 Summary of chapter and ramifications for the applicability of the retrospective customer model

The findings about the perceptions of students indicate that student perceptions have been influenced by the contextual developments in the higher education sector, which are articulated with a strong emphasis on employability and the connection of the programme with the demands from businesses. Also, students appear to hold a perception of quality as 'value for money' which is explained as a desire for 'more for less' and for them to be treated as customers. There is evidence to support that students in private providers hold higher demands for the provision of quality in the context of 'value for money'.

At the same time there are important differences, particularly in regard to the perceptions of teaching and learning standards. Partner institution students, influenced by their previous education experience, consider transmission teaching as necessary for the provision of good quality higher education. This has significant ramifications for the applicability of a 'home' quality management model. The university's teaching and learning approach requires students to adopt a 'deep learning' approach and programme content and delivery is structured around this. If a retrospective quality management approach is adopted, without proactive management of partner institution students' perceptions, the learning approach that partner institution students will adopt would not be that required to produce the expected outcomes. Instead, in this case it is justified to adopt a prospective management of partner institution perceptions around teaching and learning in order to ensure that they adopt the appropriate learning approach which leads to the desired educational and service quality outcomes.

From the findings of this research it is evident that the differences in the level and nature of student perceptions about quality impose significant limitations on the applicability of the retrospective customer model for the management of quality in TNHE. Higher student perceptions by partner institution students will result a probable gap between the expected and the actual (perceived) level of service. This will lead to poor student satisfaction rates which will then impact the educational process (i.e. demotivation, disengagement with teaching and learning activities, withdrawal from the programme). Also, the difference in how students perceive the meaning of ‘high quality higher education’ and its components will have a direct impact on educational quality. In a retrospective customer model, where the expectations and perceptions of students are left unmanaged, inappropriate perceptions will lead to the adoption of a learning approach which is not appropriate for the realisation of the desired educational outcomes. This, in turn, will affect student satisfaction, leading to problems in assuring equal service quality standards, or the so-called student experience.

Clearly, from the evidence of this research, students seem to share a common customer identity, which, however, impacts differently their perceptions about what constitutes quality in higher education. This alone is something that justifies the adoption of a prospective management model, taking into consideration the importance of student perceptions on both the educational (Nijhuis, 2006) and service quality (Telford & Masson, 2005) outcomes.

Chapter 8 – Student perceptions of transnational higher education partnerships

8.0 Introduction

This chapter will present a discussion of the data from the section of the personal interviews which aimed to provide evidence for one of the research objectives of this thesis; Objective 2 was to provide an evaluation of TNHEPs from a student's perspective by answering Research Question 4: How do students, both from the university and the transnational partner institution, evaluate Transnational Higher Education Partnerships?

Specifically the students' opinion of the comparability of the learning experience in TNHE provision was explored. Students were asked to consider the student's learning experience in a case where a higher education programme is offered in another country by a local partner of the awarding institution/university. Students were asked to identify possible advantages and disadvantages of TNHEPs and specifically comment upon the student experience.

The aim was to ascertain how students perceive TNHE and identify specific advantages and disadvantages, positive and negative issues. This is a departure from previous attempts to evaluate TNHE and TNHE partnerships. So far, the evaluation of TNHE partnerships has been mostly an issue of quality assurance reviews by universities and external bodies (e.g. UNESCO, OECD) as well as part of the wider consideration of international developments in the area of the free trade of services (GATS). However, the importance of gaining a 'student perceptive' in the quality of TNHE has been identified in a number of studies and recent publications, (Cremonini et al., 2012; Vincent-Lancrin & Pfotenhauer, 2012; IIEP-UNESCO, 2011). In an earlier report, published by the European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), it was concluded as being the responsibility of all parties (countries) involved in TNHE to conduct an "analysis of the profile, expectations, and preferences of transnational education students" (Campbell & Van der Wende, 2000, p. 27). Thus, in this research project, the focus was on the evaluation of TNHE partnerships from a participant (student) perspective. This forms an important part of the unique contribution to knowledge of this research project in terms of the scientific discussion and research evidence in the area of TNHE and higher education quality management.

8.1 Student perceptions about TNHEPs *(advantages/positive issues)*

Overall, university students perceive the idea of offshore delivery positively. They view TNHEPs as an opportunity to live in another country as part of their degree programme, study within a different cultural context and gain a global perspective. It is interesting that most of the university students responded to this section's question, as they were students potentially studying at one of the TNHEPs. It is interesting because the university students considered the option of studying in a TNHEP as being one of the options available to them. This shows that the students of a traditional source (exporting country) like the UK still consider TNHE as one of their higher education study options. Partner institution students evaluated TNHE from a user perspective as they are already participating in it. Their views are discussed and evaluated within that context.

8.1.1 University students: TNHEPs offer superior learning experience due to better tutorial support

The university students thought that it was possible to have the same learning experience when studying at a collaborative partner of the university. Some students mentioned that the learning experience could be even superior to the one provided at the university for international students. During the interviews, university students argued that partner institutions were better placed to support students' learning. They felt that the partner institutions would be able to respond quicker than the university to issues like extra tutorial support and changes in the timetable. For example, Student U5 said, "*I think the learning experience can be the same, if not better … maybe in a smaller institution students receive better support from their tutors".* Also Student U2 mentioned, *"I think that* *partners of the university will be able to be more flexible thus responding faster to student needs".*

The flexibility of a small educational provider such as the partner institution is appreciated by students as an advantage which allows the provision of a superior learning experience. The university students consider smaller educational providers as able to offer better tutorial support to their students. Thus, university students manifest a perception that institutional size affects the quality of educational provision.

Additionally, university students think that there will be academic staff at the local partner institution who will be able to understand the specific demands of local students. This is difficult for academics in the UK, where students from other countries are summarised under the category 'international students'. For example, Student U9 said, *"local academics are more likely to know and understand the international students. If these students were to come to the UK they would have to adjust and most likely would face difficulties".*

University students think that the local partner will have academics capable of understanding more easily what local students want. University students mentioned this primarily because the academics at the local partner institution speak the same language as the local students. Previous research (East, 2001; Guo & Chase, 2011) has identified that international students have difficulties in adjusting to the new living and learning environment when they go abroad. In this case, international students are those students who study at the local institution who, instead of moving abroad have chosen to study at a TNHEP. In source countries such as the UK, foreign students are summarised under the category 'international students' and dealt with as a common group. This reduces the effectiveness of pastoral and tutorial support provided.

Overall, the university students reflected upon their experience of the difficulties international students face when in the university. Students at the university consider TNHEPs as a means to achieve better support of foreign students' learning and teaching process.

8.1.2 University students: TNHE promotes international knowledge, understanding, and employability

Many university students were positive about the possibility of an exchange or study abroad option through the TNHEPs of the university.

For university students there are noticeably more advantages to studying on a programme offered transnationally than studying on a 'traditional' programme in a university campus setting: international exposure, ability to understand different cultures, ability to learn more things, and strong background for seeking employment at international level are the advantages most frequently reported by university students. These findings reflect similar findings by Findlay et al. (2010). For example, Student U5 said,

> *"It would be very interesting if we had the option to complete part of the programme in one of these partners of the university. … this possibility is very interesting as it will enable me to gather knowledge that could be useful at international level."*

Another example was Student U9, who mentioned,

> *"I do not know if we have the option to go abroad for a year or a semester. But if this was available I would definitely go. I know that the university has some partnerships on countries where the weather is much better than in the UK and the local culture is unique. This will enable me to study in a different environment and gain some international exposure."*

University Student U1 said,

> *"It would be great to be able to study in a partner of the university from another European country. This will allow me to learn other cultures and languages."*

Overall, it was evident from the interviews that all of the university students were open to the idea of working internationally and/or having international programmes offered at 'home'. One interpretation of this is that UK students are open to the internationalisation of the economy and higher education. This deviates from the findings of Findlay et al. (2010) which reveal that, despite the increase of UK student mobility between 1975 and 2005 - according to data from OECD, UK students studying abroad have risen from 16,866 to 22,405 – the percentage of UK students abroad remains low and is equivalent to about 1.7% of the total student population. Also, as Brooks and Waters (2011) explain, UK students have been reluctant to move abroad, specifically to mainland Europe. Thus, the findings of this thesis show a different perception of students in the UK about international mobility.

8.1.3 Partner institution students: TNHE is a way to overcome access barriers to higher education and gain access to a reputable higher education system

Partner institution students see TNHE as a means to enter higher education and overcome the problems of higher education access inherent in the national/domestic (Greek in their case) system. For example, Student P8 said

> *"Through this kind of partnership students are able now to study in top universities without spending time to prepare for the National examinations. The Greek system for entry to Greek public universities is frustrating for students and families."*

Partner institution students identify TNHE as a way to overcome the shortcomings of the Greek higher education system. That is to say, entry to the Greek HEIs is gained by achieving high grades in a nationwide, written examination. This system has been heavily criticised as focusing on limiting the growing number of young Greeks who want to enter higher education (Psacharopoulos & Tassoulas, 2004). Also this examination system has been criticised as one that reproduces inequalities, as Sianou-Kyrgiou (2010, p. 38) comments: "… this mechanism [the university entrance examination] simply reproduces and legitimises existing inequalities through the students' performance and choices".

Also the majority of the partner institution students viewed TNHE as a way to access a more efficient higher education system, which they believe is superior to the Greek one and also is more reputable in the perception of the local society. For example, Student P1 said, " *I consider as the main advantage of this kind of partnership the fact I was able to enter the British higher education system, which is considered as being one of the best in the world, without leaving Greece."*

Also, Student P3 said,

"using myself as an example, I was able to enter into the higher education programme I wanted to study since I was a kid offered by one of the best universities in Europe without moving abroad. Usually in Greece even if you manage to gain access to higher education it is very likely that you will get a place in a programme which is completely irrelevant to what you wanted to study in the first place."

The Greek higher education system has long-standing problems which have created a negative perception of its reputation. Psacharopoulos (2003) argues that the element of access does not only concern the number of places in the Greek public universities (i.e. ability to secure a place in a university) but also affects qualitative issues such as programme choice and quality of provision. For example, in Greece, many students, even when they do gain access to a public HEI, are not certain that they will get a place on the programme they selected as first choice (Psacharopoulos, 2003; Saiti & Prokopiadou, 2008). Research (ICAP, 2010; Dimitropoulos, 2006; Kerdis & Sfatos, 1998) has shown that Greek students and Greek society evaluate the universities of western European higher education systems such as those of the UK, Germany, France and Italy as more reputable.

From the above discussion, one could argue that TNHE allows students in receiving countries to overcome problems of access to domestic national higher education. Previous publications about TNHE have also discussed the role of TNHEPs as a means to remove entry barriers to higher education (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007; OECD, 2006).

8.1.4 Partner institution students: TNHE allows students to study with reduced economic cost and emotional, social, and cultural distress

Reflecting on the previous point about the view of access to higher education, students were asked to identify specific factors which explain the attractiveness of TNHE to students in receiving countries. The reduced financial cost for students and their families was the issue that most frequently occurred when explaining the attractiveness of TNHE. One example is Student P1, who said,

> *"If I had gone to the UK to attend the same programme at the campus of the university I would have paid almost double the amount of money I pay now at the partner institution of the university."*

Some partner institution students considered TNHE as more economical than the higher education provision of the public sector. For example, Student P4 said,

> *"The living expenses away from family are high and I cannot afford it. Even if I had gone to a Greek public HEI, where there are no fees for attending, the living expenses would have been comparable to those required for studying abroad."*

Also, partner institution students mentioned that students may prefer TNHE because they would encounter less emotional distress in comparison to going abroad to other counties for their undergraduate and/or postgraduate studies. For example, Student P2 mentioned,

> *"I have friends who have gone to the UK to study at the university. They had serious problems adapting to the different culture, and living away from their family and friends. Now, with this kind of partnership [TNE] students are able to stay at home while studying at a foreign university."*

Partner institution students think that TNHE is advantageous for students in receiving countries because it allows them access to higher education at lower cost and eliminates the emotional and cultural distress faced by students who go abroad to continue their studies.

Previous research by Varghese (2011) shows that international student mobility, both in terms of student numbers and of destination, is influenced by the cost of education, ideological affinity, the perceived academic superiority of the universities in the destination country, language proficiency, the acquisition of foreign language and culture, employment opportunities, the income level in the source countries and visa procedures.

It can be argued, therefore, that students in receiving countries consider TNHE as a means which allows entry to higher education at reduced financial, social, and cultural costs, and in that sense is an alternative choice to international student mobility.

8.1.5 Partner institution students: In TNHEPs there is better academic support & communication with teaching staff

Students at the partner institution mentioned that the learning experience can be superior to that of the university in some respects. They mentioned that closer relations with the academic staff, common language, and more frequent support by tutors can outweigh the lack of facilities or other tangible resources. For example, Student P1 mentioned,

> "*from my experience at the college I know that here the tutors are much closer to the students and are willing to provide support in a more informal pattern than tutors at the university do.*"

Additionally, Student P2 said,

> "*I think that the learning experience at the partner institution is better than it is at the university … mainly because students are able to contact tutors more easily. Additionally, at the college where I am studying now, most of the academics would speak the local language, something which helps a lot when communicating problems.*"

Some students mentioned that the teaching and learning experience someone could get in a TNHEP is comparable to that at the main campus of the university. Also, they considered that the support a student could get is superior, because of the smaller scale of the organisation. One example of this is Student P10, who said,

> *"I see no difference between what my friends who study in the UK are getting in terms of teaching and learning. They study at a much larger campus with a large library and halls of residence, but I think that I am in a better position because I am able to communicate more easily with my tutors."*

The partner institution students think that TNHEPs allow students in receiving countries to get better support because of the smaller size of the receiving institution and also because of the ability of academics and students to communicate in a common language. However, it should be noted that this perceived superiority is subject to the specific elements and factors that are present in the case study under research.

8.2 Student perceptions about TNHEPs *(disadvantages/negative issues)*

University students identified a number of potential problems/disadvantages for TNHEPs. These relate to the standards of academic staff, equivalence of admission criteria and the standards of the facilities.

8.2.1 University students: possible problems caused by inadequate academic staff and different language of delivery

The university students identified as sources of possible problems for TNHEPs the lack of appropriately qualified and trained academic staff and the different language of delivery. For example, Student U1 said, *"The ability of staff to deliver this programme maybe will reduce the accurate transfer of the content to the students"*, and Student U8 commented,

> *"I know that the university has specific rules and requirements to appoint academic staff. It could be difficult for an institution in another country to have staff who are similar to the university's."*

Also, Student U4 said,

“It depends if lecturers are themselves from that foreign country where the programme was originally designed. This will probably affect the effectiveness of programme delivery if academic staff do not have appropriate language skills.”

Some university students mentioned the lack of academic staff with research and publication activity and records as possible disadvantages for the teaching and learning experiences at TNHEPs. For example, Student U10 said,

“At the university we have professors who have published many books – in fact we are using some of our professors’ books as textbooks for their modules. I am not sure how this is going to be replicated in another country.”

University students see a possible disadvantage of TNHE in the likelihood that local partner institutions will be recruiting academic staff of a non-comparable profile to the academics of the university. University students consider the different language of delivery as carrying potential risk in the accurate propagation of terms and definitions. This concern of students is in line with the concerns expressed by external organisations such as the QAA (2012) and UNESCO (UNESCO, 2005) about the capability of local institutions in TNHE to provide teaching provision of appropriate standards to students.

8.2.2 University students: Possibility of unequal admission requirements

University students mentioned that TNHEPs should be carefully planned to ensure that students admitted to the partner institutions fulfil the admission criteria that exist at the university. For example, Student U3 said,

“The university should be very careful when establishing this kind of collaboration. The partner institutions, as profit-orientated organisations, may admit students who do not fulfil the entry criteria, just to increase their revenues.”

Also, Student U9 mentioned, *“It was hard for me to get a place at the university. I would not like to see that other people get on the programme with lower criteria”.*

University students emphasise the need for the university to exercise control over the partner institutions' process of admitting students onto their TNHEPs. This is an important decision which directly affects the quality assurance of TNHEPs.

This is something which is central to the guidelines on the collaborative provision of higher education institutions worldwide (UNESCO, 2005; Campbell & Van der Wende, 2000; QAA, 2012). The partner institution is, in most cases, obliged to use the same entry criteria as the source institution. This is specifically relevant in the case of franchise collaborations, as in the case study. There are other forms of cross-border higher education where the authority for admissions to the programme is maintained by the source institution. The degree of authority over admissions is associated with the partner institution's degree awarding powers. For example, Stella and Bhushan (2011) mention that, in franchise agreements, admission criteria are fully controlled and implemented by the awarding institution.

Overall one of the main concerns of the awarding institutions has been the consistent application of student entry criteria (Baskerville et al., 2011; Drew et al., 2008). This is always amongst the core guidelines for the quality assurance of collaborative partnerships and is at the top of the list of issues of concern for quality assurance agencies, like the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AQUA) (Stella & Bhushan, 2011).

8.2.3 University students: TNHEPs may offer inferior facilities compared with the university

Some of the university students are concerned about the ability of the partner institution to provide appropriate facilities, taking into account its size and its financial ability. For example Student U3 said,

> *"Maybe the partner institution will not have the facilities to support the provision of the same learning experience as compared with the university."*

Some university students perceived the delivery through a TNHEP of academic programmes that require extensive investment in resources (i.e. equipment and infrastructure) to be more difficult. One example of this attitude was provided by Student U10:

> *"Sure, in business studies this is not a problem but in other subject areas where the students need to use labs and other special equipment maybe they will not be able to do so in a small organisation."*

8.2.4 Partner institution students: Degrees awarded via TNHEPs are not recognised

The majority of partner institution students mentioned as a great disadvantage/problem of TNHE partnerships the lack of academic and professional rights of recognition. They reflected upon their experience in Greece where the Greek state refuses to recognise degrees obtained through the Greek private colleges that are in partnership with foreign universities. For example, Student P2 said,

> *"I know that my degree will be not recognised by the Greek government bodies. This would create problems if I want to apply for a job in the public sector or if I want to continue r postgraduate studies at a Greek public HEI."*

and Student P3 said,

> *"The Greek government refuses to recognise the degree of franchises of European Universities but this is against that EU law as has been written many times in the newspapers. I do not understand why they do that, but it creates great problems for all [TNHEP] graduates in Greece."*

Also Student P4 said,

> *"After I complete my studies I am planning to apply for a job in the public sector. As things are today I would not be able to do so because the ASEP[117] asks for recognition… I have many friends who are in this position now."*

[117] ASEP stands for Higher Council for Selection of Staff. www.asep.gr

The recognition of degrees is considered as the main disadvantage of TNE in Greece. This is in line with the background discussion of Greek higher education provided in the contextualisation chapter. Greece has refused to comply with various EU directives about the mobility of students and academic staff, including the recognition of employment rights of the graduates from partner institutions of European universities (Pottakis, 2008).

Overall, Greece has been slow in moving towards the reforms needed to comply with the Bologna Agreement process targets (Asderaki, 2009). The concerns of Greek students reflect the protectionist approach of the Greek state about higher education (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007). Additionally, the desire of Greek students to get a job in the public sector in the future reflects the perception of Greek society about the superiority of employment in the public sector (Livanos, 2010). It is interesting to see this emerging despite the recent Greek government announcement, following the recent economic problems, about only recruiting one new member of staff for every five retiring[118].

Overall, the partner institution students have underlined the issue of recognition of the qualifications obtained through TNE. This is aligned with the UNESCO (2005) guidelines, which argue for the assurance that the qualifications are recognised within the national systems of the receiving countries.

8.2.5 Partner institution students: the content of academic programmes delivered through TNHEPs may not be applicable to the local market/economy.

The partner institution students were more cautious about the provision of a foreign programme in their home country. This is despite the fact that they themselves are already studying on such a programme. An example of this is Student P2, who replied,

> *"Studying on a programme which is designed in another country can be problematic. It unlikely that this programme will address the issues of the Greek economy and/or society."*

[118] http://www.tovima.gr/default.asp?pid=2&artid=376097&ct=1&dt=03/01/2011[accessed 27/2/2011]

And Student P8 said,

> *"I have noticed for example in my case that the accounting module we are taught in Year 1 is not reflective of the Greek system. So, I was told that if I wanted to work as an accountant in Greece after my graduation I will have to do some extra courses. This is not good. I can imagine that similar issues can occur in other countries where this kind of partnership exists."*

The partner institution students see difficulties in aligning the programme outcomes with the employability requirements and specifications that exist in the receiving country as a problem of TNHE. The need to contextualise programmes offered though TNHEPs is an issue discussed widely in previous research (Eldridge & Cranston, 2009). However, according to the external quality assurance bodies, there is room for some flexibility in programme content adaptation (Smith, 2010), which is something that shows an incompatibility between the needs of the local market and the policy guidelines.

As discussed in previous chapters, the issue of employability has been high on the agenda of both this research and the contemporary public debate about the role of higher education. Specifically in the UK, the CBI and BIS have published their views about their perception of the role of higher education institutions in shaping tomorrow's employees (CBI, 2010; BIS, 2009). Additionally, there has been an on-going debate among scholars about the changes and the responsiveness of higher education institutions in these calls for employability enhancement (Jameson et al., 2011; Lee, 2010; Yorke, 2006). On the students' side, there is an on-going concern about their future employability prospects. As was identified earlier in this chapter and in the survey analysis chapter, students place employability at the top of their expectations from higher education.

From this discussion we can see that a way to increase employability in the TNHE context is by adapting the content of academic programmes to the demands of the local (importing country) employment market.

8.2.6 Partner institution students: the local provider may not have the ability to provide a culturally diverse environment comparable to the university's.

The partner institution students argued that, owing to the small number of students at the local provider, the teaching and learning and the socialising experience for the student may not be as culturally diverse as it would have been at the university. For example, Student P9 said,

> *"it is very likely that in the local institution there would be students only from the local community. This will not allow interacting inside and outside the classroom with people from other countries."*

Another example is Student P10, who mentioned,

> *"I can tell from my experience at the college now where I am studying which people I know from high school. This is good but at the same time can be a disadvantage because I do not get to know people from other countries. So, it may be the same for students who study in similar colleges around the world."*

The partner institution students show an awareness of the multicultural environment that exists in the university. They see the homogeneity of the student population in the local provider as a possible disadvantage in terms of their exposure to different cultures and ways of thinking. This coincides with the findings of previous research about the pull factors of international student mobility. For example, Gu (2009) has found that cultural experience is one of the pull factors at individual (student) level for international student mobility. Thus, the students in the receiving country, at least in this research setting, see the lack of a multicultural environment as a possible problem, something which can be a discouraging factor when choosing whether to study at a TNHEP.

8.3 Summary of Chapter 8

As summarised in Table 8.1 below, both student groups see many, however dissimilar, positive and negative issues in TNHE delivery.

For the university students, TNHEPs provide a valuable way to gain international exposure and learn foreign languages, while for students at the partner institution, it is a way to gain access to higher education. Primarily for partner institution students, TNHE is a way to overcome the shortcomings of the national higher education system and for university students it is seen as a way to internationalise their knowledge base.

This can be seen to reflect views about internationalisation at home and internationalisation abroad. Recent research has shown similar trends of UK 'home' students preferring a more 'internationalised' mode for their studies and curriculum. What is interesting from the findings of this research, and also from the findings of other research, is that 'home' students consider TNHEPs to be a means to achieve this international exposure and gain understanding and knowledge of other cultures and languages. This marks a shift from the previous, and relatively recent, perception that students in source countries, the UK in this case, are not keen to mobilise or to use the existing TNHEPs of the 'home' institution. This also marks a changing role for TNHEPs which can lead to a different appreciation within the academic community about their standing as education providers. As has been discussed previously, TNHEPs are often viewed with scepticism by academics, higher education policy makers and senior managers in source countries. This scepticism derives from the for-profit nature of the local partners as well as from financial motives behind the establishment of the TNHEPs. The view of students in source countries about TNHEPs as a means to acquire 'international' exposure provides an academic rationale behind the establishment, operation and expansion of TNHE.

For partner institution students, TNHEPs are seen as a way to achieve the same outcomes as being an international student but without moving abroad. This is also relevant to issues around internationalisation in higher education. More specifically, this falls into the discussion about the effects of student mobility, which in the past 30 years has been speedily increasing. One of the main issues is the increased economic outflow from the source countries of international students to the destination countries where the HEI are located. This worsens the balance of payments of international student source countries, as large funds are diverted to importing countries in the form of student fees and living costs. The existence of TNHEPs can slow down this increased mobility of international students and consequently reduce the outflow of funds. Also, the mobility of international students relates to 'brain-drain' in the source countries. Previous research has found that a notable portion of international students do not return to their home countries. This creates a deficit of 'human capital' for the exporting countries which in turn is linked to problems of slower economic development. From the findings of this research, it is clear that TNHEPs act as a major factor which dissuades students from moving to another country. Thus it can be argued that TNHEPs contribute to reversing the 'brain-drain' trend in exporting countries.

Both student groups show awareness of the possible problems of TNHE. It is interesting that many of the issues raised by the students are in line with the issues identified by external bodies that have participated in the public debate about the quality assurance of TNHE. The concerns of university students have been about the academic staff standards and profile along with the application by the partner institution of equal criteria and standards to those of the university's admission process. This is interesting because it reflects the concerns expressed by international organisations such as UNESCO and quality assurance agencies, such as QAA and AQUA.

Table 8.1: Students' evaluation of TNHE and TNHEPs

<table>
<tr><th>University students</th><th>Partner Institution students</th></tr>
<tr><td>(+) Advantages
TNHEPs may offer superior learning experience due to better tutorial support
○ Local providers, as smaller institutions, can possibly provide better tutorial support to their students.
○ Academic staff at partner institutions are able to understand and address the educational needs of local students.

TNHE promotes international knowledge, understanding, employability
○ Students from countries like the UK, which have been traditional destinations of international students, can use transnational higher education partnerships to gain international exposure.
○ Transnational higher education partnerships offer an opportunity to learn, understand and interact with other cultures.
○ Studying at transnational higher education partners is a way to learn other languages.
○ There are distinctively more advantages for students to study in a programme offered transnationally than a programme delivered on the main campus.</td><td>(+) Advantages
TNHE is a way to overcome access barriers to higher education and gain access to a reputable higher education system
○ TNHEPs allow students to gain access to higher education and overcome access problems and other inefficiencies of the domestic higher education system.
○ Partner institution students see TNHE as a gateway to enter a more reputable HEI and higher education system than the domestic one.

TNHE allows students to study with reduced economic cost and emotional, social, and cultural distress
○ TNHE allows students to stay at home avoiding the extra costs and the emotional distress created when going abroad.

Better academic support and communication with academic staff
○ In smaller organisations the academic staff are more willing to help and can be contacted more easily.
○ Ability to communicate with tutors in the same language.</td></tr>
<tr><td>(-) Problems/Issues
Adequacy of academic staff and different language of delivery
○ Possible problems in the ability of the local provider to recruit academic staff of comparable profile to the academics of the university.
○ Ability to achieve effective academic delivery in a different language.

Possibility of unequal/inappropriate admission requirements
○ Admission requirements may not be the same between the local partner and the university. This would be problematic for maintaining the quality standards.

TNHEPs may offer inferior facilities compared to these of the University
○ Small private organisations may not have the financial resources to provide students with the appropriate facilities required for the provision of a learning experience equal to that of the university</td><td>(-) Problems/Issues
Degree Recognition
○ Greek state refuses to recognise degrees obtained after studying at TNHEPs. This might reflect similar possible problems for TNHEP graduates in other countries in having their degree recognised domestically.

The content of academic programmes delivered through TNHEPs may not be applicable to the local market/economy
○ Problems around the appropriateness of the programme and its applicability to the local economy/market issues and the different cultural and societal background.

Less culturally diverse environment at the local partner
○ Owing to the small scale and homogeneity of the student body in the local provider, there may be a less culturally diverse learning and socialising environment for students.</td></tr>
</table>

Chapter 9 – Conclusions

9.0 Introduction

This final chapter of the thesis will present the conclusions of the research. The conclusions are presented in accordance with the research objectives and research questions. This aims to increase the effectiveness of reading this thesis by allowing the reader to grasp how the research inquiry has answered the research questions and fulfilled the research purpose. The findings from Research Objectives 1 and 2 are used to inform the conclusion for Research Objectives 3 and 4.

In Research Objective 3 (section 9.3), I reflect on the ramifications of the findings of this research for the applicability of the retrospective customer model in TNHE while in Research Objective 4 (section 9.4), I propose a prospective model for the management of quality in TNHE. These elements form the contribution of this thesis to the available knowledge in the field of TNHE and quality management. The contribution to knowledge of this thesis is outlined in a separate section, followed by a section about recommendations for further research.

9.1 Research Objective 1: to explore and explain the student expectations and perceptions of quality in higher education in the two groups who are studying on the same programme but at different delivery locations.

The first objective of the research included the consideration of student expectations and perceptions across the university and the partner institution. This included the exploration of the factors that affected the choice of students for the selection of higher education institution and programme (Research Question 1, see Section 9.1.1). Also, Objective 1 included the exploration and comparison of student expectations and perceptions about quality in in higher education (Research Question 2, see Section 9.1.2) and particularly about the elements they consider as necessary for the provision of high quality higher education (Research Question 3, Section 9.1.3).

9.1.1 Research Question 1: What are the factors that influence the choice of programme and higher education institution of students who study on the same programme but at different delivery locations - the university and the transnational partner - and how do they compare?

The findings of this thesis are, partly, in line with the findings of existing research (Shekarchizadeh et al., 2011; Moorman, 2011; Beljulji et al., 2011), specifically about the influence of employability on students' choice of higher education institution and programme. It has been found that students, irrespective of their location, share similar concerns about employability that influence their decisions about higher education institutions and higher education programmes. Expectations around competitive advantage in the employment market after graduation are driving the decision-making process of students, irrespective of their location. This is in line with the findings of existing research which reveals employability as one of the major factors influencing students' decision-making globally.

Both student groups are influenced by the reputation of the higher education institution. However, they perceive reputation differently. University students relate reputation strongly with the rankings, whereas partner institution students consider word of mouth and the perception of their local communities. It has been found that students in the UK primarily use rankings as a means to identify the reputation of a higher education institution and higher education programme. Students in the partner institution form a perception about the reputation of the higher education institutions primarily through: 1) previous students who are in the local communities or family, and 2) the perception of the local communities or the society about the reputation of the higher education institution. For partner institution students, the reputation is linked with their aspiration for higher employability prospects after graduation.

University students are influenced significantly by the tangible elements of the provision and look to find facilities beyond the standard for teaching and learning purposes. University students are influenced by the existence of socialising and recreational facilities. In contrast, partner institution students are not influenced by tangibles.

Similarly, university students consider the location of the higher education institution as very important. This reflects their expectations for social life, entertainment and proximity to the family home for occasional visits.

Partner institution students are influenced by factors that concern the organisation and the efficient operation of the teaching provision. Class size is one of the major factors of influence for partner institution students. This reflects on their experience of inefficiencies in the national public higher education system. In Greek higher education institutions, large classes have been identified as a source of problems in quality and educational attainment.

For partner institution students, the entry system is a major factor of influence. This reflects the problems of the national system for entry to public higher education institutions. There is a link between the pros and cons of the national domestic higher education system, including the entry system, and the choice of the student to study within transnational higher education provision.

A great difference in the factors affecting student choice between the two student groups of the case study was the influence of family. In Greece, family and relatives play an important role before, during and after the studies. In contrast, in the UK it appears that family plays a less important role in the decision-making of students as well as during the course of their studies.

The implications from these similarities and differences are several and touch upon various areas. In terms of marketing, higher education institutions which aim to operate in a transnational higher education environment and/or collaborate with a partner institution for offshore delivery should take into account the role of family and local communities. As found in this research, family and local communities play the major role in the decision-making process in some countries. This could mean a need to diversify marketing campaigns to target these groups instead of students.

However, more important are the implications of these findings for the management of quality in a transnational higher education context. Students appear to be influenced by different factors and expect to find different elements at the higher education institution. The factors of influence and what they would expect depend upon the social and cultural dynamics that exist in each country. Also, these would depend upon the situation of the domestic higher education system, which would act either as a benchmark for standards or as an example to avoid. Thus, student satisfaction would be relevant to the above criteria which are expected to vary between countries. Consequently, it would be problematic to attempt to apply a common quality management model to address student satisfaction in different locations of delivery.

9.1.2 Research Question 2: what are the student expectations and perceptions of two student groups who are studying on the same programme but at different delivery locations – the university and the transnational partner - and how do they compare?

The statistical analysis revealed that students who study on the same programme but at different locations of delivery have different expectations and perceptions. Also the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data showed that students share some common expectations, which are primarily linked with employment prospects after graduation.

The most notable differences in student expectations are in teaching and learning, which lie at the core of the educational provision. It was found that students in different locations of delivery have different expectations about the teaching style, assessment, and tutorial support. This difference is linked to the students' previous educational experience. Previous educational experience, the different education systems and the teaching and learning approaches derived from these systems largely affect the formation of students' expectations.

The university students expect responsive and organised teaching and learning provision. Thus they look for easier access to teaching staff and better organisation of teaching timetables. Also, they expect to have good facilities, organised classes and good communication with academic staff. Their expectations are shaped by word of mouth from previous students (in general) who appear to claim that the level of support and the style of communication in higher education institutions in the UK are less responsive and personal respectively. The interpretation of this is twofold: first that university students expect a rather basic and conventional level and style of teaching and support and second that there seems to be an issue with current teaching and support in UK higher education.

The partner institution students expect a teaching style which reflects their previous educational experience from their secondary education in Greece. Despite them showing awareness of the requirements and standards of the foreign education system and the awarding institution, partner institution students expect to be taught through an instructional teaching style in which the student has a passive role in the class during teaching. The partner students' previous experience in secondary education in Greece inevitably leads to an expectation of a directed and highly structured learning method which is dominated by memorisation and reproduction of information.

Also, there appears to be a direct link between the organisational characteristics of the education provider and the nature and intensity of student expectations about teaching and support. The smaller the size of the education provider, the higher the expectations of students around teaching and tutorial support. Similarly, it was found that in private for-profit education providers, the student expectations for teaching and tutorial support will be more intense.

From the above it can be concluded that student expectations about teaching and tutorial support vary considerably between students who study on the same programme but at different geographical locations of delivery. The variation in the expectation will be a result of the previous educational experience of students and the organisational characteristics of the education provider.

Both student groups share strong expectations about employability. It is striking that students, irrespective of their location, and despite the early stage in their studies, explicitly expressed expectations about employability after graduation. There was a rather increased focus, by both student groups, on the after-graduation period instead of the educational journey towards that point. University students mentioned specific elements of the programme as relevant to their future career aspirations and they expected to acquire an international dimension through the material covered inside the class. Partner institution students expect their degree to provide them with a competitive advantage in the employment market, as it is considered superior to the degrees awarded by Greek higher education institutions.

9.1.3 Research Question 3: What elements do students consider to be important for the provision of high quality higher education?

Students, irrespective of their location, consider quality in higher education to be dependent on similar elements which, primarily, have to do with teaching and learning. Both student groups consider the standards of teaching and the academic staff as the key components of quality in higher education. This is in line with existing research (Thomas & Galambos, 2004; Kelso, 2008; Clark & Hall, 2010) which shows that students, in various countries and education environments, place great importance on the core elements of the education process, that is, teaching and learning, as a means to high quality education.

For university students, quality in teaching means the ability of academic staff to provide an international dimension to the material/course. This reflects on an increasing aspiration, which has been documented in this thesis, for UK students to pursue careers internationally. Also, university students considered as an important element of quality the openness and good communication of academic staff.

For partner institution students, quality of teaching meant an extremely instructional teaching style. Also, they considered the existence of appropriate academic staff as necessary for high quality education provision in the sense of providing detailed lecture notes and personal guidance beyond the standard scheduled classes. Partner institution students' perception of quality in higher education is largely affected by their previous educational experience.

Both student groups consider the programme content and its link with employment prospects as one of the key components of quality. Students consider as appropriate programme content which leads to higher employability, rather than judging it on the basis of its academic value. Irrespective of their location, students share common perceptions about the increased contribution of programme content, and its link with employability, to the quality of higher education.

It seems that career aspirations which reflect the economic environment, along with previous educational experience, are shaping students' perceptions about quality in higher education. There are deviations between the two groups as to what students consider as appropriate in regards to teaching, learning, support and academic staff. Thus, the alignment of student expectations using a common model of quality would be rather problematic. Even if students have the same expectations, the way in which they perceive the different elements that constitute quality in higher education would affect their perception of the quality in the current education experience.

Students in both locations share the view that quality in higher education should reflect the fees paid. Thus, students, irrespective of their location, embrace a 'value for money' view of quality which is linked with the 'student as customer' model. Both student groups have identified a relationship between their financial contribution to the payment of fees and the standards of quality they require. Students appear to be informed about the shift in higher education to becoming a customer focused system, thus they expect to be treated as customers. This also reflects a view of education as a business transaction, where students require more contribution and obligations by higher education institutions and a more passive role for themselves. This shows that students' perceptions about quality in higher education, as well as about the role of higher education institutions, are altered by the student as customer model. Also, a link was found to exist between the financial contribution of students towards the payment of their fees and the intensity of the customer minded approach. The higher their contribution to the payment of fees, the more they view themselves as customers.

The view of students of quality as 'value for money' reflected an expectation of more contact time and personal support. This was more intense in the partner institution students and was due to the fact they attended a private for-profit education institution. As mentioned earlier, there is a link between the institutional characteristics of the education provider and the intensity of students' requirement to be treated as customers.

The perception of partner institution students about quality in higher education is also affected by the poor quality of the domestic Greek higher education system. The Greek higher education system has serious and long-standing problems of accountability which have influenced the perceptions of partner institution students towards quality in higher education. Partner institution students' view of quality as value for money includes a substantial drive for accountability which derives from the negative example of the domestic higher education system. Thus, the quality standards of the domestic higher education system would affect the perception of students about the meaning of, and essential elements for, quality in higher education.

9.2 Research Objective 2: provide an evaluation of Transnational Higher Education Partnerships from a student perspective.

Part of the research purpose of this thesis was to provide a 'student perspective' in the evaluation of the role of TNHE as alternative modality of higher education. This carries significant value, not only as part of the findings required to evaluate the applicability of the current quality model in TNHE, but also as a standalone section considering the scarcity of evidence on this issue.

9.2.1 Research Question 4: How do students, both from the university and the transnational partner institution, evaluate Transnational Higher Education Partnerships?

Students, irrespective of their location, consider transnational higher education as an alternative to traditional delivery at the 'home' campus.

For university students, transnational higher education is a means to achieve international exposure and learn about other cultures. Also, university students consider the learning experience at a transnational higher education partner as equivalent, if not superior, to that at the 'home' institution. This reflects their perception that partner institutions in receiving countries are more responsive and flexible in addressing the needs of students. University students evaluate a TNHEP as more appropriate for international students. This is because local academics are able to communicate in the same language with local students and are aware of the culture and demands of the employment market. Overall, university students evaluated transnational higher education partnerships as an alternative option for themselves, to complete a higher education degree and prepare for an international career, and for international students who want to acquire a higher education qualification from a foreign higher education system but wish to avoid problems of language and cultural compatibility.

The concerns expressed by university students are around the profile of academic staff and the language of delivery. The academic staff employed at partner institutions may not be of the same profile as at the 'home' university. This would affect the level of teaching and the overall learning experience of students who study offshore. Also, university students believe that the different language of delivery, despite the benefits in terms of students' minimum required adaptability, has a potential risk around the accurate propagation of terms and definitions.

Finally, but most importantly, university students consider the fact that the partner institution would be, in most cases, a small for-profit organisation as a possible risk for standards and quality. This could diminish the willingness and/or the ability of partner institutions to provide facilities equivalent to those of the university, which are vital for supporting the learning process of students. Also, according to university students, the partner institution may have vested interests in lowering the admission criteria to increase the number of students.

For partner institution students, transnational higher education is a means of overcoming the access barriers in the domestic higher education system. Also, transnational higher education is seen by partner institution students as a means of accessing a superior higher education system to the domestic one. It appears to be most important for partner institution students that transnational higher education partnerships offer access to a reputable foreign higher education system at lower financial, social and emotional costs than studying abroad at the main campus. Thus, the existence of transnational higher education partnerships deters students from emigrating abroad and presents an alternative to international student mobility.

Partner institution students consider teaching and learning at transnational higher education partnerships as comparable to that of the university. Also, partner institution students consider that the transnational partner, because of its smaller size and its private character, would offer superior standards of teaching and support.

The greatest problem in the evaluation of transnational higher education partnerships by partner institution students is the lack of recognition by the receiving country of degrees awarded after the completion of a programme delivered transnationally. This reflects the fact that Greece presents a case of extreme protectionism over higher education provision by institutions other than the public universities (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007).

Partner institution students consider that the homogenous student body at the partner institution may decrease their exposure to the multicultural environment that usually exists in a large campus abroad. So, international students may benefit from transnational higher education in terms of lower financial, social and emotional costs, but are disadvantaged in terms of exposure to other cultures and gaining an international insight.

9.3 Objective 3: to evaluate the applicability of retrospective customer model for the management of quality in TNHE.

The third objective of the research, which is fulfilled by drawing evidence from the findings in Objectives 1 and 2, was to evaluate the applicability of the current retrospective customer model for the management of quality in TNHE.

The research evidence suggests that student expectations and perception across different locations of delivery will vary significantly in core elements of the educational process. Specifically, the analysis and discussion of the data showed that the expectations and perceptions of students about quality in higher education are affected and shaped by a range of contextual dynamics. These dynamics are embedded in and/or related to the environment in which the students have grown up, live and currently study. It was found that the range of these dynamics is similar between the two locations of the case study.

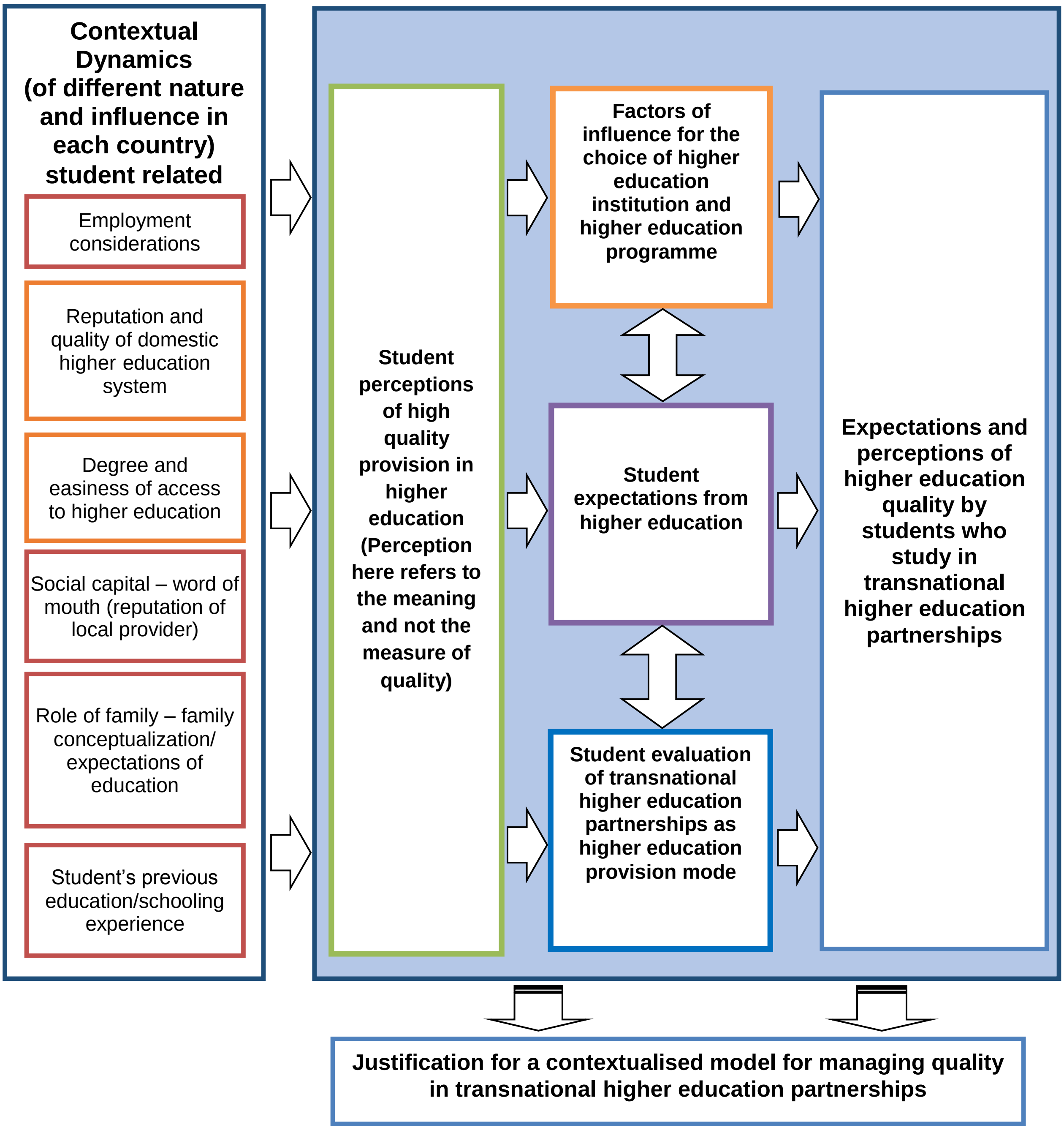
However, it has been found that the nature and meaning of these dynamics varies between the two different environments. Also it has been found that each of these dynamics would have different magnitudes in their influence on student expectations and perceptions. As shown in Figure 9.1 below, these environmental dynamics are: employability, family and parents, the condition of the domestic higher education system, the degree and ease of access to higher education, and social capital in the form of word of mouth. These dynamics also affect the students' perception of quality in higher education.

In turn, it has been found that the way in which students perceive quality in higher education would affect their choices of and expectations from higher education. The factors influencing choices and student expectations are affected by the student perceptions about the necessary elements for the provision of high quality in higher education and vice versa. For example, university students have a strong expectation about facilities, which appears at the top of the elements which they consider as necessary for high quality in higher education. Another example was that both student groups had a shared perception about the relevance of the programme content to employability as a component of quality in higher education, while both student groups also have strong expectations about increased employability after the completion of their studies.

Also, during the analysis and discussion of the findings it has been found that the factors that influence the student choice of university and higher education programme are linked with student expectations. It was found that the factors of influence are either the same as, or affect the formation of, the student expectations. For example, facilities were a factor of influence for university students and also an expectation. Also, for partner institution students, the reputation of the university programme and its attractive structure, content and duration was a major factor of influence, and on the basis of this they formed expectations around increased employability after their graduation.

The evaluation of transnational higher education by students was found to be shaped by their expectations. For example, university students expected to gain international exposure during their studies in anticipation of employment prospects at international level. Influenced by this, they evaluated the opportunity to gain exposure to other cultures, languages, and working experience as one of the advantages of TNHEPs. Similarly, partner institution students evaluated transnational higher education partnerships as a means of acquiring a superior higher education qualification in light of their expectation of increased employment prospects after graduation. The perceptions of the students about the necessary elements for high quality provision in higher education shaped their service expectations and their evaluation of transnational higher education. For example students from both groups perceived the standards of teaching and the quality of academic staff as an important element of quality in higher education. This is reflected in their evaluation of TNHE, where both student groups mentioned advantages and disadvantages which derive from or are related to teaching standards and academic staff quality.

Figure 9.1: Emerged conceptual framework for the analysis and evaluation of student expectations and perceptions in a transnational higher education context



From the above discussion, and as shown in Figure 9.1 above, a conceptual framework has emerged for the identification, discussion and evaluation of student expectations and perceptions in a transnational higher education context. This conceptual framework, as generated and supported by the findings, is generalisable and applicable to other contexts. Thus, this conceptual framework is part of the contribution of this research to existing knowledge as well as to future research practice, as a framework for the analysis, discussion, and evaluation of the different aspects/elements that affect the applicability of the customer model in the transnational higher education context. This implies a theoretical generalisability for the emerged conceptual framework which, mutatis mutandis[119], is applicable to other TNHE contexts.

At the same time, the conceptual framework in Figure 9.1 supports the need for the contextualisation of quality management in TNHE. In both the service quality and the education quality contexts, a difference in student expectations and perceptions across different locations of delivery requires a contextualised quality management model. This is because, considering the significant relationship between student perceptions and the learning approach that students tend to adopt (Nijhuis, 2006; Ginns et al., 2007), a failure to explore, measure, and manage the different student expectations and perceptions prior to delivery makes it very likely that their experience will lead to poor educational quality outputs and unreliable service quality measurements via student satisfaction surveys (Wallace & Dunn, 2013; Lizzio et al., 2002).

Thus, the ramifications of these findings for the applicability of the retrospective customer model for the management of quality in TNHE are significant. From the findings of this research it is clear that the assumption and rigid use, across different locations of delivery, of fixed relationships between presage factors (student and institution) and educational quality and service quality outcomes does not guarantee consistent replication of ‘home’ standards offshore. The findings of this research have shown that student presage factors in TNHE vary depending on the students’ social, cultural, and educational context. This worsens the existing problems of the retrospective customer model in realising educational and service quality standards. Also, it justifies the need for a reflective and contextualised model/approach for the management of quality across different locations of programme delivery. This is because, contrary to the retrospective

[119] Latin, “things having been changed that have to be changed”; that is, with the necessary alterations (Blackburn, 2008).

customer model for the management of quality in TNHE, the consideration of student factors, prior to delivery, will allow better planning of the provision and the necessary actions to re-adjust student expectations and perceptions (Biggs, 2001). Thus, a prospective approach allows the achievement of the desired quality standards and higher retention rates.

9.4 Objective 4: to propose a prospective and reflective model for the management of quality in TNHE.

A proposed model (Figure 9.2 below) can be drawn from the previous observations. This proposed model for the management of quality in TNHE combines elements of the Biggs theory of prospective quality management (2001) and the Finnie & Usher (2005) model for the measurement of quality. I contextualise Biggs' prospective quality management (2001) and, based on the findings of this research, propose the following reflective practice for institutions involved in TNHE.

Student presage factors should be explored proactively and well before the initiation of a TNHE programme delivery. The findings of the literature review (Gibbs, 2010, 2012; Biggs, 1993; Finnie & Usher, 2005) and this thesis suggest that student presage factors play an important role in the actual learning approach adopted by students, and in the educational process outcomes. Considering the significant differences in student presage factors revealed by this study, the exporting institution should seek to identify student expectations and perceptions about teaching and learning, as well as about the other elements of the higher education provisions (i.e. tangibles, support outside class, administrative support). The exploration of student expectations and perceptions can be facilitated by a survey of prospective students prior to programme delivery.

The second area that needs to be proactively explored is the education system in the importing country. The findings of this thesis have shown a significant impact of prior education experience of students on their expectations and perceptions about teaching and learning. The tendency of students towards rote learning and transmission teaching appears to be heavily associated with the existence of these teaching and learning practices in the domestic education system of the TNHE importing country. Also, the exploration of the state of the education system in the importing country will allow the identification of problems related to the existing knowledge of students. The exporting institution should explore carefully the education system in the importing country and plan the necessary induction/preparatory actions to induce students to the new education approach.

The third area that needs to be explored proactively by TNHE exporting institutions includes the contextual factors that affect the expectations and perceptions of the higher education quality of students in the importing country. This thesis has revealed an important influence on student expectations and perception of contextual factors in the importing country such as the family and other social networks, economic conditions, culture, and society's approach towards higher education. For example, the impact of cultural dimensions has been found to be closely associated with different prioritisations of student expectations and perceptions (i.e. association of uncertainty avoidance with higher student expectations for tangible elements). The proactive exploration and appraisal of the impact of the contextual factors contributes to the identification of unreasonable or inappropriate student expectations and perceptions that, again, if left unmanaged, will lead to poor educational and service quality outcomes.

Using the outcomes from the exploration of the above three areas, student beginning characteristics and learning inputs can be targeted and managed prospectively. According to Finnie and Usher (2005), beginning characteristics are "the characteristics and abilities of incoming students that affect the quality of their educational experience and the outcomes" (p. iii) and learning inputs "the institutional financial resources, material inputs and the organization of those resources which thus comprise the determinants and characteristics of individuals' learning experiences".

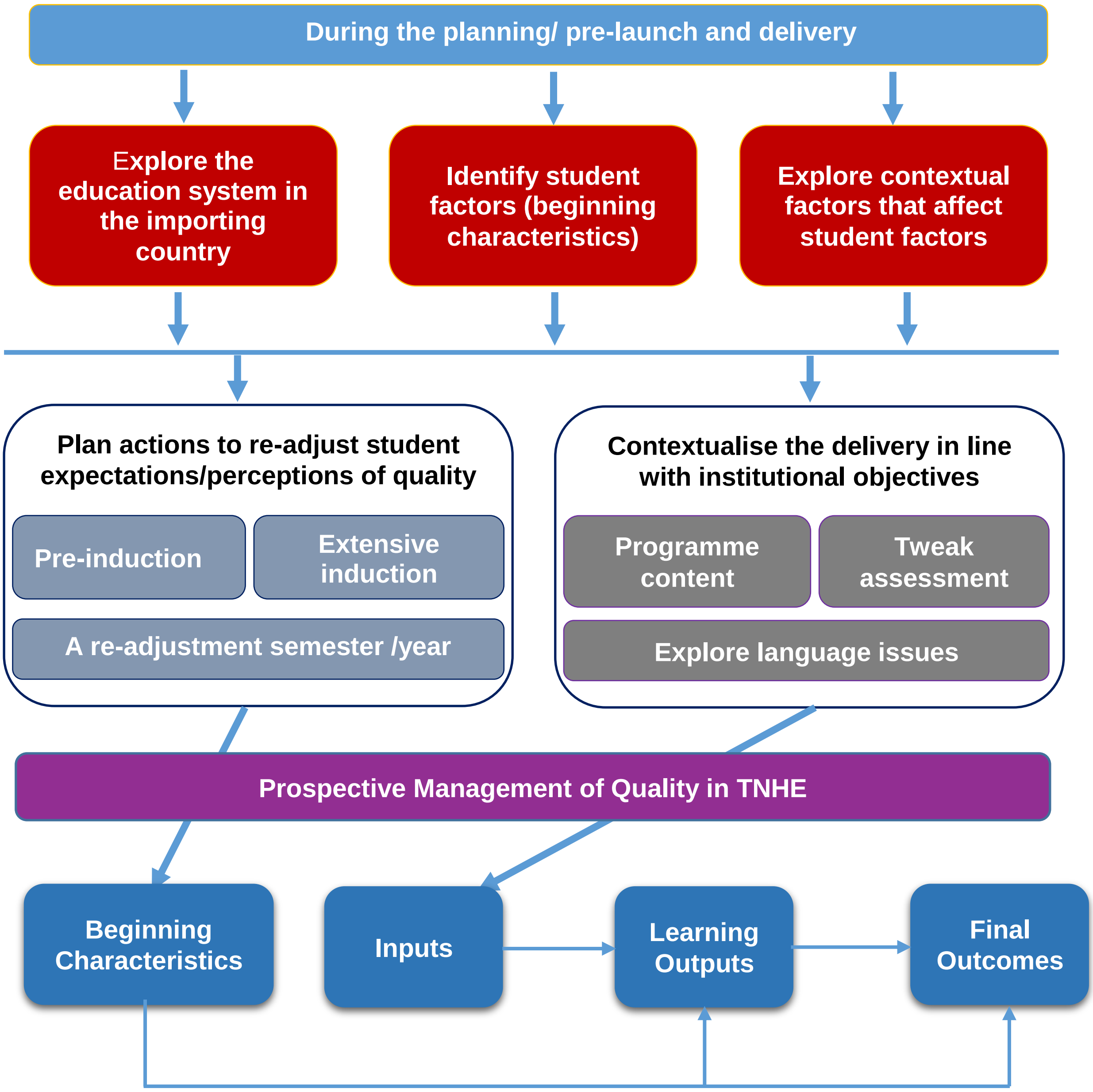
In regard to the student beginning characteristics, the exporting institution together with the partner should plan actions to re-adjust and actively manage student expectations and perceptions of quality. Some examples can be a pre-induction period where students have explained to them what is expected from them in terms of participation, a more extensive induction (1 month) or even the consideration of an entire year which will deal with significantly inappropriate student expectations and perceptions. By induction, I do not mean the typical 'familiarisation' process which takes place during the first week(s) of higher education programmes. Instead, here I refer to induction programmes which specifically target student expectations and perceptions about the teaching and learning approach, the meaning of quality in higher education, the nature of 'value for money', as well as the extensions and limitations of the programme content on graduates' employability. As shown in Figure 9.2 below, the prospective management of these elements will ensure that students enter the educational process with those expectations and perceptions that comply with the teaching and learning approach required to fulfil the educational outcomes.

In regard to the learning inputs, the awarding institution should consider modifications to accommodate the need for contextualisation of the offshore delivery of its programme without undermining its institutional quality standards. Some examples here are changes in the programme content, tweaking of assessments and a possible accommodation of local language. The programme content can incorporate additional optional modules which correspond to the demands of the local/domestic employment market. Also, the assessment could be adapted so that it allows students, who may not be familiar with a specific mode of assessment (i.e. presentations), to gradually develop their competencies without undermining their educational performance. Finally, one of the most critical elements in learning inputs is the language of delivery. In TNHE quality management, the issue of the language of delivery has been heavily debated (Bambacas & Sanderson, 2011; Wu, 2008; Whitchurch, 2012; Saarinen, 2012; Doiz et al., n.d.), and at least two poles can be identified in this debate. First, there are those who consider that students studying offshore for a UK qualification should be treated in exactly the same way as students who study at the main campus of the university in the UK. For the supporters of this view, the use of English as the medium of instruction and assessment is a non-negotiable issue. However, there is evidence to suggest that students whose English is not their first language tend to perform lower than their real potential. Based on this fact, those who are at the other pole of the language debate in TNHE see the contextualisation of the language of instruction and assessment as an issue that not only does not undermine the quality and standards of the exporting institution but in fact is a way in which to facilitate their fulfilment. Reflecting on the findings of this thesis which revealed an important influence of the students' previous educational experience on their expectations and perceptions, the use of the importing country's language as the medium for instruction or/and assessment in TNHE programmes should be explored prospectively by exporting institutions. This can be built in to the TNHE provision, either partly (i.e. year 1 of 3 to be taught and assessed in the domestic language) or entirely (i.e. all three years of a Bachelor programme to be delivered in the domestic language).

The above prospective actions will take an active management approach to ensure that student beginning characteristics and learning inputs are such as to facilitate the implementation of the desired learning outputs and the final outcomes. In this way, TNHE exporting countries can ensure that educational quality standards are at an appropriate level, while student satisfaction and consequently service quality is maintained.

One of the important changes introduced with this model is the initiation of the quality management process in the planning/pre-launch stage of TNHE collaboration by targeting the heart of the educational process. The model should be used in conjunction with the emerging conceptual framework for the analysis and evaluation of student expectations and perceptions in a transnational higher education context, presented earlier in Section 9.3. This will allow higher education institutions to identify the factors that affect, or would be likely to affect, student expectations and perceptions at different locations of TNHE delivery. The actions, targeting student beginning characteristics and learning inputs will be subject to the analysis of contextual factors that affect and shaped student expectations and perceptions. These contextual factors are expected to vary between different countries and particularly between different cultural settings. Thus, the proposed model will be contextualised according to the requirements of each particular setting.

Figure 9.2: Proposed model for prospective quality management in TNHE



The value of the proposed model is that it provides the justification and the practical approach for focusing on managing student beginning characteristics and adjusting learning inputs accordingly, as a means to assure standards. It is therefore a change of focus in TNHE quality management, from being passive and rigid to becoming active and reflective.

However, this proposed model should be considered alongside the common due diligence and quality assurances processes required by the relevant regulatory bodies in the TNHE importing or exporting countries, to protect students and their families from fraudulent providers.

Instead, the purpose of this model is support the adoption of a realist and practical approach towards quality management in TNHE. This is pursued by recognising the contextual factors that will influence the applicability of a quality management model across borders. The value of this realist approach lies in the fact that while it recognises 'student as customer' and 'higher education as a service' as mega-trends affecting quality management, it provides a practical solution for acknowledging and managing student expectations and perceptions as a means to reassure educational quality standards across borders.

Considering the wide acceptance by various stakeholders of educational quality as a reliable indicator of quality standards in higher education, but also its close connection to service quality, this model can provide valuable practical support for quality management practitioners in a TNHE setting.

9.5 Fulfilment of the research purpose

The purpose of this research project was ***to explore and explain the student expectations and perceptions of quality in transnational education and evaluate the applicability of a retrospective customer model for the management of quality in transnational higher education partnerships.*** Also, the research purpose included ***the consideration of a prospective management model for effective quality management in TNHE.***

The analysis and discussion of the quantitative and qualitative evidence has showed that the expectations and perceptions of students who are studying on the same programme but at different geographical locations vary. It was found that the variation of the student expectation and perception depends on the contextual dynamics of the local social and economic environment, and the previous educational experience of students. Thus, student expectations and perceptions would vary from country to country on the basis of their different social, cultural, economic, and educational contexts and dynamics. It is therefore unlikely that a retrospective customer model which has been designed in one country on the basis of the local contextual dynamics would be applicable in another country.

The research purpose included the exploration of the students' perception of the term 'quality in higher education'. It has been found that the perception of students about quality in higher education is primarily influenced by their increased financial contribution towards the payment of their fees. Thus, students, irrespective of their location, are embracing a 'value for money' view of quality in higher education, which is explained as the existence of universal dynamics that affect students globally and shape their identity as 'customer'. Similarly, students view quality in higher education to be linked with employability. However, students, irrespective of their location, mentioned the quality of teaching and academic staff to be central in the provision of quality.

Part of the research purpose of this research was to show, by proving that student expectations and perceptions of quality in higher education are not the same in different countries, that the current retrospective customer model of managing quality in higher education is not applicable to a transnational higher education context.

The research purpose included the consideration and justification of the use of a prospective quality management model in TNHE. There is strong evidence to suggest that a prospective model would be suitable to manage quality in TNHE by acknowledging and being reflective of the different student expectations and perceptions. A prospective quality management model has been proposed that allows the alignment of institutional educational quality standards with student satisfaction and service quality in a TNHE context.

9.6 Contribution to knowledge

The aim of this thesis was to explore student expectations and perceptions in a transnational higher education context. At the same time, the appropriateness of the 'student as customer' model and the adoption of a service quality logic in managing quality in higher education has been the subject of existing research and debate, mostly on 'home' universities but not looking much at the transnational context. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, there was little evidence, prior to this thesis, to contribute to the understanding of student expectations and perceptions in a transnational higher education context, and the evaluation of the applicability of the current retrospective customer model for the management of quality in TNHE. Thus, this thesis primarily contributes to the existing knowledge about the applicability of the retrospective customer model in higher education.

Also, the contribution of this research to the existing knowledge lies in the presentation of a conceptual framework which shows how student expectations and perceptions are affected and shaped by contextual dynamics in each country. This can be used by TNHE practitioners to understand and evaluate student beginning characteristics in different countries.

Finally the contribution of this research to existing knowledge lies the in the proposal of a realist and practical approach for the prospective management of quality in TNHE. This model combines new evidence from this research and existing theoretical models (Finnie & Usher, 2005; Biggs, 2001) applied in a new context (TNHE).

9.7 Suggestions for further research

This study has been concerned with the research of a case study of a franchise arrangement between a Greek private for-profit college and a UK university. There are several other areas, in terms of geographical location and institutional characteristics, that require further research in order to complete the picture of the nature of student expectations and perceptions in a transnational higher education context.

Future research could test the applicability of the conceptual model for the exploration and analysis of student beginning characteristics along with the proposed prospective management model, in other international contexts.

Also, future researchers could expand on the findings of this research and explore student expectations and perceptions in a more diverse context and/or setting. A possible study in the future could include a range of different countries and explore other forms of cross-border higher education, such as branch campuses, online delivery, distance learning or twinning programmes.

A good possible area for further research, both in terms of academic significance and of richness of information, is the role that culture plays in shaping student expectations and perceptions. The influence of culture has been explored by previous research about influence on customer expectations and perceptions of service quality, but limited work has been done in the context of higher education, and this is even more the case in transnational higher education research.

Also, considering the growing importance of educational quality, the concept of prospective quality management should be explored more extensively, particularly by quality assurance bodies, as a new strategic focus for updating quality assurance guidelines in cross-border settings.

Appendices

1. Covering letter and survey questionnaire in Greek

Αγαπητέ Φοιτητή,

Σου ζητείται να λάβεις μέρος στο ερευνητικό πρόγραμμα με τίτλο ***«Διεθνοποίηση της Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης και διοίκηση ποιότητας».***

Η έρευνα αυτή εξετάζει τις αντιλήψεις, τις προσδοκίες και τις επιρροές των φοιτητών που σπουδάζουν στο ίδιο πρόγραμμα σπουδών (Bachelor in Business) αλλά σε διαφορετικά μέρη του Κόσμου. Η έρευνα αυτή πραγματοποιείται συγχρόνως στο πανεπιστήμιο [redacted] στο [redacted] της Μεγάλης Βρετανίας και στο [redacted] στο Ηράκλειο Κρήτης.

Είναι αποκλειστικά δική σου απόφαση εάν θα λάβεις μέρος ή όχι. Εάν αποφασίσεις να λάβεις μέρος, πάλι είσαι ελεύθερος να αποχωρήσεις ανά πάσα στιγμή χωρίς να δώσεις καμία εξήγηση. Η απόφαση σου να αποχωρήσεις ή να μην λάβεις μέρος εξ' αρχής δεν θα έχει καμία επίδραση στη θέση σου μέσα στο εκπαιδευτικό ίδρυμα στο οποίο σπουδάζεις.

Η συνεισφορά σου είναι σημαντική για να στην προσπάθεια μας να αποφασίσουμε εάν είναι δυνατή η Διεθνοποίηση της Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης καθώς και εάν υπάρχουν διαφορές ή ομοιότητες μεταξύ φοιτητών που σπουδάζουν στο ίδιο πρόγραμμα σπουδών αλλά σε διαφορετικά μέρη του Κόσμου.
Μέχρι σήμερα δεν υπάρχει αρκετή έρευνα για τα παραπάνω θέματα. Έτσι η συμμετοχή σας είναι πολύτιμη και η ειλικρινή σας γνώμη μπορεί να κάνει τη διαφορά.

Παρακαλούμε διαβάστε προσεκτικά κάθε ερώτηση και έπειτα συμπληρώστε το ερωτηματολόγιο. Υπάρχουν 19 ερωτήσεις σε αυτό το ερωτηματολόγιο και αναμένεται ότι θα χρειαστούν 20 λεπτά για να το συμπληρώσετε προσεκτικά.

Όλες οι πληροφορίες που θα συλλεχθούν κατά τη διάρκεια της έρευνας αυτής θα κρατηθούν **αυστηρά εμπιστευτικές**.
Η ανωνυμία σας είναι διασφαλισμένη και η φοιτητική σας ταυτότητα δεν μπορεί να αποκαλυφθεί.

Σε περίπτωση που θεωρήσετε κάποια από τις ερωτήσεις θίγει ευαίσθητα δεδομένα ή ότι είναι μη κατάλληλη, μην την απαντήσετε.

Σε ευχαριστούμε προκαταβολικά για την συμμετοχή σου.

Ο ερευνητής

1

Παρακαλούμε απαντήστε σε όλες τις ερωτήσεις. Να είστε ειλικρινής και αυθόρμητός. Η γνώμη σας είναι πολύ σημαντική.

1. το φύλο σας : Γυναίκα □ Άνδρας □

2. η ηλικία σας: 18-24 □ 25-30 □ 30+ □

3. Πόσο σας επηρέασαν οι παρακάτω παράγοντες στο να επιλέξετε το [redacted] για να συνεχίσετε τις σπουδές σας;
(σημειώστε με Χ στο αντίστοιχο κουτί,)

0=καθόλου 5=πάρα πολύ

	0	1	2	3	4	5
Η φήμη για την ποιότητα του						
Ήταν πρόθυμο να αναγνωρίσει τις δεξιότητες / βαθμολογίες που ήδη κατείχα.						
Έχει φήμη για την εξειδίκευση και την ποιότητα και του ακαδημαϊκού του προσωπικού.						
Έχει δεσμούς / διασυνδέσεις με άλλους οργανισμούς/ιδρύματα που γνώριζα						
Έχει αποφοίτους που γνώριζαν και από τους οποίους ενημερώθηκα για τα προγράμματα σπουδών						
Προσφέρει πτυχία τα οποία αναγνωρίζονται από την αγορά εργασίας.						
Προσφέρει τα κατάλληλα προγράμματα σπουδών						
Χρησιμοποιεί την πλέον πρόσφατη τεχνολογία						
Έχει φήμη ότι ανταποκρίνεται στις ανάγκες των φοιτητών.						
Είναι γνωστό για την καινοτομία του στην έρευνα και τη διδασκαλία.						
Έχει μεγάλο CAMPUS και άριστες εγκαταστάσεις.						
Είναι οικονομικά σταθερή επιχείρηση						
Προσφέρει ευέλικτη πρόσβαση (εγγραφή)						
Είναι γνωστό για την χρήση νέων τεχνολογιών						
Ήταν γνωστό σε εμένα και την οικογένεια μου						
Η διαφήμιση του						
Είναι υψηλά στου πίνακες αξιολόγησης						
Έχει τμήματα με μικρό αριθμό φοιτητών						

4. Παρακαλούμε καταγράψτε άλλους παράγοντες / λόγους <u>(που δεν συμπεριλαμβάνονται παραπάνω)</u> οι οποίοι σας επηρέασαν να επιλέξετε το [redacted] για να συνεχίσετε τις σπουδές σας.

....
....
....
....

5. Παρακαλούμε καταγράψτε <u>(κατά σειρά σημαντικότητας)</u> τους τρεις σημαντικότερους παράγοντες λόγους οι οποίοι διαδραμάτισαν κυρίαρχο ρόλο στην απόφαση σας να σπουδάσετε στο [redacted] <u>(μπορείτε να αναφέρετε και παράγοντες/λόγους που δεν αναφέρονται παραπάνω)</u>

1..
2..
3..

6. Παρακαλούμε προσθέστε τα όποια σχόλια θέλετε να κάνετε σχετικά με την επιλογή σας να σπουδάσετε στο [redacted]

....
....
....
....

2

7. Πόσο σας επηρέασαν οι παρακάτω παράγοντες/λόγοι την επιλογή σας να σπουδάσετε στο πρόγραμμα Bachelor (Hons) in Business;

(σημειώστε με Χ στο αντίστοιχο κουτί,)

0=καθόλου 5=πάρα πολύ

	0	1	2	3	4	5
Μελλοντικές προοπτικές απασχόλησης						
Η φήμη του συγκεκριμένου προγράμματος σπουδών						
Το κόστος σπουδών						
Η κοινωνική καταξίωση του επαγγέλματος που προκύπτει από την κατοχή του πτυχίου						
Ήταν η μοναδική επιλογή που είχα						
Το επέλεξα απλά για να συνεχίσω τις σπουδές μου σε ανώτατο επίπεδο						
Με συμβούλεψε η οικογένεια μου						
Με συμβούλεψαν οι γονείς μου						
Έχω/είχα φίλους που σπουδάζουν/σπούδαζαν στο ίδιο πρόγραμμα						
Το περιεχόμενο του προγράμματος						

8. Παρακαλούμε καταγράψτε άλλους παράγοντες / λόγους <u>(που δεν συμπεριλαμβάνονται παραπάνω)</u> οι οποίοι σας επηρέασαν να επιλέξετε το Bachelor (Hons) in Business για να συνεχίσετε τις σπουδές σας.

....
....
....
....

9. Παρακαλούμε καταγράψτε <u>(κατά σειρά σημαντικότητας)</u> τους τρεις σημαντικότερους παράγοντες λόγους οι οποίοι διαδραμάτισαν κυρίαρχο ρόλο στην απόφαση σας να σπουδάσετε στο Bachelor (Hons) in Business <u>(μπορείτε να αναφέρετε και παράγοντες/λόγους που δεν αναφέρονται παραπάνω)</u>

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....

10. Παρακαλούμε προσθέστε τα όποια σχόλια θέλετε να κάνετε σχετικά με την επιλογή σας να σπουδάσετε στο Bachelor (Hons) in Business

....
....
....

11.Παρακαλούμε καταγράψτε <u>(κατά σειρά σημαντικότητας)</u> τα τρία σπουδαιότερα στοιχεία τα οποία θεωρείτε απαραίτητα για την δημιουργία ενός υψηλής ποιότητας προγράμματος σπουδών.

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....

12. Εάν ήσασταν μέλος της ομάδας διοίκησης του πανεπιστημίου, σε ποια θέματα θα επικεντρωνόσαστε για να μεγιστοποιήσετε την ποιότητα και την ικανοποίηση των φοιτητών;

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....

13. Πόσο σχετικό είναι το περιεχόμενο του προγράμματος σπουδών που επιλέξατε με το μελλοντικό σας επάγγελμα / καριέρα ; (1= καθόλου σχετικό, 10=πολύ σχετικό)

.... (δώστε έναν αριθμό)

14. Ποια σημεία του προγράμματος σπουδών σας βρίσκετε περισσότερο σχετικά με το μελλοντικό επάγγελμα / καριέρα που επιθυμείτε να κάνετε; (καταγράψτε με σειρά σχετικότητας, 1=το περισσότερο σχετικό)

1...

2. ....

3...

15. Ποια σημεία του προγράμματος σπουδών σας νομίζετε ότι απαιτούν βελτίωση / αλλαγή / ανανέωση (καταγράψτε με σειρά προτεραιότητας, 1=το περισσότερο επείγον)

1...

2. ....

3...

16. Παρακαλούμε σημειώστε (X) σχετικά με το εάν συμφωνείτε με τις παρακάτω προτάσεις, με βάση την κλίματα από 1 εως 5 (αφήστε κενό όπου η ερώτηση δεν σας αφορά ή δεν επιθυμείτε να απαντήσετε)

(1) = Διαφωνώ Απόλυτα, **(2)** =Διαφωνώ, **(3)** = είμαι ουδέτερος, **(4)** =Συμφωνώ, **(5)** = Συμφωνώ Απόλυτα

	1	2	3	4	5
Έλαβα ξεκάθαρες πληροφορίες σχετικά με τη δομή του προγράμματος σπουδών και τις επιλογές που έχω.					
Έχω λάβει ξεκάθαρές συμβουλές σχετικά με τα περιεχόμενα των μαθημάτων.					
Το πρόγραμμα διοικείται αποτελεσματικά.					
Το ωρολόγιο πρόγραμμα υλοποίησης των μαθημάτων με βοηθάει στις σπουδές μου.					
Το επίπεδο των μαθημάτων είναι αυτό που περίμενα.					
Ο φόρτος εργασίας, συμπεριλαμβανομένων και των εργασιών, είναι σωστός.					
Υπάρχει σωστή ισορροπία φόρτου εργασίας μεταξύ των μαθημάτων.					
Γίνεται σωστή σύνδεση του ακαδημαϊκού / επιστημονικού περιεχομένου των μαθημάτων μεταξύ τους.					
Η χρήση της βιβλιοθήκης με έχει βοηθήσει στις σπουδές μου.					
Η χρήση των ηλεκτρονικών πηγών (Internet, VLP) με έχει βοηθήσει στις σπουδές μου.					
Έχω βοηθηθεί και ενθαρρυνθεί να διαχειριστώ ο ίδιος την μάθηση και την ανάπτυξη μου.					
Είναι εφικτό να έρχομαι σε επαφή με τους καθηγητές μου με ευκολία.					
Ουσιαστική προσωπική βοήθεια / υποστήριξη είναι διαθέσιμη.					
Είμαι ευχαριστημένος που επέλεξα το συγκεκριμένο πρόγραμμα σπουδών					
Συνολικά είμαι ικανοποιημένος με το συγκεκριμένο πρόγραμμα σπουδών					
Συνολικά είμαι ικανοποιημένος με το [redacted]					

17. Καταγράψτε (με σειρά ικανοποίησης) τα τρία περισσότερο ικανοποιητικά πράγματα που αφορούν το περιεχόμενο του προγράμματος σπουδών , ξεκινήστε με 1=το περισσότερο ικανοποιητικό

1...

2...

3...

18. Καταγράψτε (με σειρά μη ικανοποίησης) τα τρία λιγότερο ικανοποιητικά πράγματα που αφορούν το περιεχόμενο του προγράμματος σπουδών , ξεκινήστε με 1=το περισσότερο δυσάρεστο/μη ικανοποιητικό

1...

2...

3...

19. Συνολικά, πόσο ικανοποιημένοι είστε από το πρόγραμμα σπουδών Bachelor (Hons) in Business?
(1 = απόλυτα δυσαρεστημένος, 10=απόλυτα ικανοποιημένος)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. Covering letter and survey questionnaire in English

Dear Student

You are being invited to take part in the research project with title ***"Internationalization of Higher Education and Quality Management"***.

This research project investigates the perceptions, expectation and influences of Students who study on the same programme of study (BA in Business Studies) but at different part of the world. The research takes place at [redacted] in [redacted] UK and at [redacted] in Heraklion Crete Greece.

It is up to you to decide whether or not you want to take part. If you decide to get involved, you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason. A decision to withdraw at any time, or a decision not to take part, will not affect your status within the institution that you currently study.

Your contribution will be important in deciding to what extent Internationalization of Higher Education is visible and if there are difference and/or similarities between students at different parts of the world who are studying on the same degree course. Up to today there is not much research on the issues we mentioned above, thus, your participation will be very valuable and your frank and honest opinion can make the difference.

Please read carefully each question and then complete questionnaire. There are 19 questions in this questionnaire and it is estimated that the total amount of time spent on completing it will be 20 minutes.

All information that is collected about you during the course of the research will be kept **strictly confidential**. Your **anonymity** is reassured and your student ID cannot be identified. In case you consider some of the questions asked to be sensitive or inappropriate for you, you should feel free not to answer them.

In case you require further information please contact:
The Researcher, 11 Leostic Str, Heraklion Crete Greece, 0030 6948238025

Thank you for participation

-A real signature

Ref.no :........

Please, before completing, read carefully the instructions (at the covering letter accompanying this questionnaire)
Answer as many questions as possible. Be frank and honest. Your opinion is important

1. Your gender: Female ☐ Male ☐

2. Your age: 18-24 ☐ 25-30 ☐ 30+ ☐

3. How the following facts have influenced your choice in selection of [redacted] for continuing your studies

[redacted]	No influence	Minor Influence	Major Influence	Not Applicable
Has a reputation for quality				
Was willing to recognise my previous qualification				
Has a reputation for quality and expertise of its staff				
Has links to other institutions known to me				
Has reputable alumni through whom I learned about it				
Offers qualifications that will be recognised by employers				
Offers appropriate courses and programmes				
Makes use of the latest information technology				
Has a reputation for being responsive to student needs				
Is well known for innovation in research and teaching				
Has a large campus and excellent facilities				
Is financially stable				
Offers flexible entry throughout the year				
In noted for its superior use of technology				
Was well known to me				
Advertises and promotes itself strongly				
Is high in University rankings				
Has small class size				

4. Please list any other factors <u>(not included above)</u> that have influenced your choice in selection of [redacted] for continuing your studies

....
....
....
....

5. Please list <u>(in order of importance)</u> the three most important factors that played dominant role in your decision to study at [redacted] <u>(you can refer to factors not mentioned above)</u>

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....

6. Please add any comments you wish to make regarding your choice to study at [redacted]

....
....
....
....

①

Ref.no :........

7. How have the following factors influenced your choice to study on the Bachelor (Hons) in Business Studies?

	No influence	Minor Influence	Major Influence	Not Applicable
Future employment prospects				
Reputation of the particular programme				
Cost of attending				
Social status of profession deriving from the degree				
It was the only choice available to me				
Just to continue studying for a Higher Degree				
Advice of Family				
Advice of Parents				
Friends studying at the same programme				
Content of programme				

8. Please list any other factors <u>(not included above)</u> that have influenced your choice to study on the Bachelor (Hons) in Business Studies programme.

....

....

....

....

9. Please list <u>(in order of importance)</u> the three factors that have influenced <u>most</u> your decision to study on the Bachelor (Hons) in Business Studies programme. <u>(you can refer to factors not mentioned above)</u>

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....

10. Please add any comments you wish to make regarding your choice to study on the Bachelor (Hons) in Business Studies programme?

....

....

....

11. Please list <u>(in order of importance)</u> the three <u>most important</u> elements you consider necessary for the formation of a high quality programme of study?

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....

12. If you were a member of the top management team of the University, on which areas / aspects you would focus on to increase quality and student satisfaction?

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....

13. How relevant is the content your chosen programme of study to your future / chosen career?

1 Not Relevant	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Very Relevant

②

14. What aspects of your programme of study do you find <u>most relevant</u> your future / chosen career (list in order of relevance, 1=most relevant)?

1..
2. ....
3..

15. What aspects of your programme of study do you think need improvement/change/update (list in order of priority, 1=most urgent)?

1..
2. ....
3..

16. Please mark on scale from 1 to 5 (*leave blank if not applicable*)

(1) = Strongly disagree, **(2)** =Disagree, **(3)** =No opinion, **(4)** =Agree, **(5)** =Strongly agree

	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
I have received clear information about the course structure and alternative routes					
I have been given clear advice about my choice of optional and/or free-choice modules					
The course has been administered efficiently					
The timetable has enabled me to take the modules I wished to study					
The level of difficulty of work has increased from stage to stage					
The overall workload including assessment has been right					
There has been a reasonable balance of the total workload between modules					
The academic content of my modules has linked together well					
The use of library resources has enhance my studies					
I have been helped and encouraged to manage my own learning and development					
I have been able to contact my course tutor easily					
Effective personal support has been available					
I am pleased I chose this course					
Overall I am satisfied with this course					
Overall I am satisfied with [redacted] University					

17. List (in order of satisfaction) the three most satisfactory aspects of the content of your programme of study, 1=most satisfactory

1..
2..
3..

18. List (in order of dissatisfaction) the three least satisfactory aspects of the content of your programme of study, 1=most dissatisfactory

1..
2..
3..

19. Overall, how satisfied are you by the programme of study, Bachelor (Hons) in Business Studies?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not Satisfied									Very Satisfied

③

3. Permission to research

Letter to the Dean of the University's Business School

Vangelis Tsiligiris
[redacted]
Hreajklion Crete Greece

To:
Professor Martin [redacted]
Dean of [redacted] Business School
[redacted]
UK

Cc: Professor [redacted]

Heraklion 18/10/2004

Re: Permission to research

Dear Sir,

I have decided to start a PhD research in the subject of "Internationalization of higher education and quality management" at the University of Central England (UCE) in Birmingham.
I am planning to research the expectations and perceptions of students who study at the university and the college on the BA in Business programme. My research will include a questionnaire survey and focus-group interviews.

I would like to kindly ask you for your permission to perform the above mentioned research at the university and contacting university students. I can ensure you that my research will not disturb the smooth operation of the programme and will not distract students. Also, I can ensure you that I will take into consideration the relevant research ethical guidelines as well as the university's internal regulations during the design and implementation of my research.

Sincerely,

Vangelis Tsiligiris

Reply by the Dean of the University's Business School

From: [redacted] Martin [mailto:marti[redacted]@[redacted]ac.uk]
Sent: Friday, October 22, 2004 7:41 PM
To [redacted]
Subject: RE:

Vangelis

I am happy we could be one of your sites for carrying out the research you are planning.

Hope all is well.

Regards

Martin

-----Original Message-----
From [redacted]
Sent: 18 October 2004 16:25
To: [redacted] Martin
Cc: [redacted]
Subject:

Dear Professor [redacted]

I hope that you are well and you had a positive beginning of the new academic year.

I am writing you regarding the research I am initiating in the context of a PhD degree. Please read through the attached file.

I am looking forward to your reply.

Sincerely Yours,
Vangelis Tsiligiris

References

Abdullah, F. (2006). Measuring service quality in higher education: three instruments compared. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*. [Online]. 29 (1). p.pp. 71–89. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1080/01406720500537445&magic=crossref||D404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3. [Accessed: 13 April 2011].

Abu-Ghazalah, T. (2013). *Global Education:Knowledge-based economics for 21st century nations*. [Online]. Available from: http://www.britishcouncil.org/goingglobal2013/. [Accessed 10 June 2013].

Abubakar, B., Shanka, T. & Muuka, G.N. (2010). Tertiary education: an investigation of location selection criteria and preferences by international students - The case of two Australian universities. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*. [Online]. 20 (1). p.pp. 49–68. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1080/08841241003788052&magic=crossref||D404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3. [Accessed: 2 April 2011].

Ahmed, I. (2012). *Investigating students' experiences of learning English as a second language at the University of Sindh, Jamshoro, Pakistan*. Ph.D. [Online]. University of Sussex. Available from: http://sro.sussex.ac.uk/43289/. [Accessed: 3 April 2013].

Al-Alak, B.A. & Alnaser, A.S.M. (2012). Assessing the Relationship Between Higher Education Service Quality Dimensions and Student Satisfaction. *Australian Journal of Basic & Applied Sciences*. 6 (1). p.pp. 156–164.

Alexander, P.A., Murphy, P.K., Guan, J. & Murphy, P.A. (1998). How students and teachers in Singapore and the United States conceptualize knowledge and beliefs: Positioning learning within epistemological frameworks. *Learning and Instruction*. [Online]. 8 (2). p.pp. 97–116. Available from: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959475297000042. [Accessed: 11 November 2012].

Altbach, P. (2006). Globalization and the university: Realities in an unequal world. *International handbook of higher education*. p.pp. 121–139.

Altbach, P. & Knight, J. (2007). The Internationalization of Higher Education: Motivations and Realities. *Journal of Studies in International Education*. [Online]. 11 (3-4). p.pp. 290–305. Available from: http://jsi.sagepub.com/cgi/doi/10.1177/1028315307303542. [Accessed: 28 March 2011].

Altbach, P., Reisberg, L. & Rumbley, L. (2009). *Trends in Global Higher Education: Tracking an Academic Revolution*. A Report Prepared for the UNESCO 2009 World Conference on Higher Education. UNESCO.

Amthor, R.F. & Metzger, S.A. (2011). Neoliberalism, Globalization, and the American Universities in Eastern Europe: Tensions and Possibilities in "Exported" Higher Education. *Globalizations*. [Online]. 8 (1). p.pp. 65–80. Available from:

http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1080/14747731.2011.544207&magic=crossref%7c%7cD404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3. [Accessed: 14 May 2011].

Appleton-Knapp, S.L. & Krentler, K.A. (2006). Measuring Student Expectations and Their Effects on Satisfaction: The Importance of Managing Student Expectations. *Journal of Marketing Education*. [Online]. 28 (3). p.pp. 254 –264. Available from: http://jmd.sagepub.com/content/28/3/254.abstract. [Accessed: 6 November 2011].

Arambewela, R. & Hall, J. (2006). A comparative analysis of international education satisfaction using SERVQUAL. *Journal of services research*. 6 (3). p.pp. 141–163.

Archer, M.S. (1998). *Critical realism: essential readings*. London; New York: Routledge.

Arvanitopoulos, K. (2012). *Νόμος 4093/2012 (ΦΕΚ 222 Α')*. [Online]. p.pp. 1–124. Available from: http://www.minedu.gov.gr/home/dioikitika-eggrafa-main/134-keme/10116-4093-2012-222.html. [Accessed: 13 October 2013].

Arztmann, D. & John, S. (2008). *Promoting Young Women in SET: Lessons learned. A Cross-National Analysis of Past Research Projects*. IFAC PROJECT. Athens.

Asderaki, F. (2009). The Impact of the Bologna Process on the Development of the Greek Quality Assurance System. *Quality in Higher Education*. [Online]. 15 (2). p.pp. 105–122. Available from: http://ehis.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/eds/detail?hid=116&sid=c1640e24-a593-43c9-9c0b-91f90bb6dd4c%40sessionmgr115&vid=3&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c2l0ZQ%3d%3d#db=a9h&AN=42746710. [Accessed: 19 March 2011].

Astin, A.W. (1984). Student involvement: A developmental theory for higher education. *Journal of college student personnel*. [Online]. 25 (4). p.pp. 297–308. Available from: https://www.middlesex.mass.edu/tutoringservices/downloads/astininv.pdf. [Accessed: 8 October 2013].

Athiyaman, A. (1997). Linking student satisfaction and service quality perceptions: the case of university education. *European Journal of Marketing*. 31 (7). p.pp. 528–540.

Baker, M. (2011). Employability: the new student buzzword at universities. *BBC*. [Online]. 9 April. Available from: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-13013994. [Accessed: 17 September 2013].

Bambacas, M. & Sanderson, G.B. (2011). Instructional preferences of students in transnational Chinese and English language MBA programs. *Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice*. [Online]. 8 (1). p.p. 2. Available from: http://ro.uow.edu.au/jutlp/vol8/iss1/2/. [Accessed: 12 August 2013].

Barnes, B.R. (2007). Analysing Service Quality: The Case of Post-Graduate Chinese Students. *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence*. [Online]. 18 (3). p.pp. 313–331. Available from: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14783360601152558. [Accessed: 4 January 2012].

Barnett, R. (2000). *Realizing the university in an age of supercomplexity*. Society for Research into Higher Education & Open University Press.

Baskerville, S. & Arlecdon Consulting (2013). *A guide to UK higher education and partnerships for overseas universities*. [Online]. London: UK Higher Education International Unit. Available from: http://www.international.ac.uk/media/2346832/guide-to-uk-he-and-partnerships_web_final.pdf. [Accessed: 20 August 2013].

Baskerville, S., MacLeod, F. & Saunders, N. (2011). *A Guide to UK Higher Education Partnerships for Overseas Universities*. Research Series. London: UK Higher Education International and Europe Unit.

Bebko, C.P. (2000). Service intangibility and its impact on consumer expectations of service quality. *Journal of Services Marketing*. [Online]. 14. p.pp. 9–26. Available from: http://www.emeraldinsight.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/journals.htm?articleid=855862&show=abstract. [Accessed: 25 August 2011].

Becket, N. & Brookes, M. (2008). Quality Management Practice in Higher Education–What Quality Are We Actually Enhancing? *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education*. [Online]. 7 (1). p.pp. 40–54. Available from: http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/hlst/documents/johlste/vol7no1/becket.pdf. [Accessed: 30 December 2012].

Behrens, R. (2013). *Student complaints rise by 25%: do higher fees mean higher expectations?* [Online]. 13 June 2013. the Guardian. Available from: http://www.theguardian.com/higher-education-network/blog/2013/jun/13/student-complaints-rise-25-per-cent. [Accessed: 11 August 2013].

Beljulji, D., Ekström, A. & Liu, S. (2011). *Educational Service Quality in Higher Education in Sweden, A perspective of*.

Bennett, P., Bergan, S., Hamilton, M., Soinila, M., Sursock, A., Uvalic-Trumbic, S. & Williams, P. (2010). *Quality Assurance in Transnational Higher Education*. Helsinki: European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education.

Berend, T.I. (2006). *An economic history of twentieth-century Europe: economic regimes from laissez-faire to globalization*. Cambridge University Press.

Bergan, S., Guarga, R., Polak, E.E., Sobrinho, J.D., Tandon, R. & Tilak, J.B.. (2009). Public Responsibility for Higher Education. In: *UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education: 2009, Paris*. 2009.

Beyers, C. (2008). The hermeneutics of student evaluations. *College Teaching*. 56 (2). p.pp. 102–106.

Bhaskar, R. (1998). *Critical Realism: Essential Readings (Critical Realism–Interventions)*. [Online]. Available from: http://www.citeulike.org/group/718/article/2785932. [Accessed: 17 July 2013].

Bhaskar, R. (2008). *A Realist Theory of Science*. London:Taylor & Francis.

Biggs, J. (1988). Assessing student approaches to learning. *Australian Psychologist*. [Online]. 23 (2). p.pp. 197–206. Available from: http://doi.wiley.com/10.1080/00050068808255604. [Accessed: 17 September 2013].

Biggs, J. (1989). Approaches to the Enhancement of Tertiary Teaching. *Higher Education Research & Development*. [Online]. 8 (1). p.pp. 7–25. Available from: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0729436890080102. [Accessed: 14 December 2012].

Biggs, J. (1993). From Theory to Practice: A Cognitive Systems Approach. *Higher Education Research & Development*. [Online]. 12 (1). p.pp. 73–85. Available from: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0729436930120107. [Accessed: 19 December 2012].

Biggs, J. (1996). Western misconceptions of the Confucian-heritage learning culture. In: D. (David A.) Watkins & J. J. B. Biggs (eds.). *The Chinese learner: cultural, psychological and contextual influences*. University of Hong Kong, Comparative Education Research Centre.

Biggs, J. (2001). The reflective institution: Assuring and enhancing the quality of teaching and learning. *Higher Education*. [Online]. 41 (3). p.pp. 221–238. Available from: http://link.springer.com/article/10.1023/A%3A1004181331049. [Accessed: 14 December 2012].

Biggs, J. & Tang, C. (2011). *Teaching for quality learning at university*. Open University Press.

Birbili, M. (2000). Translating from one language to another. *Social Research Update*. (31). p.p. [Online]. Available from: http://sru.soc.surrey.ac.uk/SRU31.html. [Accessed: 2 March 2013].

BIS (2009). *Higher Ambitions : The future of universities in a knowledge economy*. [Online]. Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. Available from: www.bis.gov.uk. [Accessed: 21 August 2012].

BIS (2011). *Higher Education: Students at the Heart of the System*. [Online]. Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. Available from: http://discuss.bis.gov.uk/cloudfiles/11-944-WP-students-at-heart.pdf.[Accessed: 3 February 2012].

Blackburn, S. (2008). *The Oxford dictionary of philosophy*. 2nd ed., rev. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Blackmur, D. (2007). A Critical Analysis of the UNESCO/OECD Guidelines for Quality Provision of Cross-Border Higher Education. *Quality in Higher Education*. [Online]. 13 (2). p.pp. 117–130. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1080/13538320701629137&magic=crossref||D404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3. [Accessed: 1 April 2011].

Blaikie, N. (2007). *Approaches to Social Enquiry: Advancing Knowledge*. Cambridge: Polity Press Polity.

Blaikie, N. (2009). *Designing Social Research*. Cambridge: Polity Press

Blasco, M.F. & Saura, I.G. (2006). Segmenting University Students on the Basis of Their Expectations. *Journal of Marketing For Higher Education*. [Online]. 16 (1). p.pp. 25–45. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1300/J050v16n01_02

&magic=crossref||D404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3. [Accessed: 3 April 2011].

Bodycott, P. (2009). Choosing a higher education study abroad destination. *Journal of Research in International Education*. [Online]. 8 (3). p.pp. 349 –373. Available from: http://jri.sagepub.com/content/8/3/349.abstract. [Accessed: 24 September 2011].

Bodycott, P. & Lai, A. (2012). The Influence and Implications of Chinese Culture in the Decision to Undertake Cross-Border Higher Education. *Journal of Studies in International Education*. [Online]. 16 (3). p.pp. 252–270. Available from: http://jsi.sagepub.com/content/16/3/252. [Accessed: 5 August 2012].

Bolton, D. & Nie, R. (2010). Creating Value in Transnational Higher Education: The Role of Stakeholder Management. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*. [Online]. 9 (4). p.pp. 701–714. Available from: http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/login.aspx?direct=true&db=buh&AN=56659888&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

Bonaccorsi, A. (2007). *Universities and strategic knowledge creation: specialization and performance in Europe*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

Bourdieu, P. (2008). The Forms of Capital. In: *Readings in Economic Sociology*. [Online]. Blackwell Publishers Ltd, pp. 280–291. Available from: http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/9780470755679.ch15.

Bowes, L. & Harvey, L. (1999). The impact of sandwich education on the activities of graduates six months post-graduation. *Birmingham, Centre for Research into Quality*.

Bowl, M., Cooke, S. & Hockings, C. (2008). Home or away? Issues of "choice", living arrangements and what it means to be a student. *Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning*. 10 (1). p.pp. 4–13.

Brandenburg, U., McCoshan, A., Bisch, L., Kreft, A., Storost, U., Leichsenring, H., Neuss, F., Morzick, B. & Noe, S. (2013). *Delivering Education across Borders in the European Union*. [Online]. European Commission. Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/education/higher-education/doc/studies/borders_en.pdf. [Accessed: 13 August 2013].

Briggs, S. (2006). An exploratory study of the factors influencing undergraduate student choice: the case of higher education in Scotland. *Studies in Higher Education*. [Online]. 31 (6). p.pp. 705–722. Available from: http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=22908944&site=eds-live&scope=site.

Brinkworth, R., McCann, B., Matthews, C. & Nordström, K. (2008). First year expectations and experiences: student and teacher perspectives. *Higher Education*. [Online]. 58 (2). p.pp. 157–173. Available from: http://www.springerlink.com/index/10.1007/s10734-008-9188-3. [Accessed: 3 April 2011].

British Council (2012a). *Portrait of a Transnational Education Student*. Student Insight Hot Topics. [Online]. London: British Council. Available from: http://ihe.britishcouncil.org/educationintelligence/student-insight-tne.

British Council (2012b). *The shape of things to come: Higher education global trends and emerging opportunities to 2020*. In: Going Global 2012, London. Available from: http://ihe.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/going_global/session_attachments/GG2012%2012.1%20Janet%20Illieva.pdf. [Accessed: 23 August 2012].

British Council (2013a). *The shape of things to come. The evolution of transnational education: data, definitions, opportunities and impacts analysis*. Going Global 2013. [Online]. London: British Council. Available from: https://ihe.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/import-content/the_shape_of_things_to_come_2.pdf. [Accessed: 10 November 2013].

British Council (2013b). *Transnational education continuing to expand*. [Online]. Available from: http://www.britishcouncil.org/press/new-research-transnational-education-continuing-expand. [Accessed: 15 September 2013].

British Educational Research Association (2011). *Ethical Guidelines For Education Research*. [Online]. Available from: http://www.bera.ac.uk/publications/guidelines/.

Brooks, R. & Waters, J. (2011). *Student mobilities, migration and the internationalization of higher education*. Houndmills Basingstoke Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Broomfield, D. & Bligh, J. (1998). An evaluation of the short form course experience questionnaire with medical students. *Medical education*. 32 (4). p.pp. 367–369.

Brown, P., Lauder, H. & Ashton, D. (2008). Education, Globalisation and the Future of the Knowledge Economy. *European Educational Research Journal*. 7 (2). p.pp. 131–156.

Brown, R. & Carasso, H. (2013). *Everything for Sale? The Marketisation of UK Higher Education*. London: Routledge.

Browne, E.J.P. (2010). *Securing a sustainable future for higher education*. *An Independent Review on Higher Education Funding & Student Finance.* [Online]. Available from: http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/corporate/docs/s/10-1208-securing-sustainable-higher-education-browne-report.pdf. [Accessed: 18 December 2012].

Browne, B.A., Kaldenberg, D.O., Browne, W.G. & Brown, D.J. (1998). Student as Customer: Factors Affecting Satisfaction and Assessments of Institutional Quality. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*. [Online]. 8 (3). p.pp. 1–14. Available from: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1300/J050v08n03_01. [Accessed: 28 June 2013].

Bryman, A. (2001). *Social Research Methods*. Oxford University Press, Incorporated.

Bryman, A. (2012). *Social Research Methods*. Oxford University Press.

Burt, R.S. (2000). The network structure of social capital. *Research in Organizational Behavior*. [Online]. 22. p.pp. 345–423. Available from: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0191308500220091. [Accessed: 27 September 2013].

Campbell, C. & Van der Wende, M. (2000). International initiatives and trends in quality assurance for European higher education. *ENQA occasional paper*. 1.

Cardoso, S., Carvalho, T. & Santiago, R. (2011). From Students to Consumers: reflections on the marketisation of Portuguese higher education. *European Journal of Education*. [Online]. 46 (2). p.pp. 271–284. Available from: http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1465-3435.2010.01447.x/abstract. [Accessed: 26 February 2012].

Van-Cauter, K. (2013). The shape of things to come 2: The evolution of transnational education. In: *Going Global 2013*. 6 March 2013, Dubai: British Council.

C-BERT (2010). *The Emergence of a Global Higher Education Marketplace: Successes, Stresses, and Failures in International Branch Campuses* [Online]. Available from : http://www.globalhighered.org/Documents/ashe.pdf [Accessed: 22 March 2011]

CBI (2009). *Stronger together. Businesses and universities in turbulent times. A report from the CBI Higher Education Task Force*. [Online]. Available from: http://www.cbi.org.uk/highereducation. [Accessed: 28 March 2012]

CBI (2010). *Fulfilling potential. The business role in education.* CBI. [Online]. Available from: http://www.cbi.org.uk/media/951143/fulfilling_potential_2010.pdf [Accessed: 28 March 2012]

Centre for Educational Research and Innovation. (2004). *Internationalisation and trade in higher education : opportunities and challenges*. Paris France: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Chamorro-Premuzic, T. & Furnham, A. (2008). Personality, intelligence and approaches to learning as predictors of academic performance. *Personality and Individual Differences*. [Online]. 44 (7). p.pp. 1596–1603. Available from: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0191886908000032. [Accessed: 12 August 2013].

Chapman, A. & Pyvis, D. (2006). Quality, identity and practice in offshore university programmes: issues in the internationalization of Australian higher education. *Teaching in Higher Education*. [Online]. 11 (2). p.pp. 233–245. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1080/13562510500527818&magic=crossref||D404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3. [Accessed: 2 April 2011].

Chapman, A., Pyvis, D., Chapman, A. & Pyvis, D. (2013). *Enhancing quality in transnational higher education: experiences of teaching and learning in Australian offshore programs.* [Online]. Available from: http://www.voced.edu.au/content/ngv56308. [Accessed: 10 August 2013].

Chapman, D.W., Cummings, W.K. & Postiglione, G.A. (2011). Transformations in Higher Education: Crossing Borders and Bridging Minds. *Crossing Borders in East Asian Higher Education*. p.pp. 1–22.

Chapman, L. & Ludlow, L. (2010). Can Downsizing College Class Sizes Augment Student Outcomes? An Investigation of the Effects of Class Size on Student Learning. *jge: the journal of general education*. 59 (2). p.pp. 105–123.

Chatterjee, A., Ghosh, C. & Bandyopadhyay, S. (2009). Assessing students' rating in higher education: A SERVQUAL approach. *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence*. [Online]. 20 (10). p.pp. 1095–1109. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1080/1478336090324

7114&magic=crossref||D404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3. [Accessed: 20 April 2011].

Chen, C.H. & Zimitat, C. (2006). Understanding Taiwanese students' decision-making factors regarding Australian international higher education. *International Journal of Educational Management*. [Online]. 20 (2). p.pp. 91–100. Available from: http://www.emeraldinsight.com/10.1108/09513540610646082. [Accessed: 3 April 2011].

Cheng, M. (2011). "Transforming the learner" versus "passing the exam": Understanding the gap between academic and student definitions of quality. *Quality in Higher Education*. [Online]. 17 (1). p.pp. 3–17. Available from: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13538322.2011.554634. [Accessed: 14 December 2012].

CHERI (2011). *Higher Education and Society in Changing Times: looking back and looking forward*. Centre for Higher Education Research and Information. Open University Press.

Chien, C.-L. & Kot, F.C. (2011). New Patterns in Student Mobility in the Southern Africa Development Community. In: SARUA (ed.). *Building Regional Higher Education Capacity through Academic Mobility*. Southern African Regional Universities Association (SARUA).

Choudaha, R. (2012). The rise of "glocal" students and transnational education. *the Guardian*. [Online]. 21 June. Available from: http://www.guardian.co.uk/higher-education-network/blog/2012/jun/21/opportunities-in-transnational-education. [Accessed: 27 June 2012].

Clark, J. & Hall, I. (2010). *Exploring transition: the experiences of students at Newcastle University in their first year*. Newcastle University. [Online]. Available from: http://www.ncl.ac.uk/cflat/news/documents/ExploringTransitionFinalReport.pdf [Accessed: 2 January 2012]

Clark, N. (2012). *Understanding Transnational Education, Its Growth and Implications*. [Online]. 2012. World Education News & Reviews. Available from: http://www.wes.org/ewenr/12aug/practical.htm. [Accessed: 29 August 2012].

Clarke, J., Cochrane, A. & McLaughlin, E. (1994). *Managing social policy*. London: SAGE.

Clarke, M. (2007). The Impact of Higher Education Rankings on Student Access, Choice, and Opportunity. *Higher Education in Europe*. [Online]. 32 (1). p.pp. 59–70. Available from: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03797720701618880. [Accessed: 9 August 2013].

Clewes, D. (2003). A student-centred conceptual model of service quality in higher education. *Quality in Higher Education*. 9 (1). p.pp. 69–85.

Clinton, M. (2011). Managing Students' and Teachers' Expectations of Higher Education: A Psychological Contract Approach. *Higher Education Research Network Journal*. [Online]. p.p. 23. Available from: http://ec2-79-125-112-176.eu-west-1.compute.amazonaws.com/study/learningteaching/kli/research/hern/hernjvol3.pdf#page=25. [Accessed: 29 September 2013].

Cohen, L. (2007). *Research Methods in Education.* Hoboken: Taylor & Francis,.

Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. (1994). *Research methods in education.* London and New York. Routledge.

Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education*. London; New York: Routledge.

L. Coiffait (ed.) (2011). *Blue Skies: New thinking about the future of higher education*. London: Pearson Centre for Policy and Learning.

Coleman, D. (2003). Quality Assurance in Transnational Education. *Journal of Studies in International Education*. [Online]. 7. p.pp. 354–378. Available from: http://jsi.sagepub.com/cgi/doi/10.1177/1028315303255597. [Accessed: 24 August 2011].

Collins, C.S. (2007). A General Agreement on Higher Education: GATS, globalization, and imperialism. *Research in Comparative and International Education*. 2 (4). p.pp. 283–296.

Connors, B. (2010). Global Mechanisms and Higher Education. in *Int Association for Critical Realism Conf: IACR 2010.*

Cranmer, S. (2006). Enhancing graduate employability: best intentions and mixed outcomes. *Studies in Higher Education*. 31 (2). p.pp. 169–184.

Cremonini, L., Epping, E., Westerheijden, D. & Vogelsang, K. (2012). *Impact of Quality Assurance on Cross-Border Higher Education*. Twente: Center for Higher Education Policy Studies (CHEPS).

Creswell, J.W. (2003). *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method approaches*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. (2009). *Research design : qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method approaches*. 3th ed. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications.

Cronin Jr, J.J., Brady, M.K. & Hult, G.T.M. (2000). Assessing the effects of quality, value, and customer satisfaction on consumer behavioral intentions in service environments. *Journal of retailing*. [Online]. 76 (2). p.pp. 193–218. Available from: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0022435900000282. [Accessed: 29 August 2013].

Crotty, M. (1998). *The Foundations of Social Research: Meaning and Perspective in the Research Process*. SAGE Publications.

Cullen, J., Joyce, J., Hassall, T. & Broadbent, M. (2003). Quality in higher education: from monitoring to management. *Quality Assurance in Education*. [Online]. 11 (1). p.pp. 5–14. Available from: http://www.emeraldinsight.com/10.1108/09684880310462038. [Accessed: 2 April 2011].

Cuthbert, D., Smith, W. & Boey, J. (2008). What do we really know about the outcomes of Australian international education? A critical review and prospectus for future research. *Journal of Studies in International Education*. [Online]. 12 (3). p.pp. 255–275. Available from: http://jsi.sagepub.com/content/12/3/255.short. [Accessed: 11 August 2013].

Daniel, S.J., Kanwar, A., COL, P.W. & Uvalić-Trumbić, S. (2008). From Innocence to Experience: the Politics and Projects of Cross-border Higher Education. In: *Education Across-Borders II: Politics, Policy and Legislative Action*.

Daniel, J., Kanwar, A. & Uvalic-Trumbic, S. (2009). Breaking Higher Education's Iron Triangle: Access, Cost, and Quality. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*. [Online]. 41 (2). p.pp. 30–35. Available from: http://heldref-publications.metapress.com/app/home/contribution.asp?referrer=parent&backto=issue,7,11;journal,11,83;linkingpublicationresults,1:119983,1. [Accessed: 4 June 2011].

Daun, H. (2011). Globalization, EU-ification, and the New Mode of Educational Governance in Europe. *European Education*. [Online]. 43 (1). p.pp. 9–32. Available from: http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=60208019&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

Davies, P. (2012). Can Governments Improve Higher Education Through "Informing Choice"? *British Journal of Educational Studies*. [Online]. 60 (3). p.pp. 261–276. Available from: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00071005.2012.715626. [Accessed: 21 December 2012].

Davis, R. (2010). *Working-class revolution not reaching "posh" universities*. [Online]. 28 September 2010. the Guardian. Available from: http://www.theguardian.com/education/2010/sep/28/working-class-students-posh-universities. [Accessed: 9 October 2013].

De la Fuente, J., Cardelle-Elawar, M., Peralta, F.J., Sánchez, M.D., Martínez-Vicente, J.M. & Zapata, L. (2011). Students' factors affecting undergraduates' perceptions of their teaching and learning process within ECTS experience. *Frontiers in psychology*. [Online]. 2. Available from: http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3111137/. [Accessed: 19 August 2013].

De Wit, H. (2011a). Globalisation and internationalisation of Higher Education. *RUSC*. 8 (2). p.pp. 241–248.

De Wit, H. (2011b). *Naming internationalisation will not revive it*. [Online]. 23 October 2011. University World News. Available from: http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20111021215849411. [Accessed: 26 October 2011].

De Wit, H. (2011c). *Trends, issues and challenges in internationalisation of higher education*. [Online]. Centre for Applied Research on Economics and Management, School of Economics and Management of the Hogeschool van Amsterdam. Available from: http://www.carem.hva.nl/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Trends-Issues-and-Challenges_Hans-de-Wit1.pdf. [Accessed: 20 December 2012].

Dearden, L., Fitzsimons, E. & Gill, W. (2010). *The impact of higher education finance on university participation in the UK (BIS research paper no. 11)*. [Online]. Available from: http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/id/eprint/479. [Accessed: 10 September 2013].

Dearing, R. & others (1997). The Dearing Report. *The National Committee of Enquiry into Higher Education*.

Deem, R. (2001). Globalisation, New Managerialism, Academic Capitalism and Entrepreneurialism in Universities: Is the local dimension still important? *Comparative Education*. [Online]. 37 (1). p.pp. 7–20. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1080/03050060020020408&magic=crossref||D404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3. [Accessed: 28 March 2011].

Deem, R. (2004). The Knowledge Worker, the Manager-academic and the Contemporary UK University: New and Old Forms of Public Management? *Financial Accountability & Management*. 20 (2). p.pp. 107–128.

Deem, R. & Brehony, K. (2005). Management as ideology: the case of "new managerialism" in higher education. *Oxford Review of Education*. [Online]. 31 (2). p.pp. 217–235. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1080/03054980500117827&magic=crossref||D404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3. [Accessed: 3 April 2011].

Dill, D.D. (2006). Convergence and diversity: The role and influence of university rankings. In: *CHER 19th Annual Research Conference, Kassel*. 2006.

Dimitropoulos, A. (2006). *Έρευνα του ΕΛΙΑΜΕΠ για την πανεπιστημιακή εκπαίδευση στην Ελλάδα.* Αθήνα.

Directgov (2011). *Money you can get to pay for university : Directgov - Education and learning*. [Online]. 14 October 2011. Public services all in one place. Available from: http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/UniversityAndHigherEducation/StudentFinance/DG_194804. [Accessed: 14 October 2011].

Doiz, A., Lasagabaster, D. & Sierra, J. (2012). Globalisation, internationalisation, multilingualism and linguistic strains in higher education. *Studies in Higher Education*. [Online]. p.pp. 1–15. Available from: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03075079.2011.642349. [Accessed: 17 August 2012].

Drew, S., McCaig, C., Marsden, D., Haughton, P., McBride, J., McBride, D., Willis, B. & Wolstenholme, C. (2008). *Trans-national Education and Higher Education Institutions: Exploring Patterns of HE Institutional Activity*. Sheffield Hallam University.

Dwivedi, M. (2013). Studying and teaching at UK degree programmes in India. *Asian Education and Development Studies*. [Online]. 2 (1). p.pp. 70–86. Available from: http://www.emeraldinsight.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/journals.htm?articleid=17073035&show=abstract. [Accessed: 11 August 2013].

East, J. (2001). International students identified as customers: Their expectations and perceptions. *Changing Identities*. [Online]. Available from: http://learning.uow.edu.au/LAS2001/unrefereed/east.pdf.

Easton, G. (2010). Critical realism in case study research. *Industrial Marketing Management*. [Online]. 39 (1). p.pp. 118–128. Available from: http://linkinghub.elsevier.com/retrieve/pii/S0019850109001424. [Accessed: 14 July 2013].

Edwards, J., Crosling, G. & Edwards, R. (2010). Outsourcing university degrees: implications for quality control. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*. [Online]. 32 (3). p.pp. 303–315. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1080/1360080100374 3539&magic=crossref||D404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3. [Accessed: 3 April 2011].

Eisenhardt, K.M. (1989). Building theories from case study research. *Academy of management review*. [Online]. 14 (4). p.pp. 532–550. Available from: http://amr.aom.org/content/14/4/532.short. [Accessed: 25 July 2013].

Eldridge, K. & Cranston, N. (2009). Managing transnational education: does national culture really matter? *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*. [Online]. 31 (1). p.pp. 67–79. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1080/1360080080255 9286&magic=crossref||D404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3. [Accessed: 28 March 2011].

ELSS (2011). *Faculty of Education, Law and Social Science Approved Ethical Procedures 2011-12*.

EURYDICE (2010a). *Focus on higher education in Europe 2010 : the impact of the Bologna process*. [Online]. Brussels: Education Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency. Available from: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/Education/eurydice/documents/thematic_reports/122EN.pdf [Accessed: 1 April 2013].

EURYDICE (2010b). *Organisation of the education system in Greece*. [Online]. European Commission. Available from: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/eurybase_en.php#greece.

Fairclough, N. (1989). *Language and power*. Language in social life series. London ; New York: Longman.

Fairclough, N. (2003). *Analysing discourse: Textual analysis for social research*. [Online]. Psychology Press. Available from: http://books.google.com/books?hl=el&lr=&id=dsoi4TyCFkMC&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=Fairclough&ots=pwUhp5p3Mv&sig=emzdT288935Vp5hVPN_AJKcfGuc. [Accessed: 2 April 2013].

Fallshaw, E. (2003). Overseas partnerships–a case study in quality. In: *Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia Annual Conference, Canterbury, New Zealand*. 2003.

Farrugia, C. (2012). International Branch CampusQuality in a Segmented Quality Assurance Environment. *Sheikh Saud Bin Saqr Al Qasimi - Foundation for Policy Research*. [Online]. 5 (September). p.pp. 1–8. Available from: http://www.academia.edu/2298638/International_Branch_Campus_Quality_in_a_Segmented_Quality_Assurance_Environment. [Accessed: 18 December 2012].

J. Fegan & M. H. Field (eds.) (2009). *Education Across Borders*. [Online]. Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands. Available from: http://www.springerlink.com/index/10.1007/978-1-4020-9411-8. [Accessed: 28 April 2011].

Fenstermacher, G. & Richardson, V. (2005). On making determinations of quality in teaching. *The Teachers College Record*. 107 (1). p.pp. 186–213.

Field, A.P. (2005). *Discovering statistics using SPSS*. London: SAGE Publications.

Field, A.P. (2009). *Discovering statistics using SPSS: (and sex and drugs and rock "n" roll)*. SAGE Publications Ltd.

Fielding, A., Dunleavy, P.J. & Langan, A.M. (2010). Interpreting context to the UKs national student (Satisfaction) survey data for science subjects. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*. 34 (3). p.p. 347.

Filippakou, O. (2011). The idea of quality in higher education: a conceptual approach. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*. [Online]. 32 (1). p.pp. 15–28. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1080/01596306.2011.537068&magic=crossref||D404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3.

Findlay, A., King, R., Geddes, A., Smith, F., Stam, M.A., Dunne, M., Skeldon, R. & Ahrens, M.J. (2010). *Motivations and experiences of UK students studying abroad*. [Online]. BIS Research Paper. Available from: http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/corporate/migratedD/publications/B/BIS-RP-008. [Accessed: 20 August 2012]

Findlay, A.M. (2011). An Assessment of Supply and Demand-side Theorizations of International Student Mobility. *International Migration*. [Online]. 49 (2). p.pp. 162–190. Available from: http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1468-2435.2010.00643.x/abstract. [Accessed: 6 June 2012].

Findlay, A.M., King, R., Smith, F.M., Geddes, A. & Skeldon, R. (2012). World class? An investigation of globalisation, difference and international student mobility. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*. [Online]. Available from: http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1475-5661.2011.00454.x/full. [Accessed: 17 August 2012].

Finn, D. (2000). From full employment to employability: a new deal for Britain's unemployed? *International Journal of Manpower*. [Online]. 21 (5). p.pp. 384–399. Available from: http://www.emeraldinsight.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/journals.htm?articleid=848277&show=abstract. [Accessed: 17 September 2013].

Finney, T.G. & Finney, R.Z. (2010). Are students their universities' customers? An exploratory study. *Education + Training*. [Online]. 52 (4). p.pp. 276–291. Available from: http://www.emeraldinsight.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/journals.htm?articleid=1863767&show=abstract. [Accessed: 26 December 2011].

Finnie, R. & Usher, A. (2005). *Measuring the quality of post-secondary education: Concepts, current practices and a strategic plan*. [Online]. CPRN= RCRPP. Available from: http://rcrpp.org/documents/35988_fr.pdf. [Accessed: 15 December 2012].

Flouris, G. & Pasias, G. (2003). A critical appraisal of curriculum reform in Greece (1980-2002). *European Education*. 35 (3). p.pp. 73–90.

Foskett, R. (2005). Collaborative Partnership in the Higher Education Curriculum: a cross-sector study of foundation degree development. *Research in Post-Compulsory Education*. 10 (3). p.pp. 351–372.

Fry, H., Ketteridge, S. & Marshall, S. (2008). *A handbook for teaching and learning in higher education: enhancing academic practice*. London: Routledge.

Gaffney-Rhys, R. & Jones, J. (2008). Reflections on the UK National Student Survey: a Business and Management case study. *Business*. [Online]. 1. p.pp. 3–14. Available from: http://repository.newport.ac.uk/handle/123456789/338.

Galindo-Rueda, F., Marcenaro-Gutierrez, O. & Vignoles, A. (2004). *The Widening Socio-economic Gap in UK Higher Education*. [Online]. London: Centre for the Economics of Education. Available from: http://www.lse.ac.uk/intranet/LSEServices/ERD/pressAndInformationOffice/PDF/HigherEducationPaperJuneAmended.pdf. [Accessed: 24 August 2013].

Georgiadis, N.M. (2011). Greek University: the road to marketization. *Research in Comparative and International Education*. 6 (2). p.pp. 201–221.

Giavrimis, P. & Papanis, E. (2008). Sociological Dimensions of School Failure: The Views of Educators and Students of Educational Scchools. *The Journal of International Social Research, ⅕ Fall*. p.p. 327.

Gibbs, G. (2010). *Dimensions of quality*. [Online]. York: The Higher Education Academy. Available from: http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/documents/evidence_informed_practice/Dimensions_of_Quality.pdf. [Accessed: 26 December 2012]

Gibbs, G. (2012). *Implications of "Dimensions of quality" in a market environment*. [Online]. York: The Higher Education Academy. Available from: http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/evidence_informed_practice/Implications_of_Dimensions_of_quality. [Accessed: 15 December 2012].

Gibson, A. (2010). Measuring business student satisfaction: a review and summary of the major predictors. *Journal of Higher Education Policy & Management*. [Online]. 32 (3). p.pp. 251–259. Available from: http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=50218458&site=eds-live&scope=site.

Gillard, D. (2011). *Education in England: a brief history*. [Online]. 2011. Available from: http://www.educationengland.org.uk/history/timeline.html. [Accessed: 26 February 2012].

Ginns, P., Prosser, M. & Barrie, S. (2007). Students' perceptions of teaching quality in higher education: the perspective of currently enrolled students. *Studies in Higher Education*. [Online]. 32 (5). p.pp. 603–615. Available from: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03075070701573773. [Accessed: 30 June 2013].

Goldbart, J., Marshall, J. & Evans, I.R. (2005). International students of speech and language therapy in the UK: Choices about where to study and whether to return. *Higher education*. 50 (1). p.pp. 89–109.

Grace, G. (1989). Education: Commodity or Public Good? *British Journal of Educational Studies*. [Online]. 37 (3). p.pp. 207–221. Available from: http://www.jstor.org/stable/3121278. [Accessed: 1 November 2011].

Gray, D.E. (2009). *Doing research in the real world*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Gronroos, C. (1990). Service Management: A Management Focus for Service Competition. *International Journal of Service Industry Management*. [Online]. 1 (1). Available from: http://www.emeraldinsight.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/journals.htm?articleid=851473&show=abstract. [Accessed: 4 August 2011].

Gruber, T., Fuß, S., Voss, R. & Gläser-Zikuda, M. (2010). Examining student satisfaction with higher education services: Using a new measurement tool. *International Journal of Public Sector Management*. [Online]. 23 (2). p.pp. 105–123. Available from: http://www.emeraldinsight.com/journals.htm?articleid=1846507&show=abstract. [Accessed: 11 August 2013].

Gu, J. (2009). Transnational education: Current developments and policy implications. *Frontiers of Education in China*. [Online]. 4 (4). p.pp. 624–649. Available from: http://www.springerlink.com/index/10.1007/s11516-009-0033-y. [Accessed: 7 May 2011].

Guba, E.G. (1990). *The paradigm dialog*. London: SAGE Publications, Incorporated.

Guba, E.G. & Lincoln, V.S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In: N. K. Denzin & V. S. Lincoln (eds.). *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks Calif.: SAGE, pp. 105–117.

Guo, S. & Chase, M. (2011). Internationalisation of higher education: integrating international students into Canadian academic environment. *Teaching in Higher Education*. [Online]. 16 (3). p.pp. 305–318. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10%2e1080%2f13562517%2e2010%2e546524&magic=crossref%7c%7cD404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3. [Accessed: 14 May 2011].

Gürüz, K. (2008). *Higher education and international student mobility in the global knowledge economy*. New York: State University of New York Press.

Gürüz, K. (2003). Higher education in the global knowledge economy. *CMU Assembly*. 23.

Hall, M. (2012). *Inequality and higher education: marketplace or social justice?* London: Leadership Foundation for Higher Education.

Hamdan, A.K. (2009). Reflexivity of discomfort in insider-outsider educational research. *McGill Journal of Education/Revue des sciences de l'éducation de McGill*. [Online]. 44 (3). p.pp. 377–404. Available from: http://www.erudit.org/revue/mje/2009/v44/n3/039946ar.html. [Accessed: 24 April 2013].

Hamilton, L. (2011). *Case studies in educational research*. [Online]. Online: British Educational Research Association. Available from:

http://www.bera.ac.uk/system/files/Case%20studies%20in%20educational%20research.pdf. [Accessed: 25 May 2013].

Hartig, J. (2011). Methodology: A Retroductive Approach. In: *Learning and Innovation @ a Distance*. [Online]. Wiesbaden: Gabler, pp. 161–175. Available from: http://link.springer.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/content/pdf/10.1007%2F978-3-8349-6904-0_7.pdf. [Accessed: 4 August 2013].

Harvey, D. (2007). *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Harvey, D. (2010). *The enigma of capital: and the crises of capitalism*. Profile Books.

Harvey, L. (2005). A history and critique of quality evaluation in the UK. *Quality Assurance in Education*. 13 (4). p.pp. 263–276.

Harvey, L. (2012). *Analytic Quality Glossary*. [Online]. 2012. Quality Research International. Available from: http://www.qualityresearchinternational.com/glossary/internationalisation.htm. [Accessed 25 September 2013]

Harvey, L. (2007). The Epistemology of Quality. In: *Outcomes and Theory of Quality Assurance*. 2007, Toronto.

Harvey, L. (1996). *Transforming higher education*. Buckingham [England] ;;Bristol Pa.: Society for Research into Higher Education. London: Open University Press.

Harvey, L. & Askling, B. (2003). Quality in higher education. *The dialogue between higher education research and practice*. p.pp. 69–83.

Harvey, L. & Drew, S. (2006). *The first-year experience: a review of literature for the Higher Education Academy*. York: The Higher Education Academy

Harvey, L., Geall, V., Moon, S., Aston, J., Bowes, L. & Blackwell, A. (1998). *Work Experience: Expanding Opportunities for Undergraduates.* Centre for Research into Quality, University of Central England in Birmingham

Harvey, L. & Green, D. (1993). Defining Quality. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*. 18 (1). p.p. 9.

Harvey, L., Moon, S. & Geall, V. (1997). Chapter 8: Work Placements. In: *Graduate's Work: Organisational Change and Students' attributes*. Birmingham, UK: University of Central England in Birmingham.

Harvey, L. & Newton, J. (2004). Transforming quality evaluation. *Quality in Higher Education*. [Online]. 10 (2). p.pp. 149–165. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1080/1353832042000230635&magic=crossref||D404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3. [Accessed: 3 April 2011].

Harvey, L. & Williams, J. (2010). Fifteen Years of Quality in Higher Education. *Quality in Higher Education*. [Online]. 16 (1). p.pp. 3–36. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1080/13538321003679457&magic=crossref||D404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3. [Accessed: 14 May 2011].

Hazelkorn, E. (2009). *Rankings and the Global "Battle for Talent."* in R. Bhandari and S. Laughlin (eds), Higher Education on the Move: New Developments in Global Mobility, Institute of International Education, New York. Pp79-94.

Hazelkorn, E. (2013). *How Rankings are Reshaping Higher Education*. [Online]. Available from: http://arrow.dit.ie/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1023&context=cserbk. [Accessed: 9 August 2013].

HCA (2008). *Μια ακόμα καταδίκη της Ελλάδας για τη μη αναγνώριση των πτυχίων των κολλεγίων*. [Online]. 4 December 2008. Hellenic Colleges Association. Available from: http://www.hca.gr/nea1_55.php. [Accessed: 23 October 2011].

Healey, N. (2013a). *Definitions and estimates of the size and shape of UK transnational education*. HEA Special Interest Group - Transnational Education paper. [Online]. UK: Higher Education Academy. Available from: http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/internationalisation/Nigel_Healey_paper. [Accessed: 8 May 2013].

Healey, N. (2013b). Why do English Universities really Franchise Degrees to Overseas Providers? *Higher Education Quarterly*. [Online]. 67 (2). p.pp. 180–200. Available from: http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/hequ.12012/abstract. [Accessed: 7 May 2013].

HEGlobal (2012). *TNE - HEGlobal: Transnational education*. [Online]. 2012. HEGlobal Intergrated Advisory Service. Available from: http://heglobal.international.ac.uk/tne.aspx. [Accessed: 30 August 2012].

Helgesen, U. & Nesset, E. (2007). What accounts for students' loyalty. Some field study evidence", *International Journal of Educational Management*, 21 (2), pp.126 - 143

Hellawell, D. (2006). Inside–out: analysis of the insider–outsider concept as a heuristic device to develop reflexivity in students doing qualitative research. *Teaching in Higher Education*. 11 (4). p.pp. 483–494.

Hellenic Colleges Association (2012). *Interviews*. [Online]. 2012. HCA - Interviews. Available from: http://hca.gr/%ce%bd%ce%ad%ce%b1/%cf%83%cf%85%ce%bd%ce%b5%ce%bd%cf%84%ce%b5%cf%8d%ce%be%ce%b5%ce%b9%cf%82/. [Accessed: 27 December 2012].

Hellenic Parliament (2008). *Το Σύνταγμα της Ελλάδας. Μέρος Δεύτερο - Ατομικά και κοινωνικά δικαιώματα. Άρθρο 16: (Παιδεία, τέχνη, επιστήμη)*. [Online]. 2008. Available from: http://www.hellenicparliament.gr/Vouli-ton-Ellinon/To-Politevma/Syntagma/article-18/. [Accessed: 9 August 2011].

Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency (2009). *Έκθεση για την ποιότητα στην Ανώτατη Εκπαίδευση 2009*. [Online]. Available from: http://www.hqaa.gr/data1/HQAA_REPORT_2009.pdf.[Accessed: 10 March 2012]

Henard, F. & Leprince-Ringuet, S. (2008). *The path to quality teaching in higher education*. [Online]. OECD. Available from: http://www.oecd.org/edu/imhe/44150246.pdf. [Accessed: 20 April 2011]

HESA (2013). *HESA - Higher Education Statistics Agency - Free Online Statistics - Students & qualifiers*. [Online]. 2013. The Higher Education Statistics Agency.

Available from: http://www.hesa.ac.uk/content/view/1897/239/. [Accessed: 12 November 2013].

Hill, C., Cheong, K.-C., Leong, Y.-C. & Fernandez-Chung, R. (2013). TNE – Trans-national education or tensions between national and external? A case study of Malaysia. *Studies in Higher Education*. [Online]. p.pp. 1–15. Available from: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03075079.2012.754862. [Accessed: 21 January 2013].

Hill, F.M. (1995). Managing service quality in higher education: the role of the student as primary consumer. *Quality Assurance in Education*. [Online]. 3 (3). p.pp. 10–21. Available from: http://www.emeraldinsight.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/journals.htm?articleid=839535&show=abstract. [Accessed: 4 June 2011].

Hill, Y., Lomas, L. & MacGregor, J. (2003). Students' perceptions of quality in higher education. *Quality Assurance in Education*. [Online]. 11 (1). p.pp. 15–20. Available from: http://www.emeraldinsight.com/journals.htm?articleid=839712&show=abstract. [Accessed: 10 December 2011].

Hillage, J. & Pollard, E. (1999). Employability: developing a framework for policy analysis. *Labour Market Trends*. 107. p.pp. 83–84.

Hoare, L. (2013). Swimming in the deep end: transnational teaching as culture learning? *Higher Education Research & Development*. [Online]. 32 (4). p.pp. 561–574. Available from: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/07294360.2012.700918. [Accessed: 5 July 2013].

Hoare, L. (2012). Transnational Student Voices Reflections on a Second Chance. *Journal of Studies in International Education*. [Online]. 16 (3). p.pp. 271–286. Available from: http://jsi.sagepub.com/content/16/3/271. [Accessed: 12 August 2012].

Hodson, P.J. & Thomas, H.G. (2001). Higher education as an international commodity: ensuring quality in partnerships. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*. 26 (2). p.pp. 101–112.

Hodson, P.J. & Thomas, H.G. (2003). Quality assurance in higher education: fit for the new millennium or simply year 2000 compliant? *Higher Education*. 45 (3). p.pp. 375–387.

Hofstede, G. (2013a). *Geert Hofstede | Dimensions of national Cultures*. [Online]. 2013. Available from: http://www.geerthofstede.nl/culture/dimensions-of-national-cultures.aspx. [Accessed: 13 April 2011].

Hofstede, G. (2013b). *The Hofstede Centre: Greece*. [Online]. 2013. The Hofstede Centre. Available from: http://geert-hofstede.com/greece.html. [Accessed: 12 August 2013].

J. Holmwood (ed.) (2013). *A Manifesto for the Public University*. Bloomsbury London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Houston, D. (2008). Rethinking quality and improvement in higher education. *Quality Assurance in Education*. [Online]. 16 (1). p.pp. 61–79. Available from:

http://www.emeraldinsight.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/journals.htm?articleid=1657864&show=abstract. [Accessed: 31 May 2011].

Li-Hua, R., Wilson, J., Aouad, G. & Li, X. (2011). Strategic aspects of innovation and internationalization in higher education: The Salford PMI2 experience. *Journal of Chinese Entrepreneurship*. [Online]. 3 (1). p.pp. 8–23. Available from: http://www.emeraldinsight.com/10.1108/17561391111105990. [Accessed: 19 May 2011].

Hudzik, J.K. (2011). *Comprehensive Internationalization*. *From Concept to Action.* NAFSA. Available from: http://www.nafsa.org/uploadedFiles/NAFSA_Home/Resource_Library_Assets/Publications_Library/2011_Comprehen_Internationalization.pdf. [Accessed: 11 November 2011].

Hussain, K. & Birol, C. (2011). The Assessment of Non-academic and Academic Service Quality in Higher Education. *Egitim Arastirmalari-Eurasian Journal of Educational Research, 1 (42), p.pp. 95-116.*

Hussey, T. & Smith, P. (2010). *The trouble with higher education: A critical examination of our universities*. London: Taylor & Francis.

Hutton, J.G., Leung, V., Mak, A.K.Y., Varey, R.J. & Watjatrakul, B. (2011). Students, Patients, Citizens, and Believers as “Customers”: A Cross-National Exploratory Study. *Journal of Nonprofit & Public Sector Marketing*. [Online]. 23 (1). p.pp. 41–70. Available from: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/10495142.2011.548758. [Accessed: 23 November 2012].

Hyland, F., Trahar, S., Anderson, J. & Dickens, A. (2008). A Changing World: the internationalisation experiences of staff and students (home and international) in UK Higher Education. *The Higher Education Academy*. [Online]. Available from: http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/internationalisation/Changing_world.

ICAP (2010). *Τριτοβάθμια Ιδιωτική Εκπαίδευση*. ICAP. Athens: ICAP.

IIE (2013). *Project Atlas*. [Online]. 2013. Institute of of International Education. Available from: http://www.iie.org/en/Services/Project-Atlas/United-Kingdom. [Accessed: 24 August 2013].

IIEP-UNESCO (2011). *Regulating and assuring the quality of cross-border providers of higher education*. [Online]. Paris: International Institute for Educational Planning (UNESCO). Available from: http://www.iiep.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Cap_Dev_Training/Training_Materials/HigherEd/EQA_HE_5.pdf. [Accessed: 25 December 2011].

IMF (2011). *Greece: Fourth Review Under the Stand-By Arrangement and Request for Modification and Waiver of Applicability of Performance Criteria*. [Online]. IMF. Available from: http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/cat/longres.aspx?sk=25038.0.[Accessed 1 December 2011].

International Committee (2010). *academic asylum*. [Online]. Available from: http://www.minedu.gov.gr/english/education/12-04-11-report-of-the-international-committee-on-higher-education-in-greece.html. [Accessed 5 September 2011].

Ishitani, T.T. (2006). Studying Attrition and Degree Completion Behavior among First-Generation College Students in the United States. *The Journal of Higher Education*. [Online]. 77 (5). p.pp. 861–885. Available from: http://www.jstor.org/stable/3838790. [Accessed: 8 October 2013].

Ivo, A. (2011). *Students: A Greek Export Success Story*. [Online]. 26 June 2011. EconoMonitor. Available from: http://www.economonitor.com/blog/2011/06/students-a-greek-export-success-story/. [Accessed: 12 February 2012].

De Jager, J. & Du Plooy, A. (2006). Student's expectations of service quality in tertiary education: a comparison between prospective and current students. *Acta Commercii,* 6 (1), p.pp. 10-19

James, R. (2007). Students and student learning in mass systems of higher education: Six educational issues facing universities and academic leaders. *Mass Higher Education in UK and International Contexts*.

James, R. (2002). Students' changing expectations of higher education and the consequences of mismatches with the reality. *Responding to student expectations*..

James, R. & Beckett, D. (2006). The changing expectations of university students and the implications for learning. in Wang, C., Mohanan, K. and Pan, D. *Proceedings of the Second Symposium on Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, Centre for Development of Teaching and Learning, National University of Singapore

Jameson, J., Strudwick, K., Bond-Taylor, S. & Jones, M. (2011). Academic principles versus employability pressures: a modern power struggle or a creative opportunity? *Teaching in Higher Education*. [Online]. p.pp. 1–13. Available from: http://www.tandfonline.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/doi/abs/10.1080/13562517.2011.590978. [Accessed: 23 August 2011].

Johnson, R.B. & Onwuegbuzie, A.J. (2004). Mixed methods research: A research paradigm whose time has come. *Educational researcher*. 33 (7). p.p. 14.

Jones, G.R. (2010). Factors Influencing Choice of Higher Education in Wales. *Contemporary Wales*. [Online]. 23 (1). p.pp. 93–116. Available from: http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/uwp/cowa/2010/00000023/00000001/art00009. [Accessed: 5 March 2013].

Jones, M. (2001). *The issue of bias and positionality in cross-cultural, educational studies - enhancing the validity of data through a reflective-reflexive approach*. [Online]. 12 June 2001. Available from: http://www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/documents/00001733.htm. [Accessed: 24 April 2013].

Jonker, J. & Pennink, B. (2009). *The Essence of Research Methodology*. [Online]. Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer Berlin Heidelberg. Available from: http://www.springerlink.com/index/10.1007/978-3-540-71659-4. [Accessed: 3 April 2011].

Jonker, J. & Pennink, B.J.W. (2010). *The Essence of Research Methodology: A Concise Guide for Master and PhD Students in Management Science*.Springer.

Kahanec, M. & Králiková, R. (2011). *Pulls of International Student Mobility*. Discussion Paper. [Online]. IZA. Available from: http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1977819. [Accessed: 21 August 2012].

Kallinikaki, T. (2010). Gender, Children and Families in the Greek Welfare State. *Children, Gender and Families in Mediterranean Welfare States*. p.pp. 181–202.

Kalvemark, T. & Van der Wende, M. (1997). *National Policies for the Internationalisation of Higher Education in Europe. Hogskoleverket Studies 1997:8 S.* [Online]. Available from: http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED432190. [Accessed: 5 May 2011].

Kara, A. & Campus, Y. (2004). Business Student Satisfaction, Intentions and Retention in Higher Education: An Empirical Investigation. *International Journal of Educational Management*. [Online]. 19 (2). p.p. 19. Available from: http://www.realmarcom.com/uop/documents/research/student_satisfaction.pdf.

Karagiannopoulou, E. & Christodoulides, P. (2005). The impact of Greek University students' perceptions of their learning environment on approaches to studying and academic outcomes. *International Journal of Educational Research*. [Online]. 43 (6). p.pp. 329–350. Available from: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0883035506000322. [Accessed: 25 September 2011].

Katsara, R. (2004). The need to investigate Greek students' experiences in British universities: the use of ethnography in the identification of such a need. *International Education Journal*. 5 (1). p.pp. 70–89.

Katsikas, E. (2009). Elements and Symptoms of a Poor Higher Education system: Evidence from a Greek University. *Discussion Paper Series*. [Online]. 30 (17). p.pp. 1–41. Available from: http://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&btnG=Search&q=intitle:Elements+and+Symptoms+of+a+Poor+Higher+Education+system+:+Evidence+from+a+Greek+University#0.

Katsikas, E. (2010). Elements and Symptoms of an Ineffective Higher Education System: Evidence from a Greek University. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*. 34 (3). p.p. 20.

Katsikas, E. & Dergiades, T. (2009). Higher Education Policy in Greece, Filling the Danaids' Jar. *Discussion Paper Series*.

Kay, J., Dunne, E. & Hutchinson, J. (2010). *Rethinking the values of higher education-students as change agents?*. [Online] QAA. Available from: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Documents/StudentsChangeAgents.pdf. [Accessed: 22 February 2013].

Kazamias, A.M. & Roussakis, Y. (2003). Crisis and reform in Greek education. *European Education*. 35 (3). p.pp. 7–30.

Kell, P.M., Vogl, G., Kell, P. & Vogl, G. (2012a). International Students: Towards Global Citizenship, Towards New Perspectives on Global Student Mobility. In: *International Students in the Asia Pacific*. Education in the Asia-Pacific Region:

Issues, Concerns and Prospects. [Online]. Springer Netherlands, pp. 169–183. Available from: http://www.springerlink.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/content/u632t05n15818816/abstract/. [Accessed: 11 September 2012].

Kell, P.M., Vogl, G., Kell, P. & Vogl, G. (2012b). Transnational Student Mobility: Introducing New Paradigms for Researching International Students. In: *International Students in the Asia Pacific*. Education in the Asia-Pacific Region: Issues, Concerns and Prospects. [Online]. Springer Netherlands, pp. 1–24. Available from: http://www.springerlink.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/content/g5877j5nl42p568x/abstract/. [Accessed: 6 June 2012].

Kelso, R.S. (2008). *Measuring undergraduate student perceptions of service quality in higher education*. [Online]. United States -- Florida: University of South Florida. Available from: http://search.proquest.com/docview/275864004?accountid=12117.[Accessed 21 January 2012].

Kerdis, D. & Sfatos, C. (1998). *Greek Higher Education: Prospects for Reform*. Hellenic Resources Institute. New York: Pella Publishing Company.

Keynes, J.M. (2006). *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*. Atlantic Publishers & Dist.

Khemka, K. (2012). *Transnational education in Asia: Opportunities and challenges*. In: 2012, The Observatory on Borderless Higher Education.

Khodayari, F. & Khodayari, B. (2011). Service Quality in Higher Education. *Interdisciplinary Journal*. [Online]. Available from: http://www.doaj.org/doaj?func=fulltext&aId=952680. [Accessed: 12 August 2013].

Kim, T. (2009). Transnational academic mobility, internationalization and interculturality in higher education. *Intercultural Education*. [Online]. 20 (5). p.pp. 395–405. Available from: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14675980903371241. [Accessed: 30 August 2013].

Kindleberger, C.P. (2006). *Keynesianism vs. monetarism, and other essays in financial history*. Taylor & Francis.

King, R. & Raghuram, P. (2012). International Student Migration: Mapping the Field and New Research Agendas. *Population, Space and Place*. [Online]. p.p. n/a–n/a. Available from: http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/psp.1746/abstract. [Accessed: 17 November 2012].

Kinser, K. (2011). Multinational quality assurance. *New Directions for Higher Education*. [Online]. 2011 (155). p.pp. 53–64. Available from: http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/he.444/abstract. [Accessed: 6 June 2013].

Kirkpatrick, I. & Martinez-Lucio, M. (1995). *The politics of quality in the public sector: the management of change*. Van Nostrand Reinhold.

Kitsantonis, N. (2011). E.U. Presses Greece on Private Colleges. *The New York Times*. [Online]. 10 April. Available from:

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/11/world/europe/11iht-educLede11.html. [Accessed: 13 October 2011].

Knight, J. (2004). Internationalization Remodeled: Definition, Approaches, and Rationales. *Journal of Studies in International Education*. [Online]. 8 (1). p.pp. 5–31. Available from: http://jsi.sagepub.com/cgi/doi/10.1177/1028315303260832. [Accessed: 12 September 2010].

Knight, J. (2006). Internationalization: Concepts, complexities and challenges. *International handbook of higher education*. p.pp. 207–227.

Knight, J. (2007a). *Cross-border Higher Education: issues and implications for quality assurance and accreditation*. Palgrave MacMillan.

Knight, J. (2007b). Implications of Crossborder Education and GATS for the Knowledge Enterprise. In: *submitted to UNESCO Forum on Higher Education, Research and Knowledge*.

Knight, J. (2011). Internationalization: North, South, East and West. *Borderless 2011 - OBHE*. p.pp. 1–19.

Know, H. & Wyper, J. (2008). *Quality Enhancement Themes: The First Year Experience*. [Online]. Glasgow: The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. Available from: http://qmwww.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/docs/publications/a-practical-guide-to-providing-flexible-learning-in-further-and-higher-education.pdf. [Accessed: 21 October 2013].

KPMG (2012). *Extending the campus: a lesson in successful global expansion for higher education institutions*. KPMG International.

Kragh, S.U. & Bislev, S. (2005). Universities and student values across nations. *Journal of intercultural communication*. (9, June). Available from: http://www.immi.se/intercultural/nr9/kragh.htm [Accessed: 9 September 2010].

Kuhn, T. (1962). The structure of scientific revolution. *University of Chicago Press, Chicago*.

Kvale, S. (1996). *Interviews: An introduction to qualitative research interviewing*. Sage Publications, Inc.

Kwan, P.Y.. & Ng, P.W.. (1999). Quality indicators in higher education-comparing Hong Kong and China’s students. *Managerial Auditing Journal*. 14 (1/2). p.pp. 20–27.

Kyriazis, A. & Asderaki, F. (2008). *Higher education in Greece*. Monographs on Higher Education. Bucharest: CEPES European Centre for Higher Education.

Laing, L. & Laing, G. (2011). The student as customer model and its impact on the academic leadership role in higher education. In: *Meeting the Challenges: Proceedings of the ATN Assessment Conference 2011*. 2011.

Lane, J.E. (2011). Global expansion of international branch campuses: Managerial and leadership challenges. *New Directions for Higher Education*. [Online]. 2011 (155). p.pp. 5–17. Available from: http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/he.440/abstract. [Accessed: 19 December 2011].

Lane, J.E., Kinser, K. & Knox, D. (2013). Regulating Cross-border Higher Education: A Case Study of the United States. *Higher Education Policy*. [Online]. 26 (2). p.pp. 147–172. Available from: http://www.palgrave-journals.com/hep/journal/v26/n2/abs/hep201223a.html. [Accessed: 12 August 2013].

Larsen, K., Momii, K. & Vincent-Lancrin, S. (2004). Cross-border Higher Education: an analysis of current trends, policy strategies and future scenarios. *OBHE Report*.

Lawton, W. & Katsomitros, A. (2012). *International Branch Campuses. Data and Developments*. London: The Observatory on Borderless Higher Education.

Lee, D. (2010). *Employability at the business-led university: towards a student-led and business facing agenda*. draft paper presented at The Political Economy of University Governance Workshop, University of Birmingham 24 June 2010.

Leonadari, A. (1994). Comparability of self-concept among normal achievers and children with learning difficulties within a Greek context. *International Journal of Early Childhood*. 26 (1). p.pp. 19–32.

Letcher, D.W. & Neves, J.S. (2010). Determinants of undergraduate business student satisfaction. *Research in Higher Education Journal*. 6 (1). p.pp. 1–26.

Levy, D.C. (2006). The Unanticipated Explosion: Private Higher Education's Global Surge. *Comparative Education Review*. [Online]. 50 (2). p.pp. 217–240. Available from: http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/500694. [Accessed: 30 August 2011].

Li, J., Liu, F. & Rojas-Méndez, J.I. (2013). How international students select offshore programs: the influence of image, attitude, subject norm, and perceived behavioral control. *Asia Pacific Education Review*. [Online]. 14 (3). p.pp. 381–390. Available from: http://link.springer.com/10.1007/s12564-013-9265-x. [Accessed: 30 August 2013].

Liagouras, G., Protogerou, I. & Caloghirou, Y. (2003). Exploring mismatches between higher education and the labour market in Greece. *European Journal of Education*. 38 (4). p.pp. 413–426.

Liamputtong, P. (2008). Doing Research in a Cross-Cultural Context: Methodological and Ethical Challenges. In: P. Liamputtong (ed.). *Doing Cross-Cultural Research*. Social Indicators Research Series. [Online]. Springer Netherlands, pp. 3–20. Available from: http://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-1-4020-8567-3_1. [Accessed: 22 April 2013].

Lianos, T.P., Asteriou, D. & Agiomirgianakis, G.M. (2004). Foreign university graduates in the Greek labour market: Employment, salaries and overeducation. *International Journal of Finance & Economics*. [Online]. 9 (2). p.pp. 151–164. Available from: http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/ijfe.238.

Lim, A.H. & Saner, R. (2011). Trade in Education Services: Market Opportunities and Risks. *SSRN eLibrary*. [Online]. Available from: http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1807291. [Accessed: 26 May 2011].

Lim, F.C.B. (2008). Understanding quality assurance: a cross country case study. *Quality Assurance in Education*. [Online]. 16 (2). p.pp. 126–140. Available from:

http://www.emeraldinsight.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/journals.htm?articleid=1723419. [Accessed: 20 January 2013].

Livanos, I. (2010). The relationship between higher education and labour market in Greece: the weakest link? *Higher Education*. 60 (5). p.pp. 473–489.

Lizzio, A., Wilson, K. & Simons, R. (2002). University Students' Perceptions of the Learning Environment and Academic Outcomes: Implications for theory and practice. *Studies in Higher Education*. [Online]. 27 (1). p.pp. 27–52. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1080/03075070120099359&magic=crossref||D404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3. [Accessed: 3 April 2011].

Lomas, L. (2007). Are Students Customers? Perceptions of Academic Staff. *Quality in Higher Education*. [Online]. 13 (1). p.pp. 31–44. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1080/13538320701272714&magic=crossref||D404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3. [Accessed: 3 April 2011].

Lueddeke, G. (2010). Curriculum matters: building capacity for strategic change in UK higher education. *International Journal of Strategic Change Management*. 2 (1). p.pp. 18–31.

Luijten-Lub, A. (2007). *Choices in internationalisation : how higher education institutions respond to internationalisation, europeanisation, and globalisation*. [Online]. 2007. Available from: http://doc.utwente.nl/58402/. [Accessed: 26 April 2011].

Lutran, J. (2010). *Ιδιωτική Ανωτάτη Εκπαίδευση Στη Δυτική Ευρώπη*. [Online]. Hellenic College Association. Available from: http://www.hca.gr/pdf/panep1-gr.pdf.

Lyberaki, A. & Paraskevopoulos, C.J. (2002). Social capital measurement in Greece. In: *International Conference of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), London*. 2002, pp. 25–27.

Lynch, K. (2006). Neo-liberalism and Marketisation: the implications for higher education. *European Educational Research Journal*. 5 (1). p.pp. 1–17.

Lytras, M.D., De Pablos, P.O. & Avison, D. (2010). *Technology Enhanced Learning: Quality of Teaching and Educational Reform: 1st International Conference, TECH-EDUCATION 2010, Athens, Greece, May 19-21, 2010. Proceedings*. Springer Verlag.

Marginson, S., Kaur, S., Sawir, E., Ziguras, C. & McBurnie, G. (2011). Transnational Higher Education in the Asia-Pacific Region: From Distance Education to the Branch Campus. In: S. Marginson, S. Kaur, E. Sawir, P. Maassen, & J. Müller (eds.). *Higher Education in the Asia-Pacific*. Higher Education Dynamics. [Online]. Springer Netherlands, pp. 105–122. Available from: http://www.springerlink.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/content/j868006760415273/abstract/. [Accessed: 21 September 2012].

Marginson, S. & Van der Wende, M. (2007). Globalisation and Higher Education. *OECD Papers*. 7 (7). p.pp. 1–85.

Marijana Sikošek & Borut Kodriè (2011). *Student Expectations of Higher Education Institution Services in the Light of Service Differentiation*. [Online]. 6 (3). p.pp. 283–

305. Available from: http://ideas.repec.org/a/mgt/youmng/v6y2011i3p283-305.html. [Accessed: 18 December 2011].

Maringe, F. & Carter, S. (2007). International students' motivations for studying in UK HE: Insights into the choice and decision making of African students. *International Journal of Educational Management*. [Online]. 21 (6). p.pp. 459–475. Available from: http://www.emeraldinsight.com/journals.htm?articleid=1621921&show=abstract. [Accessed: 29 August 2013].

F. Maringe & N. Foskett (eds.) (2010). *Globalisation and Internationalisation in Higher Education : Theoretical, Strategic and Management Perspectives*. [Online]. London, GBR: Continuum International Publishing. Available from: http://site.ebrary.com/lib/alltitles/docDetail.action?docID=10415877. [Accessed 21 August 2012].

Marseilles, M. (2009). *University World News - GREECE: Access reform overdue*. [Online]. 15 March 2009. University World News. Available from: http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20090313111826534. [Accessed: 17 August 2011].

Marseilles, M. (2010). *University World News - GREECE: Reforms may usher in privatisation*. [Online]. 24 October 2010. University World News. Available from: http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20101022215247946. [Accessed: 4 April 2011].

Matthews, B. (2010). *Research methods: a practical guide for the social sciences*. 1st ed. New York, NY: Pearson Longman.

Maxwell, J.A. (2012). *A realist approach for qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

Mazzarol, T. & Soutar, G.N. (2002). "Push-pull" factors influencing international student destination choice. *International Journal of Educational Management*. [Online]. 16 (2). p.pp. 82–90. Available from: http://www.emeraldinsight.com/10.1108/09513540210418403.

McBurnie, G. & Ziguras, C. (2007). *Transnational education : issues and trends in offshore higher education*. New York NY: Routledge.

McCall, L., Palermo, C. & Wray, N. (2009). Placements and Their Influence on Australian Nutrition and Dietetics Students. *Focus on Health Professional Education: A Multi-disciplinary Journal*. [Online]. 11 (1). p.p. 14. Available from: http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edsihc&AN=127828850635407&site=eds-live&scope=site.

McEvoy, P. (2006). A critical realist rationale for using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. *Journal of Research in Nursing*. [Online]. 11 (1). p.pp. 66–78. Available from: http://jrn.sagepub.com/cgi/doi/10.1177/1744987106060192. [Accessed: 26 July 2013].

McInnis, C. (2002). Signs of disengagement? In: *Higher education in a globalising world*. [Online]. Springer, pp. 175–189. Available from: http://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-94-010-0579-1_12. [Accessed: 11 November 2013].

Meghir, C., Vayanos, D. & Vettas, N. (2010). *The economic crisis in Greece: A time of reform and opportunity*. [Online]. p.pp. 1–30. Available from: http://greekeconomistsforreform.com/wp-content/uploads/Reform1.pdf.

Menon,, M., Saiti, A. & Socratous, M. (2007). Rationality, Information Search and Choice in Higher Education: Evidence from Greece. *Higher Education*. [Online]. (5). p.pp. 705–721. Available from: http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10734-006-9019-3.

Mertens, D.M. (1998). *Research methods in education and psychology: integrating diversity with quantitative & qualitative approaches*. Sage Publications.

Meyer, S.B. & Lunnay, B. (2012). The Application of Abductive and Retroductive Inference for the Design and Analysis of Theory-Driven Sociological Research. *Sociological Research Online*. 18 (1). p.p. 12.

Middlehurst, R. (2001). *Quality assurance implications of new forms of higher education*. Part 1: A Typology. Helsinki: ENQA. (ENQA Occasional Papers, Vol. 3)

Middlehurst, R. (2011). Accountability and Cross-Border Higher Education. *Accountability in higher education: global perspectives on trust and power*. p.p. 179.

Middlehurst, R. (2013). Shifting Patterns of International Higher Education: Ebb and Flow or Sea Change? *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*. [Online]. 45 (5). p.pp. 28–35. Available from: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00091383.2013.812476. [Accessed: 14 September 2013].

Middlehurst, R. & Woodfield, S. (2004). *Summary report: The role of transnational, private, and for-profit provision in meeting global demand for tertiary education: Mapping, regulation and impact*. [Online]. Available from: http://dspace.col.org/handle/123456789/99. [Accessed: 3 October 2013].

Milisiunaite, I., Adomaitiene, R. & Galginaitis, J. (2009). *Quality management as a tool for quality culture embedment: Vilnius university approach*. In: [Online]. 23 August 2009, Vilnius, Lithuania: EAIR. Available from: http://www.eair.nl/forum/vilnius/pdf/595.pdf. [Accessed: 23 December 2012].

Milliken, J. & Colohan, G. (2004). Quality or Control? Management in Higher Education. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*. [Online]. 26 (3). p.pp. 381–391. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1080/1360080042000290221&magic=crossref||D404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3. [Accessed: 2 June 2011].

Min, S., Khoon, C.C. & Tan, B.L. (2012). Motives, Expectations, Perceptions and Satisfaction of International Students Pursuing Private Higher Education in Singapore. *International Journal of Marketing Studies*. [Online]. 4 (6). p.p. p122. Available from: http://www.ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/ijms/article/view/19515. [Accessed: 13 November 2012].

Molesworth, M., Scullion, R. & Nixon, L. (2010). *The Marketisation of Higher Education and The Student As Consumer*. Taylor & Francis.

Moogan, Y.J. & Baron, S. (2003). An analysis of student characteristics within the student decision making process. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*. [Online]. 27

(3). p.pp. 271–287. Available from: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0309877032000098699. [Accessed: 28 June 2013].

Moorman, A.B.R. (2011). Changing student expectations and graduate employment: Case studies from Xi'an, Shaanxi Province. *Frontiers of Education in China*. 6 (4). p.pp. 521–548.

Moreau, M. & Leathwood, C. (2006). Graduates' employment and the discourse of employability: a critical analysis. *Journal of Education and Work*. [Online]. 19 (4). p.pp. 305–324. Available from: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13639080600867083. [Accessed: 17 September 2013].

Morgan, J. (2012). *One-sixth of UK degree students prefer to have the best of British abroad*. [Online]. 19 January 2012. Times Higher Education. Available from: http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?storycode=418739#.Txfe1P6snDk.twitter. [Accessed: 19 January 2012].

Naidoo, R. (2003). Repositioning Higher Education as a Global Commodity: Opportunities and challenges for future sociology of education work. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*. [Online]. 24 (2). p.pp. 249–259. Available from: http://www.tandfonline.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/doi/abs/10.1080/01425690301902.

Naidoo, R. (2007). Higher education as a global commodity: The perils and promises for developing countries. *The Observatory on Borderless Higher Education, London*.

Naidoo, V. (2009). Transnational Higher Education. *Journal of Studies in International Education*. [Online]. 13 (3). p.pp. 310 –330. Available from: http://jsi.sagepub.com/content/13/3/310.abstract. [Accessed: 4 August 2011].

Neuman, L.W. (2007). *Social Research Methods, 6th edition*. Pearson Education.

Newton, J. (2000). Feeding the Beast or Improving Quality?: academics' perceptions of quality assurance and quality monitoring. *Quality in higher education*. 6 (2). p.pp. 153–163.

Ng, I. & Forbes, J. (2009). Education as Service: The Understanding of University Experience Through the Service Logic. *Journal of Marketing For Higher Education*. [Online]. 19 (1). p.pp. 38–64. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1080/08841240902904703&magic=crossref||D404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3.

Nguyen, N. & LeBlanc, G. (2001). Image and reputation of higher education institutions in students' retention decisions. *International Journal of Educational Management*. 15 (6). p.pp. 303–311.

Niehoff, B., Turnley, W., Yen, H.J.R. & Sheu, C. (2001). Exploring Cultural Differences in Classroom Expectations of Students From the United States and Taiwan. *Journal of Education for Business*. [Online]. 76 (5). p.pp. 289–293. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1080/08832320109599651&magic=crossref||D404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3. [Accessed: 8 June 2011].

Nijhuis, J. (2006). *Learning strategies, student's characteristics and their perceptions of the learning environment an integrated study among business students*. Maastricht: Universiteit Maastricht

Nolan, P. (2007). *Capitalism and freedom: the contradictory character of globalisation*. Anthem Press.

OECD (2006). *Cross Border Higher Education for Development*. [Online]. Paris: OECD. Available from: http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/51/42/37477437.pdf.

OECD (2009a). *Higher Education to 2030, Volume 2, Globalisation*. Paris: OECD Publishing,.

OECD (2009b). *Review on Quality Teaching in Higher Education*. Institutional Management in Higher Education. Paris: OECD.

OECD (2010a). *Measuring Globalisation: OECD Economic Globalisation Indicators 2010*. Paris : OECD Publishing,.

OECD (2010b). *Trends Shaping Education 2010*. Paris: OECD.

OECD (2011a). *Education at a Glance*. [Online]. Paris: OECD. Available from: http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/61/2/48631582.pdf.

OECD (2011b). *Strong Performers and Successful Reformers in Education. Education Policy advice for Greece*. [Online]. Available from: http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/27/6/48407731.pdf.

OECD (2012a). *Education at a glance 2012 OECD indicators*. Paris: OECD.

OECD (2012b). Higher Education. In: *Education Today*. [Online]. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, pp. 57–70. Available from: http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/content/chapter/edu_today-2013-8-en. [Accessed: 17 December 2012].

OFFA (2013). *OFFA Find an access agreement*. [Online]. 2013. Office for fair access. Available from: http://www.offa.org.uk/access-agreements/?initial=&cat=HEI. [Accessed: 24 August 2013].

Olcott, D. (2009). Global Connections to Global Partnerships: Navigating the Changing Landscape of Internationalism and Cross-Border Higher Education. *The Journal of Continuing Higher Education*. 57 (1). p.pp. 1–9.

Olcott, D. (2010a). *Global Connections –Local Impacts: Trends in Cross-Border and International Higher Education*. In: 2010, San Francisco California.

Olcott, D. (2010b). *The Leadership Enigma: Myths and Realities of University Internationalism Strategy*. In: 2010, Lithuania.

Olssen, M. & Peters, M. (2005). Neoliberalism, higher education and the knowledge economy: from the free market to knowledge capitalism. *Journal of Education Policy*. [Online]. 20 (3). p.pp. 313–345. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1080/0268093050010 8718&magic=crossref||D404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3. [Accessed: 14 May 2011].

Paleocrassas, S., Rousseas, P. & Vretakou, V. (2002). Upper secondary curriculum options and labour market performance: evidence from a graduates survey in Greece. *Journal of Vocational Education and Training*. 54 (2). p.pp. 295–304.

Papadimitriou, A. (2011). *The enigma of quality in Greek higher education a mixed methods study of introducing quality management into Greek higher education*. [Online]. Enschede :: University of Twente [Host],. Available from: http://doc.utwente.nl/75876/.

Parasuraman, A., Berry, L.L. & Zeithaml, V.A. (1991). Understanding customer expectations of service. *Sloan Management Review*. 32 (3). p.pp. 39–48.

Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V.A. & Berry, L.L. (1988). SERVQUAL: A multiple-item scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality. *Journal of retailing*. 69, p.pp. 420-450.

Pascarella, E.T. & Terenzini, P.T. (1991). *How College Affects Students: Findings and Insights from Twenty Years of Research.* [Online]. Available from: http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED330287. [Accessed: 29 September 2013].

Passy, F. & Giugni, M. (2001). Social Networks and Individual Perceptions: Explaining Differential Participation in Social Movements. *Sociological Forum*. [Online]. 16 (1). p.pp. 123–153. Available from: http://link.springer.com/article/10.1023/A%3A1007613403970. [Accessed: 27 September 2013].

Patrinos, H.A. (1995). The Private Origins of Public Higher Education in Greece. *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*. 13 (2). p.pp. 179–200.

Peach, D. & Gamble, N. (2011). Scoping Work-Integrated Learning Purposes, Practices and Issues. In: S. Billett & A. Henderson (eds.). *Developing Learning Professionals*. [Online]. Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, pp. 169–186. Available from: http://www.springerlink.com/content/w771054424401272/. [Accessed: 14 December 2011].

Pimpa, N. (2003). The influence of family on Thai students' choices of international education. *International Journal of Educational Management*. [Online]. 17 (5). p.pp. 211–219. Available from: http://www.emeraldinsight.com/10.1108/09513540310484931. [Accessed: 3 April 2011].

Piperopoulos, G. (2007). Οι Σχέσεις γονέων και παιδιών στην Ελλάδα του 21ου αιώνα. *Ιατρικά Θέματα*. [Online]. (36). p.pp. 17–21. Available from: http://www.isth.gr/?page=2693&e=3044. [Accessed 15 July 2013].

Pointer, G. (2005). The UK's major urban areas. *Focus on people and migration. www. statistics. gov. uk/downloads/theme_compendia/fom2005/03_FOPM_ UrbanAreas. pdf*. [Online]. Available from: http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/fertility-analysis/focus-on-people-and-migration/december-2005/focus-on-people-and-migration---focus-on-people-and-migration---chapter-3.pdf. [Accessed: 4 August 2013].

Politt, C. & Baichaert, G. (1995). *Quality Improvements in European Public Services, Cases and Commentary*. London: Sage.

Pollitt, C. (1993). *Managerialism and the public services: cuts or cultural change in the 1990s*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Porter, M.E. (1998). *Competitive advantage: creating and sustaining superior performance: with a new introduction*. New York: Free Press.

Pottakis, A. (2008). Higher Education Reform in Greece: Another Missed Opportunity? *European Public Law*. 14 (4). p.pp. 507–521.

Pratasavitskaya, H. & Stensaker, B. (2010). Quality Management in Higher Education: Towards a Better Understanding of an Emerging Field. *Quality in Higher Education*. [Online]. 16 (1). p.pp. 37–50. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1080/13538321003679465&magic=crossref||D404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3. [Accessed: 1 June 2011].

Programme Director (2013). *Interview with the university programme director*.

Psacharopoulos, G. (1995). Education in Greece Today: Contributions to the Perennial Debate - Introduction. *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*. 13 (2). p.pp. 169–178.

Psacharopoulos, G. (2003). The social cost of an outdated law: Article 16 of the Greek constitution. *European Journal of Law and Economics*. 16 (2). p.pp. 123–137.

Psacharopoulos, G. & Tassoulas, S. (2004). Achievement at the higher education entry examinations in Greece: A Procrustean approach. *Higher Education*. 47 (2). p.pp. 241–252.

Pyvis, D. & Chapman, A. (2004). *Student experiences of offshore higher education: Issues for quality.* Melbourne: Australian Universities Quality Agency.

QAA (2013). *British Council partners with QAA to promote UK HE internationally*. [Online]. 9 September 2013. Available from: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Newsroom/News/Pages/British-Council-partners-with-QAA.aspx. [Accessed: 15 September 2013].

QAA (2010). *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education Collaborative provision and flexible and distributed learning (including e-learning) – Amplified version October 2010*. [Online]. Available from: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Documents/collab2010.pdf.

QAA (n.d.). *Transnational education: an agenda of "sameness"?* [Online]. Available from: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/Podcasts/Transcripts/Pages/transcript-tne.aspx. [Accessed: 17 December 2012].

QAA (2012). *UK Quality Code for Higher Education. Part B: Assuring and enhancing academic quality. Chaper B10: Managing higher education provision with others*. [Online]. Cloucester: The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. Available from: http://www.qub.ac.uk/home/Research/PostgraduateCentre/PostgraduateTraining/ResearchStudentSkillsProgramme/FileStore/Filetoupload,310025,en.pdf. [Accessed: 11 December 2012].

Quinn, A., Lemay, G., Larsen, P. & Johnson, D. (2009). Service quality in higher education. *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence*. [Online]. 20 (2). p.pp. 139–152. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1080/14783360802622805&magic=crossref||D404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3. [Accessed: 13 April 2011].

Quinn, F. & Stein, S. (2013). Relationships between learning approaches and outcomes of students studying a first-year biology topic on-campus and by distance. *Higher Education Research & Development*. [Online]. (ahead-of-print). p.pp. 1–15. Available from: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/07294360.2012.704902. [Accessed: 19 August 2013].

Raikou, N. & Karalis, T. (2007). Student Mobility from a Greek Perspective: Benefits and Difficulties as Expressed by the Participating Students. *Higher Education in Europe*. [Online]. 32 (4). p.pp. 347–357. Available from: http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=44500436&site=eds-live&scope=site.

Ramsden, P. (2008). The future of higher education teaching and the student experience. *URL: http://www. bis. gov. uk/policies/teaching-student-experience*. [Online]. Available from: http://www.bis.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2009/10/HE-Teaching-Student-Experience.pdf. [Accessed: 11 August 2013].

Remenyi, D. (1998). *Doing Research in Business and Management: An Introduction to Process and Method*. London: SAGE Publications.

Ressler, J. & Abratt, R. (2009). Assessing the impact of university reputation on stakeholder intentions. *Journal of General Management*. 35 (1). p.pp. 35–45.

Robson, C. (2002). *Real world research: A resource for social scientists and practitioner-researchers*. London: Wiley-Blackwell.

Rust, V.D. & Kim, S. (2012). The Global Competition in Higher Education. *World Studies in Education*. 13 (1). p.pp. 5–20.

Saarinen, T. (2012). Internationalization of Finnish higher education — is language an issue? *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*. [Online]. 2012 (216). Available from: http://www.degruyter.com/view/j/ijsl.2012.2012.issue-216/ijsl-2012-0044/ijsl-2012-0044.xml. [Accessed: 17 August 2012].

Sagu, S. (2009). *Higher Education Policy and Student Expectations*. In: [Online]. 2009, Vilnius, Lithuania: EAIR, pp. 1–11. Available from: http://www.eair.nl/forum/vilnius/pdf/596.pdf. [Accessed: 9 August 2013].

Saiti, A. & Mitrosili, E. (2005). *Parental perception of the education of their adolescent children: evidence from Greek secondary education*.

Saiti, A. & Prokopiadou, G. (2008). The demand for higher education in Greece. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*. [Online]. 32 (3). p.pp. 285–296. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1080/03098770802221080&magic=crossref||D404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3. [Accessed: 17 March 2011].

Sandefur, G.D., Meier, A.M. & Campbell, M.E. (2006). Family resources, social capital, and college attendance. *Social Science Research*. [Online]. 35 (2). p.pp. 525–553. Available from: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0049089X04001061. [Accessed: 22 September 2011].

Sander, P., Stevenson, K., King, M. & Coates, D. (2000). University Students' Expectations of Teaching. *Studies in Higher Education*. 25 (3). p.p. 309.

Santiago, P. & OECD (2008). *Tertiary education for the knowledge society*. Paris: OECD.

Saunders, M. (2009). *Research methods for business students*. 5th ed. New York: Prentice Hall.

Saunders, M.N.K., Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A. (2012). *Research Methods for Business Students*. Harlow: Financial Times/ Prentice Hall.

Sax, B. (2004). Students as "customers." *On the Horizon*. [Online]. 12 (4). p.pp. 158–160. Available from: http://www.emeraldinsight.com/10.1108/10748120410564467. [Accessed: 3 April 2011].

Sayer, R.A. (2000). *Realism and Social Science*. London: SAGE.

Schapper, J. & Mayson, S. (2005). Managerialism, Internationalization, Taylorization and the Deskilling of Academic Work: Evidence from an Australian University. *Internationalizing Higher Education*. p.pp. 181–197.

Schuch, E. (2011). *Development Through Globalization?: Does Economic Globalization Provide the Solution to World Poverty?* GRIN Verlag.

Schwantz, G.D. (1997). *Service quality in higher education: expectations and perceptions of traditional and non-traditional students*.

Scott, P. (2005). The global dimension: Internationalising higher education. *Internationalisation in higher education: European responses to the global perspective*. p.pp. 8–22.

Scutter, S.D., Palmer, E.J., Luzeckyj, A., Brinkworth, R.S. & McCann, B.E. (2010). What a strange idea! Student expectations of the first year university experience. In: *ERGA Conference (5th: 2010: Adelaide, Australia)*. 2010.

Serenko, A. (2011). Student satisfaction with Canadian music programmes: the application of the American Customer Satisfaction Model in higher education. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*. [Online]. 36 (3). p.pp. 281–299. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1080/02602930903337612&magic=crossref%7c%7cD404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3. [Accessed: 23 April 2011].

Shank, M., Walker, M. & Hayes, T. (1996). Cross-Cultural Differences in Student Expectations. *Journal of Marketing For Higher Education*. [Online]. 7 (1). p.pp. 17–32. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1300/J050v07n01_03&magic=crossref||D404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3. [Accessed: 13 April 2011].

Shanka, T., Quintal, V. & Taylor, R. (2006). Factors Influencing International Students' Choice of an Education Destination-A Correspondence Analysis. *Journal of Marketing For Higher Education*. [Online]. 15 (2). p.pp. 31–46. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1300/J050v15n02_02&magic=crossref||D404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3. [Accessed: 3 April 2011].

Shekarchizadeh, A., Rasli, A. & Hon-Tat, H. (2011). SERVQUAL in Malaysian universities: perspectives of international students. *Business Process Management Journal*. [Online]. 17 (1). p.pp. 67–81. Available from: http://www.emeraldinsight.com/journals.htm?issn=1463-7154&volume=17&issue=1&articleid=1906073&show=html&PHPSESSID=rcc520i77ulngejdtcav95p941. [Accessed: 19 December 2011].

Shepherd, E. (2013). Transnational Education: The student experience. In: *Going Global 2013*. 6 March 2013, Dubai: British Council, Education Intelligence.

Sherry, C., Bhat, R., Beaver, B. & Ling, A. (2004). Students as customers: The expectations and perceptions of local and international students. In: *HERDSA Conference*. 2004.

Sheth, J.N., Mittal, B. & Newman, B. (1999). Consumer behavior and beyond. *NY: Harcourt Brace*. [Online]. Available from: http://www.dandelon.com/servlet/download/attachments/dandelon/ids/CH001DCFC4F4C307014FCC12571D8003725B3.pdf. [Accessed: 29 August 2013].

Sianou-Kyrgiou, E. (2008). Social class and access to higher education in Greece: supportive preparation lessons and success in national exams. *International Studies in Sociology of Education*. 18 (3-4). p.pp. 173–183.

Sianou-Kyrgiou, E. (2010). Stratification in Higher Education, Choice and Social Inequalities in Greece. *Higher Education Quarterly*. [Online]. 64 (1). p.pp. 22–40. Available from: http://doi.wiley.com/10.1111/j.1468-2273.2009.00427.x.

Sianou-Kyrgiou, E. & Tsiplakides, I. (2011). Similar performance, but different choices: social class and higher education choice in Greece. *Studies in Higher Education*. [Online]. 36 (1). p.pp. 89–102. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1080/03075070903469606&magic=crossref%7c%7cD404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3.

Siegel, S. & Castellan Jr, N.J. (1988). *Nonparametric statistics for the behavioral sciences.* New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company.

Da Silva, J. (2012). *Men's perceptions and lived experiences of romantic relationships: a qualitative approach using interpretative phenomenological analysis*. [Online]. Available from: http://roar.uel.ac.uk/1519/. [Accessed: 24 August 2013].

Singh, N. & Papa, R. (2010). *The Impacts of Globalization in Higher Education*. The International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation (IJELP), 5(2), p.pp. 1-9

Smimou, K. & Dahl, D.W. (2012). On the Relationship Between Students' Perceptions of Teaching Quality, Methods of Assessment, and Satisfaction. *Journal of Education for Business*. [Online]. 87 (1). p.pp. 22–35. Available from:

http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/08832323.2010.550339. [Accessed: 16 January 2013].

Smith, A. & Webster, F. (1997). *The postmodern university?: contested visions of higher education in society*. Society for Research into Higher Education & Open University Press, Buckingham; Bristol, PA.

Smith, A.M. & Reynolds, N.L. (2002). Measuring cross-cultural service quality: A framework for assessment. *International Marketing Review*. [Online]. 19 (5). p.pp. 450–481. Available from: http://www.emeraldinsight.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/journals.htm?issn=0265-1335&volume=19&issue=5&articleid=855520&show=html&PHPSESSID=lgrgoiuloirgjl7gjbps1f5qg5. [Accessed: 8 June 2011].

Smith, G., Morey, A., Foster, C. & Teece, M. (2002). *How international students view their Australian experience: A survey of international students who finished a course of study in 1999*. Australian Education International.

Smith, K. (2010). Assuring quality in transnational higher education: a matter of collaboration or control? *Studies in Higher Education*. [Online]. 35 (7). p.pp. 793–806. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1080/03075070903340559&magic=crossref||D404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3. [Accessed: 14 May 2011].

St. Aubyn, M., Pina, A., Garcia, F. & Pais, J. (2009). *Study on the efficiency and effectiveness of public spending on tertiary education*. Third Report. Brussels: European Commission, Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs,.

Stake, R.E. (1995). *The Art of Case Study Research*. London: SAGE Publications.

Stamoulas, A. (2005). Implementation of the Bologna Process Goals: On Greek State Funding. *Higher Education in Europe*. [Online]. 30 (1). p.pp. 41–51. Available from: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03797720500088053. [Accessed: 12 August 2012].

Steiner, L., Sundström, A.C. & Sammalisto, K. (2012). An analytical model for university identity and reputation strategy work. *Higher Education*. [Online]. Available from: http://www.springerlink.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/content/30476802356m278l/. [Accessed: 10 November 2012].

Stella, A. (2006). Quality Assurance of Cross-border Higher Education. *Quality in Higher Education*. [Online]. 12 (3). p.pp. 257–276. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1080/13538320601072859&magic=crossref||D404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3. [Accessed: 2 April 2011].

Stella, A. & Bhushan, S. (2011). *Quality assurance of transnational higher education : the experiences of Australia and India*. 1st ed. [Online]. [Melbourne]: National University of Educational Planning and Administration (India) ;Australian Universities Quality Agency. Available from: http://www.auqa.edu.au/files/otherpublications/quality_assurance_of_transnational_higher_education_the_experiences_of_australia_and_india.pdf#page=10.

Stella, A., Bhushan, S. & National University of Educational Planning and Administration (India), A.U.Q.A. (2011). *Quality assurance of transnational higher education: the experiences of Australia and India*. [Melbourne]: National University of Educational Planning and Administration (India) : Australian Universities Quality Agency.

Stier, J. (2010). International education: trends, ideologies and alternative pedagogical approaches. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*. [Online]. 8 (3). p.pp. 339–349. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1080/14767724.2010.505095&magic=crossref||D404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3. [Accessed: 14 May 2011].

Stromquist, N.P. (2007). Internationalization as a response to globalization: Radical shifts in university environments. *Higher Education*. [Online]. 53 (1). p.pp. 81–105. Available from: http://www.springerlink.com/index/10.1007/s10734-005-1975-5. [Accessed: 19 May 2011].

Stukalina, Y. (2012). Addressing service quality issues in higher education: the educational environment evaluation from the students' perspective. *Technological & Economic Development of Economy*. 18 (1). p.pp. 84–98.

Sursock, A., Smidt, H. & others (2010). *Trends 2010: A decade of change in European Higher Education*.

Svensson, L. & Wihlborg, M. (2010). Internationalising the content of higher education: the need for a curriculum perspective. *Higher Education*. [Online]. 60 (6). p.pp. 595–613. Available from: http://www.springerlink.com/index/10.1007/s10734-010-9318-6. [Accessed: 14 May 2011].

Swain, H. (2011). *UK: Fees and unemployment make mobility attractive*. [Online]. 17 April 2011. University World News. Available from: http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20110415201807146. [Accessed: 19 October 2011].

Taghian, M. (2010). Marketing planning: Operationalising the market orientation strategy. *Journal of Marketing Management*. [Online]. 26 (9). p.pp. 825–841. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1080/02672571003683813&magic=crossref||D404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3.[Accessed: 5 March 2013].

Tam, M. (2001). Measuring Quality and Performance in Higher Education. *Quality in Higher Education*. [Online]. 7 (1). p.pp. 47–54. Available from: http://www.informaworld.com/openurl?genre=article&doi=10.1080/13538320120045076&magic=crossref||D404A21C5BB053405B1A640AFFD44AE3. [Accessed: 4 June 2011].

Tashakkori, A. & Teddlie, C. (2003). *Handbook of mixed methods in social & behavioral research*. London: SAGE.

Teichler, U. (2004). The changing debate on internationalisation of higher education. *Higher education*. 48 (1). p.pp. 5–26.

Teichler, U. (2010). Internationalising Higher Education: Debates and Changes in Europe. *Changing Educational Landscapes*. p.pp. 263–283.

Telford, R. & Masson, R. (2005). The congruence of quality values in higher education. *Quality Assurance in Education*. [Online]. 13 (2). p.pp. 107–119. Available from: http://www.emeraldinsight.com/10.1108/09684880510594364.

THE (2011). *Times Higher Education - White Paper: reactions round-up*. [Online]. 28 June 2011. Times Higher. Available from: http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?storycode=416655. [Accessed: 16 August 2011].

The College (2011a). *College Brochure*.

The College (2011b). *Internal Regulations*.

The College (2011c). *About The College.*

The Higher Education Academy (2011). *Internationalisation*. [Online]. Available from: http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/internationalisation. [Accessed: 23 October 2011].

The University (2009). *Annual Diversity Report*.

The University (2010a). *Academic Standards and Quality Handbook*.

The University (2010b). *"The University" Strategic Plan 2010-2015*.

The University (2011). "*About The University* "

Thomas, E.H. & Galambos, N. (2004). What satisfies students? Mining student-opinion data with regression and decision tree analysis. *Research in Higher Education*. 45 (3). p.pp. 251–269.

Thomas, L. (2002). Student retention in higher education: the role of institutional habitus. *Journal of Education Policy*. [Online]. 17 (4). p.pp. 423–442. Available from: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02680930210140257. [Accessed: 11 August 2013].

Tilak, J.B.. (2011). *Trade in Higher Education: the Role of the General Agreement on Trade in Services*. Fundamentals of educational planning 95. [Online]. Paris: UNESCO: International Institute for Educational Planning. Available from: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002149/214997e.pdf. [Accessed: 22 April 2013].

Trend, R. (2009). Influences on Future UK Higher Education Students' Perceptions and Educational Choices across Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences (GEES). *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*. [Online]. 33. p.pp. 255–268. Available from: http://www.tandfonline.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/doi/abs/10.1080/03098260802276862. [Accessed: 27 September 2011].

Tricker, T. (2003). Student expectations—how do we measure up. In: *2nd Global Conference on "The Idea of Education", Friday 4th July-Saturday 5th July*. 2003.

Trigwell, K. & Ashwin, P. (2003). *Undergraduate Students' Experience of Learning at the University of Oxford*. Institute for the Advancement of University Learning. [Online]. University of Oxford. Available from: http://www.ab.gov.tr/files/ardb/evt/1_avrupa_birligi/1_4_zirveler_1985_sonrasi/200

2_3_barselona_zirvesi_baskanlik_sonuc_bildirgesi_en.pdf. [Accessed: 16 August 2013].

Trowler, P. (2010). UK Higher Education: Captured by New Managerialist Ideology? In: V. L. Meek, L. Goedegebuure, R. Santiago, & T. Carvalho (eds.). *The Changing Dynamics of Higher Education Middle Management*. [Online]. Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, pp. 197–211. Available from: http://www.springerlink.com/index/10.1007/978-90-481-9163-5_10. [Accessed: 26 May 2011].

Tsiligiris, V. (2011a). EDUQUAL: Measuring cultural influences on students' expectations and perceptions in Cross-Border Higher Education. In: *Scanning Horizons*. [Online]. 2011, Kingston University. Available from: http://www.heir2011.org.uk/conference-presentations/presentations/HEIR2011%20Tsiligiris.pdf. [Accessed 11 April 2013]

Tsiligiris, V. (2011b). Greek Debt Crisis and Internationalisation of Higher Education: Review of the Dialogue on the New Proposed National Strategy. *Anglohigher*. [Online]. 3 (1). p.pp. 17–18. Available from: http://www.anglohigher.com/magazines/magazine_detail/95/38.[Accessed 15 January 2012].

Tsiligiris, V. (2012a). The Debt Crisis and Higher Education Reforms in Greece: A Catalyst for Change. *Anglohigher*. [Online]. 4 (1). p.pp. 15–16. Available from: http://www.anglohigher.com/magazines/download_page/115.[Accessed: 11 February 2012].

Tsiligiris, V. (2012b). Transnational higher education partnerships: overcoming higher-education access barriers and "brain-drain" reversal in Greece. In: *Going Global 2012*. 13 March 2012, London, GBR: British Council.

Tsiligiris, V. (2013). Transnational higher education partnerships: overcoming higher-education access barriers and "brain-drain" reversal in Greece. In: T. Gore & M. Stiasny (eds.). *Going Global: identifying trends and drivers of international education*. [Online]. Emerald Group Publishing, pp. 55–68. Available from: http://www.amazon.com/Going-Global-Identifying-International-Education/dp/1781905754/ref=sr_1_4?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1367349700&sr=1-4. [Accessed: 25 June 2013].

Tsoukatos, E. & Rand, G.K. (2007). Cultural influences on service quality and customer satisfaction: evidence from Greek insurance. *Managing Service Quality*. [Online]. 17 (4). p.pp. 467–485. Available from: http://www.emeraldinsight.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/journals.htm?articleid=1615788&show=abstract. [Accessed: 12 April 2011].

Tysome, T. (1998). Quality lockout. *Times Higher Education Supplement*. 10. p.p. 3.

Tzani, M. (1983). *School success: an issue of social origin and culture (in Greek)*. Athens: Gregory.

UK Higher Education International Unit (2010). *International higher education in facts and figures*. [Online]. Universities UK. Available from: http://www.international.ac.uk/resources/Int%20facts%20%20figures%20booklet%20FINAL%20FOR%20WEB.pdf.[Accessed: 12 February 2011].

UNESCO (2005). *Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education*. [Online]. Paris. Available from: http://www.unesco.org/education/guidelines_E.indd.pdf. [Accessed: 1 June 2012].

UNESCO (2013). *Rankings and accountability in higher education: Uses and Misuses*. [S.l.]: United Nations Educational. Available from: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002207/220789e.pdf [Accessed 4 April 2013].

UNESCO & Council of Europe (2001). *Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education.* [Online]. Riga: Unesco-CEPES; Available from: http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/010606Code_of_good_practice.pdf. [Accessed: 11 March 2013].

UNESCO Institute for Statistics. (2010). *Global education digest 2010 : comparing education statistics across the world*. Montreal Quebec: UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

Universities UK (2010). *Changes in student choices and graduate employment*.

Universities UK (2011). *Universities UK Response to the Higher Education White Paper*. [Online]. Available from: http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/Publications/Pages/UniversitiesUKResponsetotheHigherEducationWhitePaper.aspx.

Urwin, P. & Di Pietro, G. (2005). The impact of research and teaching quality inputs on the employment outcomes of postgraduates. *Higher Education Quarterly*. 59 (4). p.pp. 275–295.

Usher, A. (2012). *Size Matters*. [Online]. 2012. Higher Education Strategy Associates. Available from: http://higheredstrategy.com/size-matters/. [Accessed: 17 September 2013].

Varghese, N.V. (2009). Cross-Border Higher Education and National Systems of Education. In: J. Fegan & M. H. Field (eds.). *Education Across Borders*. [Online]. Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, pp. 33–48. Available from: http://www.springerlink.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/content/l86x136hpv24v758/. [Accessed: 31 August 2011].

Varghese, N.V. (2011). *Globalisation and cross-border education: Challenges for the development of higher education in Commonwealth countries*. IIEP research papers. UNESCO.

Vincent-Lancrin, S. & Pfotenhauer, S. (2012). *Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education: Where Do We Stand?* [Online]. OECD Publishing. Available from: http://ideas.repec.org/p/oec/eduaab/70-en.html. [Accessed: 16 December 2012].

Vlasceanu, L., Grünberg, L. & Pârlea, D. (2004). *Quality Assurance and Accreditation: A Glossary of Basic Terms and Definitions*. Papers on Higher Education. Bucharest: UNESCO-CEPES.

Volet, S. & Jones, C. (2012). Cultural Transitions in Higher Education: Individual Adaptation, Transformation and Engagement. *Advances in Motivation and Achievement*. [Online]. 17. p.pp. 241–284. Available from:

http://www.emeraldinsight.com/books.htm?chapterid=17063312. [Accessed: 6 November 2012].

Voss, R., Gruber, T. & Szmigin, I. (2007). Service quality in higher education: The role of student expectations. *Journal of Business Research*. [Online]. 60 (9). p.pp. 949–959. Available from: http://linkinghub.elsevier.com/retrieve/pii/S0148296307000562. [Accessed: 3 April 2011].

Vretakou, V. (1989). *The school professional guidance in Greece*. Athens: Papazisis.

Wächter, B. & Ferencz, I. (2012). Student Mobility in Europe: Recent Trends and Implications of Data Collection. In: A. Curaj, P. Scott, L. Vlasceanu, & L. Wilson (eds.). *European Higher Education at the Crossroads*. [Online]. Springer Netherlands, pp. 387–411. Available from: http://www.springerlink.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/content/x2t881458vq261kr/abstract/. [Accessed: 6 June 2012].

Wallace, M. & Dunn, L. (2013). *Teaching in Transnational Higher Education: Enhancing Learning for Offshore International Students*. London: Taylor & Francis.

Waters, J. & Leung, M. (2013). A Colourful University Life? Transnational Higher Education and the Spatial Dimensions of Institutional Social Capital in Hong Kong. *Population, Space and Place*. [Online]. 19 (2). p.pp. 155–167. Available from: http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/psp.1748/abstract. [Accessed: 5 July 2013].

Waters, J. & Leung, M. (2011). Young People and the Reproduction of Disadvantage Through Transnational Higher Education in Hong Kong. *Sociological Research Online*. 17 (3). p.p. 6.

Wedlin, L. (2011). Going global: Rankings as rhetorical devices to construct an international field of management education. *Management Learning*. [Online]. 42 (2). p.pp. 199–218. Available from: http://mlq.sagepub.com/cgi/doi/10.1177/1350507610389683. [Accessed: 14 May 2011].

Wei, H. (2012). An empirical study on the determinants of international student mobility: a global perspective. *Higher Education*. [Online]. p.pp. 1–18. Available from: http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10734-012-9593-5. [Accessed: 23 November 2012].

Weiner, I.B., Freedheim, D.K., Reynolds, W.M., Schinka, J.A. & Miller, G.E. (2003). *Handbook of Psychology: Educational psychology*. John Wiley and Sons.

Wells, R.S., Seifert, T.A., Padgett, R.D., Park, S. & Umbach, P.D. (2011). Why Do More Women than Men Want to Earn a Four-Year Degree? Exploring the Effects of Gender, Social Origin, and Social Capital on Educational Expectations. *Journal of Higher Education*. [Online]. 82 (1). p.pp. 1–32. Available from: http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=57437076&site=eds-live&scope=site.

Van der Wende, M. & Westerheijden, D.F. (2001). International aspects of quality assurance with a special focus on European higher education. *Quality in Higher Education*. 7 (3). p.pp. 233–246.

Whitchurch, C. (2012). *Reconstructing Identities in Higher Education: The rise of “Third Space” professionals*. London: Routledge.

Whitmore, S. (2011). *Public Whereness: Japanese Canadian Nationality and the Transformation of the Canadian Multicultural Public Sphere*. [Online]. Canada: Trent University (Canada). Available from: http://search.proquest.com/docview/816366118?accountid=12117. [Accessed: 2 April 2013].

Wholey, J.S. (1983). *Evaluation and effective public management*. London: Scott Foresman & Co.

Wiers-Jenssen, J. & Stensaker, B. rn (2002). Student satisfaction: towards an empirical deconstruction of the concept. *Quality in Higher Education*. 8 (2). p.pp. 183–195.

Wilkins, S. & Balakrishnan, M.S. (2012). Assessing student satisfaction in transnational higher education. *International Journal of Educational Management*. [Online]. 27 (2). p.pp. 4–4. Available from: http://www.emeraldinsight.com/journals.htm?articleid=17066184&show=abstract. [Accessed: 27 November 2012].

Wilkins, S. & Huisman, J. (2012). The international branch campus as transnational strategy in higher education. *Higher Education*. [Online]. p.pp. 1–19. Available from: http://www.springerlink.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/content/p6t2r6r757744466/abstract/. [Accessed: 4 June 2012].

Wilkins, S., Stephens Balakrishnan, M. & Huisman, J. (2012). Student satisfaction and student perceptions of quality at international branch campuses in the United Arab Emirates. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*. [Online]. 34 (5). p.pp. 543–556. Available from: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/1360080X.2012.716003. [Accessed: 14 December 2012].

Williams, J. (2012). *Consuming Higher Education: Why Learning Can’t be Bought*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Williams, J. & Kane, D. (2009). Assessment and Feedback: Institutional Experiences of Student Feedback, 1996 to 2007. *Higher Education Quarterly*. [Online]. 63 (3). p.pp. 264–286. Available from: http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1468-2273.2009.00430.x/abstract. [Accessed: 11 November 2013].

Wood, V.R. (2006). Globalization and Higher Education: Eight Common Perceptions from University Leaders. *IIE Networker (Institute of International Education – Bi-annual Journal for International Education Professions)*. (Spring). p.pp. 26–34.

Woodhouse, D. (2012). *A Short History of Quality*. [Online]. Available from: https://www.caa.ae/caa/images/QASeries_2.pdf. [Accessed: 14 December 2012].

Woodside, A.G. (2010). *Case Study Research: Theory, Methods and Practice*. London: Emerald Group Publishing.

Working Party Academics (2011). *Alternative white paper: In defence of public higher education*. [Online]. Available from:

http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/interactive/2011/sep/27/higher-education-alternative-white-paper. [Accessed: 19 October 2011].

Wu, W. (2008). *Challenges of university academic adjustment: a case study of East Asian international postgraduate students at one British university*. Ph.D. [Online]. University of Warwick. Available from: http://webcat.warwick.ac.uk/record=b2242370~S1 : http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/2851/. [Accessed: 14 April 2013].

Wynn, D. & Williams, C.K. (2012). Principles for conducting critical realist case study research in information systems. *MIS Q.* [Online]. 36 (3). p.pp. 787–810. Available from: http://dl.acm.org/citation.cfm?id=2481655.2481663. [Accessed: 6 July 2013].

Yin, R. (2003). *Case study research : design and methods*. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks California: Sage Publications.

Yorke, M. (2006). *Employability in higher education: what it is - what it is not*. ESECT Learning and Employability Series. [Online]. Available from: http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/employability/employability336. [Accessed 23 June 2012].

Yorke, M. & Longden, B. (2004). *Retention and student success in higher education*. Open University Press.

Yorke, M. & Longden, B. (2008). *The first-year experience of higher education in the U.K. final report*. York: Higher Education Academy.

Zachariadis, M., Scott, S. & Barrett, M. (2010). *Exploring critical realism as the theoretical foundation of mixed-method research: evidence from the economics of IS innovations*. [Online]. Available from: http://www.jbs.cam.ac.uk/research/working_papers/2010/wp1003.pdf.

Zeithaml, V.A., Berry, L.L. & Parasuraman, A. (1993). The nature and determinants of customer expectations of service. *Journal of the academy of Marketing Science*. 21 (1). p.pp. 1–12.

Zeng, L.M., Webster, B.J. & Ginns, P. (2013). Measuring the research experience of research postgraduate students in Hong Kong. *Higher Education Research & Development*. [Online]. 32 (4). p.pp. 672–686. Available from: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/07294360.2012.754410. [Accessed: 19 August 2013].

Zhang, L. (2003). Does the big five predict learning approaches? *Personality and Individual Differences*. [Online]. 34 (8). p.pp. 1431–1446. Available from: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0191886902001253. [Accessed: 12 August 2013].

Zhao, X. (2012). A Review on Service Quality and Student Satisfaction of Higher Education. In: J. Luo (ed.). *Soft Computing in Information Communication Technology*. [Online]. Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer Berlin Heidelberg, pp. 115–122. Available from: http://link.springer.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/content/pdf/10.1007%2F978-3-642-29148-7_17. [Accessed: 23 December 2012].

Ziguras, C. (2011). *Global Trends and Key Issues in Transnational Education*. In: [Online]. 2011, Kuala Lumpur: RMIT. Available from: http://www.britishcouncil.org/malaysia-excellenceintne-speaker-presentations-ziguras.pdf. [Accessed: 31 August 2012].

Ziguras, C. (2012). How do we ensure that the future of transnational education is clearer than the present? In: *Examining the Future of Transnational Education*. [Online]. 14 March 2012, London. Available from: http://ihe.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/going_global/session_attachments/GG2012%206.3%20Christopher%20Ziguras.pdf. [Accessed: 24 September 2012].

Zikmund, W. (2010). *Business research methods.* 8th ed. /. Mason OH: South-Western Cengage Learning.

Σιδηροπούλου-Δημακάκου, Δ., Αλεξοπούλου, Γ., Αργυροπούλου, Α., Δρόσος, Ν. & Ταμπούρη, Σ. (2008). *Σχολικός επαγγελματικός προσανατολισμός*. [Online]. 2008. Available from: http://repository.edulll.gr/edulll/handle/10795/1359. [Accessed: 29 November 2011].