

**Evaluating the Effectiveness of German TNE:  
Selected Case Studies from the Middle East**

تقييم فعالية التعليم الألماني العابر للحدود:  
دراسة حالات مختارة من الشرق الأوسط

by

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of the requirements for the degree of  
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## **ABSTRACT**

In its endeavors to internationalize its higher education, science and research, Germany began making their own footprints in transnational education (TNE), and situated their unique model of applied sciences globally. This study sheds light on the German TNE in the Middle East region, where the German TNE flagship universities are located. The study is concerned with evaluating the effectiveness of German TNE through selected case studies from the Middle East. Namely, the German University in Cairo (GUC), the German Jordanian University (GJU), The German University of Technology in Oman (GUtech) and the Turkish- German University (TGU). Through the lenses of internationalization, the study will interpret the evolution, motives and benefits for German TNE stakeholders. Furthermore, in order to measure the German TNE success, and explore students, staff and managers perspectives, the multiple case study method was selected. Qualitative empirical data was collected from different primary sources including questionnaires, interviews, audit reports and the universities' official websites. The data was described, analyzed, and findings were synthesized to present a well-rounded, and in-depth narrative. The study recommends modelling and further expanding these TNE projects for their great benefits for all stakeholders, as they contribute in the internationalization and reformation of the education systems in both Germany and the TNE host countries.

**Key words:** Transnational Education, Germany, Middle East, Evaluation, Effectiveness

## خلاصة البحث

في سعيها الدؤوب لتدويل تعليمها العالي، والبحث العلمي، بدأت ألمانيا بوضع بصماتها في التعليم العالي العابر للحدود، وعززت مكانة جامعاتها كنموذج مميز في العلوم التطبيقية والتعليم المهني. تسلط هذه الدراسة الضوء على التعليم الألماني العابر للحدود في منطقة الشرق الأوسط، حيث تتواجد أكبر الجامعات الألمانية العابرة للحدود. تعنى الدراسة بتقييم فعالية التعليم الألماني العابر للحدود من خلال دراسة حالات مختارة من الشرق الأوسط. تحديداً، الجامعة الألمانية المصرية، والجامعة الألمانية الأردنية، والجامعة الألمانية للعلوم والتكنولوجيا في عمان، والجامعة التركية الألمانية. وتطرح الدراسة نظرية التدويل لتفسير نشأة التعليم الألماني العابر للحدود، والدوافع والمزايا لجميع الأطراف المشاركة فيه. وقد اعتمدت الدراسة منهج دراسة الحالة المتعددة لقياس مدى نجاح التعليم الألماني العابر للحدود، واستطلاع وجهات نظر طلابه وخريجيه وموظفيه ومدرائه. وذلك لما أتاحه منهج دراسة الحالة من توظيف أدوات مختلفة لجمع بيانات نوعية من مصادر أولية مختلفة، مثل المواقع الرسمية للجامعات المختارة، وتقارير تقييم الجامعات، وأسئلة موجهة ومقابلات. وقد تم وصف البيانات، وتحليلها لاستخلاص النتائج وتقديم استنتاجات وتوصيات البحث. وتوصي الدراسة بنمذجة وزيادة أعداد هذه الجامعات لمزاياها الإيجابية في تقدم وإصلاح وتدويل التعليم العالي في ألمانيا والدول المضيفة.

**كلمات مفتاحية:** التعليم العابر للحدود، ألمانيا، الشرق الأوسط، تقييم، فعالية

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## **Abbreviations**

ACQUIN	Certification and Quality Assurance Institute
BMBF	Federal German Ministry of Education
DAAD	The German Academic Exchange Service
GATS	General Agreement on Trade in Services
GJU	The German Jordanian University
GUC	The German University in Cairo
GUTech	The German University of Technology in Oman
HE	Higher Education
IHEIs	International Higher Education Institutions
IPPM	International Provider and Program Mobility
NAFSA	The Association of International Educators
TGU	The Turkish-German University
TNE	Transnational Education
WTO	World Trade Organization

# Chapter 1

## *1. INTRODUCTION*

In the current light of the covid-19 pandemic, the future of education is suddenly perplexing. The familiar landscape of higher education has especially been affected. University buildings closed their services. International students all over the world were told to pack their suitcases and travel back to their homes. Air travel and the conventional forms of internationalization may not be the same again in the near future. They are unsustainable, risky and with the help of modern technology; a lot less necessary. Combined, these factors highlight the importance of transnational education (TNE) and present it in a new light.

In the Middle East (ME), the idea of seeking higher education overseas, has been prevalent and desirable for a long while. However, recent conditions in the political climate have presented new challenges for young Arabs and Muslims to pursue an offshore degree. Post 9/11 tensions have made it much more difficult to acquire a visa, making Transnational Higher Education (TNE) a great option for higher education (Miller-Idriss & Hanauer 2011). Moreover, female students in developing countries would benefit from TNE as they face socio-cultural challenges restricting their access towards higher education in different ways (Hussain 2007).

In the early 1990s, the term Transnational Education (TNE) was coined in order to discern between international students residing in the international higher education providing country, and students who go to provider universities in their own host country (Clausen, Schindler-Kovats, & Stalf, 2011). Hussain (2007) states that TNE is not a new

phenomenon but its global expansion in the last few decades may be a new development. Consequently, emerging and developing countries were unable to meet their local students increased demand on international higher education and were affected by students travelling offshore to seek international degrees. At the same time, English-speaking countries such as Australia, the US, and the UK began developing TNE in order to reach new students who cannot travel to them so as to promote their income, international prestige and higher education excellence. As a result, emerging and developing countries welcomed these TNE projects to have their needs for international higher education realized. Recently, however, some non-English speaking countries began making their own footprint in TNE. Such is the case for Germany. Clausen, Schindler & Kovats (2011) argue that it was not until the year 2000 when Germany started its involvement in the international higher education marketplace and situated its reputation globally.

For Germany, the concept of internationalization grew in significance as it became one of the solutions to repair the country's international reputation post World War II (Wahlers 2018). Slowly but surely, Germany's attention to internationalization evolved as one of the components of its reformation agenda (Academic Cooperation Association, 2008), which resulted in Germany's Internationalization of Higher Education, Science and Research Strategy by the Federal German Ministry of Education (BMBF) in 2016. This strategy aims to promote the German reputation in academic excellence in science, research and innovation (BMBF 2016). In addition, one of the internationalization strategy's aims is to resolve global challenges through research by collaborating with all countries, including emerging and developing nations. Lastly, another important aim is to internationalize the German applied sciences model in higher education (BMBF 2016). According to the

BMBF's website, the German model of education is distinguished from others based on its focus on applied sciences and their "vocational training system" (Education n.d.). This system gives undergraduate students the opportunity to practically train in their field alongside their academic education for a good duration of two to three and a half years. The result is capable, well trained graduates ready to join the workforce and contributing to low unemployment rates (Education n.d.).

German TNE slowly started gaining more popularity as it offered a practical and unique model of higher education. The significance of Germany's module lay heavily in their notable interest in founding universities in a number of emerging and developing countries (BMBF 2016). Considering the fact that Germany founds and funds these universities regardless of monetary gain, one has to question the benefits and motives behind Germany's TNE module. This study proposes the theory of internationalization as a main driver of the German TNE evolution and movement by all German TNE stakeholders.

Since initiation, in 2000, the number of German TNE students and courses increased over time. According to DAAD (2018, pg. 80):

In 2018 the number of students enrolled in German TNE courses around the world increased to over 32,000; German higher education institutions offered 276-degree programs at over 60 locations in 35 countries.

Five of these 60 locations reside in the Middle East (DAAD 2020, namely, the German University of Technology in Oman (GUTech), the German Jordanian University (GJU), the Turkish-German University (TGU) in Turkey, the German University in Cairo (GUC) in Egypt and Wadi International University in Syria (DAAD 2020). Despite the lofty reputation that all these German TNE universities enjoy, the literature shows little

interest in German TNE institutions in the Middle East. It lacks case studies, research and further investigation. This gap will be addressed by contributing new findings and empirical data to the existing literature. The main aim of this paper is to investigate the effectiveness of German TNE in the Middle East through selected case studies. To reach this aim, the study puts forth the following questions:

- What are the motives and calculated benefits of the governments, universities and students of Germany and the host countries?
- How were German universities evaluated?
- Did the alumni's university experiences meet their expectations?
- How can Germany and the Arab World countries further develop the TNE projects for better effectiveness?

To answer the research questions, an extensive review of the existing literature will be conducted in order to demonstrate the current knowledge, and set the scene for the study as a whole. The literature review discusses TNE evolution, definitions, terminology, and gives a background about higher education and TNE in the Middle East. Additionally, a background about the German TNE participants' motivations will be explained through the theory of internationalization.

The literature suggests that the history of establishing a TNE definition has been dubious. This study commends the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)'s definition:

Transnational education (TNE) refers to universities, courses and individual study modules that are offered abroad essentially for students from the respective country or region, while the main academic responsibility lies with a university in another country. Academic responsibility, first of all, refers to contents (curricula), but typically embraces at least some of the following elements as well: German faculty, degrees awarded and quality assurance conducted by the German university. (DAAD 2014, p. 3).

The difference between DAAD's definition and other definitions is that it highlights the TNE provider's academic responsibility. In it, internationalization covers policies, strategies and practices that add international dimensions to the different aspects of TNE delivery (Knight 2004).

The literature review section will answer the first research objective about the motivation of the German TNE participants. The second and third objectives will be achieved through selected case studies empirical data collection, analysis, and findings, while the fourth objective will be concluded from the findings of the first three objectives.

The methodology section will define the approach that was used to answer the main research question, and the second and third questions. The multiple case study method was selected to present a well-rounded, and in-depth narrative. Data was collected from surveys, questionnaires, interviews, documents and other primary sources using a mix of qualitative methods. Utilizing Biggam's (2015) recommendations of analyzing the research findings, the findings from the literature review, selected universities websites, questionnaires, and interviews were first described and reported, studied for patterns and themes, analyzed, and finally discussed and synthesized in the conclusion.

The international exchange of minds through Germany's TNE programs could strengthen political, commercial and cultural ties. It would allow students and staff to

develop socio- cultural understanding, tolerance, respect for others backgrounds, values, beliefs and appreciation for diversity (McNamara 2013). It is more likely that international students are more capable of respecting different opinions even if they conflict with their personal beliefs. Similarly, Middle Eastern countries would greatly benefit from hosting German TNE projects, as they will contribute to internationalizing and reforming their higher education systems, curriculums, instruction, recruitment, staff and students. TNE projects promote the host countries' reputation in education, science and research, generate a source of income and reduce brain-drain. Adopting the German Applied Sciences Model by higher education institutions will provide the marketplace with skilled graduates and thus, improve industry and employability. Additionally, students will have access to international education while in their countries at lower costs, and international education would enhance their 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and expand their opportunities of employability accordingly.

## Chapter 2

### ***2. LITERATURE REVIEW***

#### **2.1 Introduction**

Most literature on German TNE was commissioned or conducted by DAAD, in addition to brief local case studies administered by German experts on the TNE projects and host countries addressing higher education institutions participants in internationalization strategies (Academic Cooperation Association, 2008). Moreover, in partnership with the British Council, DAAD commissioned additional research on TNE (British Council 2014).

This review of literature will investigate the key issues related to German TNE in the Middle East in terms of its effectiveness. The study's four research questions will be addressed through analyzing the findings of this literature review combined with the case studies' empirical data collection, analysis, and findings:

- What are the motives and calculated benefits of the governments, universities and students of Germany and the host countries?
- How were German universities evaluated?
- Did the alumni's university experiences meet their expectations?
- How can Germany and the Arab World countries further develop the TNE projects for better effectiveness?

This review will provide a brief background about education, TNE, and German-Backed universities in the Middle East will be provided. TNE motives of governments, universities and students of both Germany and the host countries will be interpreted through the lens of the internationalization theory. To support this theory, the study adopts DAAD's definition of TNE which suggests that TNE is the result of a country's academic responsibility towards less developed nations (DAAD 2014).

## **2.2 Transnational Education Phenomenon, Definitions, and Terminology**

TNE provides the opportunities for students to study in HEIs while staying in their home countries. TNE started in western English-speaking countries such as Australia, the United States and the United Kingdom as a result of the reduction on the government subsidies to their universities. Consequently, the universities started looking for other ways to counterbalance the financial shortages. Since onshore-student fees were falling, the universities provided international education to students in their home countries (Alam et al. 2013). While countries like Australia, UK and the US consider TNE as a source of income and a way of reaching new students, developing and emerging countries hope that their students gain international degrees in their own countries (DAAD 2014). Moreover, the World Trade Organization (WTO), recognized trade in education as an important factor of economic growth and considered TNE as an international trade service under the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS). Consequently, all TNE activities including distance learning fall under the GATS rules (Bannier 2016).

### *2.2.1 Defining TNE*

The term TNE describes the phenomenon in which students attend institutions located in a country other than the country that provides the program of study. Nevertheless, “TNE has gained its meaning and popularity through everyday use—not through the conceptual foundation of the term” Knight (2016). TNE is viewed as a result of an ever-increasing demand for international education (Fromm 2018). In the early 1990s, the term Transnational Education (TNE) was coined in order to discern between international students residing in the international higher education providing country and students who go to provider universities in their own host country (Clausen, Schindler-Kovats, & Stalf, 2011). According to the council of Europe, in a frequently cited definition, TNE stands for:

All types of higher education study programs, 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. (Council of Europe 2002).

In the same way, the British council defined TNE as the “education provision from one country offered in another” (2013, p. 13). However, while the previous definitions focus on the mobility of programs, DAAD adds the academic responsibility and quality assurance by the TNE provider which, in its turn, reflects Germany’s perspective. In fact, DAAD expects the German universities that apply for TNE projects abroad to adhere to expected standards such as being familiar with the host country’s context, sustainable financing, human resources and ties with Germany. This can be through students and staff exchange, ensuring employability, high quality of research-based teaching and quality assurance measures (DAAD 2014). The same standards are also emphasized by the German’s Rectors

conference code for German Higher education projects abroad (German's Rectors Conference 2013).

### ***2.2.2 TNE Terminology***

“The literature suggests that the terminology is key challenge in understanding TNE education” (Ashour 2018). TNE, and other commonly used synonyms such as ‘cross border, borderless, and offshore education are not precise in reflecting the practical meaning of international programs and provider mobility. In a recent study by DAAD, (Kammüller, Bachmann & Otte 2020), argue that the two terms “cross border” and “borderless” indicate that there are borders to cross, but it is not clear “who or what does the crossing”. However, the term ‘International Provider and Program Mobility’ (IPPM) indicates the mobility of the international academic program and provider towards the students. The term (IPPM) was introduced by Knight and McNamara (2017), in a study commissioned and managed by DAAD and the British Council, and supported by the (BMBF). Knight (2019) states that the term IPPM is gaining acceptance because it clarifies the specific definition and meaning of TNE.

### **2.3 Higher Education and Transnational Education in the Middle East**

Higher Education reform in the Middle East can be seen through the increasing number of universities, enrolled students and reform initiatives throughout the Arab countries. Statistics on higher education in the Arab world for the year 2014 indicate that over the last twenty-five years, the number of universities has increased rapidly to 700, the number of enrolled students to 10 million and the number of faculty members to 350,000

(Al-Zoubi & Abu-Orabi 2019). On the other hand, Miller-Idriss and Hanauer (2011) argue that the graduates of public universities, lack the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills necessary for meeting the market place needs. With a few exceptions, the education system in the Middle East suffers from many challenges including low quality of education and research, gender inequality, other types of inequality, and a lack of long-life learning education (Lai, Ahmad and Da Wan 2016). Altbach (2011) adds that the curriculum is irrelevant, the professors are underqualified and most importantly, the graduates don't find jobs as their skills don't match the market place needs. Even when they are qualified, in some of the Middle East countries, they are not guaranteed jobs because of the stagnating economy (Altbach 2011). Despite the increasing numbers of youth and university enrollments, unemployment is very high in the Middle East, and the HE sector is under the pressure of meeting the labor market needs (Altbach 2011). At the same time, there are reform initiatives on national and regional levels. The 'Arab Higher Council for Scientific Research' was established in 2014 in order to promote the HE role in research advancement and Arab countries development. Moreover, the collaborative efforts of the World Bank and Marseille Center for Mediterranean Integration have led to the University Governance and Quality Assurance Program that addresses issues such as the inconsistent quality of HE and the discrepancy between the work place needs and the graduates' skills (Lai, Ahmad and Da Wan 2016).

An example that reflects the points mentioned above is the higher education system in Jordan. The GJU project director, Dr. Geiger stated that the idea of founding the German Jordanian University started in 2002, when King Abdullah II realised that the engineering students in Jordan were not ready for the work place, a complaint that was voiced by

Jordanian industries (German Dimension, 2015). As a solution, the King visited Germany to request the establishment of a Jordanian university based on the German applied sciences module. Prof. Mousa Al-Lozi (2011) pointed out that in 2011, forty thousand students graduated from the HE institutions in Jordan, only to find a market that has no use for them. This is due to the disparity in relevant research and the provision of impractical majors. The education policies were not concerned with the needs of the market post-graduation. In the conference 'Education in Jordan: vision and reality', the minister of higher education Dr. Al-Khadra (2015), and Dr. Al-Qarm (2015) reaffirmed that one of the greatest challenges that Jordan is facing, is the huge gap between the learning outcomes and the workforce demand. This resulted in the increase of unemployment rates accordingly. Dr. Al-Khadra (2015) highlighted the need to improve educational policies, quality and outcomes. This reality clearly emphasizes the necessity of internationalizing higher education in the Middle East. TNE puts forward a hopeful example whose success and proper utilization could positively impact the education systems in Middle Eastern countries.

The expansion of TNE in the Middle East is a recent phenomenon (Hanover 2011), and the lack of reliable and ongoing data collection makes it hard to track the total numbers of TNE institutions throughout the world. However, around one third of the TNE branch campuses are in the Middle East (Hanover 2011). The largest share of TNE projects in the Middle East are located in UAE and Qatar which have become regional hubs for TNE (Alam et al. 2013).

## **2.4 Theoretical Framework: Internationalization theory and TNE motivation**

The demand for international higher education is growing worldwide as a result of globalization. Academic internationalization involves different activities such as the provision of onshore and transnational education, curriculum internationalization, providing foreign language programs and enhancing cross-cultural understanding (Altbach and Knight 2007). Knight (2002) defines the internationalization of higher education as “the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education”. Similarly, NAFSA, the Association of International Educators, defines the internationalization of higher education as “the conscious effort to integrate and infuse international, intercultural, and global dimensions into the philosophy of postsecondary education”. Furthermore, NAFSA indicates that for effective internationalization, academic communities should be responsibly engaged in global networks and partnerships (NAFSA n.d.). In light of the foregoing definitions, this study proposes internationalization as a theory to explain the different motivations for German TNE participants. Germany’s engagement in TNE activities is viewed as a main component of the German broad Internationalization strategy at both the national level and the HEIs level, which aims to promote German HE reputation and excellence internationally (Academic Cooperation Association, 2008). Backing exchange programs for students and researchers on a global level is one of Germany’s traditions at attempting to amend its image post-1945 (Wahlers 2018). Thus, the internationalization that started in the late eighties, goes back to this idea (Wahlers 2018). The German Study Programs

Abroad initiative is aimed at attracting international students “while maintaining and improving the appeal of national universities” (Fromm 2014, pg. 25).

Germany started engaging in TNE activities later in the year 2000 through a different approach; the unique German TNE model, or TNE ‘made in Germany’. Clausen, Schindler & Kovats (2011, p. 1) argue that Germany’s TNE is based on mutual benefits regardless of profit. They suggest that this German model of TNE coined ‘made in Germany’, has developed in the world of cross-border education. Ashour (2018) explains that Germany’s nonparticipation in TNE throughout the Gulf countries goes back to their motivation. While most TNE universities were founded upon economic basis, Germany’s TNE universities prioritize mutual benefit over economic value (Ashour, 2018).

#### ***2.4.1 Germany’s motivation and benefits from TNE?***

The German federal government’s internationalization of education, science and research strategy (2016) defined the following aims:

- a) bolstering the German science, research and innovation excellence through worldwide collaboration,
- b) overcoming global challenges through education and research at an international level,
- c) including developing and emerging countries,
- d) and internationalizing Germany’s mark of vocational education, practical training and qualifications (BMBF 2016).

The German ministry of education emphasizes the importance of equal opportunities in education, regardless of wealth or social status and ensures that potential is utilized and that

talent is well supported (BMBF n.d.). The German applied science model of education is distinguished from others based on its focus on “vocational training system”. According to the BMBF (n.d.), this system gives students the opportunity to practically train in their field alongside their academic education. This results in capable, well trained fresh employees ready to join the workforce and contribute to a low unemployment rate (BMBF 2016). Germany believes that all countries must collaborate to solve the global challenges through education and research (BMBF 2016). Involving developing countries in research and science is one of Germany’s strategies for internationalizing higher education. This goal is achieved by establishing and nurturing TNE projects in developing countries (BMBF 2016). The internationalization of higher education has been widely accepted as one of Germany’s top priorities on its reformation agenda (Academic Cooperation Association, 2008). Consequently, the German nation state and stakeholders are involved in initiating, planning, implementing and supporting TNE projects (Fromm & Raev 2018).

‘German Study Programs Abroad’ is a German national project comprised of founding and supporting German TNE in foreign countries. It is part of the major schemes aimed toward cultivating an attractive and competitive higher education, and a global reputation in research and science. Public funding from the BMBF is the propelling component to German TNE under the German Study Programs Abroad project. Managed, supported, and run by the (DAAD), German HEIs benefit from this framework in a number of ways:

- a) The launching of the combined Bachelors and Masters study courses,
- b) the legislation of a national system accreditation simplified the integration of the German Study Abroad program and,

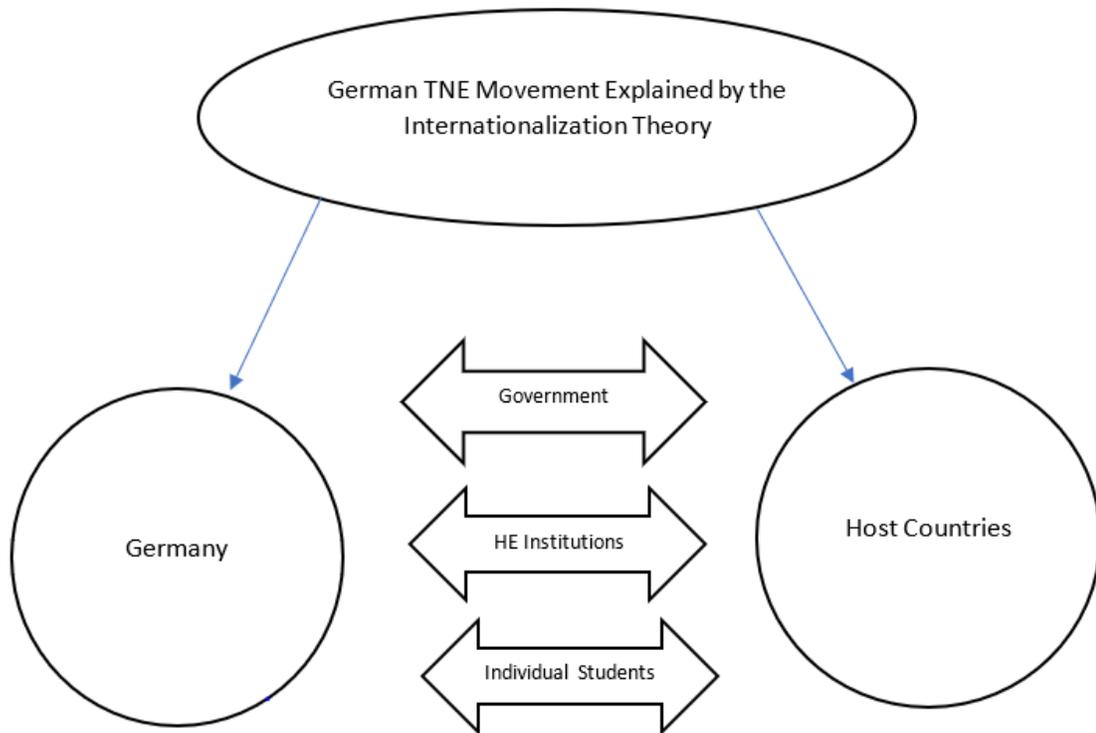
- c) the internationalization and reformation of the German curriculum, which produced several programs taught in English to accommodate international students (Academic Cooperation Association, 2008).

Throughout the past few decades, German HE internationalization policy has been the main factor for TNE evolution in Germany. The First Action Scheme of DAAD was the inauguration of the “Action Program to Promote International Students at German Universities” in 1996, which sought to bolster its reputation and position as a research and study destination for international and young professionals (DAAD n.d.). The Second Action Scheme in 2000, aimed to market Germany’s “Offshore activities” in an attractive way to build up the significance and reputation of German education overseas, generate further sources of income for investing institutions and acquaint learners of emerging economy backgrounds with German culture and education (Academic Cooperation Association, 2008). In 2004, the Third Action Scheme was held in order to internationalize HE initialized “The International University of the Future” and reaffirm the fundamental importance of cross border HE (Academic Cooperation Association, 2008). Moreover, a previous study by the Academic Cooperation Association (2008) suggested five benefits for Germany as a TNE sending country:

- a) Global Marketing and Internationalization of German higher education,
- b) rising interest by students in host countries in studying in Germany and learning the German language,

- c) Internationalizing and improving the providing universities' curriculum, instruction and staff capacity,
- d) bolstering the providing institutions' strategic planning and decision making and,
- e) reinforcing German industry in the hosting regions.

It can be deduced, therefore, that TNE motivations are driven by the Internationalization of higher education: the involvement of state actors and the clear connection between policy and implementation are explicit pointers. According to (Fromm 2018, p. 3), "German TNE is shaped by National politics and policies rather than by global market forces". In fact, those policies were built on a 'win-win' approach, in which all participating parties benefitted from the German Study Programs Abroad arrangement (Clausen, Schindler-Kovats, & Stalf, 2011). Said benefits included the further development of research and science for all, widening the international and global networks for teachers, researchers, and professionals, and improving the international image and branding for all. Additionally, expanding opportunities for research and recruitments of talents worldwide (Clausen, Schindler-Kovats, & Stalf, 2011).



**Figure 1: German TNE Internationalization theory explaining all TNE participants' motivations.**

#### ***2.4.2 The host countries' motivation and benefits from TNE***

The literature suggests that it is challenging to evaluate the impact of TNE projects on host countries due to the lack of reliable data on the number of TNE projects, programs or enrolled students (McNamara 2013). Therefore, impact can be measured by evaluating the motivation against the calculated benefits of a TNE host country, which is possible if the host country has clear policies for TNE (McNamara 2013). A recent study by Ashour (2018) suggests that the German TNE model has several benefits to host countries such as developing the higher education quality, capacity building, advancing research as a main

component of higher education, internationalizing their teaching, learning, curriculum and recruitment, and promoting their reputation and presence internationally (Ashour 2018). On the other hand, the British Council’s study findings in 2013 suggested five impact categories for TNE host countries. Table 1 shows the benefits of students, instructors, universities and host countries of TNE at all levels: academic, economic, socio-cultural and the reputation of the education status as a whole. However, there are potential academic, economic and social concerns such as the lack of quality assurance, foreign curriculum irrelevance to the local context, mismatch between the graduates’ skills and the local market’s needs, possible loss of cultural identity and other risks. (See table 1).

Category of impact	Examples of potential benefits	Examples of potential risks
<b>Academic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>increased access for local students to higher education</li> <li>updated teaching and learning, curriculum development, and evaluation practices</li> <li>exposure to new quality assurance and qualification recognition policies and practices</li> <li>increased capacity in programme management and implementation</li> <li>diversification of academic programmes being offered to students</li> <li>professional development opportunities for local faculty.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>lower quality provision if quality assurance and accreditation systems are not in place</li> <li>curriculum not relevant to local context and culture</li> <li>competition, not collaboration, between local and foreign providers</li> <li>'canned courses'</li> <li>sustainability of academic programmes if low enrolments</li> <li>local HEIs responsible for providing programmes which require major investments in equipment, labs, facilities</li> <li>foreign qualifications not recognised.</li> </ul>
<b>Economic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>revenue generation from increased enrolments in collaborative programmes</li> <li>decrease outflow of currency</li> <li>less expensive for students to study at home than go abroad</li> <li>income from potential commercialisation of joint research projects</li> <li>contribution to country's shift to knowledge/ service-based economy</li> <li>increase trade in education services for economic free zones.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>higher delivery costs for collaborative programmes delivery</li> <li>sending countries have greater potential for revenue than host countries if memorandums of understanding do not address issue</li> <li>branch campus development is not attracting foreign direct investment.</li> </ul>
<b>Human resource development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>better trained workforce</li> <li>mitigate brain drain if domestic students stay in country</li> <li>potential brain gain if foreign students are retained.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>education/training is not meeting labour market needs and skills gap</li> <li>potential brain drain to neighbouring countries.</li> </ul>
<b>Social cultural</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>exposure to teaching/learning in different language to facilitate job mobility</li> <li>contact with faculty and students from other countries and cultures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>overuse of foreign languages as medium of instruction</li> <li>tensions between different cultural and value norms in and outside of classrooms</li> <li>potential change/loss of cultural identity.</li> </ul>
<b>Status</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>increased status through link with highly ranked foreign HEI.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reputational risks if quality is not assured.</li> </ul>

**Table 1: Major categories and examples of TNE impacts on host country. (McNamara 2013, p.45)**

## **2.5 German-Backed Universities: A Trademark Mark for HE Frameworks**

(Clausen, Schindler & Kovats, 2011) define bi-national or foreign-backed universities as independent universities that are supported, backed, coached and quality assured by foreign universities. The three most common modes of TNE in Germany are ‘German study courses abroad’, ‘German-backed universities’ and affiliated or branch campuses of German universities abroad (DAAD 2014). For the purpose of this research, the focus will be given to the German-backed TNE mode.

German-backed universities are founded in overseas countries and mentored by a German university. The mentor university would be in charge of curriculum design, quality assurance, and training the local teaching staff. Often, the mentor university and the local university would trade staff and students and organize exchange programs that could benefit both institutions (DAAD 2014). Some of the most well- recognized universities under this mode are the GJU, the GUC, the GUtech, and the TJU. Therefore, the German-backed module holds high political significance as it strengthens political ties, exchanges culture and ideas between countries and strengthens Germany’s reputation as a pro education, humanitarian nation.

Location	2018/19	
	absolute	in per cent of total enrolment
<b>Cairo</b>	12,935	39%
<b>Amman</b>	4,339	13%
<b>Muscat</b>	2,172	7%
<b>Shanghai</b>	2,024	6%
<b>Istanbul</b>	1,794	5%
<b>Ho Chi Minh City</b>	1,386	4%
<b>Qingdao</b>	1,000	3%
<b>Singapore</b>	669	2%
<b>Almaty</b>	633	2%
<b>Bishkek</b>	630	2%

**Table 2: Demonstrates Students Enrollments in Top 10 German TNE Host Countries (DAAD 2020, pg. 8).**

According to the DAAD (2020), four of the five largest German-backed universities with the highest numbers of student enrollment are located in the Middle East. Namely, the GUC, the GJU, the GUtech, and the TGU.

## **2.6 German TNE Quality Assurance**

German TNE in the Middle East is a byproduct of Germany’s internationalization of education, science and research. German institutions in the Middle East are generally founded and aided by the German Federal Ministry of Education or DAAD. Therefore, the DAAD, BMBF and German HEIs are responsible for ensuring high quality and overall performance. In fact, DAAD emphasizes the academic responsibility in its definition of TNE as explained earlier. Furthermore, in 2003, the ‘General Meeting of the German Rectors’ Conference adopted “the Code of Conduct for German Higher Education Projects

Abroad” which highlights both the quality and recognition of the German TNE projects abroad:

The academic qualifications offered by German higher education projects abroad are recognized by both the host country and the participating German universities and open up access to advanced study programs at German universities. The universities involved assure the quality of the programs they offer as part of their institutional quality assurance processes and regular monitoring. (German Rectors’ Conference 2013).

According to Program manager at the German Accreditation Council, Mayer-Lantermann, the German responsibility for foreign degrees is not at the same level as that of the national degrees. On the other hand, the host country is responsible for the TNE quality assurance. Some host countries select a German agency to conduct an audit. The GUC and the GUTech were both inspected by the Accreditation, Certification and Quality Assurance Institute (ACQUIN). According to ACQUIN’s website (n.d.), the accreditation measures comply with the European guidelines and standards for HE quality assurance. The ACQUIN evaluates the institution’s overall performance, the quality of the study programs, and recommends areas of improvement (ACQUIN n.d.). As for GJU, it was inspected by an independent evaluator appointed by DAAD. (DAAD Evaluation Report 2016 n.d.). No evidence of external evaluation was found for TGU. There is evidence that the university’s performance is evaluated internally at a regular basis but the evaluation reports are in the Turkish language (internal audit n.d.). Moreover, in the university website, one can find documents relevant to quality policy and quality legislations but they all are in the Turkish language as well (Turkish-German University Quality Policy n.d.).

## 2.7 DAAD's TNE case study

This section of the paper examines how previous studies attempted to evaluate the success of German TNE through case studies. The different research methods and data analysis will be explored in the hopes of deriving useful and tried strategies that serve to achieve the purpose of this study.

A recent study reported on the current conditions of two German TNE universities in China and Turkey, respectively (DAAD 2020). The study published a descriptive account of the universities, recording their reason and method of foundation, funding and management, their curriculum, success, and future outlooks. In 2004, the Chinese-German University for Applied Sciences (CDHAW) was founded top-down through the Chinese ministry of education's initiative. Often listed as one of the best TNE universities in China, CDHAW was constructed strategically in an area well affiliated with German companies. CDHAW students frequently intern at those companies as a part of their studies and later on work there as qualified professionals. Perhaps the greatest difficulty of CDHAW's programs is that in addition to pursuing their major, students are also required to learn German in preparation for their "German Year" abroad. This year is what mainly qualifies the students for a double degree. A few years ago, CDHAW also opened for German students who wish to acquire a coveted double degree. DAAD concludes that "The future of Sino-German cooperation in TNE-IPPM is not easy to predict. The interest of German universities – especially the universities of applied sciences (UAS) – is to collaborate with Chinese institutions in joint study programs still exists, but the surrounding conditions are changing. Some predictions are that the Chinese government is trying to decrease the

western influence and will, therefore, stop allowing their students to travel for the German Year. Foreign students and faculty however, would still be permitted into China.

The Turkish-German University (TGU) was founded in 2013 after years of planning between both countries' governments. TGU is unique in that its curriculum and programs are heavily entangled with their "mentor" university in Germany. In fact, most courses in TGU are taught in German and the rest are taught either in English or Turkish. Many of TGU's graduates have earned bi or tri-lingual degrees in their majors. Additionally, TGU students are regularly encouraged to fly to Germany on research stays or to spend a few semesters in a German university through a scholarship or exchange program. Each semester, approximately, thirty percent of TGU's teaching staff are flown to Germany for academic training and knowledge exchange.

The DAAD report measures the two university's success through two different pieces of evidence; For TGU, the ratio of applications to acceptance rate are seen as evidence for success. For example, the study mentions that the high number of applicants over "two million Turkish school leavers every year," proves "the success of TGU as well as the high reputation of the German academic system in Turkey" (DAAD 2020, p.20). On the other hand, the report rates CDHAW's success through the number of graduates. "To date, more than 1,625 Chinese and 609 German students graduated from CDHAW. The success of CDHAW inspired the German partner universities engaged at CDHAW to establish a formal German University Consortium for International Cooperation" (DAAD 2020, p.14).

This shows that though these numbers may have merit, there are still no established standard means of success criteria as each case was analyzed differently. The study does well in giving a detailed description of the university's condition and nicely provides some predictions for the future outlook of both. However, the analysis of both doesn't necessarily come up with new theoretical guidelines or structure. The case study approach is suitable for this type of research and will, therefore, be used in this paper. What this study will attempt to add is a more structured method of success analysis that may possibly be generalized at least for the Middle East region.

## 2.8 Conclusion

This study of relevant German TNE literature reveals that TNE is an opportunity for Germany and the host countries to reap great benefits in the process of internationalizing their higher education. Table 3 provides a summary of the motivations and calculated benefits for all host and sending country participant in TNE projects.

	Germany	Host countries	Shared benefits between sending and host countries
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Solve the global challenges through education and research.</li> <li>-Promoting vocational education model.</li> <li>-Including developing countries.</li> <li>-Reinforcing the German industry in the target regions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Exposure to international quality assurance and accreditations.</li> <li>-Income generation from increased enrollment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Promote reputation and excellence in Education and Research.</li> </ul>
HE institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Attracting international students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Benefit from the TNE graduate skills.</li> <li>-Reduce brain drain.</li> <li>-Can contribute to improve country's renovation in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Internationalizing and reforming the curriculum, instruction,</li> <li>-Staff capacity and recruitment.</li> </ul>

		<p>education (if the TNE project is taken as a model).</p> <p>-Decrease outflow of currency.</p>	<p>-Mutual benefits through cultural exchange.</p> <p>-Bolstering strategic planning and decision making, program management and implementation development of research and science.</p> <p>-Widening the international and global networks for teachers, researchers, and professionals.</p>
Individual Students	<p>-The internationalization and reformation of German universities will reflect positively on the German students learning and skills.</p>	<p>-Access to international education with lower costs while remaining in home country or region. (This is an additional advantage for females who can't travel alone due to cultural reasons).</p> <p>-Variety of programs and double degree programs offered to students.</p> <p>-Learning different languages and improving 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.</p> <p>-The German year provides a chance for students' skills to improve and increases their chances for international employability.</p>	<p>-Benefit from student cultural exchange expanding opportunities for research and recruitments of talents.</p> <p>-Better chances for local and international employability.</p>

**Table 3: Summary of motivations and calculated benefits for TNE participants.**

The different definitions and terms to describe TNE were discussed in detail, and DAAD's definition was praised for its emphasis on the providing institution's academic responsibility to ensure a high quality of program delivery. Germany's motivation is explained by the higher education internationalization strategy embraced by the BMBF in 2016. This strategy is implemented at both the German political and higher education

institutional levels. The review elaborated several positive political, educational, social cultural and economic benefits for both Germany and the TNE host countries.

The background on education in the Middle East indicates that the large majority of public university graduates lack the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills needed for the market place (Al-Zoubi & Abu-Orabi 2019). The Middle East TNE host countries need to bridge this gap by taking these TNE projects as examples to further improve the public universities that dominate the educational landscape. Based on previous studies of TNE projects, it can be concluded that measuring the effectiveness of TNE is not standardized. On the contrary, it depends on the researcher's own perspectives and measures. An example is the DAAD's evaluation of two German TNE Projects – the TGU and CDHAW in different standards despite the fact that both are reported in the same study. This could be referred to the different contexts and geographies of the different universities. However, this review emphasizes the need for clearer evaluation criteria. Standardized measures can be put in place to evaluate the overall effectiveness of TNE projects. Further research is needed on how German TNE host countries utilize the German Model so as to spread its positive effects to local universities.

## **Chapter 3**

### ***3. METHODOLOGY***

The methodology section describes the approach that was used to answer the main research question. The question of how effective German TNE in the Middle East is, required a tool to measure the effectiveness of German TNE universities. To do so, sufficient data must be collected on each institution. Based on this, the multiple case study method was selected because it allowed the researcher to investigate the condition of German TNE institutions in depth using several different methods. Yin (1994) suggests a practical four-part method:

- “1. Design the case study,
2. Conduct the case study,
3. Analyze the case study evidence, and
4. Develop the conclusions, recommendations and implications.” (Yin 1994, cited in Tellis 1997)

The methodology section will be concerned only with the first two parts. The rest will be applied in the Findings and conclusion sections, respectively. For the purposes of this research, several case studies were conducted in order to accumulate a considerable body of evidence.

#### **3.1 Designing the Case Studies**

##### **i) Selection Criteria**

The first step in designing the case study method began by outlining the criteria for case selection. The term “German transnational universities in the Middle East” was fed into Google search engine. A thorough search into the database was conducted and all the German TNE universities in the Middle East were listed. This yielded a total of six outcomes: The German Jordanian University (GJU), the German University in Cairo (GUC), the German University of Technology in Oman (GUTech), the Turkish German University (TGU), Wadi International University in Syria and the German Graduate Faculty of Logistics in Abu Dhabi (GGFL). The results were compared for common properties to filter out institutions that were too dissimilar or too unqualified. The factors that were used to determine this were as follows:

- Was the university founded by DAAD?
- Is it an independent institution?
- Is the main language of instruction English or German?

These criteria were formulated to assure a certain quality in the selected institutions, to ensure that the curriculum is transnational and to minimize the margin of cultural disparity through electing a common language denominator. If all conditions were met, the case passes. Through this filter, Wadi International University and GGFL were eliminated. Wadi International University was eliminated because it is no longer backed by DAAD, and because the main language of instruction in the university was neither German nor English, but rather a mixture of several languages depending on the major. Additionally, the quality standards were not met (Mayer-Lantermann, 2014). GGFL was eliminated because it is not an independent institution but only an exchange program arranged between an Emirati

university and a German affiliate. The refined selection for conducting the case studies came down to the remaining three universities: GJU, GUC, TGU and GUTech.

CRITERIA	GJU	GUC	TGU	GUTech	GGFL	Wadi International University
Was the university founded by DAAD?	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red
Is it an independent institution?	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green
Is the main language of instruction English or German?	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red

LEGEND
Green
Red

**Table 4: shows the refinement criteria for case study selection (developed by author).**

## ii) Methods of Data Collection

To obtain comprehensive data for each case study, a researcher must consider the following three principles: Using several data sources, building a case study database, and upholding a chain of evidence (Yin 1994, cited in Tellis 1997). This study collected data from questionnaires, interviews, documents and other primary sources.

To gather the largest amount of relevant information on each case, the researcher had to utilize a number of different approaches. This study takes advantage of a mixed qualitative method approach to build the case study:

### 1. Interviews and questionnaires

- a) Four zoom interviews with alumni from GJU, GUC, and TGU respectively,
- b) One zoom interview with a staff member from GUTech,
- c) One zoom interview with a DAAD representative,

- d) Two questionnaires; one for staff and the second for students/alumni.
- e) One email correspondence with a staff member from GUC Germany

**2. Documents and existing data:**

**a) GUC:**

- i) Official university website,
- ii) AQCUIIN accreditation report.

**b) GJU:**

- i) Official university website,
- ii) German Dimension (a GJU publication 2015),
- iii) A commissioned DAAD audit report in 2016 (a summary of this report was found in GJU website)

**c) GUTech:**

- i) Official university website,
- ii) GUTech Audit Report by Oman Academic Accreditation Authority (2013)
- iii) AQCUIIN Accreditation Report (2015)

**d) TGU:**

- i) Official university website

**3.2 Conducting the Case Studies**

According to (Yin1994, cited in Tellis 1997), this section should incorporate three components for successful execution: “Preparation for Data Collection, Distribution of the Questionnaire, and Conducting Interviews”.

## **Part 1:**

In order to contribute new and relevant data to the literature, the researcher chose to collect information via questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaires were designed to be open-question format. However, they still allowed the participants to answer in as much or as little detail as they liked. And where the first questionnaire was distributed through a personal connection who happened to be a GJU alumni, the second version was distributed via LinkedIn, Gmail and WhatsApp.

To find staff participants, the researcher went to the universities' official websites and emailed each university respectively. Six emails were sent in total. However, this resulted in only 2 responses: one from GUC Mittwoch, Germany branch and another from GUTech staff. All the other emails remained unanswered.

In order to reach more participants, the researcher typed the name of the selected institutions in the LinkedIn search bar. From there, the researcher contacted as many alumni and staff as she could with a brief explanatory message that was modified according to the recipient in addition to an invitation for an interview via Zoom (see Appendix A).

This method resulted in a much higher number of participants. Thirty-four people accepted the connection request but only 16 people answered the questionnaire by the 15<sup>th</sup> of August, 2020. Out of those 16, 4 were GUC alumni, 3 were GJU alumni, 6 were TGU alumni and students, 2 were GUTech alumni and one was a DAAD representative. 4 additional responses came from GUC students through a personal connection. The results

were sent by WhatsApp and bumped the GUC participants up to a total of 8 students and alumni.

Upon replying, the researcher sent a number of curated questions that differed depending on the participant (student / alumni / staff). The alumni and student questions are contained in Appendix B. For the staff participants, the questions are contained in Appendix C.

The request for an interview via zoom was accepted by 6 participants: one GJU alumni, one GUC alumni, one TGU alumni, one TGU student, one GUTech staff member, and one DAAD representative. All the interviews were scheduled between the 16<sup>th</sup> of June, 2020 and the 30<sup>th</sup> of July, 2020. Since the participants have already received the questions, they had a good idea about the topics of the interview. An assistant was asked to conduct the interview since she had better interviewing skills. The assistant was debriefed well before conducting each interview. The interviews were semi-structured in that though the questions were previously given out, the interviewer allowed the conversations to flow more organically. All interviews lasted between 30 to 52 minutes. The methods of recording were a mix between note taking and voice recording. The first five interviews were recorded through the notes of the interviewer while the sixth interview with the DAAD representative was recorded on a separate device. The interviews were then typed up as scripts of raw data and attached in Appendix D.

Total Qualitative Correspondence Per Source				
GJU	GUC	TGU	GUTech	DAAD

**Table 5: Shows the total number of qualitative correspondences the researcher was able to collect from each institution.**

**Part 2:**

The second portion of data collection focused on using existing data to build each case comprehensively. According to Joop & Hennie (2005), primary resources are firsthand records or original works on the topic of investigation. This study will prioritize primary sources of information over other sources. The researcher began by looking at the official websites of the TNE universities. From there, some websites linked or mentioned accreditation and audit reports. This then led to a search for accreditation documents and official case studies citing each case specifically.

To begin, the official GUTech website offers general background information about the foundation and credibility of GUTech, the usual admissions and fees information and a short summary about their AQCUIIN and OAAA accreditations. A simple Google search for “GUTech AQCUIIN report”, and “GUTech OAAA report” quickly yielded the intended documents in PDF format for a total of 3 sources for GUTech. GJU’s official website was quite typical as well; it was organized and contained general information about the university. Finding accreditation documents however, was quite challenging. Instead, the GJU website has a page that summarizes an evaluation report commissioned by DAAD. Besides that, a publication titled “The German Dimension” was found in PDF format on the official GJU website. On the GUCs official website, a page was dedicated to briefly

summarize the university’s credentials including their ACQUIN accreditation. Similar to GUTech, a quick Google search for ‘GUC ACQUIN report’ yielded a PDF copy available for the public. As for TGU, unfortunately, the only quality assurance documents linked on their website are internal audit reports available only in the Turkish language. Upon reaching out to the TGU contacts on the official website, the researcher received no reply.

Total Primary Data Sources Per Case			
GJU	GUC	TGU	GUTech

**Table 6: Displays the number of existing sources the researcher was able to collect for each case study.**

Types of Qualitative Data Used							
Questionnaires			Interviews			Existing data	
Students	Alumni	Staff	Students	Alumni	Staff	websites	Documents
4 results	6 results	1 result	1 result	3 results	2 results	4 results	5 results
		Total:11				Total: 6	Total: 9
							Total: 26

**Table 7: Describes the different types of qualitative data, type of participants and number of results for each.**

### **3.3 Ethical considerations**

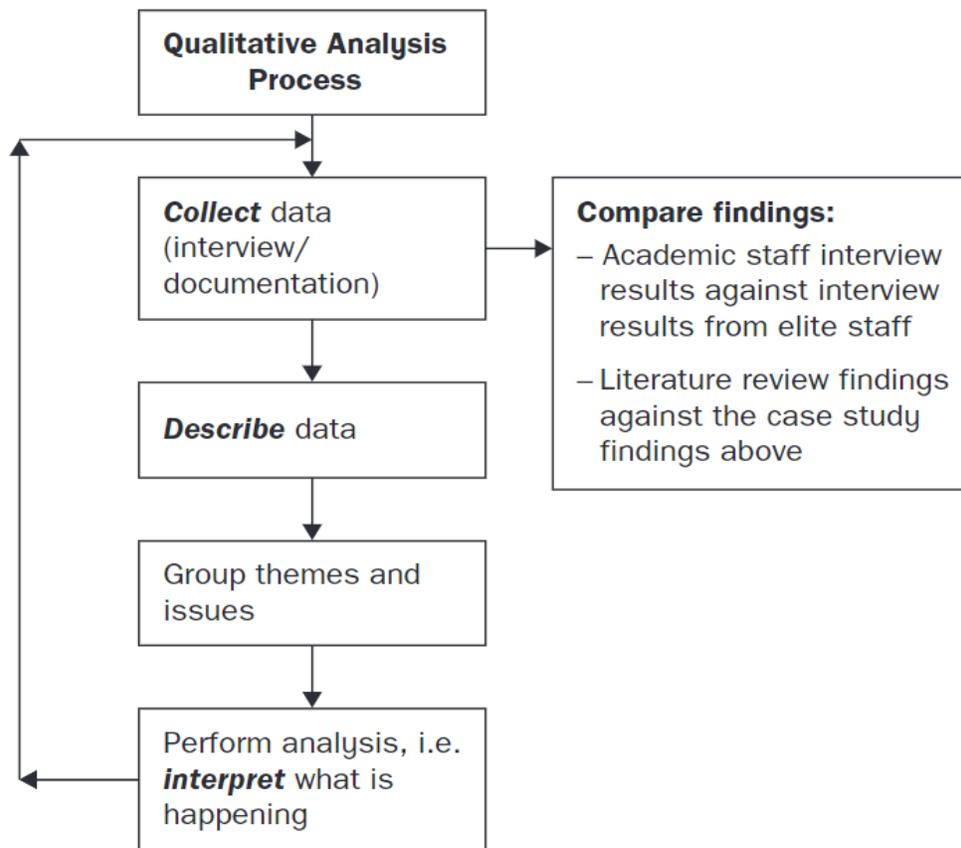
The participants were informed of the research aims from the very beginning. Those who accepted and answered were then asked whether or not they consent to their names being used in the research.

### **3.4 Validity and reliability**

Establishing multiple data sources increases the validity and reliability of the research. This is especially relevant when using reliable existing documentation and corroborating it with the quantitative findings.

### **3.5 Methods of analyzing the Research Findings**

“You cannot evaluate the worth of your research findings unless you have made an attempt at going through the intellectual exercise of description → analysis → synthesis.” (Biggam 2015, p. 203). Based on this, the methods of analysis will follow a coherent structure where the findings will be first described and reported, studied for patterns and themes, analyzed, and finally discussed and synthesized in the conclusion.



**Figure 2: Describes a comprehensive method of analysis for qualitative data. (Biggam 2015, p. 192)**

## **Chapter 4**

### ***4. RESEARCH FINDINGS***

Upon receiving the participant replies, collecting the relevant data and accumulating the interview outcomes as explained in the methodology section above, the findings will be described, summarized, analyzed and synthesized in this section. According to Briggam (2015), this section should “partake in three main types of intellectual activity: a simple description of your results; discussion about what you found; and, finally, an integrative analysis of your empirical data against your Literature Review findings”. First, the data will be classified based on which case it belongs to - starting with official websites, documentation then questionnaires and interviews. An explicit case analysis and discussion will follow each case. Finally, the conclusion will be synthesized in the following chapter.

#### **4.1 Case #1: The German University in Cairo (GUC)**

##### ***4.1.1 The Official university website***

According to its official website (About GUC n.d.), GUC is a non-profit independent Egyptian private university. The GUC was established as a result of a presidential decree in 2002 in cooperation with the State Universities of Ulm and Stuttgart, and a consortium of Egyptians and Germans, with the aim of building excellence in research and teaching. GUC is a leading center of excellence in teaching, research and applied sciences. GUC established a campus in Berlin to facilitate its students’ internships, the culture exposure, the involvement in the German economy and the orientation to industrial accomplishment (About GUC n.d.).

#### 4.1.2 The GUC ACQUIN Accreditation report (2018)

The GUC external accreditation report by the Accreditation, Certification and Quality Assurance Institute (ACQUIN), demonstrated a different dimension of the

<b>A Summary of the GUC ACQUIN Accreditation Report (2018)</b>	
Accredited Programs	Information Engineering and Technology” (B.Sc./M.Sc.), Media Engineering and Technology” (B.Sc./M.Sc.)
Objectives of the HEI	The GUC’s vision and mission are clearly published in the website along with the philosophy and values. The main aim is building high standards in research and teaching to contribute to the students’ welfare nationally and internationally and improve relations between Egypt and Germany.
Strategy of the faculties	For the faculty of Information Engineering and Technology: the approach is to prepare students with innovative approach and desire to learn, contributing to the industrial cooperation and the progress of the university in higher education research. However, for the Media Engineering and Technology, the approach also focused on innovative problem-solving skills, with a desire to learn and lead in top leadership international positions.
Teaching Methods	Typical teaching methods: theoretical learning in classes, practical work in labs, tutorials and seminars, internships and projects. The general class size is 200 students in lectures, and around 30 students in labs and tutorials. Soft skills are to be gained in the GUC Berlin Campus. Support to bachelor or master thesis is provided through a research paper writing course in bachelor and a seminar in the master program.
Quality Management	The university’s quality management system monitors, reviews, and evaluates all study programs. Three centers manage the quality management: ECTS Coordination Center, Quality Assurance and Accreditation Center, and Six Sigma Center. The ECTS is responsible for managing the academic standards. The QAAC is responsible for the development of programs and tracking them by consistent evaluation. The Six Sigma had the biggest change on the university which developed a higher standard of quality management system. Additionally, the Quality Management and Accreditation Committee (QMAC) outline and update the Total Quality Management (TQM) concept. The approach taken in Quality management is “Plan – Do – Check –Act” cycle.
Evaluation	The four programs were accredited without conditions until September 2024.
Recommendations	The peer group advised the university to strengthen its academic profile to enhance research, attract distinguished academic staff and avoid student brain drain. “In the study program MET the current majors CSEN and EDPT should be substituted with the three majors “Computer Sciences”, “Computer Engineering”, “Media Engineering”. “The content and scope of the latter should soon be re-evaluated”.

German TNE performance. The main findings from this report are summarized in table 8 below:

### **4.1.3 GUC Questionnaires Responses**

#### ***4.1.3.1 Questionnaires Responses by the GUC alumni***

The questionnaires questions for the four case studies alumni/students were designed to get their perspectives about the graduates' satisfaction, employability post-graduation, and the German year. Below are the summarized findings from each question.

*Q1. What year did you graduate?*

All of the GUC alumni participants graduated from 2010 to 2017.

*Q2. Were you employed quickly after graduating?*

The participating GUC alumni were employed relatively quickly ranging from immediate employment to a maximum of 8 months' time. Of the four participants, one was employed immediately "as a teaching assistant in the university". Two participants signed their contracts within 3 months of graduating and one less lucky participant found employment after 6 to 8 months of graduating.

*Q3. Did you find that your university experience gave you an advantage?*

The participants answered positively, with the exception of one alumnus who was not sure if they gained an advantage.

*Q4. Do your fellow graduates share your sentiments?*

The participants answered with yes, with one exception of an alumni who is not sure about his fellow graduates' sentiments.

*Q5. Would you advise your friends to go to your university instead of more well-known public universities in your country?*

All the alumni would recommend attending GUC, they consider it one of the top universities in the country.

*Q6. Did you travel to Germany during your studies? Why or why not?*

**Table 9: A Summary of the GUC ACQUIN Accreditation Report 2018.** Two alumni did not have the opportunity to travel, mostly because of travel costs. The other two travelled to attend workshops and study a semester.

*Q7. If yes, did you feel well prepared for the experience?*

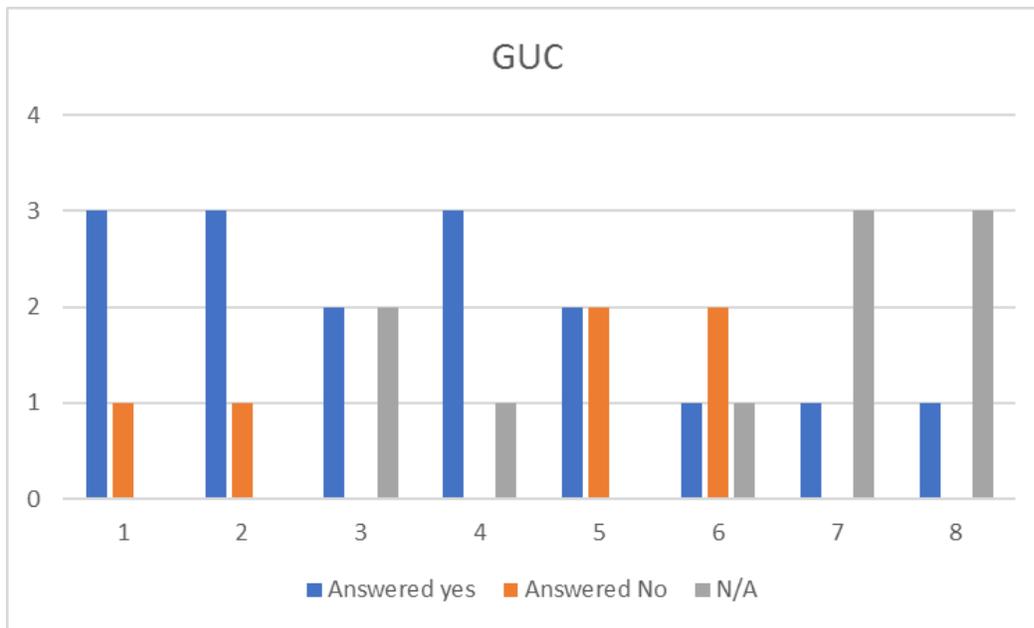
One alumnus said that they were not prepared, travelling alone was a new experience for them, but it was very beneficial. The other alumni reported that they were prepared and that the experience was fruitful.

*Q8. What was something your university did well?*

No responses received.

#### ***4.1.3.2 Questionnaires response by GUC Mittwoch staff member***

According to the GUC Mittwoch representative, “GUC operates a campus for teaching and research in Berlin, German affiliates send high-ranked academics to GUC advisory boards, and German professors (co-) supervise research, and teach selected courses – just to list a few activities”. The participant adds that many of GUC’s top students travel to Germany to conduct research projects and that “alumni data shows that at least 15% of GUC graduates continue their career abroad (for some time)”. To answer the question on how GUC’s alumni affect change, the participant referred to a website (<https://www.guc.edu.eg/wegucians/>) that lists some of GUC’s most successful and influential alumni.



**Figure 3: Shows the GUC participant answers for each of the 8 questions.**

#### **4.1.4 Interview Findings for GUC alumni**

Out of the 4 participants who answered the LinkedIn questionnaire, one participant agreed to be interviewed. The researcher asked an assistant to administer the interview. The assistant debriefed the alumnus on the topic, provided a list of questions and the two agreed upon a time and date to conduct the interview. As with all of the study’s interview structures, this interview was semi-structured. The interviewer had the chance to ask relevant questions outside of the planned list of questions and the interviewee had the chance to speak as freely as she wished about the topic of discussion. The interview was conducted on the 8<sup>th</sup> of July, 2020 and lasted for about 40 minutes. Below is a summarized version of the interview findings. To see the full interview script, refer to Appendix D, interview #2.

Overall, the interviewee's experience in GUC was quite positive. To answer whether or not she'd recommend GUC to other prospective students she said: "If they are going for Applied Arts, definitely I will encourage them. No public university in Egypt delivers the same content that is delivered in GUC". The interviewee explained that GUC had a very good design curriculum that was heavy on the practical courses. She described the course as something that encouraged her "to be open, to express my ideas and to be brave". She continues to narrate saying that "professors pushed us to go out and find product designers in companies and ask them questions, learn from people in the industry". When asked about the fees, the participant described them as "average if a bit high". She also said that acquiring a scholarship is possible if you ranked in the top of your class. And though getting accepted into GUC was a very competitive matter, the environment between the students wasn't very competitive. The interviewee justified that saying that in "the first 2 years, students were more focused on getting their work in the exhibition rather than trying to best one another". Besides that, the participant states that the students were well prepared for their trip to Germany because it was very organized and allowed them to adapt quickly. After graduating, the interviewee worked as a teaching assistant in GUC after which she continued her education at the American University in Cairo. There, it became apparent that GUC hasn't prepared her for research and thesis writing. She expressed this saying that "the Master's degree was focused on research and we had to write a thesis – which was something new and difficult for me. I struggled a lot in the beginning as I didn't have any experience in research writing from GUC. But then I took on this challenge and improved a lot." The participant concluded by reaffirming how grateful she felt about her experience in GUC and expressed that that was when her "mindset changed 180 degrees".

## **4.2 Case #2: The German Jordanian University (GJU)**

### ***4.2.1 The Official university website***

According to the GJU official website (About the University n.d.), the GJU is a public bi-national university that follows the German Applied Science model. The GJU was founded in 2005 by a royal decree as a result of an agreement between the German and Jordanian governments. Since then, the German ministry of education and DAAD have been supporting the GJU academically and financially under the category of "German Study Programmes Abroad". The Program offers different levels of funding for scholarships, student-groups mobility and flying faculty programmes. A group of around 80 German universities led by the University of Applied Sciences Magdeburg-Stendal back the GJU. The students are required to spend their last mandatory "German year" in Germany where they would study one semester in one of the German universities that are part of the GJU partners. Afterwards, they will intern in a German company in the following semester. The German curriculum is adapted to meet the needs of the GJU students (DAAD 2014).

### ***4.2.2 The German Dimension (GJU Publication 2015)***

According to the GJU publication, the German dimension, edited by Jecht (2015), numerous testimonials by Jordanian and German students and faculty can be seen as evidence of the exchange program being implemented successfully in both countries. The overall consensus shows a positive experience achieved by both sides through the exposition to a different culture, language and ideas. Following are positive perspectives for GJU staff, students and alumni.

Alhasan expressed that the German year “equals a century” and it was true that “I left it now and might not go back for a long time, but the memories will remain forever” (ed. Jecht 2015, pg. 40). AlDabbah argues that the days she spent in Germany will be “exciting stories to share my grandchildren” and added that “staying in a foreign country for a long period of time does not only improve your language skills, but also provides you with the possibility to understand and experience a new culture” (ed. Jecht 2015, pg. 41). Shananier said that “Like all other students in GJU, I had my expectations for the year in Germany. However, the experiences that I made exceeded all my expectations in many different ways” (ed. Jecht 2015, pg. 50). The German student Schwarz explains that “The experience is now part of me and will probably shape me even long after my return” (ed. Jecht 2015, pg. 77). The Jordanian faculty, Dr. Madi argued that “in Amman, our approach certainly has a very practical dimension. However, here in Germany practice plays a much stronger role” (ed. Jecht 2015, pg. 77). Dr. Magule pointed that he “had to learn that problems are dealt with when they occur, not when they are anticipated. In Jordan, planning ahead means ‘we should maybe do it this way, inshallah’”. Dr. Mugele added: “I noticed the significant difference in students before and after their German year: students in their 5th year who had just come back from Germany were a lot more independent and motivated, which is testament of the good work of the network partners, and shows the benefits of spending a year in another culture” (ed. Jecht 2015, pg. 161). Dr. Kiesel from Germany, argues that “the exchange with colleagues from the GJU was exciting. We exchanged and discussed different approaches in the fields of curriculum and course content, yet we also looked for a “common ground”, as well as the individual cultural approaches” (ed. Jecht 2015, pg. 177).

These testimonials by Jordanian and German students and faculty prove that the exchange program has been very beneficial to GJU in terms of improving the capacity, teaching and learning to an international experience. To the German students and faculty, it was beneficial to learn about the Jordanian culture and gain a unique international experience as well. This also shows that GJU doesn't strictly follow the German module as it is implemented in Germany. GJU's education program is a balance between the traditional Jordanian education module and Germany's applied science. The real transition however, happens when the student is living for a year in the opposite country and fully experiencing this country's education system.

#### ***4.2.3 A DAAD's commissioned audit report in 2016 (a summary of this report was found in GJU website)***

The GJU was evaluated by DAAD (2016) as a "successful and distinctive bi-national project". Both Germany and Jordan were highly commended by the DAAD commission team for their dedication and commitment in leading the project to a success. The report adds that the GJU can be an exemplar which can possibly meet the needs of Jordan and the region. However, even though it is no secret that an improved module of practical academia is needed in the region, it seems that the possibility of its implementation has been improbable due to historical and cultural reasons.

#### ***4.2.4 Questionnaire responses by the GJU alumni***

*Q1. What year did you graduate?*

Two graduates graduated recently in 2020 and 2019; the third alumnus graduated in 2013.

*Q2. Were you employed quickly after graduating?*

The participating GJU alumni were employed relatively quickly; One of them mentioned that they were employed by a German consultant after five months of graduating.

*Q3. Did you find that your university experience gave you an advantage?*

The participants answered positively, with the exception of one alumnus who said he is not sure if he gained any advantage.

*Q4. Do your fellow graduates share your sentiments?*

The participants answered with yes; one confirmed that they were discussing this with their fellow graduates, and they all agreed that they gained many benefits.

*Q5. Would you advise your friends to go to your university instead of more well-known public universities in your country?*

Two alumni agreed strongly, while the third alumnus disagreed and recommended other public universities.

*Q6. Did you travel to Germany during your studies? Why or why not?*

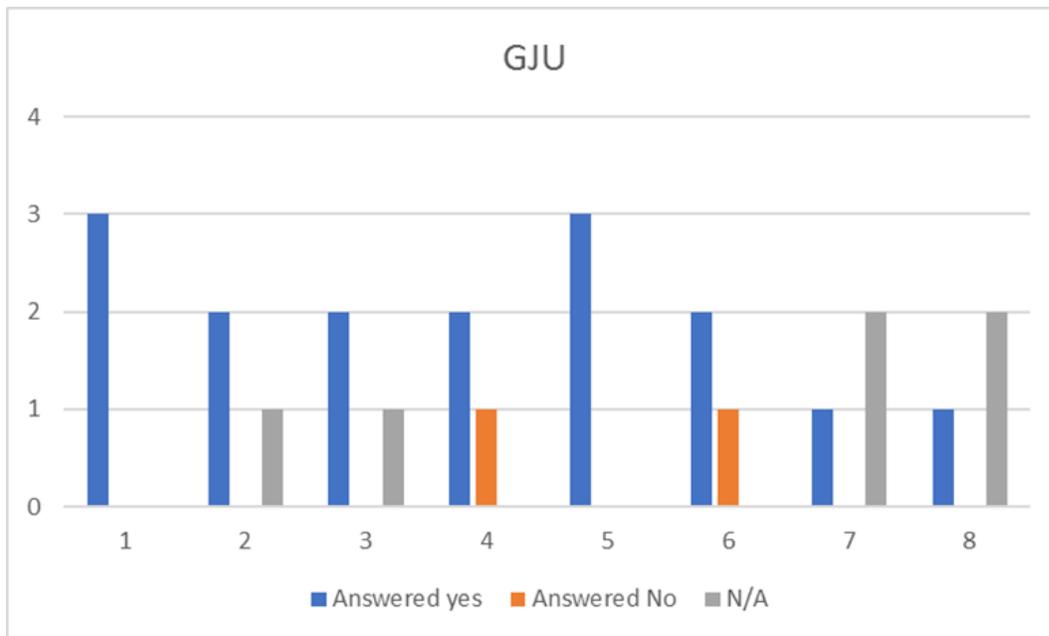
All the participants travelled to Germany, since it is mandatory in GJU.

*Q7. If yes, did you feel well prepared for the experience?*

All the participants were well prepared, they added that the experience was very beneficial. However, the students struggled with the language barrier as it made local communication much more difficult.

*Q8. What was something your university did well?*

No responses received.



**Figure 4: Shows the 3 GJU participant answers for each of the 8 questions.**

#### *4.2.5 Interview Findings for the GJU alumnus*

Before the interview, the assistant reached out to as many GJU alumni and staff as she can. Only 3 replied and of those 3, only 1 alumnus agreed to be interviewed. The assistant provided the questions before the interview, a time and date were agreed upon through LinkedIn correspondence and a Zoom link was provided by the interviewer. The interview was conducted on the 19<sup>th</sup> of June 2020 and took a total of 40 minutes to complete. It is important to note that the interviewee spoke in the Arabic language for much of the interview and the script was translated to English by the interviewer through notetaking. Below will be a summarized version of the interview findings. To see the full interview script, refer to Appendix D interview #2.

Overall, the interviewee described her experience in GJU as a positive one. She added that she believes most of her fellow alumni share the same perspective. “The other day, our batch were all discussing our university and post-grad experiences and we all agreed that we gained so much benefit from attending GJU. Benefit in terms of education, connections and high rate of employability”, she stated. As for the curriculum, the participant established that it differed greatly from the common Jordanian system at local public universities. The German system encouraged independent study a lot more. The participant affirmed this saying that “unlike other universities, we had to do A LOT of independent reading and self-learning and it really helped us improve a lot as learners”. The participant narrated her experience in German saying that “the biggest barrier for us was language. We were mostly still beginners in German. However, the system there was very clear and organized. Life-wise, everything was in order and easy to follow”. The participant also expressed a lot of interesting personal experiences that foreign students go through. She said that she “learned about a lot of different cultures including my own”, and that “it was actually pretty eye-opening in that I myself learned more about my culture and religion in order to answer people’s questions”. She then expressed some of her feelings of homesickness in Germany narrating that “the funny thing is, after a while in Germany, we felt very homesick. Then, when we went back to Jordan, we started really missing Germany. Somehow, it felt like we didn’t really fit in our home country anymore but neither did we fit perfectly in Germany. Many of my friends now work in German companies in Jordan – some stayed in Germany to continue their education – some returned to Jordan and still dream of going to Germany again”.

### **4.3 Case #3: The German University of Technology in Oman (GUtech)**

#### ***4.3.1 The official University Website***

The third one is the GUtech. The GUtech is a private university which was established as a result of a ministerial decree in Muscat 2007. According to the GUtech official website, the idea of constituting the GUtech can be tracked back to 2003 when some ambitious Omani investors decided to establish a strong technology university in Oman in line with the guidance of his highness Sultan Qaboos regarding the provision of high-quality education by the private investors. In August 2006, these investors established Oman Educational Services (L.L.C). (OES), a limited liability company in order to fulfill the Omani legal requirements for the establishment of the GUtech. L.L.C. (OES) signed a cooperation agreement with the RWTH University of Aachen in Germany in December 2006. This agreement paved the way to establish GUtech on March 2007 (GUtech n.d).

#### ***4.3.2 GUTech Audit Report by Oman Academic Accreditation Authority***

In 2013, the Oman Academic Accreditation Authority appointed an external Audit Panel of local and international reviewers to evaluate the GUTech and provide information to the public about the university's performance. The main findings from this report are summarized in table 9 below:

<b>A Summary of GUTech ACQUIN Accreditation Report (2015)</b>	
Mission, Vision and Values	GUTech main mission is to nurture students with adequate education to produce highly responsible graduates, guided by Oman's culture and heritage and the German excellence in science and technology.
Curriculum	The curriculum is developed upon the RWTH curriculum of modules and ECTS-points, while keeping the subjects appropriate to the Oman's region culture.
Teaching Quality	The university follows a student -centered learning through lecture teaching and demonstration, laboratory work and tutorials.
Assessment Methods, Standards and Moderation	The Board of Examiners holds responsibility to ensure that exams are offered for all courses taught. They evaluate the planning and execution of the examinations and make sure they are in accordance with the academic regulations policy. Additionally, they review the final grades at the end of each semester and forward them to the department of registry to inform them on the academic performance of students.
Graduate Destinations and Employability	At the time of the report, there were no graduates yet, but it is proven that the education provided in the engineering firm is enough for students to work as mechanical engineers, and process engineers in a wide range of areas within the industry. Representatives from the local industry reported very positive experience with the graduates from GUTech.
Key Recommendations	Increase lecture halls and lab spaces, provide space for forming learning groups. Advertise the staff and student exchange between GUTech and RWTH Aachen. Revise the model descriptions to a typical way of representing modules. Stronger support to research activities, and pushing more transparency for the promotion of staff.

**Table 10 A summary of the GUTech Audit report by OOAA**

***4.3.3 The ACQUIN Accreditation Report (2015)***

The GUTech ACQUIN report demonstrated a different dimension of the German TNE performance. The main findings from this report are summarized in table 10 below:

<b>A Summary of GUTech ACQUIN Accreditation Report (2015)</b>	
Mission, Vision and Values	GUTech main mission is to nurture students with adequate education to produce highly responsible graduates, guided by Oman's culture and heritage and the German excellence in science and technology.
Curriculum	The curriculum is developed upon the RWTH curriculum of modules and ECTS-points, while keeping the subjects appropriate to the Oman's region culture.
Teaching Quality	The university follows a student -centered learning through lecture teaching and demonstration, laboratory work and tutorials.
Assessment Methods, Standards and Moderation	The Board of Examiners holds responsibility to ensure that exams are offered for all courses taught. They evaluate the planning and execution of the examinations and make sure they are in accordance with the academic regulations policy. Additionally, they review the final grades at the end of each semester and forward them to the department of registry to inform them on the academic performance of students.
Graduate Destinations and Employability	At the time of the report, there were no graduates yet, but it is proven that the education provided in the engineering firm is enough for students to work as mechanical engineers, and process engineers in a wide range of areas within the industry. Representatives from the local industry reported very positive experience with the graduates from GUTech.
Key Recommendations	Increase lecture halls and lab spaces, provide space for forming learning groups. Advertise the staff and student exchange between GUTech and RWTH Aachen. Revise the model descriptions to a typical way of representing modules. Stronger support to research activities, and pushing more transparency for the promotion of staff.

**Table 11 A summary of GUTech ACQUIN external Accreditation Report 2015.**

**4.3.4 Questionnaires responses by the GUTech alumni**

*Q1. What year did you graduate?*

One GUTech alumnus graduated in 2012, the other in 2016

*Q2. Were you employed quickly after graduating?*

One alumnus got employed after one year and a half, the other got employed in 3 months.

*Q3. Did you find that your university experience gave you an advantage?*

One alumnus said that it did not give an advantage. The second alumnus reported that it gave them a huge advantage; since it is one of the most premium education institutions in the Sultanate.

*Q4. Do your fellow graduates share your sentiments?*

Both alumni answered yes.

*Q5. Would you advice your friends to go to your university instead of more well-known public universities in your country?*

Both participants recommended GUTech, reporting that it is one of the best universities in the Sultanate.

*Q6. Did you travel to Germany during your studies? Why or why not?*

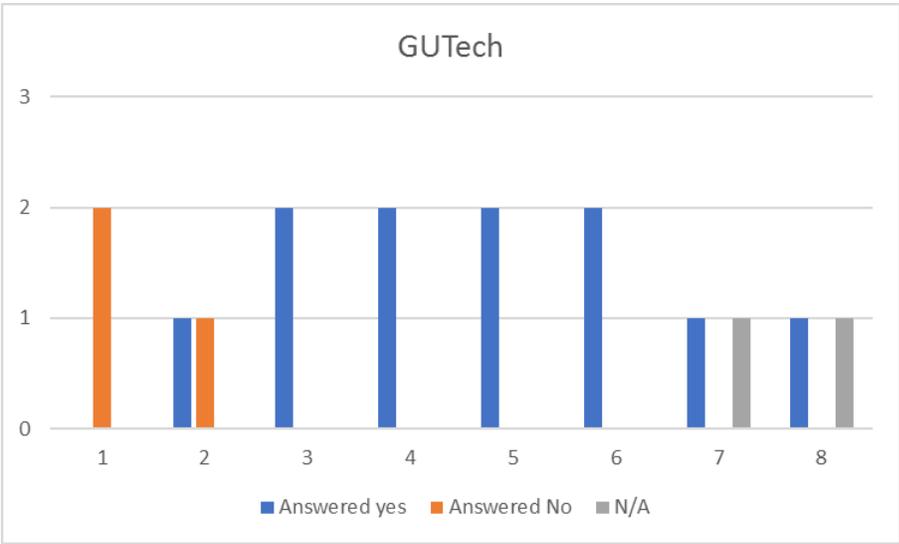
Yes, they both travelled to learn the German language and attend workshops.

*Q7. If yes, did you feel well prepared for the experience?*

Both participants reported that they were well prepared.

*Q8. What was something your university did well?*

No responses received.



**Figure 5:** shows the participant answers for each of the 8 questions.

#### ***4.3.5 Interview Findings for GUTech International Office Manager***

After sending out an email using GUTech's official website contact page (<https://www.gutech.edu.om/contact-us/>), the researcher was contacted by GUTech's International Office Manager, Felixa Wingen who showed interest in the research objectives. From there, a time and a date were agreed upon to administer the interview and a Zoom link was provided. The interview was conducted on the 16<sup>th</sup> of June, 2020 and took approximately 40 minutes to complete. The script was written up using the interviewer's notes. The interview was semi-structured, giving the interviewer a chance to ask related questions outside the boundaries of the prepared questions and allow the conversation to flow more organically. Below, an abridged version of this interview's findings will be equipped.

When asked about the German affiliation, the interviewee explained that the nature of the affiliation between GUTech and its main partner RWTH Aachen University is a strong one. The ties are maintained through the exchange of faculty, including teaching and managerial staff as well as exchange programs and activities between GUTech students and students from different German universities. However, only a very small percentage of GUTech students actually attend those exchange programs. On the topic of the students' transition to a German curriculum, Ms. Wingen says that students "struggle in the beginning trying to adjust to the German system, but it's a very strong curriculum and the students improve a lot after the first culture shock wears away". GUTech is inspected by the government every 2 years and ACQUIN renews their accreditation every five years.

Most of GUTech's graduates find employment within a year and reports from the industry reveal that they are well prepared. Finally, to answer the question of where she sees the future of German TNE going, Ms. Wingen replied that she believes there will be even more focus given to online learning development and added that "for such events (coronavirus pandemic) in the future, I think that we need to work more on tailoring and designing a version of the curriculum that can adapt immediately to such situations with minimal time loss".

#### **4.4 Case #4: The Turkish-German University (TGU)**

##### ***4.4.1 Official website***

According to the TGU website, The TGU is a tuition-free public university located in Istanbul, and subject to the Turkish higher education legislation. It was founded in 2013 as a result of an agreement between the German and Turkish governments, with an aim of combining the German and Turkish best educational practices, and to contribute to the scientific, economic and cultural collaboration between the two countries. The German ministry of education (BMBF), and a consortium of 37 universities besides DAAD support the TGU financially, academically and provide quality assurance under the category of "German Study Programmes Abroad". TGU is a multilingual university with most of the courses offered in German language, in addition to Turkish and English. TGU awards the German partner university's (double-degree) Diploma along with the Turkish university Diploma. TGU provides one German language preparatory year for students who are beginners in the German language. The university's education programs are developed by both German and Turkish scientists (about us n.d.).

#### **4.4.2 Questionnaires responses by the TGU alumni and students**

*Q1. What year did you graduate?*

Half of the participants are still studying, the rest graduated in 2016-2018

*Q2. Were you employed quickly after graduating?*

The participating TGU alumni reported that they had job offers and immediate employment, and most of them were working in part-time jobs while studying.

*Q3. Did you find that your university experience gave you an advantage?*

The participating students and alumni all agreed that the experience had given them an advantage.

*Q4. Do your fellow graduates share your sentiments?*

The participating students and alumni had a positive perspective towards the TGU.

*Q5. Would you advice your friends to go to your university instead of more well-known public universities in your country?*

All the participants recommended their friends to attend the TGU.

*Q6. Did you travel to Germany during your studies? Why or why not?*

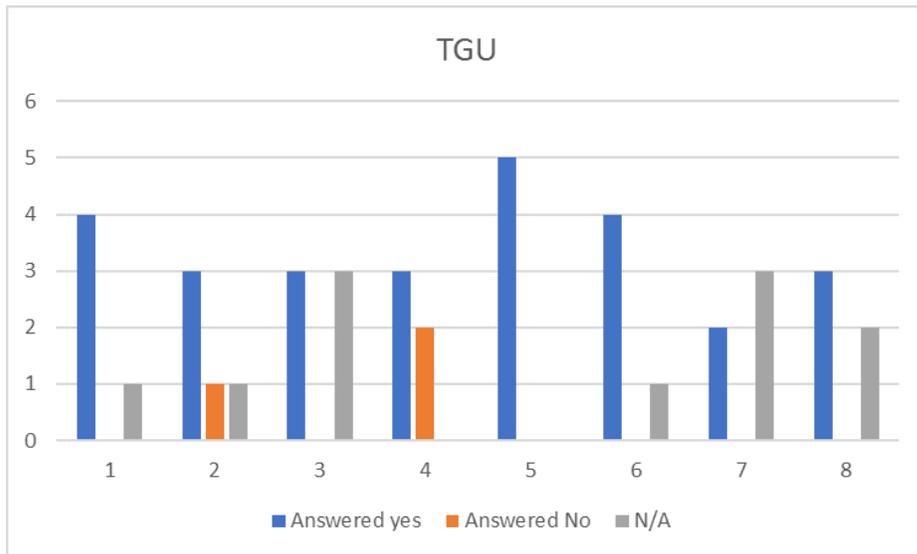
All the TGU participants travelled to Germany during their studies, with the exception of one student who was supposed to travel this semester.

*Q7. If yes, did you feel well prepared for the experience?*

Half of the participants said that they weren't prepared but it affected them positively, the other half reported that they were prepared and had past experience in Germany.

*Q8. What was something your university did well?*

One alumnus reported that the TGU helped him understand the importance of learning German, facilitated his internship, jobs and post graduate studies, in addition to the wide academic and career network.



**Figure 6: Shows the participant answers for each of the 8 questions.**

#### *4.4.3 Interview Findings for one TGU student and one TGU alumnus*

Despite being unable to reach any TGU staff, the student and alumni turnout from TGU was good comparatively. After the assistant reached out to as many TGU alumni as possible through her LinkedIn profile, 7 people replied to the questionnaire and 2 of those agreed to elaborate via Zoom interview. The first interviewee was a fourth year TGU student. His Zoom meeting was scheduled for the 24<sup>th</sup> of July, 2020 and lasted for 15 minutes. The second interview was with a TGU alumnus scheduled on 27<sup>th</sup> of July, 2020 and lasted for 30 minutes. Both interviews were semi-structured where the interviewer had the option to ask related questions outside of the prepared format. Because the two interviewees have had very different experiences, the questions were also somewhat different as well. To separate between the two different interviewees, they will be named

Participant 1 (current student) and Participant 2 (alumni). A condensed version of the interview findings will be provided below. To see the full interview scripts, refer to Appendix D, interviews #3 and #4.

While both interviewees chose to enroll in TGU because of its good reputation – especially regarding engineering majors -, only Participant 1 felt that his expectations were mostly met. “I’d say my expectations were 75% met,” he said. Contrarily, the other interviewee expressed his disappointment saying that he had to repeat a year of study because of issues with the management and that TGU “was still young, most of my professors did not have enough experience”. And though Participant 1 was generally happy with his experience, he also agreed that “sometimes when highly qualified professors weren’t able to come from Germany, we had much less qualified teachers”. Similarly, both participants agreed that TGU does indeed give them advantages. Participant 1 expressed this by saying that “TGU helped us take language learning much more seriously”, that “TGU makes it easier for us to get internships, jobs or post graduate education”, and that “TGU gives its students better opportunities in Germany”. Participant 2 affirmed this saying that “TGU has a huge reputation in the industry”, and that he was employed by a German company immediately. However, Participant 2 complained that he didn’t enjoy his experience at TGU. He even recommended high school graduates to go to other bigger public universities saying “I think universities like Istanbul Technical University for example, would offer a much better quality of education. TGU has a huge reputation in the industry but in terms of facilities, professionals, and education, I think the top public universities in Turkey are much better”. He also recommended that TGU should focus more

on improving the quality of facilities and education over the political dimension that seemed to be the main focus of TGU. He expressed his concerns saying that “right now, I think it’s a bit more politically focused. TGU is being used as a political move to strengthen international relations. I think moving forward, German TNE needs to focus more on improving and investing in the quality of education in their institutions”.

#### 4.5 External Accreditations Reports Summary

The table below gives an overview of the evaluation criteria, commendations and recommendations of each case study.

University	GJU	GUC	GUTech	TGU
<b>External Accreditation Body/ Evaluator</b>	DAAD “appointed an independent commission”.  Source: GJU website. (DAAD Evaluation Report 2016 n.d.).	ACQUIN in 2018  Accredited programs: “Information Engineering and Technology” (B.Sc./M.Sc.),  “Media Engineering and Technology” (B.Sc./M.Sc.).	ACQUIN in 2015  Accredited programs: “Mechanical Engineering” (B.Eng.), “Environmental Engineering” (B.Eng.), “Process Engineering” (B.Eng.).	Unknown
<b>Rating/judgement by auditor</b>	“Successful and distinctive bi-national project that inextricably includes aspects of international academic cooperation, cooperation in education and development, and cultural exchange”	The four programs were accredited without conditions until September 2024.	The three programs were accredited without conditions until September 2023.	

	(DAAD Evaluation Report 2016 n.d.).			
<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	Not mentioned	The “Rules for the Accreditation of Study Programs and for System Accreditation” in the actual official version of February 20th, 2013.	The “Rules for the Accreditation of Study Programs and for System Accreditation” in the actual official version of February 20th, 2013.	
<b>Key Commendation</b>	<p>-Both Germany and Jordan’s dedication and commitment in leading the project to success.</p> <p>-GJU’s flexible adaptation to the Jordanian context, connection with Germany by different means such as the cultural, student and staff exchange, teaching German courses and the successful obligatory German Year.</p> <p>-The GJU’s successful embedding of the German applied sciences program can be a model that could possibly meet the needs of Jordan and the region.</p>	<p>-The academic staff vs. student’s ratio is very good which provides students with plenty of opportunities to meet the expected outcomes.</p> <p>– GUC’s collaboration with local companies and German universities enhanced the students’ skills, competences and employability.</p> <p>- Feasible and comprehensive examination process enabled the students to make the expected progress.</p> <p>-Equal rights policy towards those with special needs and women.</p>	<p>The structure, content and exams enhance the students’ progress and competences towards achieving the expectations.</p> <p>Academic staff qualifications and ratio is adequate.</p> <p>-The quality management assures a continuing improvement of the programs and their environment.</p>	
<b>Recommendation</b>	GJU to increase approaching industry and businesses in Jordan	Strengthen the academic profile to enhance research, attract	-Enhance research activities.	

	to facilitate project-based academic studies and internship across all its faculties.	distinguished academic staff and avoid student brain drain.  “In the study program MET the current majors CSEN and EDPT should be substituted with the three majors “Computer Sciences”, “Computer Engineering”, “Media Engineering”.  “The content and scope of the latter should soon be re-evaluated”.	-Based on the increasing number of students, larger lecture halls, lab facilities, space for learning groups and equipment to be provided”.  -Develop transparent criteria for the promotion of staff.  -Ensure the cooperation between GUTech and RWTH in terms of lectures in English on the Bachelor level at RWTH Aachen, students’ internship in Germany and staff and students’ exchange.	
<b>Notes</b>	Additionally, the GJU MBA program was accredited by the Foundation of the International Business Administration Accreditation (FIBAA) in 2009. (About TAG-SB n.d.)	In 2013, GUC established a German campus in Berlin to facilitate students’ internship and visiting scholars from Germany.		

**Table 12 A summary of the case studies external Audit/Accreditation reports.**

#### **4.6 DAAD Representative Interview Findings**

According to the DAAD official website, “DAAD is the world's largest funding organization for the international exchange of students and researchers.” DAAD is a private organization whose main responsibilities lie in providing scholarships, promoting internationalization for the German language, research module, higher education, and culture (Who we are. n.d.). For the purpose of gaining further information on the

organization and its involvement in German TNE in the Middle East, the study provided a comprehensive interview with Benjamin Schmäling, the Head of Transnational Education Projects in the Middle East, Africa & Latin America on behalf of DAAD.

As was briefly mentioned in the methodology section, the researcher asked an assistant to conduct the interview. Before the interview, the assistant made sure to debrief the interviewee on the topic, details and questions of the research project via e-mail correspondence. The two parties then agreed on a time and date and a Zoom link was provided by the interviewer. The questions provided were aimed to answer as many of the research questions as possible. However, the interview was semi-structured, the interviewer was allowed to ask related questions outside of the delegated script and the interviewee was free to discuss the topic to his liking. This resulted in a robust findings section and allowed the case studies to be clearly illustrated. The next few paragraphs will provide a summarized version of the interview findings. To see the complete interview script, refer to Appendix D, interview #5.

### **Interview Findings:**

*Q1 What kinds of benefits does Germany gain from founding and funding TNE in other countries?*

There are several benefits that Germany gains from TNE projects that could be summed up in the following points:

- i) Internationalization of German universities' teaching and research,
- ii) Most German universities are interested in strengthening ties and relations with different foreign universities all over the world,
- iii) German university students are interested in working on an international level in outreach programs, and in solving issues in cooperation with other researchers as well,
- iv) For German higher education to gain more international visibility and attraction,
- v) To attract international students to continue their Masters or PhD education in Germany,

- vi) To maintain scientific and education-based ties with other countries regardless of politics.

*Q2 Why is the German TNE footprint greater in the Middle East, (with bigger institutions and student body), than other host countries?*

There are many different reasons that could explain the German TNE phenomenon in the Middle East. The interviewee mentioned a couple of important reasons that could be outlined in the following points:

- i) Political surroundings,
- ii) Political will and commitment from all involved parties,
- iii) The interest and commitment of German higher institutions,
- iv) The influence of the German language in the host country,
- v) And the possibility to levy tuition fees.

*Q3 Moving forward, where do you see the future of German TNE in the Arab world and the Middle East?*

The interviewee has good reason to believe that there is high potential in the Middle East region. From seeing a lot of interest for the establishment of German TNE in the region to an eagerness for host countries to obtain a farther range of educational influence and attraction, regionally. Mr. Schmäling says that “we ‘DAAD’ get a lot of proposals in this context, far more than other regions - especially regarding TNE.” He also hints at future new projects saying: “There are also ideas to establish bi-national universities in other countries. For example, in Morocco, we’re not in the state of concrete planning, but it’s not excluded – there are ideas and concepts of founding other bi-national universities, but it’s not quite clear if it’s going to be as huge as say, the university in Cairo. But there are ideas and there’s political will on both sides,” and “We know of another cooperation project in Egypt – we (DAAD) still don’t know if we’re going to fund it but it’s planned at least by the German university and its partner in Egypt. So, these are some ideas and possibilities on where the future lies”. To express host countries’ interest in growing their

educational reach, the interviewee says that “in general, for those projects (German TNE in Middle East) I think, they are also interested in developing and gaining more attraction in their surrounding region or neighboring countries. For example, in the case of GJU, for students from Syria and Iraq who come as refugees to Jordan to have the opportunity to study at GJU, it helps the scope of these universities grow and gain more regional importance instead of just on a national level. This is something that could possibly be in the future for example, to enlarge the sphere of activity.” Another foreseeable possibility is the growth of education through the digital format. Mr. Schmaling comments on that saying that “of course, the digital format of teaching and research is getting more and more important and I think these projects will harness the opportunities of digital cooperation in teaching, learning and also the social responsibilities of the higher education sector and to expand the digital offer. This is also something I see growing in all of TNE in general with a strong focus in the Middle East and North Africa and I also think there will be further bottom-up projects initiated by the German higher institutions, not initiated by political initiative or ministries or politicians, but rather by the universities themselves”.

*Q4 How is DAAD handling the current pandemic in terms of education, resourcing and providing material for TNE students in lockdown?*

In such uncertain times, the DAAD organization did their best to accommodate the German universities both in Germany and abroad. They reacted fairly well applying the following steps:

1. Arranged webinars on discussing how to handle emergency situations and how to come out of it with meaningful contributions to education in the long run,
2. Collaborated with onsite embassies to help international students stuck overseas,
3. Tried to resume normal routine approximately 2 to 3 months after the pandemic,
4. Plans to introduce a program for effective response mechanisms and to increase research on pandemics.

The interviewee concluded on a hopeful note stating that “using the interdisciplinary approach and network that concerns different regions, we can address global issues like this

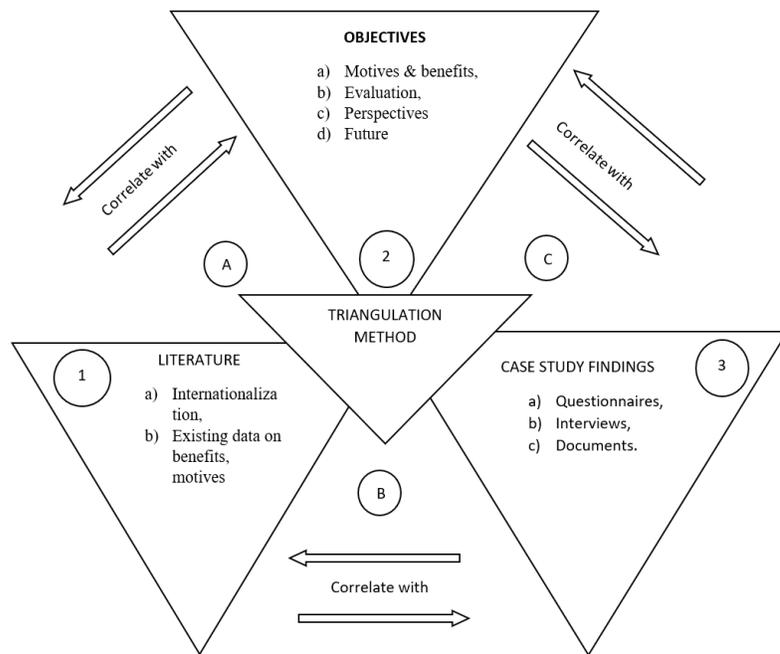
much better. We can only find proper solutions when we work together. We saw this especially in the coronavirus pandemic; we have to work together to find vaccines, to find ways we can treat illnesses – not just corona but also concerning other epidemics and pandemics beyond covid-19. For example, other topics like climate change, we all realize within DAAD and everywhere else how important it is to work together to find solutions for these pressing global issues.”

## **Chapter 5**

### ***5. DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION***

#### **5.1 Discussion**

This section will briefly summarize the findings of each case, analyze them separately, and then synthesize the findings with the literature. The analysis will take the form of cross triangulation wherein each case's findings will be corroborated with the research objectives and the literature review, respectively. According to Honorene (2017), triangulation includes using several data sources in an investigation to yield a deep understanding of a phenomenon in order to get valid, bias-free, reliable, and generalizable research findings.



**Figure 7 demonstrates the triangulation method and the correlation between the selected data sources and the objectives of the research.**

### ***5.1.1 Case #1: The German University in Cairo (GUC)***

GUC is by far the biggest German TNE University in the Middle East. Existing data shows that GUC’s main aim is to improve research and teaching, strengthen the relations between Egypt and Germany and avoid brain drain. Qualitative data from interviews and questionnaires illustrated a correlation with the existing data. Factors such as efficient employment, international exchange and practical industry skills demonstrate this correlation.

The findings from the questionnaires, interviews and documents revealed some significant information about GUC. The data pointed that the students found that the

practical applied module of the German system was rather beneficial. It shows that this module produces skilled and experienced graduates, who face little to no trouble finding employment. This is quite relevant to the educational landscape in the Middle East as the popular public universities generally favor a more traditional, theoretical approach of instruction. The resulting graduates of such systems are sometimes underqualified for entry level jobs. Another clear benefit for GUC students was the opportunity to travel and interact with people from different backgrounds. The experience not only expanded their cultural and intellectual awareness, but also broadened their career and educational networks. This is demonstrated by the estimate that around 15% of GUC graduates continue their careers overseas at least for some time (About GUC n.d.).

Though the general impression of GUC is rather encouraging, the findings also displayed some minor concerns. In the GUC ACQUIN report of 2014, the auditors recommend that more focus be given to research. The GUC interviewee also mentions the lack of research during her undergraduate studies. However, the interviewee graduated in 2011, prior to the ACQUIN report and some evidence from the Mittwoch GUC branch questionnaire suggests that “All of the GUC students are required to conduct research (latest in the Bachelor thesis)”. This shows the importance of acquiring accreditation from an external international institution since one of the German TNE’s main aims is to enhance research in host countries. Through the quality assurance conducted by ACQUIN, there seems to be a greater effort to reach this aim. Another concern that was voiced by some participants addresses the high tuition fees and the additional travel costs. Some students, for example, weren’t able to travel because of their inability to afford the costs. While the

ability to levy tuition fees seems necessary for sustainability as explained in the DAAD interview, perhaps there could be solutions to help students cover the costs of their travels if not some of their fees. One of the BMBF's goals is to aid in the availability of good education to students regardless of their financial ability and social status. However, this may not be possible to achieve in GUC's case with the exception of the few top students in each batch.

### ***5.1.2 Case #2: The German Jordanian University (GJU)***

As one of the German TNE flagship projects in the Middle East, GJU enjoys a great reputation amongst Jordanians. The database on GJU shows an active exchange system between the German and Jordanian students. GJU's official website states that the university's main aims are to promote ties between Jordan and Europe, improve research quality, and produce highly skilled employees with the capabilities to compete in today's modern world (About the University n.d.). This information is validated by data gathered from the interviews and questionnaires. Outcomes like prompt employment, travel and exchange, independent learning curriculum and vocational training are all positive pointers of correlation.

Similar to GUC's findings, the majority of GJU's participants reported positive experiences at their university. The students benefitted well from the applied sciences program and the independence it gave them. An independent study-oriented program encourages the students to do a lot of reading and self-learning, which is something rarely found in public Jordanian universities. They also valued the exchange experience and the practical internships at international firms. Getting introduced to other cultures affected the

participants positively. Meeting people from different backgrounds really helps dissolve negative stereotypes or prejudices and creates empathy and understanding. However, one of the most significant findings from the GJU case study is the emphasis on German industry in Jordan. GJU seems to have good relations with German companies in both countries where students normally conduct their internships. This helps them find steady employment from German companies after graduating. It shows how important it is for the education sector to have strong ties with companies and institutions in the market. Such exchange helps universities better understand what is expected from fresh employees and thereby, have a more seamless transition from the university space to the office space.

Like GUC, GJU participants are also required to cover their travel expenses. GJU's German exchange semester is a mandatory requirement for students. This means that for students with less financial ability, enrolling in GJU is not possible. A concern voiced by a German participant who attended GJU is that the Arabic language was often used in class by instructors regardless of whether or not 100% of their students spoke Arabic. This is of course quite frustrating for foreign students but it also makes it harder for the rest of the students to improve their English or German language. Instead, students should be encouraged to improve their additional languages and become comfortable with lectures completely taught in those languages.

### ***5.1.3 Case #3: The German University of Technology in Oman (GUtech)***

GUtech is one of the top universities in the country. GUtech's official website states that the university's aim is to advance creativity, innovation and research and prepare socially responsible and competent individuals (GUtech n.d.). Furthermore, GUtech aims to

contribute in improving international ties between Oman, Germany and the rest of the world. The interview and questionnaire findings show that the university is progressing towards these aims. The participants all agreed that GUtech provides premium education, showed some evidence of international exchange as well as satisfactory employment rates for GUtech alumni.

One of GUtech's assets when collecting information was the easily available documentation. GUtech's website is organized, easy to navigate and quite informative. The accreditation documents are available to the public and they're pretty detailed and transparent. Combined with the modern university architecture, the impression is one of quality and professionalism. The existing data and the interview both helped rectify the very small amount of student participation. This also points toward good quality assurance policy and involved management; both very important in such a young university. The two participating alumnus described positive experiences at GUtech, both travelled shortly for workshops in Germany but only one found quick employment. The other alumnus struggled for a year and a half before being employed despite being one of the best students. Beside that, the reports and the GUtech interviewee agree that post-graduation employment is satisfactory and mostly happens within a year of graduating. One significant aspect similar to GJU, is GUtech's connection to the industry. The university receives feedback from the industry to affirm that their students are well equipped for the workplace. However, one important observation is the imbalance between the genders in education versus industry. In GUtech – and perhaps this extends to the rest of the Middle East with variance – the ratio of females in higher education is much higher than males;

yet, the opposite is true when it comes to the industry. This may be because of the greater tendency for females to remain in their home countries for education and therefore take up more seats. Males, on the other hand, do tend to travel more for education, culturally speaking. Yet, in the engineering industry, particularly, males are in higher demand.

#### **5.1.4 Case #4: The Turkish-German University (TGU)**

Although relatively young, TGU has acquired quite the reputation in Turkey. TGU's official website describes the university's mission to combine the best educational practices of Germany and Turkey in order to meet the increasing demand for highly skilled individuals in Turkey, contribute to the advancement of research, science and the culture and economy of both nations (about us n.d.). The case study's findings affirm this in that most of TGU's alumni find immediate employment, participate in travel and exchange programs and effectively learn a new language. Having said that, some of the participants complained about the overtly political dimension of the university and wished that the bulk of the focus shifted to enhancing the quality of education.

Like the other cases, TGU's students and alumni benefit greatly from the reputation and vast career and academic network that German TNE seems to enjoy. This is significant as it helps internationalize the university, boosts relations between people of different backgrounds and broadens the capacity for cross-border research and science. In TGU, the effect of this network is very evident as the alumni not only find no trouble getting employed, but are often working part-time jobs during their studies. Additionally, such interrelations with Germany offer the students new opportunities in Germany using the German language – something that is otherwise unlikely. Besides that, TGU is the only

university of the selected cases that does not levy tuition fees. TGU's students attend the university for free and, often, DAAD covers their travels to Germany as well.

However, just because TGU does not levy tuition does not mean that this is completely without consequence. The interview findings suggest that TGU is quite politically driven and that sometimes the students see inconsistencies in the quality of education. Whether that is a consequence of free tuition and financial concerns or management issues is yet to be determined. Perhaps a mix of several combined issues. Besides that, TGU seems to be heavily reliant on its German partners with things concerning teaching staff, to curriculum material, to travel. That isn't necessarily unfavorable if it was well balanced. Yet, based on the findings, there is some evidence to show that TGU has trouble providing qualified local staff, and in the case that German teachers are unable to travel back and forth, the quality of learning falls. In addition, TGU seems to be the only university in this study that hasn't been accredited by ACQUIN or any other external committee for that matter. That said, TGU seems to have fared well through the covid-19 lockdown period, perhaps due to its heavy reliance on the German partners with whom TGU's students received the bulk of their online education.

## **5.2 Synthesis**

The Introduction and literature review sections of the research emphasized that the main driving factor of German TNE is internationalization. In accordance with the German Federal Ministry of education (BMBF)'s aims (see chapter 2.4.1), the study's findings suggest that those aims are indeed being reached. The findings show clear evidence of

worldwide collaboration on research and science as mentioned in the interview findings section. For example, all of the study's students and alumni have either travelled or been visited by international instructors in order to collaborate on research and education. The same applies to staff and student exchange from emerging and developing countries which 3 of the research's case studies fall under.

The case study's findings also confirm the literature review's summary of motivations and benefits (see table 2). The findings demonstrated how German TNE benefits from global marketing and internationalization, showed growing interest from students to learn the German language and study in German, provided evidence for the German curriculum being preferred over the host country's system, presented proof that DAAD and German institutions are willing to provide instruction, staff, strategic planning and decision making. The findings also provided evidence that German TNE does indeed bolster German industry in the host countries because most of the German TNE graduate end up working in German companies. McNamara 2013 mentions that TNE introduces the risk of loss of cultural identity. The interviewees seem to confirm this risk to a certain degree as one interviewee described a different kind of homesickness that those who have returned from Germany feel in their own home country. The students' cultural identity becomes very confused and they start to feel like misfits in their society.

Reaffirming the literature review's summary of motivations and benefits (see table 2), the findings prove that internationalization is indeed the main force behind German TNE. The findings provided plenty of evidence to demonstrate internationalization at the student level, illustrated through travel, language learning, international teaching staff and German

curriculum. It's apparent at the staff level in the staff exchange trips and workshops. At the managerial level, internationalization is indicated through the German rectors, German administration staff in the host country, DAAD's involvement and the agreements between German universities and German TNE universities. Then, at a political level, internationalization is evidenced in the agreements between foreign governments, offices and stakeholders.

### 5.3 Implications and recommendations

The findings implications and recommendations are listed in the table below.

Implications	Reccomendations
Research standards are not to the expected level in TNE universities. They're far from the German partner standards.	Encourage the students to read and write regularly and offer courses on research writing.  Tailor curriculum to increase research related assignments and methods.
The disparity between the education quality in Germany and the host countries means that the host country's students benefit much more from the exchange trips than German students travelling to those countries.	Regulate in-class lectures so that they are conducted in the language of instruction, engage the students in discussion and create a more accepting environment to foreign students
GUtech's ACQUIN report implies that internationalization through exchange is not up to the expectations.	Advertise the possibility of German students travelling on exchange programs to GUtech to create a more diverse student body and decrease the pressure of paying for travel on the Omani students.

<p>The ties between the education sector and the industry are very important. This network ensures employment and /or education prospects for German TNE graduates.</p>	<p>The education-industry relationship network should be studied more deeply by universities in order to collaborate on student apprenticeships, internships and practical interactions with real-life office environment.</p> <p>Feedback from both parties can help improve the expectations of both employers and alumni.</p>
<p>The findings imply that there's gender-based discrimination in the industry that doesn't reflect the educational environment.</p>	<p>Further research should address this issue, stakeholders should raise awareness and appropriate solution found accordingly.</p>
<p>Quality assurance from a well-known external accreditor implies that the universities are taking positive steps towards internationalization.</p>	<p>German TNE stakeholders should ensure that all German TNE universities are accredited by ACQUIN or other external accreditors to ensure quality and improve research prospects. However, it's better for all German TNE universities to receive accreditation from one organization in order to have a more uniform assessment.</p>
<p>The high tuition fees mean that GUC, GJU and GUtech cannot be accessible for everyone. The average family in one of the host countries would be unable to cover the costs.</p>	<p>To increase the scholarship capacity for high achieving students, enable them to enroll in German TNE universities and exempt more students from the German year expenses. Provide more assistance in funding possibilities for students with financial difficulties.</p>

<p>The acquisition of a new specialization in the German language creates new opportunities for graduates of German TNE.</p>	<p>Continue providing German exchange and German language courses for the students. Provide free German language courses by German instructors during the students first semester. Increase focus on language learning to ensure that students are able to find internships in Germany when the time comes.</p>
<p>TGU’s direct focus on political image and reputation implies that the university prioritizes image and reputation over other things such as quality of education.</p>	<p>Prioritize funding on educational and quality matters rather than marketing issues.</p>
<p>TGU’s overreliance on German partners implies that the university is hard pressed to sustain itself locally.</p>	<p>Develop action plans to spend resources and manage TGU so that it can become a more independent institution.</p>

**Table 13: Shows the research implications and recommendations**

#### 5.4 Limitations

The researcher faced limitations such as difficulty in acquiring willing participants, time period; covid-19 pandemic presented obstacles such as inability to conduct face-to-face interviews. Limited by the number of possible interviews, the sample population interviewed wasn’t too large. The interview questions may reflect the researcher’s personal bias, interview answers may reflect the interviewee’s personal response bias – imperfect or incomplete recollections. Additionally, the interview surveys show a skew towards participants compared with other participants. The amount of documentation and staff

interviews are plentiful in GUtech's case, moderates in GUC's, sparse in GJU's and very sparse in TGU. Moreover, TGU audit reports were in Turkish with no English copies available.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

To conclude, the research aim was to evaluate the effectiveness of the German TNE through selected case studies from the Middle East. The study presented four research questions in order to satisfy the aim of the research. Through the literature review, findings section and discussion, the questions were addressed in detail. The first question regarding the motives and benefits behind TNE was extracted from the literature, summarized in table 3 and confirmed through the case study findings. The second research question about German TNE evaluation was addressed in both the literature review and the findings sections through a background on quality assurance, accreditation and audit reports. The third question concerning the perspectives of the students was discussed in depth in the methodology, findings and discussion sections. Lastly, the fourth question relating to the future possibilities of TNE in the middle East was eluded to by DAAD's representative in the findings section.

### ***5.5.1 Further development of German TNE in the Middle East***

Based on the study's findings, German TNE projects in the Middle East proved to be effective and beneficial for Germany and the host countries. The German ideology of supporting education in developing countries, and promoting internationalization and cultural education is very relevant to today's globalized world.

The literature on education in the Middle East indicates that the large majority of public university graduates lack the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills needed for the market place. Middle Eastern countries should attempt to bridge this gap by taking these TNE projects as examples to further influence and improve education in the public universities that dominate the educational landscape. Current developments are hopeful but Middle Eastern universities need to take the initiative to internationalize their higher education systems. Connections with Germany will not only improve education and research but will also reflect positively on the industry. The covid-19 pandemic was a good lesson in resourcefulness. By utilizing the digital format, universities can easily introduce elements of internationalization into their modules. As for Germany, some more focus could be given to growing the German Applied Sciences module in the Middle East region. Such connections are very possible and can be arranged through agreements with DAAD, foreign affairs offices and the individual determination of university staff and students.

Finally, the potential for German TNE growth in the Middle East looks promising. Future plans point to advancements in the form of new on-site universities and digital development of curriculums and cutting-edge technology.

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## *Appendices*

### **Appendix A** *(Message via LinkedIn)*

“Dear (name of university) alumni / staff,

I am a Masters student from The British University in Dubai. I’m conducting research on the condition of German Transnational Education in the Middle East region. If you could answer some of my inquiries about your experiences at (name of university), that would be wonderful.”

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### **Appendix B** *(LinkedIn questions for alumni and students)*

“Thank you for replying! I only have a few questions. Answer however you like:

1. What year did you graduate?
2. Were you employed quickly after graduating?
3. Did you find that your university experience gave you an advantage?
4. Do your fellow graduates share your sentiments?
5. Would you advice your friends to go to your university instead of more well-known public universities in your country?
6. Did you travel to Germany during your studies? Why or why not?
7. If yes, did you feel well prepared for the experience?
8. What was something you were concerned about?
9. What was something your university did well?

If you prefer, we may also organize an interview via zoom to further expand on this topic”.

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### **Appendix C** *(LinkedIn questions for staff)*

“Thank you for replying! Would you accept to conduct an interview via zoom to discuss this topic? Below are some of the questions I’d like you to answer:

- How are your ties with your German affiliates maintained?
- What percentage of your student body participates in the “German Year” or “Year of Science”?

- Is your institution regularly inspected for quality?
  - Do your graduates tend to stay in their country or travel to Germany after graduation?
  - How are your alumni valuable members of society who work to improve the social and economic condition of their country?"
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#### **Appendix D** (*interview scripts*)

**Interview #1:** British University in Dubai researcher interviewing a Junior Architect at a German company in Jordan, GJU alumni. (Note: much of the interview was conducted in Arabic and translated by the researcher accordingly)

Interview on 19-Jun-2020 from 3:00 pm to 3:40 pm Dubai time.

**BUiD researcher:** What year did you graduate?

**Interviewee:** I graduated in 2019

**BUiD researcher:** Where you employed quickly after graduation?

**Interviewee:** Yes, I was employed by a German consultant after five months of graduating.

**BUiD researcher:** Did your university experience give you an advantage in terms of employment?

**Interviewee:** Yes

**BUiD researcher:** Do your fellow graduates share the same sentiments?

**Interviewee:** Yes, all my fellow graduates were employed within a year. The other day, our batch were all discussing our university and post-grad experiences and we all agreed that we gained so much benefit from attending GJU. Benefit in terms of education, connections and high rate of employability.

**BUiD researcher:** Would you advice your friends to go there instead of other well-known public universities?

**Interviewee:** Yes, I really think GJU offered us better opportunities than graduates of Jordanian public universities. The German module is also very different from the Jordanian system. I found out for example, that most of my studies required independent learning and for the student to take responsibility of their own education. Unlike other universities, we had to do A LOT of independent reading and self-learning and it really helped us improve a lot as learners.

**BUiD researcher:** Is going to Germany mandatory? Did you go?

**Interviewee:** Yes, going to Germany in GJU is mandatory. I went to Germany for my fourth year of education. Honestly, we faced a great cultural shock it was very different from Jordan. But we really learned a lot from that experience. It made us look at the world differently. The funny thing is, after a while in Germany, we felt very homesick. Then when we went back to Jordan, we started really missing Germany. Somehow, it felt like we didn't really fit in our home country anymore but neither did we fit perfectly in Germany. Many of my friends now work in German companies in Jordan – some stayed in Germany to continue their education – some returned to Jordan and still dream of going to Germany again.

**BUiD researcher:** Did you feel well prepared?

**Interviewee:** Well, the biggest barrier for us was language. We were mostly still beginners in German. However, the system there was very clear and organized. Life-wise, everything was in order and easy to follow. Additionally, we met a lot of international students from ERASMUS and other places. I learned about a lot of different cultures including my own. I've actually never questioned my identity until the people I met there asked me about simple things like why I wear a hijab or why we Muslims do certain things. So, it was actually pretty eye-opening in that I myself learned more about my culture and religion in order to answer people's questions.

**BUiD researcher:** Are you still in touch with your university?

I'm not in touch with my colleagues in Germany unfortunately. But GJU students and staff are all connected online – the other day we were chatting with the current students who were complaining about distance learning but I think they're getting on fine.

**BUiD researcher:** Did you have German professors and staff?

I'd say around 25% of our staff were German. Then there's the German department which coordinates with the international office to organize exchange trips for students and staff alike.

**BUiD researcher:** How do you see the future of education?

**Interviewee:** I think the future will deal more internationally and directly with the industry. I think for GJU specifically – they will probably keep raising the fees because GJU's reputation keeps growing and GJU's graduates are always employed quickly, especially by German companies. Most of the alumni I know were employed within one year of graduating.

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*Interview #2:* British University in Dubai researcher interviewing a GUC alumnus.

Interview on 08-Jul-2020 from 8:30 pm to 9:10 pm Dubai time

**BUiD researcher:** What year did you graduate?

**Interviewee:** 2011 5 – years of study

**BUiD researcher:** Were you employed quickly after graduating?

**Interviewee:** I worked directly as a teaching assistant in the university

**BUiD researcher:** Did you find that your university experience gave you an advantage?

**Interviewee:** Yes, it has changed my mindset and way of thinking. I was studying design so it gave me a new perspective about how I deal with problems and challenges in my life.

**BUiD researcher:** Do your fellow graduates share your sentiments?

**Interviewee:** Depending on the major – But as design fellows, I believe studying in Applied Sciences and Arts changed our mindset.

**BUiD researcher:** Would you advise your friends to go to your university instead of more well-known public universities in your country?

**Interviewee:** Again, depending on the major. If they are going for Applied Arts, definitely I will encourage them. No public university in Egypt delivers the same content that is delivered in GUC.

**BUiD researcher:** Did you travel to Germany during your studies? Why or why not?

**Interviewee:** Yes, Munich to attend workshops with German designers

**BUiD researcher:** Did you feel well prepared for the experience?

**Interviewee:** Yes, I felt prepared and my parent encouraged me to go to experience a new culture and way of thinking

**BUiD researcher:** How did you adjust to the German module of teaching?

**Interviewee:** Before University, I went to a non-mixed, catholic French school that was run by nuns and taught a French-Lebanese curriculum. So, yes, there was a culture shock when I entered GUC. However, I'd say that GUC's curriculum wasn't that German to be honest. We didn't really have much freedom in our schedules. We had many mandatory classes for example. However, most of our professors were German, we used the German GPA system but the management was similar to most other universities. For design, it was mostly practical with a couple of theory classes. Engineering majors did a lot of lab work. Basically, going from school to university for me was moving from a system of studying and memorizing to designing and having to be creative. It was very hard to adjust that first semester. After that, I had a different mindset because my experience in a German design program taught me to take bigger risks and really understand design better.

**BUiD researcher:** Were the fees higher than the average fees at other universities in Egypt? Were they lower by comparison?

**Interviewee:** The fees were average if a bit high. To be accepted into the university, students must pay the full fees – we also had to do a 6 hour long aptitude test – very difficult because there are only 80 seats and everyone competed for those based on the aptitude test results. Then after you get in and pay the full fees, you might get a scholarship

based on performance and rank. It took me a while to manage to become valedictorian – 3 semesters – after which I got a scholarship and my fees were waived for a semester.

**BUiD researcher:** How was the environment and attitude between the students?

**Interviewee:** Not that competitive... the first 2 years, students were more focused on getting their work in the exhibition rather than trying to best one another.

**BUiD researcher:** Can you tell me more about your experience in Germany?

**Interviewee:** It was a trip after our last semester organized by a product designer. The group involved a few German-speaking students and instructors to bridge the language gap. It was a short two-week trip consisting of workshops in some of the biggest design companies in the world. And because the trip was very organized and well planned we felt well-prepared and we didn't really feel that disoriented or anything.

**BUiD researcher:** What about your experience after graduating?

**Interviewee:** Well, product design was still very new in Egypt. I liked industrial and product design but there weren't many office options in Cairo for that. And with my high GPA, it was easy for me to get employed as a TA in my university right after graduation. It was a great opportunity because we were the first batch to graduate from design and there were understaffed since the college grew. They took the top graduates from our batch as teaching assistants and we taught the younger students and fixed the understaffing issue. After that I decided to do my Master's degree in Sustainable Development at the American University in Cairo. Then I did a product design course in Milano and returned home afterwards.

**BUiD researcher:** That sounds like such an interesting perspective! Can you tell me more about the different experiences you had at each of the institutions? How was your time in GUC different from your time at the American University in Cairo and from your time in Milano?

**Interviewee:** In GUC – that was when my mindset changed 180 degrees. There, I feel that they didn't care much about image and cared a lot about learning. I learned to be open, to express my ideas and to be brave. Our professors pushed us to go out and find product designers in companies and ask them questions, learn from people in the industry. On the other hand, my Masters degree in the American university revolved around art, entrepreneurship and business. It was very interdisciplinary. From an organization point of view, it favored liberal choices and offered the opportunity to travel to Milano. The Masters degree was focused on research and we had to write a thesis – which was something new and difficult for me. I struggled a lot in the beginning as I didn't have any experience in research writing from GUC. But then I took on this challenge and improved a lot. Then, in Milano – my time there was very stressful to be honest. The Italian system was very rigid, the courses were fixed and everything was practical. We had full time studio classes where we spent 8 hours working in class and went home completely exhausted at late hours. The system was very uncomfortable and extremely competitive. The schedules were hectic and it was quite the stressful; experience. So, if I had to tell you which was the most effective

system, I'd say the German system because it was when my way of thinking about everything completely changed.

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**Interview #3:** British University in Dubai researcher interviewing a fourth-year student at TGU. Interview on 24-Jul-2020 from 8:30 pm to 8:55 pm Dubai time.

**BUiD researcher:** What year did you enroll?

I enrolled in 2016.

**BUiD researcher:** Why did you pick TGU?

I chose TGU because it offered something unique, especially for engineering majors.

**BUiD researcher:** What is the main language of instruction of your university?

The language of instruction depends on the major; engineering majors, for example, were 100% taught in German.

**BUiD researcher:** Did TGU meet your expectations?

I had quite high expectations because of TGU's reputation in Turkey. I think I made a good decision and I'd say my expectations were 75% met.

**BUiD researcher:** Did you experience a culture shock? If so, how did you overcome it?

**Interviewee:** Not quite a culture shock because Turkey and Germany have pretty similar cultures. The two countries have very strong political relations and there's a lot of cultural exchange as a result. But the change in curriculum took some adjusting to since the mathematical notations and the language of instruction was different from what I'm used to. Besides that, there were many visiting German professors who taught and lectured us and there was an increasing demand and growth for applied engineering integrated into our education. In addition, the German system teaches order and discipline.

**BUiD researcher:** Do you have any concerns?

**Interviewee:** Well, since TGU is still pretty young, I've personally seen it evolve in the year I attended. We went through both good and bad experiences. For example, since the language of instruction in my major must be German, sometimes when highly qualified professors weren't able to come from Germany, we had much less qualified teachers because of how difficult it is to find German speaking professors in Turkey.

**BUiD researcher:** What are some of the things that TGU does well?

**Interviewee:** TGU helped us take language learning much more seriously. In Turkey, learning a second language besides Turkish is very rare so being serious about it teaches discipline. Another thing TGU makes easier for us is to get internships, jobs or post graduate education because the university enjoys a very wide academic and career network.

Besides that, TGU gives its students better opportunities in Germany where the economy is great and engineering students are in demand.

**BUID researcher:** How did TGU handle the current pandemic?

**Interviewee:** TGU students were able to continue their studies online after two weeks of the lockdown. However, TGU already had a good basis for this. For example, our German partner -TU Berlin- has given us access of their online libraries, material, PDFs and so on. This made online collaboration much more feasible for TGU students.

**BUID researcher:** Where do you see online learning going?

**Interviewee:** It's becoming a regular part of daily life. However, online learning and communication is making me rethink that maybe we should improve face to face learning. I'm sure that online education will continue to develop and evolve over time but definitely, nothing tops human to human interaction and education.

**BUID researcher:** Did you go to Germany?

**Interviewee:** It's actually not mandatory to travel to Germany according to TGU. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to go to Germany this year because of the pandemic. I actually booked my ticket and everything. Then the lockdown happened and my flight was cancelled.

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***Interview #4:** British University in Dubai researcher interviewing, Software Development Engineer and TGU alumni. Interview on 27-Jul-2020 from 3:00 pm to 3:30 pm Dubai time. (Note: the participant has answered the basic questions prior to the interview)*

**BUID researcher:** Based on your answers, it seems that maybe you weren't very satisfied with your experience at TGU, can you explain this further?

**Interviewee:** Yes. I was one of the first students enrolling in 2013. The university was still young, most of my professors did not have enough experience. Management was also inexperienced and the rules and criteria changed so regularly that we couldn't keep up. Once, they changed the criteria for scholarships mid-semester and I had to retake a year because of such confusing changes.

**BUID researcher:** You mentioned in your answers that you would advise prospective students to apply elsewhere in Turkey. Can you tell me more about other public Turkish universities that will offer a better experience in your opinion?

**Interviewee:** I think universities like Istanbul Technical University for example would offer much better quality of education. TGU has a huge reputation in the industry but in terms of facilities, professionals, and education, I think the top public universities in Turkey are much better. However in my experience in TGU, we didn't have good facilities and the difference between TGU and big universities became very apparent when I did my exchange semester at TU Berlin.

**BUiD researcher:** Did you pay any fees during your time at TGU or even when you travelled to Germany?

**Interviewee:** No. Studying at TGU was free and my trips to Germany were fully covered by DAAD.

**BUiD researcher:** How was the environment in TGU between staff, students etc...?

There was no negativity. We were a very small batch from 10 to 12 students so the class environment was very friendly and close-knit. And the teacher- student relationships were very good as well.

**BUiD researcher:** Can you describe your experience in Germany in more detail?

**Interviewee:** We went to Bielefeld University after a year of studying German. The trip was a month long trip mainly to improve our German language. So we took some German classes and we met many people from all around the world using DAAD or Erasmus scholarships. Our second trip was to spend a semester in TU Berlin. It was actually a very good time. Very different experience from TGU because it was an actual big university with hundreds of students. The teachers were the same because they were our visiting professors in Turkey. The greatest difference that became apparent to me is the difference in quality of machines, labs and facilities. However, I know that TGU began improving lab equipment and facilities as I was graduating so it might be different for students attending TGU now.

**BUiD researcher:** Can you tell me more about your career experience after graduating?

**Interviewee:** It was good. I actually started working part-time at Seimens while I was still in university and after I graduated I was employed there full-time.

**BUiD researcher:** Where do you think the future of German TNE in Turkey is going?

**Interviewee:** It depends. Right now, I think it's a bit more politically focused. TGU is being used as a political move to strengthen international relations. I think moving forward, German TNE needs to focus more on improving and investing in the quality of education in their institutions. At first, it seemed like the German side was indeed very dedicated especially with providing German staff and teachers. After a while though, we noticed a decrease in this particularly. At that time, there were some terrorist events that made the German staff weary of coming to Turkey which was obviously, unfair to the students since it caused a drop in quality. Besides that, sometimes our Turkish assistants or teachers went to Germany for language courses but I'm not sure if they took professional development courses as well.

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**Interview #5:** British University in Dubai researcher interviewing Benjamin Schmäling, DAAD representative. Interview on 30-Jul-2020 from 6:00 pm to 6:52 pm Dubai time.

**BUID researcher:** What kinds of benefits does Germany gain from founding and funding TNE in other countries?

The logic of the DAAD funding; normally we don't fund on-site. DAAD funding does not go directly to the partner country. It is generally not possible in the DAAD funding logic to for example fund the infrastructure or to build a building or a campus. If this happens, this will come partly and indirectly via the German higher education institutions. This is important to understand in terms of the TNE approach because DAAD is an organization of German universities actually. It's a private institution but non-commercial institution. So, funding comes from public ministries. We're a kind of agency for German higher institutions to enhance their cooperation with countries from all over the world. And for individuals too; but when I talk about projects, it's about project funding and not the individual scholarship and funding schemes for the individuals but for projects in the higher education sector and that's why I always talk about the higher education institutions and the projects. Then when we're talking about the benefits of these projects for Germany; again it depends on the level that were talking about. For the German higher education institutions for example, the main benefit lies in the internationalization of their teaching and research activities. They are, all of them practically; all universities and universities of applied sciences, more or less have internationalization strategies. They have certain regions in the world or countries, they'd like to intensify cooperation with. They also get more involved in outreach programs or social responsibility issues and the idea or the main objective is to generate scientific findings and to intensify cooperation with researchers in other countries. To create new research groups around new topic and also to progress in the research areas the university is interested in. and then also to gain a bit more international visibility and attractiveness. For example, talking about the binational universities or other study programs that are offered abroad. It is also interesting to the German higher education institutions as a next step maybe, to attract some of these students for a masters or a PhD program in Germany. Then to build research networks between Germany and the country abroad. When the PhD candidate, for example, goes back to his or her home country to continue research and to enlarge the networks and intensify them. Then for DAAD, as I said, is an organization – private organization from the German higher education institutions are members- so the primary interest of the DAAD is to support the German higher institutions in establishing and intensifying these links in the framework of all of our programs. In the project department; this is what we do actually to create the political framework- if it's also necessary- to accompany political negotiations between the country where the cooperation is interested in and the German government or the governmental entities. To accompany this process, to work as an intermediary organization, to help the German higher institutions to establish contact if there is no contact via research partnership or individual context between researchers or university staff – then DAAD can also help in establishing partnerships, matchmaking workshops, and so forth, and accompany the whole process of establishing a closer link with the German universities and the partner abroad. And then on a political level as the highest level of the interest in TNE is mainly to consolidate international partnerships on a state level in the sense of knowledge diplomacy. To create links not on a political level in a restricted or a very focused sense but in a larger definition of diplomatic ties between Germany and another country. And to stay

in touch with this country; to have common projects in the area of education and research where the ties stay profound and intense even if it get difficult on a political level. To gain partnerships in countries in general and to improve these partnerships with countries all over the world.

**BUID researcher:** Why is the German TNE footprint greater in the Middle East, (with bigger institutions and student body) than other host countries?

To add to that before I start, there is another focus also in china and in central Asia with the German Kazakh University and the German universities in Shanghai, the Sino-German universities in China but you're completely right to say that the focus also with regard to the students enrolled in the programs; the biggest bi-national universities are the German university in Cairo with around 13,000 students then followed by the GJU in Amman with 4,500 and then GUTech with 2,100 approximately. So these are the three biggest universities so it's completely right to say that the footprint with regard to the number of students is the biggest. I think it has to do with a lot of factors. It's not possible to name only one reason. The political surroundings play quite a big role I would say. For example, in the case of Jordan; Jordan has been for a long time, for decades – an important partner not only for Germany but also other European countries or different countries in the world, especially in the last 10-20 years, Jordan was and is the country with the most stability in the region; a region that is very volatile with a lot of conflicts and crisis in Syria and Iraq and now with the economic situation in Lebanon. So, Jordan is one of the countries that are politically more or less, stable. Then, for the establishments for the operations and cooperation of TNE the political will is quite important, the commitment of the national governments, the commitment of also, private stakeholders that are involved; in Egypt for example, the legal framework comes from the state and from the government of course, but there's also a high commitment of private stakeholders and investors in some of these projects. Then as a third point that I also find important too is the interest and the commitment of German Higher institutions because it's not in the idea of the German TNE approach – even if the political surroundings and will is important, the most important thing is that there's an interest for the German universities to cooperate internationally. The interest of higher education institutions and the fact that the existing corporations in the conception of German TNE. Normally we prefer a bottom-up approach where there is already an existing corporation and that this is also crucial for building up a bigger kind of corporation from study programs to binational universities. Then there are some specific aspects like the German language. In Egypt, the proficiency in German and the number of people talking German or learning German in schools for example, in the secondary system and also in tertiary education is quite high. So there is already an interest in cooperating with German institutions or learning German as a language and then also as a consequence perhaps wanting to study in Germany or at an institution that has relations with Germany like the German university in Cairo for example or El Ghouna campus. This is the only branch campus we are currently funding via the technical university berlin. It's a smaller campus than GUC with only five main study programs with a focus on water engineering. So, it's important to have the larger context of the influence of German language in Egypt. In the case of Jordan, German language is far less present in the secondary education. There

are just a few number of schools that offer German and only three universities that offer German studies or German language. This why at GJU, the students have to learn a lot of German in their three years before going to Germany in their fourth year. Nevertheless, the GJU is one of the flagship projects of course, but the surroundings and context differs in regards to the presence of German language. Then, one last aspect that could be important, too, is the possibility to levy tuition fees; because, even if it's not a commercial offer, the refinancing of the study programs is important because the DAAD funding is long but will end at some point. And then the study programs should be self-sufficient and sustainable from a financial point of view. So, the possibility to levy tuition fees in Egypt is there for example, and in Jordan and in Oman too because all the other universities on the market also levy tuition fees and they are quite high. In other countries, I talked about like Nigeria for where there's also a TNE project in archival studies and film studies. The average tuition fees in Nigeria are much lower than these other countries. They also have to levy some tuition fees but compared to other countries it's much cheaper, maybe a small percentage of the tuition fees at GUC, for example.

**BUiD researcher:** That's interesting because I've noticed that in TGU, the students don't pay any fees. It's considered to be a public university and students' studies are completely free. Even their trips to Germany are covered by DAAD. That's quite different from GJU, GUC and GUTech because the fees over there are quite high actually.

Right. They pay tuition fees but for some of the students it's possible to get a scholarship, either in their country, or for some specific programs like for example a master's program in GJU in German as a foreign language. Then, when they come to Germany, there are different possibilities. Of course there are several hundred students who come to Germany from GJU every year so it's not possible that they all get scholarships. Some of them get one by DAAD and others might get one from GJU or from the Jordanian ministry. But in general, the necessity to have sustainable financial planning for German TNE be it bi-national universities or smaller programs is always one of the conditions for state funding as initial funding. Initial funding can also take a long time. Some of the projects that required initial funding, we've been funding for fifteen years for example.

**BUiD researcher:** Moving forward, where do you see the future of German TNE in the Arab world and the Middle East?

I think in general there's high potential in the Arab world. What we know from the countries we are already collaborating with and also from the German higher institutions, we get a lot of proposals in this context, far more than other regions - especially regarding TNE. There's a lot of ongoing cooperation already in the Middle East and North Africa and every time we make a new call - this is once or twice a year - there are many German universities that are interested in cooperating or intensifying cooperation with a partner in these countries. There are also ideas to establish bi-national universities in other countries. For example in Morocco, we're not in the state of concrete planning but it's not excluded - there are ideas and concepts of founding other bi-national universities but it's not quite clear if it's going to be as huge as say, the university in Cairo. But there are ideas and there's political will on both sides. Then within the projects that we are already funding and

that are already operating by themselves because of course funding is only one part of it; GJU, GUC, GUTech, they all have a huge owned budget and the DAAD funding is sometimes a small or sometimes big part of it. Also in General, for those projects I think, they are also interested in developing and gaining more attraction in their surrounding region or neighboring countries. For example, in the case of GJU, for students from Syria and Iraq who come as refugees to Jordan to have the opportunity to study at GJU, it helps the scope of these universities grow and gain more regional importance instead of just on a national level. This is something that could possibly be in the future for example, to enlarge the sphere of activity. Then another possibility could be to enhance research cooperation between not only German universities and the partners in the Arab countries but also other countries all over the world. In some projects there are a lot of international students or more exchange with researchers from other countries beyond the Middle East and North Africa. Then, of course, the digital format of teaching and research is getting more and more important and I think these projects will harness the opportunities of digital cooperation in teaching, learning and also the social responsibilities of the higher education sector and to expand the digital offer. This is also something I see growing in all of TNE in general with a strong focus in the Middle Easter and North Africa and I also think there will be further bottom up projects initiated by the German higher institutions not initiated by political initiative or ministries or politicians but rather by the universities themselves. We know of another cooperation project in Egypt – we still don't know if we're going it fund it but it's planned at least by the German university and its partner in Egypt. So these are some ideas and possibilities on where the future lies.

**BUiD researcher:** Speaking of refugees in Syria, I've noticed there's a university in Syria called Alwadi International University and they claim to be a German university. So, I've researched it and I couldn't find any link between them and DAAD or any other German university. Can you tell me anything about that?

This is possible. We also encountered that in Lebanon, there's a Lebanese German University and there is a German dimension in it but they have nothing to do with cooperating with German higher institutions and they're not funded by DAAD or any other German organization – they only call themselves German – I mean, it's not a protected trademark or anything and anyone can say it's a German institution, it's not a protected brand. So, I think, in these type of institutions there may be a high personal interest or institutional interest to have cooperation with Germany or act as a brand in the region like in GJUs case. But for the Syrian university I cannot confirm that there's any cooperation going on with Germany. Maybe they have something like the Lebanese university where they cooperate with the Goethe institute in Beirut. They offer language classes so there is a kind of German dimension but it's not funded within the DAAD TNE scheme.

**BUiD researcher:** In your opinion, how could German TNE collaborations with the Middle East grow and improve for example, political ties? In a highly politically profiled region, how could German TNE address those issues?

One of the prerequisites are solid existing partnerships between higher education institutions so that even if it's politically a bit unstable or complicated, the cooperation on research and on a scientific level, on a student exchange level continues. It is important for the involved higher education institutions and the researchers to address new scientific questions, new topics to try and tackle local and global challenges together. I think that this could be an important aspect to focus on in terms of internationalization; to strengthen the idea that universities have a social responsibility to do research not merely for the sake of research but to contribute in solving local or regional issues. This could also be research on the situation in these countries, on the situation of refugees or the political system but not as a some kind of political agenda but rather academic and scientific research. Another thing that universities can do contribute is to offer training and study programs that are more easily accessible for underprivileged people; refugees, or people who need to work long hours – to provide further training and maybe more lenient certificates for people who can't afford the time or money to pursue a full time academic degree.

**BUiD researcher:** How is DAAD handling the current pandemic in terms of education, resourcing and providing material for TNE students in lockdown?

Yes. I think in the last month we all learned a lot. We tried to accommodate both the German higher institutions in Germany and those abroad. We arranged web seminar series on digital cooperation to accompany our German project partners and their partners abroad in handling this emergency situation and also in discussing which of these emergency measures can be transformed into meaningful contributions in teaching and research cooperation in the long run. So this is something we set up a couple of months ago, then we tried in the first couple of weeks of the corona pandemic, we tried to help all the people who got stuck somewhere; scholarship holders who got stuck outside of their countries, Germans who got stuck somewhere in a foreign country and foreigners who got stuck in Germany and we tried to help them individually or via the German higher education institutions that are responsible for the scholarships and the funding to find solutions for those emergency cases. We collaborated a lot with embassies on site or with federal foreign offices to handle this. Then after two to three months we tried to return a bit to the regular daily working program and started to think about how we can make use of this situation and how to transform this crisis situation into something positive in the longer run. One idea is to set up a program for a better response mechanisms and research on pandemics. Using the interdisciplinary approach and network that concerns different regions, we can address global issues like this much better. We can only find proper solutions when we work together. We saw this especially in the coronavirus pandemic; we have to work together to find vaccines, to find ways we can treat illnesses – not just corona but also concerning other epidemics and pandemics beyond covid-19. For example other topics like climate change, we all realize within DAAD and everywhere else how important it is to work together to find solutions for these pressing global issues.

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#### **Appendix E** (*LinkedIn questions for alumni and students*)

-What year did you graduate? 2020

- Were you employed quickly after graduating? yes
- Did you find that your university experience gave you an advantage? not sure
- Do your fellow graduates share your sentiments? in Jordan or Germany?
- Would you advice your friends to go to your university instead of more well-known public universities in your country? No
- Did you travel to Germany during your studies? Why or why not? Yes, during Christmas
- If yes, did you feel well prepared for the experience? Yes, I did
- Did you have any concerns about GJU? Sometimes they spoke a while only Arabic... even though English is mandatory. A bit hard for a foreign student
- What did you like best about GJU? The other student were really kind, the extra activities outside from the classes, good Professors

Feel free to ask me anything else and please don't publish my name.

Kind regards,

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Hello,

Sorry for late answering(:

-I graduated at June 2019 and yes I employed quickly because I was working at part-time job and then my position changed to full-time job.

-Yes, my experiences gave to me advantages, because German as education language give the advantage as an engineer and the otherside we have made a lot of project.

-I think most of them have same thoughts.

-This answer is yes and no, because we have advantages but other well-known universities have advantages,too. Both of them are good. Just important thing is what you want exactly.

-I travelled to Germant two times, both of them are for summer school, because our university has contract with German universities and this situation is contracted.

-I think yes(:

-Yes I have, our university is new one and somethings about system and curriculum are still not settled. Also a little more emphasis should be placed on English.

-It was nice to take lessons from German university professors at regular intervaks, benefit from their experiences.

I guess thats all.

Best regards,

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1 At the moment i am studying Technik Mechtronischer Systeme at the Turkish-German-University in İstanbul.

2 I am working at the moment Parttime but not in the field of Mechatronics engineering.

3 I think an university experience isnt always a good preparation for an actual job in the studied major.

5 I would advice every friend to get experience outside of germany. Does it have to be the Tau no. I would advice to study in germany at a well known uni and take place in the erasmus programm.

6 Yes i travel minimum every 3 month back to germany for visiting family and friends

I didn't know the tau but its always better to try than not. I like the most the personal contact with the professors who are very kind and supportive to every student who shows effort

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-I graduated 2010

-employed quickly? ... not really, took around 6-8 months (especially that I traveled back to Doha (

-yes it gave me advantage , people respect GUC and the hard work we put in it .

-I don't know if my fellow grads have my sentiments .

-it depends.. but GUC is by far better than any public institute in Egypt

-I did not. Couldn't afford it.

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-What year did you graduate?

2012

-Were you employed quickly after graduating?

I was employed in January 2014

-Did you find that your university experience gave you an advantage?

Not really

-Do your fellow graduates share your sentiments?

They do

-Would you advice your friends to go to your university instead of more well known public universities in your country?

Yes, it's one of the best Universities in Oman

-Did you travel to Germany during your studies? Why or why not?

I did, some courses were taught in Germany.

-If yes, did you feel well prepared for the experience?

I was well prepared

Thank you and best regards,

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-I graduated in 2011

-Well, I had a lot of job offers both while studying and afterwards but I had different plans so I took the decision of doing them first and then start working. This plan happened exactly this way.

-Of course, it gave me an advantage. First of all, the German system was not unfamiliar to me because I also graduated from a German Gymnasium in Istanbul which is 100% regulated by the German Government. In 2010 when the project of having also a German University in Istanbul was approved by both of the countries, Merkel, herself, came and visit our high school as well to motivate us to go on with this system both in Turkey and Germany. I had the opportunity to meet her face-to-face and answer her questions. We were all in the newspapers back then. So when I graduated from my bachelor university; this German University was also ready so I chose this one. The particular advantage is that it is in German and we are talking about a very difficult, but yet very important language for the business life. Especially as an engineer I've always experienced these advantages. Still, I am lucky enough to have learnt it in the high school as my primary foreign language, since all our lessons were in German. Other than that since I'm working in the automotive sector, I can say that they are really the milestone and it's playing an extremely important role. Moreover Germany is also very good in Optics and Chemistry which are, right now, shaping the future.

-Yes, I believe they do. They were mainly Germans or the Turks born in Germany. I was the only one in my generation, that was coming from Turkey.

-Well, right now, the TDU is quite well-known. Moreover our well-known public universities are not successful anymore since the private universities have transferred all the good professors. Boğaziçi University and ODTÜ are the only ones that are still trying to

resist. So I would definitely have chosen this one if I wanted to do my bachelor's as well. (And if it was ready, of course.) Right now Koç University is accepted as the best one followed by Sabancı University. Unfortunately people with money or having shown extreme scores in the university examinations can go to these good colleges like in America. I personally had 50% scholarship because of my success; my family is one of the wealthiest families in Turkey. But this is my chance. Not everyone is born equally and that's why I would have only suggested TDU to these people because it's giving the same opportunity to everyone.

-Yes, of course. The program is a dual program if you choose to do it so. So I did the second year in Germany, in the University of Passau.

-Yes, but I wouldn't be a good example for this question because I was raised by this system since I was 14. Therefore, me saying yes, wouldn't be a perfectly objective answer.

I wish these answers can help you! If you have further questions, please feel free to ask!



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Hi,

They are simple questions so I can easily answer them here :

-What year did you graduate?

2013

-Were you employed quickly after graduating?

Yes

-Did you find that your university experience gave you an advantage?

Yes, I did an internship with a company and the same company hired me full-time in Amman .

-Do your fellow graduates share your sentiments?

Yes

-Would you advice your friends to go to your university instead of more well known public universities in your country?

Absolutely, if you are staying in Jordan for studies GJU is very recommended .

-Did you travel to Germany during your studies? Why or why not?

Yes I traveled and did a semester as an exchange student and a semester as an Intern in Germany

-If yes, did you feel well prepared for the experience?

Yes, proper research, past students and university (here and in Germany) helps .

I hope that helps you and good luck with your research!

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1 -I didn't graduate yet

2 -I am an intern at Fakir Hausgeräte

3 -Totally, yes

4 -Yes

5 -Of course not, if they are planning to go abroad and work International

6 -Yes, double degree program, 1 year

7 -Yes

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I was studying Civil Engineering at Damascus University in Damascus, Syria. After completing one year over there, my dad had already applied for me in German University in Oman without informing me and he told me I got accepted. I left Syria in 2012 and came to Oman in September of that year. I enrolled right away after a small creative design exam in the major of Architecture and Urban Planning.

I completed my studies in June 2016, and applied for jobs and got accepted in September but the problem was that I deviated a bit from my major of Architecture and took the first opportunity that came to me as a marketing executive in order to change my Visa from a student to an employee. I wasn't very satisfied doing marketing and sales but that was the only way to stay here in Oman. But thank God in 2018 I got the opportunity to go back to my field in Architecture and design and got the opportunity in August 2018 and since then am working in my field; al Hamdullilah.

Definitely, my university experience gave me a huge advantage as the education was one of the most premium education in the Sultanate. Learning from Germans is absolutely the best thing to do as of so many great traits and life lessons and discipline you can learn from them. Honestly the education we got in Gutech was basically not technical knowledge where as it was life lessons, critical thinking, design thinking and problem solving and the way to attack any design problem and the ideology to deal with it from design to integration to execution.

Most of my fellow Alumnis agree with me, but unfortunately most of them also couldn't get the chance to work in the field of Architecture for many various reasons.

I would definitely recommend the German University to other young students who want to learn a way of thinking and self-teaching mechanics and problem solving as well as confidence building.

I was one of the lucky students to get to travel to Germany as not all students get the chance to go with all costs covered. I applied for a DAAD scholarship for a 14 weeks workshop and got accepted as per my high GPA and my motivation letter. But then I also applied to Aachen for my bachelor Thesis but I couldn't get the fund from DAAD as it was very competitive and a friend of mine got selected (they took one student only out of each department).

Yes, the workshop was great in Aachen, we were prepared. Yes, we got a few sessions before leaving explaining what we will expect from the trip. We learnt a lot from the 2 weeks trip, it was honestly a great and successful capacity building for all of us, and i believe all the other students must have to experience such a trip but unfortunately any individual student has to pay for his/her self.

DAAD is honestly a great organization and they were generous a lot with me giving me 50% scholarship throughout all the 4 years of study in Oman.

I hope I helped you a bit with your survey. Please don't hesitate to contact me for further information.

All the best in your Masters.

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Yes, i travelled to Germany during my studies just after the german course for 1 month. School offers such an Option to improve the german language to the Students, who passed the german exam(DSH) in their first or second try. At least it was like that when i was studying there. I am not sure if this Opportunity still exists.

Actually i didn't. I realised that i had a lot of work to do to improve my german.

And yes, i would recommend TAU because i think when you graduate from TAU it is easy to find a job specially in the german based companies

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2017-

-after 3 months

-for sure, I feel GUC graduates are preferred to many employers

-yes

-yes, for sure

-yes I traveled, we had the opportunity of having a semester abroad

-I wasn't prepared, it was my first time to travel abroad all by my own, but I think it really affected me positively

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-I graduated in 2015

-Yes, I was employed 3 months later after graduation

-No, there was a gap between the real work life and the university experience regarding my studies background, but when it comes to soft skills and language fluency, then my university experience helped a lot

-Yes, my fellow graduates share the same sentiments

- Yes, I would definitely advise friends to go to my university

-No, I haven't had the chance to travel unfortunately

All faculties get a chance to study for one semester or more in our GUC campus in Berlin

Unfortunately, my class is the first class of Civil Engineering studies in the GUC

Back then, they were not prepared yet to launch a study program for us from the Berlin campus. German staff were involved with academically and administratively, both along with the Egyptians of course

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