

# **Transnational Education and Employability Development**

التعليم العابر للحدود و تنمية التوظيف

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

The dissertation at hand aimed at investigating the advantages and disadvantages of Transnational Education and its impact on employability development. The researcher was able to answer the research questions in the literature review. The researcher was able to answer the question about the relevance between the TNE program and the curriculum design and pedagogy. Besides, the question about how aware TNE students are of the effect of curriculum on employability was answered. The researcher also answered the question about how HEA interference helps colleges in supporting the employability within TNE curriculum. Moreover, a mixed approach was used where interviews and surveys were conducted with students, academics, and employers to get a snapshot of the relation between curriculum and employability. The research paper concluded that the students need to acquire several skills throughout their learning journey. The skills they acquire should match the job market requirements.

## ملخص البحث

تهدف هذه الأطروحة إلى البحث في إيجابيات و مساوئ التعليم العابر للحدود وتأثيره على تنمية إمكانية الحصول على وظيفة. تمكن الباحث من الإجابة عن أسئلة البحث في مراجعة المواد المنشورة، تمكن الباحث من الإجابة عن السؤال حول العلاقة بين برنامج التعليم العابر للحدود وتصميم المناهج وطرق التدريس. إضافة إلى ذلك ، تمت الإجابة عن السؤال حول مدى إدراك طلاب التعليم العابر للحدود بأثر المنهج على قابلية التوظيف. أجاب الباحث أيضًا عن السؤال حول الطرق التي يساعد تدخل التعليم العالي فيها الكليات على دعم قابلية التوظيف ضمن مناهج التعليم العابر للحدود. علاوة على ذلك ، تم استخدام نهج مختلط حيث أجريت المقابلات والدراسات الاستقصائية مع الطلاب والأكاديميين وأرباب العمل للحصول على لمحة سريعة عن العلاقة بين المناهج الدراسية وقابلية التوظيف. وخلصت ورقة البحث إلى أن الطلاب بحاجة إلى اكتساب العديد من المهارات خلال رحلة التعلم الخاصة بهم. يجب أن تتناسب المهارات التي يكتسبونها مع متطلبات سوق العمل.

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# Chapter 1

## *INTRODUCTION*

The increase in student mobility has come to be an imperative need for colleges around the globe. That need is partly due to the expansion in the quantity of projects established 'offshore' either with accomplice organizations, through worldwide branch campuses, by means of separation learning or a mix of these. Normally alluded to as transnational education (TNE), development in such projects has been considerable, primarily in Australia and in the UK, where an ongoing report (Mellors-Bourne et al. 2014) puts the quantity of dynamic enrolments at more than 335,000 and the pay from TNE to UK colleges at £496 million every year. Despite this report, there still seems to be insufficient arrangements of information on TNE and the proof base is restricted (O' Mahony 2014; British Council 2013a; Ziguras and McBurnie 2015).

TNE fundamentally includes a wide range of advanced education study programs. In addition to study programs, TNE can also consist of sets of courses of study, or instructive services (counting those of distant instruction) in which the students are situated in a nation that differs from the one where the granting establishment is based. Such projects may belong to the edifying arrangement of a state that distinguishes it from the state in which it works or may work freely of any national framework (Council of Europe 2002, p. 1) Whereas, McBurnie and Ziguras (2006, p. 1) take a more official perception and define TNE as “any education delivered by an institution based in one country to students located in another.”

Conversely, an expansiveness of action in the internationalization of higher education (HE) has been reflected in a developing assemblage of examination into its numerous measurements. In any case, it has been contended that the examination spotlight has been more focused on the

procedure than on results. Studies identifying with arrangement and technique, educational plan, teaching method and student experience are in more prominent proof than those that consider scholastic or individual change results for students and their post-study progress into further investigation or employment (Robertson et al. 2011). Despite changes that are being initiated, there are still moderately few examinations on results in the literature and where they exist. The accentuation is basically quantitative, market driven, and enormous scale (for example division or institutional), such as reports from Banks and Olsen (2008), Australian Education International (AEI 2010) and the British Council (2013a). O' Mahony (2014) investigated literature on TNE explicitly; she found that the prevailing topics identify with globalization, exchange, quality and guideline. She also discovered that educating and learning issues have a lower need in the ebb and flow assortment of TNE inquiries (2014, p. 4).

As for employment issues, Fielden (2007) contends that the crossing point of internationalization and employability has just been shown for a moderately brief time and there are gaps in execution, investigation and practice. According to literature, this is considerably more the case for employability in connection to TNE programs, where studies are restricted in number, and the connection between TNE projects, procedures and employability results has seldomly been drawn. Of the 219 research records on TNE recognized since 2005, O' Mahony (2014) did not indicate to a solitary thing that merged the topic of employability.

One exemption to this absence of investigation into results concerns the influence of study, work and volunteering abroad. This has established a great deal of consideration, particularly in the US, yet additionally in different countries, for instance the ongoing huge scale European Commission report (2014) into the effect of the Erasmus program. Such investigations, to a great extent, center around either the subsequent individual change or scholastic advantages (IU 2015),

in spite of the fact that there is currently affirmation of the connection with progressively 'positional' results (for example business related and focused, (Pyvis and Chapman 2007) which influence employability (for example Crossman and Clark 2010; Jones 2010, 2012; and European Commission 2014).

Although no physical versatility is associated with numerous TNE programs, TNE can possibly improve employment - explicit abilities that are pertinent to the local setting of worldwide occupations and the reward of capabilities which show these certifications are a significant driver for students to attempt TNE programs (British Council 2013a). For instance, Chan (2011) talks about the job of TNE in creating proficient abilities for pharmacologists. However, this shows that there is little proof of the fuse of the combination of employability aptitudes as alumni results, which have been an element of internal educational programs lately in the UK and in different nations. It is pivotal to highlight that the differentiation between business abilities and employability aptitudes is a significant one; the previous identifying with explicit callings for which capabilities and certifications are a key factor, while the last demonstrates improvement of transferable abilities that are not work explicit. (Yorke and Knight 2006, p. 8) define employability as “a set of achievements – skills, understandings and personal attributes – that make individuals more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy”.

This definition positions employability as what individuals gain on a personal perspective. It incorporates the idea that employable people are bound to pick up business however does not propose that work is the main marker, along these lines verifiably perceiving that the accessibility of occupations isn't really an element of the employability of people. This definition likewise verbalizes that more prominent employability benefits the economy and society and not just

people (for this situation students and alumni). What this definition does not do is to state that the accomplishments, abilities, understandings and individual characteristics that establish employability are only created in HE. Therefore, Yorke (2006) assures that employability is a continuous work all through one's working life.

Government and other key partners intensely highlight that there ought to be a solid connection between advanced education and economy flourishing (BIS 2016). Progressive governments have likewise contended that advanced education ought to be accessible to all who can profit from it, and that contribution in advanced education ought to be a springboard for people to access fulfilling professions and accomplish social versatility.

Regardless of the argumentative connection between globalism and localism, a solid flow of worldwide learning has turned out to be progressively prevalent, particularly when guardians and students acknowledge how significant universal learning encounters are to future pursuits of employment and profession improvement. Van der Wende (2007) translates the way toward internationalizing advanced education as 'a strategic response to the demands and challenges of social, economic, and labour market globalization,' while Kerr (1994) essentially sees such a procedure as the worldwide progression of individuals, data, learning, innovation, programs, instruction facilities, and economic capital. Governments around the world tend to improve the students' international keenness by concentrating on internationalizing the students' learning practices enabling them to adapt with the worldwide knowledge, aptitudes, and dialects important to perform expertly and socially in global, multicultural conditions (Kuang et al. 2012; Stiasny and Gore 2012; International Consultants for Education and Fairs, 2014; Mok and Yu 2014; see additionally Common Space of Higher Education in Association of Southeast Asian Nations for

provincial mobility<sup>3</sup>). Accordingly, the number of international mobile students has significantly increased.

Knight (2014) contended that the student versatility has been growing during the past few years as the first cohort of TNHE. However, it is worth mentioning that TNHE can't be restricted to the physical movement of students, but also to the movement of projects and suppliers over the national limits, or the foundation of education center points, as 'a concerted and planned effort by a country, zone, or city to build a critical mass of local and international actors to strengthen the HE sector, expand the talent pool, and/ or contribute to the knowledge economy' (Knight, 2014, p. 19), including both the first-and second-parties of transnational education. It is significant that the most dynamic contributors in setting up instruction centers are Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, and the United Arab Emirates (Knight, 2011), a large portion of which are gathered in the Asia-Pacific locale. The increasing number of international students urges the participants to effectively take part in founding educational hubs and import educational resources to solve the problem of 'brain drain' and transform it to 'brain gain' (Mok and Han, 2016).

Studies in international and transnational higher education have turned out to be increasingly prevalent, since parents and students expect to boost up the students' professional growth due to the TNE program taken. However, it persists to be arguable whether the experience encourages graduates to verify promising positions in the work market and make their investment in their study commendable.

The dissertation at hand aims to answer the following questions:

1. Do the TNE programs shed light on employability within its curriculum design and pedagogy?

2. Are the TNE alumni aware of the influence of the commenced curriculum and its effect on their employability?
3. Does the HEA need to interfere to help colleges in supporting the employability within the TNE curriculum?

Conducting the research at hand, the researcher aims to give a snapshot of the employment qualifications required from students in general and transnational students in particular. As a result, surveys (Appendix A) and interviews (Appendix B) were conducted with students, employers, and academics in order to shed light on employability development and its relation to the curriculum delivered to students.

## **Chapter 2**

### ***LITERATURE REVIEW***

#### **2.1 What Is Transnational Education?**

Transnational Education (TNE) incorporates a variety of advanced education study programs. Additionally, TNE comprises sets of courses of study, or educational services in which the students are based in a country that differs from the one where the granting establishment is based. Research proposes that TNE programs have an impact on students' skills. They support students in developing the skills needed for their workplace. Besides, TNE programs enhance the students' hard and soft skills and contribute in their hiring and promotion in their future employment.

#### **2.2 What Skills Attract the Employers?**

As per OECD, "Skills have become the global currency of the 21<sup>st</sup> century" (OECD [n.d.], p. 1). Yorke (2006) states that employers are more likely to merit employability skills than disciplinary – based understanding and skills. This was reverberated when 81% of the employers valued employability skills as a dominant factor when evaluating applicants (UKCES 2008).

Different employers search for different employability skills that, after some research, include intelligence, yearning to acquire knowledge, self-management skills, communication and social skills, the ability to work with a team (Harvey et al. 1997). Moreover, (Knight and Yorke 2004) shed light on other employability skills that include: transferable skills, networking and negotiation skills, self – confidence, decision – making skills, and the ability to deal with ambiguity.

Additionally, Davis et al. (2011) has identified six main drivers of progress that might be vital as we head into 2020: extreme durability, the ascent of shrewd machines and frameworks,

computational world, new media environment, super structured associations, and globally associated world. Consequently, some employability skills were modified: making sense, social insight, novel and versatile reasoning, cross-social competency, computational reasoning, new media education, transdisciplinary, design outlook, and virtual joint effort.

The skills listed above seem to be slightly similar and they do not only target subject knowledge or proficiencies. Leggott and Stapleford (2007) underwent a broad study about the student insights of their own transferable skills; accordingly, they claim that “employers’ requirements seem to be broadly consistent internationally” (2007, p. 124). They concluded that employability interferences in the program that is designed meet the needs of both home and international students who plan to work abroad. (Leggott and Stapleford 2007, p. 124)

This is a significant point in the TNE setting as it recommends that if the employability aptitudes advancement consolidated into national projects is likewise conveyed in the seaward form of the program, the abilities picked up will be similarly legitimate for those students who look for work locally on graduation. It additionally implies that students who embrace TNE programs outside their nation of origin will build up an important range of abilities for work as they come back to their home country

### **2.3 How Is Employability Affected by TNE and Internationalization?**

Crossman and Clarke (2010) conducted a study that included students, academics, and employers. They found that all partners distinguished clear associations among studying or potentially working abroad and employability. Characteristics created through versatility incorporated the manufacturing of systems, language procurement and the advancement of delicate aptitudes identifying with intercultural understanding, individual attributes and perspectives. A British Council review (British Council 2013b) found that businesses exceptionally esteem foreign



dialect aptitudes, though Fitch and Desai (2012) found that in the field of Public Relations, an attention to social distinctions and conventions could really compare to language capability.

Erasmus Impact Study (European Commission 2014) and a Finnish report (CIMO 2014), both contend that when students learn abroad, they receive more job opportunities. A creative commitment from the CIMO study was the finding that efficiency, flexibility and inquisitiveness are likewise aptitudes created through mobility. They contend (2014, p. 27) that inquisitiveness is the "definitive virtue of the current decade" since it causes us to profit by new inspirations and chances, it is a lively and reformative pre-essential for society, and it is inspirational.

The internationalization of the educational program at home raises a few points when it comes to TNE. Initially, some TNE settings are extremely various, accommodating worldwide and local students. This is especially the situation in nations like Singapore, which have decided to be noticed as instruction center points. Consequently, the response to the subject of who is 'at home' and who is 'studying abroad' is intricate. Those considered 'global' by dint of traveling from another nation to examine a TNE program, may in this manner be in a situation to create transferable, employability abilities through being in a 'universal' area. Besides, there remains the issue of TNE students who are 'residential' to the local delivery area where they study their program. What should be possibly done through the educational program and the more extensive examination experience to give comparable help to get to the advantages of HE internationalization and to assist create employability skills for this cluster of students specifically (who are the incredible larger part in connection to TNE programs)? These are strategy, structure and conveyance issues which should be considered in TNE projects and which don't seem to have been investigated, similarly as can be distinguished, in the literature.

## **2.4 Lack of TNE Adaptability to Changing Skills**

An Australian government study (AEI 2010) found that global students in Australia were uninformed of the significance of the conventional employability aptitudes when looking for work, knowing that accreditations or capabilities alone would be vital to future business. This is to a great extent something contrary to what numerous businesses are searching for, albeit necessities may change between the private and open division and the occupations. This sheds light on the alumni's absence of consciousness of employability abilities or their significance; their powerlessness to explain their significance to potential businesses; or that a few employers accept that these aptitudes can't be created by means of HE, and less to do with an absence of aptitudes according to graduates.

As for TNE, some study (British Council 2013a) recommends that while a significant part of the market for TNE (in specific subjects) is thought to be worked around skills, where a number of TNE students are centered around subjects with apparent high 'employability' or those that are simpler to consider while working. This could imply that TNE may at times add to oversupply of alumni in certain fields, and aptitudes incongruities, instead of support in resolving them.

## **2.5 What Motivates TNE Students?**

Hoare (2012) refers to Hodgkin (1972) who saw that progressive needs were most noteworthy when a country's human capital needs to advance from hard to delicate ability bases. Where 'hard abilities' are required, Knight recognizes specialty programs as one of the draw factors toward TNE (Knight 2010) and " an unplanned and essentially risk-free boon to the national economy" (Low 2003, in Hoare 2012, p. 27). In expertly orientated projects, especially in nations where there are aptitudes gaps, national abilities offices may frequently be associated with planning TNE projects and endorsing the educational plan.

Beyond 'hard aptitudes', a few examinations have noticed that students tend to go for TNE due to its personal and qualified aims (for example Hoare 2012; Robertson et al. 2011). These two examinations specifically use Pyvis and Chapman's (2007) "transformative and positional" ideas as a system for their investigations. In any case, it is essential to feature that personal and qualified character can likewise be "transformative" measurements, propelling TNE study.

TNE is arriving at an alternate profile of students as indicated by McNamara and Knight (2014) – the individuals who are commonly older than customary HE participants and regularly with past work understanding. This moderately developed statistic additionally incorporates a high extent of students working all day during their examinations. They found, nonetheless, that profession improvement was the fundamental inspiration for selecting TNE study, either to begin a vocation or build up an effectively settled one. As far as employability abilities, the insight of non-TNE students in their study was that the chance to pick up a progressively universal outlook was the best characteristic of TNE programs, while TNE students appraised it as the second most improved aptitude from their program after analysis. These students likewise referred to the desire to fortify intercultural mindfulness and skill as one of the key inspirations for picking their TNE program.

## **2.6 What Do Employers and Students Expect of TNE?**

McNamara and Knight (2014) find that TNE students trust that employers see TNE to be profitable in a hiring process. They refer to (1) the status of a distant organization/instruction framework and (2) the worldwide standpoint and multi-social experience of TNE graduates in respect to neighborhood non-TNE graduates. Nevertheless, different investigations have discovered changeability in impression of TNE programs in various settings. Hoare (2012) has been referenced in this regard, and Robertson et al. (2011) discovered negative observations

related with Australian TNE graduates in correlation with the individuals who had graduated locally in Singapore. Local graduates were viewed as of higher scholarly positioning and abroad experiences did not present a positional benefit.

Hoare (2012) records that TNE is regularly referred to as 'separation learning' in Singapore. She found that TNE graduates experienced negative judgement from both open and private division managers and that Singaporean bosses depend on a candidate's qualifications for recruitment. The impression of TNE programs as being of mediocre quality contrasted with local colleges is likewise noted by Ziguras and McBurnie (2011). The Singaporean edification setting might be an uncommon circumstance yet Waters and Leung (2011) report alike discoveries in Hong Kong.

Waters and Leung (2011) contend that through the presentation of supposed 'top-up' programs, British colleges offer degree-level instruction to students incapable to get to nearby advanced education. It offers a 'passage ticket' when candidates tend to seek a job. Nonetheless, they likewise propose that TNE students and graduates are moderately distraught by their degrees being less esteemed than a local correspondent. They contend that TNE can be believed to fortify examples of social disparity by referring to students as various and mediocre.

An Australian examination (AEI 2010) looked for the perspectives of 'seaward managers' on employing graduates who had studied abroad in correlation with those studied locally. Sixty-three percent expressed that candidates who studied abroad were progressively imaginative or would be advised to critical thinking aptitudes than privately instructed alumni; 53% believe that abroad instructed alumni would be wise to life experience; and 47% referred to the English language abilities of abroad instructed alumni as a significant purpose behind picking them as opposed to a privately taught alumni. However, 68% said that privately taught alumni had progressively

practical compensation desires and 53% gave capability in the local language as purposes behind favoring a privately instructed alumnus.

Most students and their families have reached a conviction where they think that international qualifications are more valuable by society and employers than the local ones. Therefore, students choose to study a TNE program aiming for a prestigious place in society and work.

Some students whose first language is not English, have thought of joining a TNE program to improve their English language aptitudes, believing that this would help in their vocation. However, this might not be the case for certain suppliers in major providing countries (i.e. UK, US, and Australia).

## **2.7 What Are the Outcomes of Employment and Employability?**

Given that Australia is apparently the most dynamic TNE supplier (Naidoo 2009), it is obvious that their projects highlight most noticeably in TNE research. However, Hoare (2012) finds it noteworthy that more research has not been embraced to comprehend the inspirations and suppositions of partners in transnational instruction, specifically since TNE is such "huge business" for Australia. O' Mahony (2014) found that some indication of cooperative activity between host and provider, represent that the transnational education is relatively immature in the research field.

Robertson et al. (2011) argues that the satisfaction scale of international education ought to be measured upon job outcomes rather than searching deeply into job opportunities and life choices after an international educational experience.

Cuthbert et al. (2008) propose that the advantages of TNE to people and the network are " often-asserted, but rarely established " (p. 261).

Robertson et al. (2011) differentiated three sorts of learning settings for Singaporean students: one group went to study in Australia to encourage their relocation; the second studied in Australia and came back to Singapore, and the third studied through an Australian TNE program locally in Singapore. They utilized Pyvis and Chapman's (2007) positional and transformational system to consider both inspirations for and results of these three settings and their examination offers helpful bits of knowledge into the results of TNE study in correlation with studying abroad. In each of the three settings, they found that students' objectives were not solely transformative or positional.

The post- study profession progress was different for TNE students since many had proceeded to further studies and had accomplished transformational and positional results from their studies, unlike the groups of migrant students and those who had returned.

McNamara and Knight (2014) found that TNE graduates are profoundly gifted however, they do not really address the local skills gaps. This relied upon the projects being conveyed, with specialty themes having a positive effect, recommending an emphasis on work explicit aptitudes as opposed to conventional employability abilities. In their examination, TNE students felt that showing techniques on TNE projects depend more on basic reasoning and expressing opinions contrasted with local curricula; consequently, their systematic aptitudes were better created.

Generally speaking, the TNE experience has the intention " to develop an unexpected motivation for transformative learning, and postgraduate study " as indicated by Hoare (2012, p. 276). TNE in this way " provides a potentially rich experience for 'second chance' learners, which can change lives, often in situations where there are few other options " (p. 283).

Thus, the literature proposes that TNE can help create employability or result in positional results in local settings. This will somehow rely upon the perspectives of local employers regarding these

projects; yet, at times they may have advantages both over national projects conveyed by a local college or over students being educated abroad. Being employable in the nation of origin may require aptitudes, information and dispositions that are significant to the neighborhood setting where there is an interchange between hard and delicate abilities prerequisites of employers. There is even the prospect that creating employability abilities through studying abroad could make a few alumni less employable at home (Robertson et al. 2011) and that returning students may think that it's harder to reintegrate into the national job market. However, if TNE is powerful in creating employability abilities, it could assist students with interpreting their freshly discovered learning and aptitudes in the local work market while inferring employability inside the local pattern.

## **2.8 Employability Development**

### **2.8.1 How Can employability Skills Develop through TNE?**

The British Council's experimental study (British Council 2014) reflected that both students and academics noticed that TNE curricula addresses skills gaps mainly at the Masters level. However, the feedback reveals that the skills gained are mainly related to a certain job and lead to a requirement in a specific vocation.

Moreover, students revealed that relational abilities and logical reasoning were increased by their TNE program as well as required in their vocation. This reaction surmises that educators are pursuing a job and considering a TNE program at the same time, so it somehow reveals about the general employability abilities improvement needed for those on full-time programs. The experimental study was later shadowed by thorough work authorized by the British Council and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) (McNamara and Knight 2014). O' Mahony's

(2014) exploration found that transferable aptitudes improvement is seen by TNE staff as one of the main advantages of TNE programs.

Yet, there is constrained proof (rather than belief) that general employability abilities can be created as a result of TNE programs, other than where versatility or work-coordinated learning is integrated. Seaward and transnational projects are advertised as like those offered at the main branch accomplice college in the UK, particularly as far as data, measures and capabilities granted are concerned (British Council 2010). Besides, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) requires projects conveyed abroad to be similar, regarding anticipated results, to projects conveyed in the UK in order to ensure scholarly benchmarks and quality. QAA institutional surveys and nation reviews are required to examine these issues so this absence of proof of employability abilities being created is to some degree confusing.

### **2.8.2 How Can Employability Be Incorporated in TNE Programs?**

Bilsland et al. (2014) depict how work-coordinated learning has been consolidated into the TNE program of an Australian college supplier and a Vietnamese accomplice in an article on inserting employability abilities. They quote Freudenberg et al. (2010), CurzonHobson (2003), and specialists in Vietnam (Duoc and Metzger 2007; Trung and Swierczek 2009) who found that consolidating employability abilities all through the program offers developmental chances to procure and rehearse these aptitudes preceding beginning a temporary job. The twelve-week internship meant to furnish the understudy with a "bridge" between study and full-time job, and to show and sharpen their employability abilities. They distinguish a few main elements in the achievement of the program:

- Integrating applicable skills into the curriculum to qualify university graduates to obtain and practice employability skills that attract the requirements of an employer; such as the



incorporation of theory and practice, problem – solving skills, critical thinking skills, having a collegial spirit, being enthusiastic to learn, managing time effectively, being able to convey messages clearly, having public relation skills, self-confident, and having listening skills.

-Having a workplace preparation program (WPP) where educators will have the chance to search for job vacancies through writing a curriculum vitae, sitting for mock interviews, and some business methods to give the students the chance to apply associated soft skills.

-Holding workshops that target the key employability skills.

-Hosting professional speakers from different companies to add value to the students' internship period.

This approach seems to be innovative and offers good practice for students. However, it is preferable to be a standard practice where it is reported in literature.

### **2.8.3 Is International Experience Vital in TNE?**

It is contended that when students study abroad, a feeling of shared identity and common acknowledgment is created as a selective class of transnational **experts** (Waters 2007) and the growth of " forms of capital" (Bourdieu 1986).

In Ilieva's (2012) study, universal experience was observed to be essential to businesses in a somewhat surprising manner. She found that businesses saw graduates originating from working class families to have had a 'padded' life and considered an encounter of a minimum of one year abroad to be an 'ensure' for development and universal presentation. She recognized extra-curricular characteristics of studying abroad, for example, social associations, as being most significant for creating intercultural capability.

Robertson et al's. (2011) study found that students who studied through TNE did not seem to have expanded their transferable abilities related with spending time in another nation to gain

intercultural aptitudes, individual freedom and more extensive worldwide points of view. This was reverberated by Sin's (2013) study in Malaysia, where the best gains were made by the individuals who spent time studying abroad as a major aspect of the TNE program. Rizvi contends that businesses value abroad education that can offer " exposure to different people and cultures, to different ideas and attitudes, and to different ways of learning and working." (Rizvi 2000, p. 214).

In this manner it appears that TNE programs with an abroad examination component may offer a perfect answer for those looking for positional results from TNE, with intercultural ability created while holding the logic of the local business setting.

The TNE setting is not excluded from the requirement for universal and intercultural features to be fused through an internationalized educational program and related learning results. It does not imply that students will naturally grow such abilities if they study an 'international' program. As an example, in the TNE literature, Fitch and Desai (2012) investigated industry desires for the intercultural skill of public relations graduates in Singapore and Perth, in addition to suggestions for the educational program. A further model originates from Clifford (2010) who considers students' points of view on "interculturality" that incorporates a similar program conveyed in Australia, Malaysia and South Africa and finds a jumble between desires and results.

According to this, international and national foundations, in addition to employability skills are essential to future employment and ought to be part of the curriculum for all educators whether they are studying in their home country, abroad, or in a Transnational university.

#### **2.8.4 What Are the Economic and Social Effects of TNE?**

The transnational education assists to create nearby abilities, decrease capital discharge, brain drain, and burden on local instruction framework. It offers decision for students and opens doors

for rivalry advancement among remote and nearby establishments henceforth quality improvement. As students can get their instruction without leaving their nation of origin or district, it can decrease the brain drain from creating nations. Due to the financial power and rivalry from the transnational training, colleges of many host countries have risen as solid universal rivals in the race for ability chases, research and development. In light of the current movement, financial growth, and geopolitical improvement, learners from the creating countries will seek knowledge particularly between Asia, Europe and North America. Consequently, China presently gets a bigger number of students than it sends to another country. It might be noticed that China sends around 400,000 students abroad for advanced education every year chased after by India with 300,000. In 2007, China's worldwide enrolment was positioned fifth on the planet, simply behind the USA, Britain, France, and Germany [5, 8, 12]. It demonstrates that China is working hard to improve its educational system so it will become a major educational destination by 2020. A comparable methodology has likewise been attempted by Singapore, Malaysia and India. The transnational education gives a chance to working experts to redesign their capabilities while working all day as they have restricted degrees through local instruction frameworks. It permits students to acquire capabilities without leaving the nation of origin and work. The transnational education can have negative effect too. Asian countries seem to be keen to become international by having the international educational framework implemented. Towards the beginning of the transnational instruction, numerous projects were conveyed not at a degree of their source nation. However, many attempts have been taken to improve the quality of the curriculum delivered. Different expert assortments of source and host nations routinely attempt reviews and give accreditations guaranteeing a degree of standard required for a specific program.

## **2.9 Higher Education Sector in the UAE**

In 2007, the UAE published a novel strategy for advanced education - " Educating the next generation of Emiratis " - featuring inclusive changes concentrated on refining the amount and value of education in the UAE. The UAE government is striving towards a sustainable social growth that is evident in the UAE's Federal Budget 2013 where 50.9% is dispensed for foundation and social improvement, and 22% is dispensed for education. UAE has converted the parents' high-income level alongside with the growing number of Emirati and expatriate learners and the government's budget spent on education into a greater request for vigorous and superior education framework. Educational institutions in the private sector will witness further growth as Emirati and expatriate parents tend to favour the private sector which provides an education of higher quality. Moreover, the elevation of 'educational tourism' has expanded the quantity of transnational learners joining higher studies in the UAE.

The UAE is known to be one of the most vital suppliers for education in the area since it attracts students from all over the MENA and beyond. In the private division, over the previous decade, a few global suppliers have opened grounds basically in Dubai and Abu Dhabi. While these foundations bring educational programs, proficient administration and personnel from their parent schools, there is a solid need to confine their methodology with the goal that the requirements of the provincial market are considered. This will guarantee that their learners are set up to meet necessities of neighbourhood employers while lining up with inclinations of different partners, for example, guardians and administrative figures. The UAE public area foundations additionally need to adjust themselves to the necessities of the work market while endeavouring towards structure reliability to emphasize superiority, subsequently effectively supporting the financial and human capital improvement plan of the legislature.

Both public and private division institutions ought to study the developing changes in the UAE market. Accordingly, they should design a curriculum for their students to ensure a long term success.

### **2.10 The Measures Taken in Dubai:**

The higher education setting in Dubai is divided into three separate sections where the first constitutes of institutions that are established by a declaration from the UAE government, the second constitutes of those that are given the quality assurance from the UAE government, CAA, and the third constitutes of the higher education institutions established in the Free Zones in Dubai, those are quality assured by the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA). The three sections exist in Dubai due to the Emirate's need for higher education and the challenges faced in the requirements of the higher education in UAE.

The UAE University, The Higher Colleges of Technology and Zayed University for women are examples of universities that were established by a royal declaration from the UAE government. These universities tend to offer higher education for locals where around 35,000 students join such universities.

Due to the great number of expatriates from Asia, Europe, and Middle East in Dubai, and due to the need for higher education, private and international universities established branches in the UAE to cater the expatriates' needs for education. Accordingly, the UAE government has established the CAA, a federal agency, to assure that the quality of the curriculum is up to the desired level.

To ensure that all learners whether locals or expatriates get various options to attain their higher education, Free Zones were established in Dubai. The Free Zones give foreign universities the chance to open a branch campus, thus giving all learners in the UAE the opportunity to access

international education without traveling. The establishment of the Free Zones not only catered to the needs of students who cannot afford to travel for education, but also to the needs of the country in general by maintaining the capable students by bringing them the desired program to Dubai. Such universities sustain the international standards of the original campus in the home country rather than modifying the curriculum to match with the local accreditation standards. Moreover, the KHDA validates these universities and their curriculum with the home campus. In 2007, KHDA created the University Quality Assurance International Board (UQAIB). This Board consists of international professionals in the field of quality assurance and international higher education provisions. The Board is competent to provide KHDA with exceptional, independent, international input and leadership on the quality of higher education provisions in Free Zones. Thus, making Dubai the center of tertiary education and research. The UQAIB “ensures that the quality of higher education of the Higher Education Providers is in line with both International and the Emirate standards” (KHDA Board Resolution No. 1 2008). The UQAIB strives to ensure that the curriculum and the quality of the programs provided are of the same quality offered in the home campus and the quality assurance in the home campus is satisfactory.

## **Chapter 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

Research is known to be a well- designed framework which follows myriad approaches towards a particular phenomenon using either of the deductive or inductive methods in order to articulate explanations that aim to answer the devised research questions (Sreejesh, Mohapatra, & Anusree, 2014). According to Gall and Borg (1996), a researcher tends to identify a problem, devise clear research questions, analyze the literature, include a detailed methodology, analyze and discuss the findings accordingly.

The methodology is considered to be the core chapter in a research since it reflects the overall efficiency of one's study since it comprises the detailed aspects of the research as a whole (Flick, 2015). Thus, the methods and procedures that are used to answer and understand the research questions in depth are clearly explained and highlighted (Sreejesh, Mohapatra, & Anusree, 2014). This chapter aims to discuss the method implemented throughout the research and to explain the reason behind using the research tools and techniques to collect the needed data. Moreover, it will shed light on the data collection process. The aim of this research is to analyze the students' preference for International colleges and the employability development offered for students joining Transnational Universities. The chapter initiates with a description of the data collection that includes interviews of participants. Additionally, ethics, biases, limitations, data analysis, and implications are addressed.

#### **3.1 Data Collection**

This study is based on a survey and interviews conducted with three types of participants: academics, employers, and students where participants had the chance to express their opinions

freely. Therefore, the research followed the explanatory mixed methodologies of qualitative and quantitative approaches. The explanatory approach aims to target the motive behind the students' choice in registering in a specific university. The purpose of mixed methods in research is to allow the researcher to gain a broad perspective and accurate explanation of the reasons behind the responses provided (Creswell 2009). The Explanatory approach is suitable for the case dealt with in this research since it is observed that students are reluctant when it comes to choosing a university that supports their future employment, and employers are searching for specific skills that universities rarely cover. Thus, the purpose of this study is to find explanations to this phenomenon by trying to reveal the perceptions of students, employers, and academics (Creswell 2009).

The sequential explanatory strategy is a common approach for mixed methodology research designs, it is beneficial in case the results of the survey were not clear and if the survey was not executed by a sufficient number of participants. In this case, further explanation will be needed upon analyzing the responds done through interviews.

Qualitative research is an effort to understand circumstances in their uniqueness as part of a particular context (Patton 1988); therefore, this approach was chosen to allow the researcher to understand and learn whether the TNE programs shed light on employability within its pedagogy, whether the alumni are aware of the curriculum they are studying and its influence on their employability, and whether the HEA needs to interfere in the curriculum provided to support employability within TNE. Data were mostly collected through interviews that were analyzed thoroughly to address the research questions. The data collection is combined and ordered into larger themes Merriam and Tisdell (2014). Before the interviews were commenced, each



participant was informed of the purpose of the study, the details of the ethical issues, and the freedom to participate in the study.

### **3.2 Research Design**

Research includes a myriad of disciplines that create the definition of a research, ways to be used in, and the knowledge it offers to a certain field. However, the direction of the research, as many theorists claim, have some common features that are known as research paradigms. The research paradigms play a major role in helping the researcher to carry out the whole process. While shaping the research design, the researcher ought to know the discipline the research follows (Antwi & Hamza, 2015). Research paradigms include the basis of several practices that refer to certain guidelines to help steer a research, they include positivism, interpretivism and pragmatism; each category covers a certain direction (Antwi & Hamza, 2015). Positivism objectively discusses how the research questions were dealt with. It additionally refers to the quantitative approach that follows the experiential theory and testing (Hunt, 2011). Whereas interpretivism follows the opposite direction and it mainly discusses the subjectivity of the topic, taking into consideration the different human behaviors (Livesey, 2016). However, pragmatism combines both, the subjective and objective points of view which is referred to as a mixed method. The mixed method enables the researcher to construct a clear analysis of the study at hand (Creswell, 2017).

If a researcher decides to adopt either the quantitative or the qualitative methods, the findings will be limited and the researcher will be only catering to one aspect, either empirical or behavioral. However, the mixed method approach broadens the researcher's horizon and aids for a better understanding of the study (Boeije, 2010).

Since the study at hand requires both subjective and objective methods, the researcher has followed the pragmatism paradigm using the mixed approach. The reason behind choosing the mixed approach is to broaden the researcher's perspective in the study (Antwi & Hamza, 2015). As for the quantitative approach the researcher conducted a survey questionnaire that included some open-ended questions for students/alumni, academics, and employers. The qualitative approach also included interviews, where the data of both approaches has been collected and studied simultaneously.

The implementation of the convergent mixed method approach is another vital aspect as it refers to collecting the results of the quantitative and qualitative data in a parallel manner, analysis, and comparison; thus, identifying the common points of view of the different participants (Feilzer, 2010). The convergent mixed approach has been recommended by several researches and theorists since it helps in gathering the needed knowledge about the results of the study and gives insightful answers to the research questions (Binkhorst et al, 2015).

An interview is an effective tool to gather the required data since it involves all human senses and allows the researcher to get precise answers, yet it has some disadvantages that might include the interviewer bias and the difficulty to set multiple interviews, unlike the survey (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2007). The data obtained through conducting interviews seem to be genuine and clear (Miles & Huberman 1984). The interviews conducted in this study follow a standardized open – ended format where questions are prearranged and responses were collected later, compared and analyzed. Thus, decreasing the possibility of the interviewer bias, however, the lack of flexibility during an interview remains to be a disadvantage. The questions asked to the interviewees intended to be simple and targeted, moreover, some questions were open-ended. The purpose of

having open -ended questions was to give the participants a chance of discussing their own perspectives (Dawson 2009).

The participants in the study at hand are students and alumni from various universities, academics who teach in different universities in Lebanon and UAE, and employers in different sectors. All the participants were fluent in English, thus translating the responses was not needed. Interviews were conducted with students and alumni in particular to study their choice behind joining a TNE university and the employability skills they have developed. Academics were chosen to have their point of view examined in the curriculum delivered in Transnational and local universities, the mindset of transnational and local students, the benefits that transnational students seek, and the impact of cross-cultural student enrollment. Whereas the employers were chosen to observe the employment strategies they abide by while choosing a candidate.

It is worth mentioning that the studies of the participants' perspectives were more valid in the interviewing process since they are a primary source to be used for further and deeper investigations (Knussen 2006).

Due to the few numbers of participants who responded through surveys, numbers and statistics cannot express the experiences of students, and the points of view of both the academics and employers. Therefore, the qualitative approach was dominant in this research. Although there are several studies using both methods, such as Al-Fattal (2010); McCune, Hounsell, Christie, Cree & Tett (2010); James, Baldwin and McInnis (1999); and Oktay (2006). However, earlier researchers did not use the qualitative method, such as Chapman (1982) and Foskett and Hesketh (1997).

### **3.3 Data Collection Process**

The data collection was based upon surveys and interviews. The researcher had used the survey monkey as a method to reach participants. The survey included multiple choice questions and some open-ended questions to enable the researcher to form a broad view to be able to answer the research questions. However, due to the summer break, and since most of the students, employers, and academics were out of reach, a few number of participants replied. Therefore, the researcher decided to interview selected participants. Some participants were interviewed via email and others were interviewed face to face. Accordingly, 10 students, academics, and employers were successfully interviewed.

### **3.4 Data Analysis Procedure**

After conducting the interviews (Appendix B), the researcher used the data collected to transcribe by avoiding biasedness. It is worth mentioning that interviewing the participants enriched the researcher's knowledge about transnational education and employability development. The data was analyzed to divide the gathered information into categories (Jacob, 1987). Thus, the method applied was the usage of coding and transcribing. While transcribing, unnecessary information was omitted. The researcher read the answers of the participants several times to make sure that all answers were related to their perspectives as students studying in TNE universities, academics delivering a curriculum that sheds light on the employability, and employers who interview candidates according to several skills that are not covered in college. Color codes were used for the data gathered by analyzing the participants' points of view. Afterwards, the data was categorized into minor and major groups and then compared for further analysis (Merriam, s. (2009). By categorizing the responses, the researcher was able to analyze the data and relate it to

the research questions. Additionally, the respondents were anonymized by using their initials instead of mentioning their full names in response to ethical considerations.

### **3.5 Ethical Considerations**

While conducting a research, a researcher is constantly advised to consider the ethics since it is a vital and critical aspect. Ethics represent moral values and standards that a researcher is expected to abide by throughout the research process. While conducting the research at hand, the researcher has kept all the ethical considerations in mind. The consent of all participants was taken before the interviewing process, and all interviewees were informed about the objective of the interview; thus, they were aware of the research context. Moreover, they were ensured via email that the confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained during the data collection and analysis process. The responds collected were transcribed in the same way they were sent in order to avoid biasness. The same process has been followed while sending the survey where the objective and ethical considerations were mentioned at the beginning. Accordingly, the researcher has ensured that all ethical implications were considered in the study at hand.

### **3.6 Biasedness**

A researcher ought to keep biases in check by reporting on personal principles, standards, and prejudices. However, it is important to acknowledge our biases giving the reader the chance to understand our positions, and then to suspend those biases (Creswell, & Miller, 2000). Thus, while transcribing the responds of the participants, the researcher avoided building assumptions on what the interviewees might mean to say since this might lead to misconceptions.

### **3.7 Validity and reliability**

The reliability of the study depends on the “extent to which a test or procedures produces similar results under constant conditions on all occasions” (Bell 2005, P 117). The survey questions were

constructed according to the employability of TNE students, the curriculum they study, and the skills the employers seek. The survey questions were in English, since all the participants were fluent English speakers, as explained earlier. The survey included a cover letter where the objective of the study was explained. It also included a thank you note for all participants.

### **3.8 Limitations**

The dissertation at hand had a major limitation. Only 10 participants responded to the survey questionnaire. The researcher couldn't reach a number of students, academics, or employers since most of them were having their summer vacation and participants don't usually like to fill in surveys. As a result, the researcher had to target some participants to be able to conduct an interview with. Another limitation was trying to find the time to meet with my interviewees or to constantly remind them to answer the questions sent via email.

### **3.9 Summary**

This chapter mainly mentions the details of the methodological tools being used while conducting this research about transnational education and employability development; the researcher targeted some participants that are classified as students, employers, and academics. The reason behind choosing those participants was to get a broad knowledge about the reason behind the students' choice to join a TNE university, whether their employability skills are being developed in the university, or if the academics are aware of the curriculum delivered, or the employability skills an employer seeks while interviewing a candidate for a certain vacancy. The researcher has followed a mixed method approach that is followed by the pragmatism paradigm. Although a few number of participants answered the survey (Appendix A), the responds were read, analyzed and compared to the interviews.

## **Chapter 4**

### ***RESULTS, DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS***

#### **4.1 Students' Perspective**

For stakeholders in both worlds, the shift from the globe of education, especially higher education, to that of job is of tremendous importance. For graduating students, it provides a chance to embark on a profession of their own choice and passion that they ensure it will provide them with financial security and economic safety for the rest of their lives. Employers expect these graduates to be job ready and owners of collective skills required for the world of work. Graduates should have both hard and soft skills to be able to cope with the work field challenges, hard skills such as computer skills and soft skills such as being a multilingual employee. In addition, the trainings provided should be specific and related to the demands of the job. Educational institutions serve as a testing tool of how well they have prepared their students for the transition to the workplace and on how well they have achieved one of their prime objectives rests in their reputation as producers of human capital, and indeed, the education system as well.

To a crucial extent, any measure of achievement is based on significant subjectivity. Therefore, such measurements should be partially based on the perceptions of the three stakeholders mentioned above. Employers' opinions and views of the "employability" of graduates, shaped by the understanding of what job graduates need to apply for, are obviously a part of the products' quality. After all, they are the consumers of the graduates' services and should be aware of their understanding of the graduates' employability and the product they produce. A graduate's preparedness for the workplace is a crucial part in developing better results. Therefore, the

confidence and performance of graduates and students are highly influenced by their perceptions of their readiness to face the world of work.

The importance of higher education is growing year by year and is playing a crucial role in the economic and social growth. It is also a tool to provide financial security to individuals. Across the world, students are looking for an international higher education without having to travel to the country awarding the qualification. Transnational education (TNE) crosses the international borders and provides the opportunity for these students to have an international higher education without the need of traveling to the awarding country. Moreover, it has shown that studying in a TNE university develops more skills needed in the workplace.

To know more about the reasons behind students choosing to study in a TNE university, the skills it develops and its effect on employability, an interview was held with 30 students based on the following questions:

1. What is the reason behind studying in a TNE university?
2. As a TNE student, what skills have you developed throughout your journey?
3. Is the TNE an “entry ticket” for employability? Why?

Interviews conducted with TNE students and graduates from various countries revealed that most of the students were satisfied with their courses. Generally, students had selected the courses for skills development and career advancement. Skills such as teamwork, research skills, time management skills and critical thinking appeared to be enhanced by TNE universities. Moreover, the interview found out that employers favor TNE graduates for employability and think that they are more prepared to the world of work.

As students were asked about their motive behind joining a TNE university, almost all of the 30 interviewed students stated that the universities’ reputation is an important reason behind



choosing it. Students agree that positive feedback and reviews play an effective role in persuading them to choose a TNE university.

Mr. A.Q stated, “There are many reasons behind studying in a TNE. The reason was its reputation in the region. It was a very good opportunity for me to gain knowledge which people travel to receive. This reputation and high standard learning material provide an advantage for the student in the work force, and a priority in a sense. All these reasons have driven me to choose to study in TNE.”

Whereas Mrs. C.W revealed, “The reason behind studying in a TNE University is due to the recommendations and reputation of the University, I have heard a very good feedback about the University in which it made it interesting for me to join; I became curious to determine and experience the TNE.”

Similarly, Mrs. K.R believed, “Reputation is the most important factor that made me choose a TNE university.”

Another common reason behind joining a TNE university is the international education it provides. 25 out of 30 students mentioned that the quality of international education was an important factor to drive them to choose a TNE university. Through international education, students are given the chance to think through a global perspective and connect with different societies.

Mr. X.T declared that he had joined a university “since it offers international education that I ensure will give me better academic experience and knowledge.”

Mrs. H.U thinks, “experiencing international education will definitely give me better knowledge, that’s why I chose a TNE university to study in.”

Before choosing a university, students investigate the skills needed in the workplace. According to the students' interview, 27 students said that TNE universities offer better work opportunities because it prepares them better to the transition from the world of education to the world of work. Mrs. J.K stated that "I wanted a professional qualification that will give me the privilege in the workplace."

Moreover, studying in a multicultural university helps in developing social skills and in giving students the chance to learn about different cultures and societies. 22 of the interviewed students mentioned that the multicultural environment found in TNE universities encouraged them to continue their education through it.

Mr. O.P. reflects that "TNE university offers diverse structures for education."

Additionally, Mr. F.D believes, "studying in a multicultural university allows me to interact with people from different cultures and backgrounds."

In the current era of endless opportunities and increasing competition, it is extremely important to work on one's own personality. 17 of the interviewed students mentioned that TNE universities developed their personalities and helped them to gain more social skills that assisted them in communicating and interacting with employers later on.

Mr. M.H trusts that "TNE universities hold high amount of diverse background students which allows us to engage and learn how to socialize more with different people from different countries."

Mr. D.K believes, "studying in a TNE university will let me face many challenges which will build my personality to make me more confident and ready to face challenges at the workplace."

University fees can also be a great obstacle that students face. Working and studying at the same time can be of a great help for students to pay their fees and continue their education. Conducting

the interview, 5 students mentioned that they chose TNE universities because it offers manageable timings and part time studying plan which helped them to work and study at the same time.

Accordingly, Mrs. T.D trusts that joining a TNE university “will help me manage my time to work and study at the same time.”

Mr. Z.G. mentioned, “I had to work to pay my fees, a TNE university will help me by providing manageable timings.”

Choosing a university is one of the most challenging decisions students pass through, especially if they plan to travel abroad. TNE universities made it much easier for students to study without the need of traveling abroad. The good reputation, the international education, the multicultural environment and the flexible timings are all reasons that promote students to choose a TNE university to study in.

The process of building new skills is a lifelong process; it gives individuals the ability to find new ways of thinking and solving problems. In the interview held, 30 students were asked about the skills they developed during their educational process in TNE universities. Thus, 28 out of 30 students mentioned that they have developed teamwork and leadership skills significantly through their journey. They emphasized the idea of having the opportunity to work in a multicultural environment and learn how to respect one’s opinions.

Mr. S.M thinks that “in addition to the academic side which was well improved through the journey at the university, there were several skills developed as well; one of which is being an important team player in a basketball team.”

Mrs. H.V stated, “I had the chance to work in a team with students from different backgrounds. This helped me to have better teamwork and leadership skills and to learn how to listen to everyone’s opinion.”

Mr. M.R similarly revealed, “Before the journey I have started in a TNE university, I had a problem in being a member of a team and working with different people. However, I am currently a better team member and I am able to understand other students’ opinions.”

Moreover, research skills are one of the most essential skills students must acquire throughout their journey. Conducting the interview, students reported that they have developed advanced research skills in their TNE universities. 23 out of 30 students of different majors mentioned that their research skills were greatly improved throughout their study in their TNE University.

Mr. N.L reflects by saying, “I am a business student and research is a main component in my major. I had very basic research skills after high school graduation; however, I developed higher skills during my study years in a TNE university.”

Mrs. R.H similarly revealed, “In medicine, advanced research skills are a must. Choosing a TNE University helped me in developing the level of research skills needed.”

Mrs. ZF also stated, “learning is all about research. In my field, political sciences, research is an essential skill to be acquired. My university gave me professional trainings and lectures to improve this skill.”

Students also reported that they have evolved effective “time management” skills which they considered as the most important skill acquired. Time management has given the students the opportunity to participate in extra-curricular activities; it improved their academic achievement and made their university life experience more manageable and beneficial.

Mrs. D.S stated, “During my first year, I was overwhelmed by the courses and assignments. I didn’t have the time to do anything but study; I wasn’t able to participate in the students’ council or the basketball team. I decided to put a daily schedule and write down my short-term goals.

After a short period of time, I was able to join the basketball team and I had time to do the things I love.”

Mr. H.B. also stated, “In high school, I was an A+ student; I was able to manage all my subjects and assignments. However, after enrolling in the TNE University, I was not able to manage my time and couldn’t finish my assignments on time. I consulted my advisor and her advice was life changing. She told me that “a goal without a plan is just a wish”. I understood that planning was the key that will aid me in managing my time and increase my grades. In no time, I had a great improvement in my grades and I even had time to pursue a part-time job”.

Moreover, Mrs. L.S pointed out that “time management is of a great importance to your personal life and career success. It teaches you how to get the best of it and enjoy the task you’re doing. Even though a TNE university puts in a lot of pressure on the students, I can say that it is a positive pressure. It teaches you how to work under pressure and manage your time effectively.”

As mentioned by the interviewed students, it is clearly shown that TNE universities have played a significant role in training them how to manage their time effectively and organize their work. Planning and setting clear goals were the strategies that the students used to help them have better time management skills.

Students have also revealed that studying in a TNE University gave them a wider approach to progress their career either in their sector or a different one. The majority of TNE students interviewed had achieved positive employment and career experiences due to the university they have studied in.

As Mr. A.D stated, “TNE universities play an important role in employability. Employers who care about reputation will choose to hire graduates who graduated from a TNE. Furthermore,

employers who care about the amount and quality of knowledge will also give TNE students a priority. This gives a TNE student a higher chance to be hired more than other students.”

Mrs. Z.D also believes “that TNE universities hold the upper hand in educational quality because of the knowledge developed when through two if not more borders and was made sure to hold high quality, also TNE universities hold high amount of diverse background students which allows us to engage and learn how to socialize more with different people from different countries.”

Mr. K.L similarly salutes TNE universities since “It gave me confidence facing the new life and journey after graduating. This helped me to be in a better place and position, as I am working now in one of the most reputable auditing companies.”

Employment is a relationship between two parties, the employer and the employee. Both of them seek the best for the job and the workplace environment. The employee ought to have the essential skills required for the workplace to have a better opportunity to apply and get the job required. As reported by TNE students, TNE universities play a fundamental role in acting as an entry ticket for employability of students. The interviews conducted suggest that TNE can help develop employability and can result in significant outcomes in the domestic settings.

#### **4.2 Employers’ Perspective**

Technology and globalization have affected the work market. Employees are nowadays in a constant race to reach the top. Therefore, employers are the best to assess the employees based on their performance and skills they have learned or acquired. However, some employers have high expectations from universities, they expect universities to train students to be ready for the job sought, neglecting the skills that an employer needs to acquire by his/her self-development process.

Still, higher education plays a vital role in sustaining a learning society Dearing (1997) since it aims to enable learners to develop their skills in order to grow intellectually and be ready for the work life to be able to effectively contribute to the society that includes civilized, democratic and inclusive citizens. Higher education aims to allow learners to lead a meaningful life while contributing to the society through their workplace. UNESCO (1960) referred to education as ‘a means to empower children and adults alike to become active participants in the transformation of their societies. Learning should also focus on the values, attitudes and behaviors which enable individuals to learn to live together in a world characterized by diversity and pluralism’.

Wilton (2012: 2) referred to employability as ‘typically conceptualized as individual ‘human capital’ in the form of a list of generic qualities that recruiters expect or desire in applicants, whether for placements or graduate roles’. The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills of United Kingdom (2009) reported that communication, inspiration, individuality, analysis, confidence and problem solving are vital skills in the realm of employability. Other employers categorized skills as ‘soft’ and ‘hard’. For Andrews and Higson (2008: 413), soft skills include competence, consistency, the ability to deal with uncertainty, to critically solve problems, and to communicate efficiently. However, Oliver (2011: 106) refers to hard skills as employability indicators and they include: knowledge, writing, speaking, thinking, using data effectively, Communication and Technology (ICT), collaboration, self-development, intercultural understanding, problem-solving, values and ethics, community engagement, and social contexts. However, Hinchcliffe and Jolly (2009: 1) argue that the graduate’s capability to dig into the realm of employability depends on one’s personal ethics and social values, the ability to cooperate with a diversity of people in different situations, and apply what was studied in the university.

An employer's perception of employability depends on the company an employee applies to. For instance, a company that deals with technology will definitely be employing candidates with hard skills, more precisely ICT knowledge, and a company that deals with service industry will employ candidates with soft skills.

Thus, an interview was conducted with 10 employers, from different companies and fields, since they are perceived to be the link between the educational system and the employees. The employers revealed knowledge of higher education and precisely, Transnational Education. The employers were asked to answer the following questions (Appendix B):

1. Is there difference between the employees who have graduated from a local university and those who have graduated from a transnational university? Is there any difference in the offer taken?
2. Does the employability depend on the degree or experience? Explain.
3. What skills an employee masters that attract you the most during an interview?
4. Do you recommend any international – oriented experiences, skills, and qualifications? Explain.

The researcher asked the first question to get a glimpse of the interviewees' knowledge about transnational education. The answers provided reflected knowledge of the terms used by the interviewer, since they were able to state the difference between the students who graduated from local universities and those who graduated from a transnational university. All the responses were nearly the same, since the employers focus on the skills the employee has or acquired from the higher education more than they focus on the type of the university the candidate had graduated from.



Mr. B.M thinks that “there is no difference between an employee who graduated from a transnational university and another graduated from a local university. In terms of employment conditions and offers both receive the same offer and benefits as long as the employee provides an equivalency for his degree which shows that the study program is approved and recognized by the Ministry of Higher Education.”

Whereas Mr. M.R. claims that “what needs to be considered first is whether the candidate is a freshly graduate or an experienced one, every employer will prefer a candidate with experience in the local market despite of the university the candidate has graduated from, so to make the comparison fair, we should consider comparing two fresh graduates or two experienced candidates. The TNE candidates will be stronger in their soft skills, like language, personality, communication and confidence while the local graduates will be prepared to work hard, committed and more familiar with the local conditions and business environments. Employers usually give more credits to the candidate with TNE, yet the local candidate is usually more stable in the country.”

While Mrs. M.D argues, “There are differences of course, some that are in favor of local students and others for the ones from transnational universities. The main difference is of course with context, ideally students from universities locally should come with some local context of how businesses run in the UAE which will be beneficial for employers who will spend less time acclimating these students to work environments in the UAE. However, there is a merit in students studying in transnational university because of the curriculum diversity and richness that is often taught in these universities. The education level is usually higher; there is more regard paid to ethics and standards at an international level, and students usually observe more care in applying them in companies they join. As an employer I am always keen on hiring the best fit for the

position, irrespective of the education background, but these elements usually help in making the decision, especially if the position requires either local knowledge, or a higher linguistic ability or consumer service.”

Mr. M.Y thinks, “The university doesn’t really make a difference in my field. Employees should be aware of the responsibilities required for the position they are applying for. All candidates sit for an IQ test before being asked for the interview; the IQ test includes many questions that ease the way for me through the interview if the candidates pass it. However, transnational students are more recommended if they are willing to work in my sister company abroad, since they will be more familiar with communication skills and aware of the diversity. As for the offer, it depends on the experience not on the name of the university the candidate graduated from.”

One of the interviewees pointed out that graduates from transnational universities were perceived to have good communication skills and knowledge. They were also proficient in the English language more than those who graduated from local universities. Moreover, they were prepared to write a curriculum vitae and go through the interviewing process. They also revealed confidence and open-mindedness in accepting constructive criticism. “I can easily communicate with graduates from transnational universities. They show good communication skills and high level of confidence since they manage to think critically and outside of the box.”

Based on the interviews conducted concerning the first question, most participants think that it does not matter where the candidate pursued his/her degree from, what matters is that whether the employee is fit to have the job he/she is seeking. However, some employers think that a transnational degree is more important than a local one if the job requires traveling and international connections.

The researcher asked the participants whether employability depends on experience or degree to investigate about the relevance between employability and the choice of university and whether the latter plays any role in allowing the graduates to find a job. The researcher also aimed at highlighting the priorities for employment from the employer's perspective. Accordingly, the researcher would be able to link the answers of the participants to the findings about whether a degree from a transnational university would make any difference in the life of the student in terms of his/her employment.

Mr. B.E believes, "Sometimes some of the brightest hires we have had were the ones without the necessary experience, but with the needed drive. I guess when pressed, I would take the drive over the experience. Experience comes with prejudice and ego, and sometimes unwillingness to learn. However, this is from experience working in PR, having said that, experience comes with its merits, which is usually Press contacts and relationships with community leaders and that is always preferable."

Mrs. L.H., a vice principal in one of the schools in Dubai, thinks, "for instruction and leadership roles, there has to be a degree (minimum of a bachelor degree) since this condition is linked with the education authorities' requirements (KHDA, Ministry of education) and each degree has to have an equivalency. But again, let me emphasize that also experience is a condition for employability. The experience condition could be eased sometimes and the required number of years of experience could be decreased."

Mr. H.A assures that both experience and degree are important when it comes to employability "both, yet the employer emphasizes more towards hiring a candidate with related experience rather than degree, as the experienced candidate will be more realistic and logical in studying any business case referring to his previous experiences."

According to the responds of the second question gathered from the participants, most employers believed that both experience and degree are mandatory for an employer. However, the drive to learn is the most important aspect a candidate is required to reveal.

The researcher then asked the interviewees about the skills that attract them, as employers, while conducting an interview. This question was asked to get a glimpse on the required skills for an employee to be hired.

Mrs. M.D thinks, “Respect, humility and confidence are what I look for during an interview. There are many interviews with experienced candidates that don't end well because of the lack of balance between humility and confidence, it is a fine line between being confident and experienced, and having an egoistic personality.”

Whereas Mrs. L.H believes, “Communication skills attracts me the most. What I mean by communication skills is the ability of the candidate to deliver his points throughout the discussion smoothly and be able to comprehend the dialogue well and give relevant responses.

Creative thinking is another yet very important skill of attraction. “Some candidates would just impress you with the way they try to elude answering a question; even if the question is not answered as it should be, yet this creativity would be a blessing to the workplace.”

Mr. M.R, as most other participants, believes that the major skills required from an employer are:

- a. Language and Communication Skills
- b. Personality and Confidence
- c. Management and Leadership Skills
- d. Time Management

Gathering the responds of the third question, the researcher found that most employers are attracted by the candidate’s English proficiency, communication skills, and the ability to think

critically outside of the box. Having the mentioned skills with the required knowledge and passion to work enables any employee to excel in the field he/she is applying for.

The researcher asked the employers whether they recommend any international experience, skill, or qualification from the candidates. This question was asked to understand the importance and effects of such qualifications.

Mr. B.E. stated, “business ethics is an art that needs to be learnt and is usually quite good in international education. Writing also is a big one that I wish is implemented more in the UAE. Graduates in the UAE lack the skills of English or Arabic writing, both in business or creative.”

Mrs. L.H. pointed out, “As a leader in an American curriculum school I would definitely recommend using the expertise of international candidates. What an international candidate can bring along is a good contribution to the multicultural environment schools have nowadays. The combination of local and international experiences would help create a more diverse learning community with many more experiences to share between the members of this community.”

Whereas Mr. M.A believes that “Cross-Cultural communication skills and the ability to work with people from different countries or backgrounds and understanding how to communicate with people from different cultures are indispensable skills. Moreover, networking and collaboration, developing a strong network of connections outside of your home country are essential, also the ability to collaborate and work together for a common purpose is fundamental in the business world.”

Almost all of the participants prefer candidates with international skills, experience, and qualifications, since they will be able to work in an environment that includes a diversity of employers. Additionally, they will be able to communicate with people of different cultures in case they are working in a company that requires traveling to different countries.

According to the interview conducted with employers, transnational education provides students with a global perspective which is useful in the work life. Transnational students seem to be more practical and have good language skills. Such graduates have gained skills that enable them to communicate and be practical. Since transnational education attracts a diversity of students, graduates build the ability to communicate with people from different cultures. Employers, in general, seem to be aware of the strengths and weaknesses of candidates who graduated from transnational universities, however, they assured that the candidates are not segregated according to the university they have graduated from, be it local, international, or transnational. What the employer cares about is the employees' ability to fit in the position he/she is applying for. Nevertheless, some employers prefer transnational candidates since they have a mixture of foreign education in a local context.

### **4.3 Academics' Perspective**

Freudenberg et al. (2010), Curzon Hobson (2003), and researchers in Vietnam (Duoc and Metzger 2007; Trung and Swierczek 2009) argue that embedding employability skills in the TNE program offers several opportunities for students to acquire and practice through internship programs. Internship and study aim to enhance the students' employability skills and lead to the success of the program. Moreover, academics believe that employability skills should be encouraged through "subject-related material and through the use of authentic contexts, collaborative project work, 'scaffolding' to encourage learning beyond current capacity and reflection" (UKCES 2008, p. 62). However, it is noted that the curriculum taught in higher education does not fulfill the employability-related teaching.

Students who move to study in an international educational hub, gain several forms of capital such as: mobility capital, human capital, social capital, cultural capital and economic capital. (King et al. 2010, p. 32). Consequently, academics believe that TNE study offers a solution for students who want to seek international education yet cannot travel abroad.

Since academics are in the field with future employees, and they deliver the curriculum to the students, they are perceived to be the link between the students and the future employers. Academics seem to be well aware of the difficulties TNE students first face to get used to the diversity and adapt to the learning environment. However, they believe that transnational education is a chance given to students who wish to study an international curriculum but cannot travel due to several abstracts. Moreover, academics trust that internationalization of the curriculum delivered through TNE, gives the chance for students to learn about the job opportunities and requirements in different cultures. Therefore, an interview was conducted with 5 academics from different universities to share their perspective concerning transnational education and employability development. The academics were asked the following questions (Appendix B):

1. Is there any difference between the curriculum delivered in transnational universities and local universities?
2. Are there any mindset differences between transnational and local students?
3. What are the benefits that transnational students seek?
4. What is the impact of cross – cultural student enrollment?

The students' experience that occurs throughout the educational process is usually defined by curriculum. Curriculum refers to planned teaching or to the students' view when it comes to the educators' goals. The researcher asked experienced academics the difference between the

curriculum delivered in transnational universities and local universities in order to examine the significance of the curriculum taught in transnational universities. Moreover, this question sheds light on the academic benefits students pursue after joining a transnational university.

Dr. R.W thinks that “The curriculum delivered in transnational universities is in general a transposition of the curriculum adopted by the local university and has been provided over several generations. It is however adapted to take into consideration the specificities of the country where it is “transposed” from and has to be delivered to students belonging to different countries and cultures. Such transposition requires then the internationalization of the curriculum.”

Whereas Dr. A.Z stated that “In general, most universities around the globe offer the same curriculum for most majors. What might be different is that Transnational Universities offer an International flavor for each major that will benefit students on an International level. Local Universities apply local laws and regulations and local experiences to their majors.”

Mr.A.A believes that “In terms of curriculum, Transnational Education represented by off shore campuses or distance learning offer almost the same courses and modules but maybe with some additional courses targeting transferable skills to increase the employability of their students and graduates.”

Mr. M.S trusts that “There are many differences between the curriculum delivered in Transnational Universities and that delivered in local ones, since some books have a note on the cover mentioning that the content is “Not Allowed to be Taught and Sold in USA”; those differences in curricula are related to cultural factors, ethical issues, and political matters that forces transnational universities to follow regulations set by the ministry of education in the hosting country.”



Most academics reflect that the transnational curriculum is an updated version of the local one, however it takes into consideration the globalization of the curriculum to suit the awarding country. Other academics suggest that both curriculums offer similar content and majors; however, TNE universities offer “international education” which leads to better academic and social achievement, consequently it offers more employability opportunities.

When comparing educational institutions such as universities, the researcher should take into consideration the academic perspective and the cognitive perspective of the students. The environment a student studies in and the type of education he/she is exposed to, greatly influence the mindset development. The second question was posed to academics who are experienced in this field to understand the difference between the mindset of transnational and local students.

Dr. N.H explained that “Transnational students are usually students who are open to several nationalities and cultures. They have a wider vision of things and their approach regarding work opportunities is more global and diversified compared to local students.”

Dr. R.W believes that “Transnational students come from different backgrounds and broader range of cultures. That may imply the presence of different mindsets between transnational and local students. That being said, it does not mean that locals may not know about other cultures especially with the existence of social media which made the world a smaller place and brought all kinds of people together.”

Mr. A.W stated that “In terms of mindsets, I believe that there is a difference, as transnational education targets potential students in different countries with all their different cultural backgrounds; that is definitely reflected on the mission and vision of these transnational institutions.

Mrs. A.S believes that there are differences in the mindset of transnational and local students, especially when it comes to transnational students in UAE, thus he stated that “local students in UAE have the attitude that they can find job easier as the public sector is open for them and they just need the degree. Transnational students take longer time in choosing university as they investigate quality of education, university reputation and accreditation, and costs; they are open to change and ready to work abroad. UAE and during last years have succeeded to become a hub of education in the region; this has increased the percentage of transnational students and influence on local students has started.”

According to my interviewees, the mindset of transnational students differs from the local students due to the backgrounds they come from. Local students are aware of the diversity through social media and travel, yet they have not undergone daily interactions with students where they are to work together in groups and study in the same environment. Consequently, transnational students are more friendly socially open.

The transnational education is growing rapidly since it provides internationally recognized education without the need of traveling abroad. Students who seek internationally recognized education will refer to transnational universities either by traveling abroad or in the branch campus. Interviewed academics highlighted the benefits that most students seek from transnational universities.

Dr. R.W. stated that transnational students seek myriad benefits upon joining a transnational university, some of which are: “ Study a curriculum that is proven to be good as it has been provided for several years and for several generations, students benefit from the reputation of the parent university. They also benefit from a wider and globalized knowledge which will provide them with the flexibility to work in different markets; moreover, they benefit from the contact

with students of different countries and cultures which will facilitate their interaction with different nationalities in the marketplace.”

Whereas Dr. A.Z. believes that “each student may have different goals in life. Those goals will lead students to pursue different benefits when studying in Transnational universities. Those benefits could be the exposure to other cultures, exposure to broader markets, and benefits of strong transnational universities that have excellent majors.”

Similarly, Mr. A.M. stated that “transnational students seek more skills to increase their employability rates; they also seek more professional international education level with lower cost in university international campuses. Moreover, they benefit from university names while studying in their home country.”

Mr. M. M argued that transnational students have several financial and academic benefits such as “accredited degree from reputable university in their home country, quality education allowing them to enter labor market easily, accommodation, suitable prices, and international recognition for their education allowing them to enter global labor markets.”

Based on the responds gathered from the participants, it is revealed that transnational students benefit from transnational universities. The benefits sought are educational, since students get the chance to study an international curriculum without having to travel abroad, thus he/she gains financial benefits. Moreover, TNE students will have more job opportunities in different countries due to the diverse environment they have studied in that allows them to be globally recognized. Cross-cultural students’ enrollment plays a vital role in the student life on university campus, in relationships, as well as academics. Besides, talking about transnational education in specific requires reference to students from different cultures studying in one institution and taking the

same curriculum. The researcher believes that this is a very vital topic that requires clarification from the academic's side. The researcher aimed at investigating how cross-cultural students affect the quality of a certain university.

Dr. A. Z stated that cross-cultural enrollment “provides an opportunity for a cross-cultural interaction between the students allowing them to explore several cultures and be opened to different opinions. Additionally, it requires the enhancement of the program to meet the expectations of the students, leading the local curriculum to be updated and include an international perspective.”

Dr. R.W. believes that “students coming from multiple backgrounds and cultures share their own experience with each other. This creates a unique way of studying giving a better platform for brainstorming sessions. It also offers each student an opportunity to bring his/her knowledge that he/she has learned to wider range of audience.”

Whereas Mr. A.A thinks that “cross -cultural students enrich higher education learning experience especially in skills related to organizational behavior and community culture; this helps when graduates get jobs in international organizations and in general it helps in acquiring transferable skills highly needed in the job market.”

Additionally, Mr. M.M. believes that cross-cultural enrollment “will increase diversity among students in transnational universities and will put pressure on those universities to create a university culture that protects everyone, encourage mutual respect among students, and encourage communication among those diversities.”

The responds participants provided upon the impact of the cross-cultural enrollment in transnational universities revealed that the benefits do not only target foreign students, but also

local ones. Such universities provide interaction among students from different cultures allowing them to change their perspectives and be open to different opinions. Moreover, the academics teaching students from different cultures find it interesting to lead activities that enhance the curriculum. Additionally, students gain several soft and hard skills that help them while seeking job opportunities.

The interviews conducted with students, employers and academics gave the researcher a broad view about Transnational Education and employability development. Each category interviewed added more value to the paper at hand. If the curriculum delivered in the branch campus properly aligns with that of the main campus, students will benefit and will develop their employability skills. Moreover, academics ought to shed more light on the skills being taught in universities, skills that attract the employers and the market that is constantly flourishing.

## Chapter 5

### *CONCLUSION*

The dissertation at hand investigated the importance of Transnational Education and its impact on employability development. The researcher used a mixed approach methodology through which a survey and an interview were conducted with the participants based on their area of expertise. Besides, the researcher referred to literature to gain a full perspective of research done on the same topic. The dissertation findings provided insight to employers about the students' needs in their fields of study and opened the way for more research in the future about the same topic.

Employment is considered one of the major factors that students look after upon joining a university. Conducting several studies, James (2000) argues that students believe that there is a major link between education and employment. Paulsen (1990) clearly mentions that the students' employment predictions improve significantly with the qualifications they receive through higher education institutions. However, this is not only the case in terms of job opportunities; students also believe that their future will flourish (Al-Fattal 2010). Numerous studies on employment aspects considered the chances students get to be employed after graduating from certain universities; therefore, students are more likely to pursue their higher education in and graduate from those universities (Tatar & Oktay 2006). Employers seek to hire graduates that incorporate the needed skills and knowledge; consequently, students consider the employment factor as a vital aspect since it increases their chances to find the required job (Wajeesh & Micceri 1997). However, (James 1999; Tatar 2006; Kallio 1995) argues that although the employment factor is well-thought-out important, it is not usually considered a priority to students.

Transnational education includes “all types of higher education study programs, sets of study courses, or educational services in which the learners are located in a country different from the one where the awarding institution is based” (Council of Europe, 2002). When universities widen their scope across the borders in search of new markets, transnational education draws an increasing interest. Additionally, it encourages universities to teach students in their own countries, which will potentially open up vast and new markets. The transnational education trend is generally regarded as the most advanced stage of university internationalization. Universities internationalize their education system and teaching activities by enrolling foreign students in their home campuses. They provide students with the curriculum, teaching and learning, and assessment practices that go in line with their internationalized purposes.

Conducting this dissertation, the researcher held interviews (Appendix B) with students studying or graduating from TNE universities, academics teaching in TNE universities, and experienced employers, aiming at recording the perspectives of a variety of personnel based on their experience in the field of the topic in hand. The interviews served as a tool to understand transnational education from three different viewpoints. The primary interview held with students helped in looking at the reasons behind choosing TNE universities, the skills developed, and the effect of TNE universities on the students’ employability. Nowadays, students are looking for international education without having to travel to the country awarding the qualification. TNE universities lend them this opportunity, and they also provide international education and the professional skills needed for the world of work. The researcher interviewed academics to gather an overview about the curriculum as well as teaching and learning being delivered in transnational universities. Moreover, the academics are in the field with students, and they are consequently able to provide a snapshot of the students’ life on campus and in class, providing the benefits

transnational students seek, their mindset, and the impact of their enrollment in transnational universities. Employers were interviewed to shed light on the skills they seek from employees. It was noticed that a huge number of students graduate yearly; however, it seems hard for them to seek a job that favors the major they have pursued. Therefore, the employers' perspective is vital to reveal the aspects they seek and their views of transnational students versus those of local students. Additionally, the employers' views are significant when it comes to the employability development of the transitional students, and their views ought to be taken into consideration while reviewing the curriculum being delivered.

The aspect of hosting TNE universities in different countries is constantly growing. The literature review in the research in hand sheds light on employability development in the TNE context. However, O' Mahony's (2014) believes that teaching and learning is limited in transnational universities especially when it comes to the students' outcomes. The literature review highlights different points of view regarding the insights on TNE programs in various countries when it comes to the nature and value of TNE. These include the curriculum that the students study, the status of the university offering the TNE program, the value of the experience compared to knowledge, the focus on the skills that employers look for, hard and soft skills, and the conflicts associated with the diversity of students studying the program.

In short, the paper at hand entitled 'Transnational Education and Employability Development', shed light on the students' perspectives behind joining a transnational university. Moreover, it discussed the skills that the employers seek upon hiring fresh graduates. Therefore, a link was created between the employers and the academics. That link resulted in some recommendations that were consequently built up upon the several interviews conducted for students, academics, and employers. Some of which are:



- Employability ought to be implemented in the curriculum to ensure that students are able to connect between the employability outcomes and their choice.
- Universities ought to provide a variety of extra-curricular and co-curricular opportunities that might include internships in order to boost the students' employability chances.
- To give graduates varied job opportunities, universities are expected to build connections in the labor market
- Students should be supported to enhance their soft and hard skills.

The researcher believes that employability might provide several opportunities not only to TNE students, but also to academics and employers. Since academics will have to constantly update and revise the curriculum delivered to students based on the need of the market, students will have a variety of majors to choose from based on the labor market, and employers will have the chance to hire innovative and skillful graduates. Conclusively, TNE universities are quite demanded by students all over the world for the reasons mentioned earlier in this study; consequently, it is highly recommended that students benefit from the programs offered in those educational institutions according to international quality assurances. It is also of great importance that students understand the link between the offerings in TNE universities and employability opportunities.

At last, the dissertation concluded that Transnational Education has a direct impact on employability. Consequently, universities should ensure students are fully aware of how their studies are linked to their majors of their studies so that they would be fully aware of the skills they should master to match their choice of study based on their interest.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Surveys

#### Employers Survey

I am conducting a survey on TNE graduate employment and the skills a TNE student develops. The study focuses on the employer's perception in hiring graduates, the student's motive for joining a TNE, and the academic's perspective upon the curriculum delivered.

Your identity will remain anonymous.

Please submit the survey as you complete it.

Thank you in advance for your efforts and time spent to fill in my survey.

1. Is your company public or private?  
 Public  Private  Other
2. What is the main business of your company?
3. How many employees do you have?
4. What is the percentage of bachelor degree holders in your company?  
 100%  75%-99%  50%-74%  25%-49%  10%-24%  0%-9%
5. What is the percentage of Master degree holders in your company?  
 100%  75%-99%  50%-74%  25%-49%  10%-24%  0%-9%
6. What is the percentage of your employed graduates studied in TNE universities?  
 100%  75%-99%  50%-74%  25%-49%  10%-24%  0%-9%
7. How important is it for graduate employees to have language competencies?  
 Very important  Important  Fairly important  Not important
8. What skills attract you during an interview to hire a candidate?
9. Mention 5 important skills present in graduate employees.
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  - 4.
  - 5.

## Students Survey

I am conducting a survey on TNE graduate employment and the skills a TNE student develops. The study focuses on the employer's perception in hiring graduates, the student's motive for joining a TNE, and the academic's perspective upon the curriculum delivered.

Your identity will remain anonymous.

Please submit the survey as you complete it.

Thank you in advance for your efforts and time spent to fill in my survey.

1. Gender

Male  Female

2. Are you a student or an alumni?

Student  Alumni

3. Are you student/alumni from a TNE university?

Yes  No

4. My university provides/provided writing support during my program.

Agree  Disagree

5. My university provides/provided employment advice and information during my program.

Agree  Disagree

6. It is important for graduates to have skills that meet the needs and interests of companies.

Agree  Disagree

7. I encourage students to register in the university I am in/graduated from because it has a good reputation.

Agree  Disagree

8. My university is recognized internationally.

Agree  Disagree

9. The degree my university offers is valued by employers.

Agree  Disagree

10. It's easy for graduates from my university to find a job right after graduation.

Agree  Disagree

11. My university includes international experience such as study abroad.

Agree  Disagree

12. I am encouraged to study a transnational education (TNE) program because it is cheaper than traveling abroad.

Agree  Disagree

13. A transnational university provides greater international experience.

Agree  Disagree

14. Employers place a premium on the ability of graduated employees to be proficient in spoken and written English.

Agree  Disagree

15. Name 5 skills you think an employer value.

### **Academics Survey**

I am conducting a survey on TNE graduate employment and the skills a TNE student develops. The study focuses on the employer's' perception in hiring graduates, the student's motive for joining a TNE, and the academic's perspective upon the curriculum delivered.

Your identity will remain anonymous.

Please submit the survey as you complete it.

Thank you in advance for your efforts and time spent to fill in my survey.

1. Category of the institution:

Public  Private

2. Type of the institution:

University  International Branch Campus  College

3. Status of respondents:

4. Please indicate the number of years you have worked in the education sector:

None  Below 2 years  3-5 years  6-10 years  more than 10 years

5. In your opinion, what are the factors that influence students to enroll in your institution?

6. Does your institution provide an element of TNE with a foreign institution?

Yes  No

7. Why do you think institutions choose to implement a TNE program?

8. The curriculum offered in TNE doesn't differ from the program offered in the original country.

Agree  Disagree

9. Would you like to comment on how your institution enhances the employment and employability of your graduates? If yes, please write your response below:

## **Appendix B:**

### **Students:**

- 1- What is the reason behind studying in a TNE university?
- 2- As a TNE student, what skills have you developed throughout your journey?
- 3- Is the TNE an “entry ticket” for employability? Why?

### **Employers:**

- 1- Is there difference between the employees who have graduated from a local university and those who have graduated from a transnational university? Is there any difference in the offer taken?
- 2- Does the employability depend on the degree or experience? Explain.
- 3- What skills an employee masters that attract you the most during an interview?
- 4- Do you recommend any international – oriented experiences, skills, and qualifications? Explain.

### **Academics:**

- 1- Is there any difference between the curriculum delivered in transnational universities and local universities?
- 2- Are there any mindset differences between transnational and local students?
- 3- What are the benefits that transnational students seek?
- 4- What is the impact of cross – cultural student enrollment?