The Main Determinants of International Student Identification with a UK Middle Ranking Business School Corporate Brand: An International Marketing Perspective

A Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

By

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to make a theoretical contribution vis-à-vis the main determinants of international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand. The findings of this study are of foundational significance in theory building terms. A substantive theory of international postgraduate student identification in UK middle ranking business school corporate brands is introduced. This theory was found to be underpinned by five attractiveness dimensions: brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, association with a metropolitan city brand, country brand and university physical campus.

The findings showed that brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, association with a metropolitan city brand, country brand and university physical campus are the main corporate brand identification dimensions of international postgraduate students – in terms of attractiveness – of a middle ranked business school (Brunel Business School). Whilst the tuition fees were a constituent part of the initial theoretical framework, this variable was not shown to have a significant effect on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. The findings also showed that brand distinctiveness and the country brand had a direct positive effect on international postgraduate student identification. Moreover, brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, metropolitan city brand, country brand and university physical campus affect international postgraduate student identification indirectly through the mediating effect of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. Whereas the effects of brand distinctiveness and country brand on international postgraduate student identification are partially mediated, and the effect of metropolitan city brand is fully mediated, tuition fees have an inverse, unmediated effect on international postgraduate student identification. A test of alternative moderating effect showed that the effects of brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, association with a metropolitan city brand, country brand, university physical campus and tuition fees on international student corporate brand identification were not moderated by the effect of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness.

This study – focusing on a middle ranking business school corporate brand, internationalisation/international marketing– appears to be the first of its kind. It is one of the first attempts to provide a theoretical undertaking regarding the main determinants of international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.

The instrumental contributions of this study stress the efficacy of business school managers in focusing on corporate brand building and corporate brand communication activities. Whilst the statistical generalisability of the findings generated from a single case study is limited, the insights are analytically generalisable.

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Dedication

To my beloved father, mother, brothers and sisters for their endless love and continual support that helped me to achieve my dream.

Publications

Journal article

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Papers presented

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Chapter One: Introduction

This study examines the main determinants of international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand. The aim of this chapter is to provide background to the research, explain the research problem, provide the research question and present the aim and objectives of this study.

1.1. Background and scope of the study and research problem

Business schools are an essential sub-sector of higher education (HE). They are considered among the best and most successful HE institutions around the world (Noorda, 2011). Moreover, the importance of business schools to the world of business is very large and this importance can be reflected through the emergence of thousands of business schools worldwide (ABS[1], 2013a). To date, most of the studies on business schools have focused on top ranking institutions (Corley and Gioia, 2000; Starkey et al., 2004; Siemens et al., 2005; Bennis and O'Toole, 2005; Davies and Thomas, 2009; Hirao, 2012; Gomez and Preciado, 2013). However, relatively little is known about middle and lower ranked business schools.

Academics have highlighted the importance of corporate brands for business schools. Notably, Opoku et al. (2006, p. 21) stated that "in the marketing of higher education, a brand can help a business school to facilitate its promotional efforts and communicate a coherent message to its target market; differentiate its offering in order to charge a premium price; enhance and sustain customer loyalty". Despite the importance of corporate brands for

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[1] ABS stands for the association of business schools.

business schools, managers and marketers of universities and business schools have only recently recognised this importance and they have started developing their institutions through corporate brands (Balmer and Liao, 2007). Moreover, scholars such as Balmer and Liao (2007), Balmer, Liao and Wang (2010) and Priporas and Kamenidou (2011) asserted that business school corporate brands are a nascent area of research and a potential area for research. They also indicated that empirical studies on business school corporate brands are limited.

Recently, marketing and management researchers have become more interested in examining customer identification with a company/ brand and the motivations behind this identification (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Marín and Ruiz, 2007; 2013; Aspara and Tikkanen, 2011; Podnar et al., 2011). This interest is justified because customer identification with a company involves building a strong link and relationship between customers and a company over time (Curras-Perez et al., 2009). Scholars such as Balmer and Liao (2007, p. 361) stated that "customer and stakeholder identification, broadly speaking relates to the degree to which an individual's or groups affinity with an organisation mirrors the distinctive characteristics of an organisation". It is not difficult to see how this perspective is applicable to corporate brands. For instance, a stakeholder's sense of identification with a brand can be strong, and they may intrinsically and emotionally feel they have proprietary ownership of the brand (Balmer, 2012a).

However, contemporary organisations and particularly HE institutions, "might fail to recognise the strength and strategic importance of their corporate brands and the importance

of customer, employee and stakeholder (corporate brand) identification" although "student identification with a corporate brand/identity appears to be of considerable importance and, sometimes, high emotional involvement" (Balmer and Liao, 2007, p. 357).

Student corporate brand identification in the business school sector is a new and under researched area of study that needs more explanation. Balmer and Liao (2007, p. 369) argued that "it is clear that issues of student corporate brand identification represent a significant but under-researched area of scholarship that merits further explication". Furthermore, the extant literature lacks empirical studies on this important phenomenon and this was highlighted by Balmer, Liao and Wang (2010, p. 82) who asserted that "a scrutiny of the corporate branding literature shows that little in the way of empirical research has taken place in relation to customer identification with corporate brands per se, this is especially the case in the HE context". This was also emphasised by Balmer and Liao (2007, p. 360) who stated that "again, we wish to reiterate that we were unable to find a study that examined student identification with a HE corporate brand".

The literature shows few attempts to examine student corporate brand identification in top ranking business school corporate brands (Balmer and Liao, 2007; Balmer, Liao and Wang, 2010). However, there is little understanding and few empirical studies that have examined this phenomenon in the UK middle ranking business school corporate brands and more particularly in the international context. UK business schools are successful in terms of internationalisation. They recruit annually more than 100,000 international students and this number represents a high portion of the total number of international students who are

studying in the UK, especially at postgraduate level (Ivory, 2009; UKCISA[2], 2014). Furthermore, UK business schools play a vital role on the success of their universities (Davies and Thomas, 2009). In addition, Balmer and Liao (2007, p. 368) asserted that the issues of student identification with corporate brands in a variety of institutional settings and the strength of identification among holders of postgraduate degrees in different educational institution is a research potential. Therefore, it is essential to examine international student identification in the UK middle ranking business school corporate brand context.

Given the large importance of students corporate brand identification in business schools and the calls by researchers to conduct further empirical studies on this research area, and in a variety of educational institutions (Balmer and Liao, 2007; Balmer, Liao and Wang, 2010), it is essential to examine this phenomenon in middle ranking business school corporate brands where the research lacks empirical studies. This study will try to fill the gaps in the literature and to answer a part of the previous research calls by focusing on international postgraduate student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand. This study therefore aims to make a theoretical contribution vis-à-vis examining the main determinants of international student identification with a middle ranking business school brand in the UK context.

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[2] UKCISA stands for UK Council for International Students Affair

1.2. Research question

Given the importance of international student identification as an unexplored area of research in the middle ranking business school corporate brand context, this research seeks to answer the following question:

What are the main determinants of international postgraduate student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand in the UK context?

1.3. The aim and objectives of the study

In spite of the importance of student corporate brand identification in the HE/business school sector (Balmer and Liao, 2007; Balmer, Liao and Wang, 2010), to date there is a lack of knowledge and empirical studies that examined this phenomenon in the middle ranking business schools. Therefore, the aim of this research is to make a theoretical contribution vis-à-vis examining the main determinants of international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand in the UK context.

The objectives of the study are to:

1- Develop a theoretical framework that postulates the main determinants of international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.

2- Use a theory building case-based survey undertaken among international postgraduate students in a London based middle ranking business school corporate brand to inform this study.

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3- Examine the effect of brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, metropolitan city brand, country brand, university physical campus and tuition fees on both middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness and international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.

4- Examine the effect of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness on international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.

5- Investigate the mediating and moderating roles of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness on the relationships between six constructs (brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, metropolitan city brand, country brand, university physical campus and tuition fees) and international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.

6- Investigate the moderating role of international students' home country on the relationship between brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, metropolitan city brand, country brand, university physical campus and tuition fees and international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.

7- Provide a theoretical basis on which further studies can be developed.

8- Make a practical contribution by providing managerial advice to middle ranking business schools corporate brand managers.

1.4. The structure of the thesis

- Chapter one provides background about the research and explains the research problem. It also presents the main aim and objectives of this study. It further provides the research question and presents the structure of the thesis.

- Chapter two provides a comprehensive literature review relevant to this study. This covers the main relevant issues of four main research areas which are: business schools, corporate brands, internationalisation and customer identification.

- Chapter three discusses the development of the theoretical framework based on the extant literature. It also provides definitions for all constructs used in the theoretical framework and shapes the main determinants of international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand. The chapter further explains the hypothesised relationships between these constructs and establishes the research hypotheses.

- Chapter four is the methodology chapter. This chapter presents a theory building case-based survey as the main research methodology that informs this study. It also discusses qualitative and quantitative methods used for collecting the empirical data.

- Chapter five is the research analysis and findings. This chapter discusses the data analysis process. It also presents the two-step approach recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988) to evaluate the measurement model fit, examine the reliability and construct validity and test the developed hypotheses. The main findings of this study are also presented in this chapter.

- Chapter six is the discussion chapter. This chapter discusses the findings in the context of the extant theories and literature.

- Chapter seven is the conclusion chapter. This chapter presents the main theoretical and managerial contributions of this study. Moreover, it articulates the weakness/ limitations of the research. In addition, this chapter suggests further research that could be conducted in the future.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to identify the theoretical/ research gaps in the literature. The previous chapter has set the research background, the research question and the aim and objectives of this study. Based on the above, this chapter provides the relevant literature of this study. It defines the main terms and discusses the key issues pertaining to business schools, corporate brands, internationalisation and customer identification with a company/ brand. The literature review shows few academic empirical studies exist in the aforementioned research areas. Moreover, there are some calls by researchers for conducting further theoretical and empirical studies. The literature further indicates that there is a scarcity of empirical studies that link the aforementioned research areas together and examine international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.

The structure of this chapter is as follows: first, it presents the context of this study represented by UK higher education and the business schools sector. Second, this chapter provides an overview on business schools and the internationalisation of business schools. Third, it examines key issues of the corporate brands research area. It defines corporate brands, provides an overview of corporate brands and explains the extant corporate brand models. It also distinguishes between corporate brands and product brands. Fourth, this chapter discusses the main issues of internationalisation. It explains the internationalisation of corporate brands and provides definitions and roles of international brands. Fifth, the chapter examines main issues of customer identification in the marketing context. It also discusses

social identity and self-categorisation theories. Finally, this chapter stresses the research gaps in the extant literature and presents a summary of the chapter at the end of it.

2.2. Context: UK higher education and business schools

Higher education is one of the most important sectors in the UK. It is also one of the main drivers for the strength of the UK economy (Lawton, 2010; Universities UK, 2014). It contributes billions of pounds to the UK national economy and it provides jobs to thousands of people. For example, the UK higher education sector contributes to the UK economy with approximately £73 billion and it provides jobs to nearly 757,268 people who work for the UK higher education institutions (Universities UK, 2014).

Business schools are an essential sub-sector of higher education. The importance of business schools to the world of business has been reflected practically through the increasing number of business schools around the world. For example, a recent estimation indicated that there are more than 7000 business schools around the world (ABS, 2013a). There are more than 927 business schools in the USA and over 950 business schools in India (Balmer, Liao and Wang, 2010). There are over 100 business schools in the UK (ABS, 2012).

In the international context, the UK has been a main destination for many international students. UK higher education is the second largest market in the world in terms of the number of international students. It comes directly after the USA, and it has an increased competition that comes from Australia and European countries (Hatakenaka, 2004; Rundle-Thiele and Buyucek, 2010). Moreover, the UK higher education market share is

approximately 18 percent of the student population who are international (UKCISA, 2014). Furthermore, the number of international (here defined as non-UK) students studying in the UK is around 425,265 students (UKCISA, 2014). This number represents 71% of full-time taught postgraduates, 47% of all taught postgraduates, 49% of full-time research degree students, 41% of all research postgraduates, 15% of full-time first degree students and 13% of all first degree students (UKCISA, 2014).

With regard to internationalisation of business schools, UK business schools show a successful story in terms of internationalisation (Knight, 2004). They have established a strong international reputation and they recruit a large number of international students, especially at the postgraduate level. Notably, the UK comes directly after the USA in terms of the number of business schools in the Financial Times top 50 rankings and they recruit annually more than 100,000 international students, including European students (ABS, 2013b). Moreover, the number of international students who are studying business and management studies are 130,505 students and this number represents 36% of the total number of international students who are studying in the UK (UKCISA, 2014). Furthermore, a recent estimation showed that one in five postgraduate students and one in eight undergraduate students were studying business and management related subjects (Ivory et al., 2009; ABS, 2013a). This makes business and management studies the most popular degree choice for students in the UK and particularly at the postgraduate level (Ivory et al., 2009; ABS, 2013a). Therefore, it is essential to examine the phenomenon of internationalisation of UK business schools from the perspective of international postgraduate students.

UK higher education institutions at the mid ranking level (middle ranking universities/ middle ranking business schools) have recently become a topic of debate in the media. For example, there are several articles that have been published recently on middle ranking universities/ business schools in well-known newspapers and magazines such as The Economist, Times Higher Education, BBC and the Guardian and they declared that these institutions represent an essential part of the UK HE (The Economist, 2010a; b; Catcheside, 2012; Hunt, 2012; Coughlan, 2013; Leunig, 2013). The articles indicated that the majority of students are studying in middle ranking higher education institutions while a small number of students are enrolled in elite or top ranking educational institutions. This was emphasised by Catcheside (2012) who stated that only between two and three percent of students are studying at elite and top ranking institutions. Catcheside (2012) added that "the race among mid ranking providers has been to develop a reputation with higher fees as an essential marker of being "reassuringly expensive". However, with the increased competition in the HE market, higher education institutions at the middle ranking level will suffer if they are not able to compete for cost and quality and continue to attract students (Hunt, 2012). In addition, top ranking education institutions will not be affected by the competition in the same way as middle ranking education institutions (Hunt, 2012; Leunig, 2013). This is probably because "'top' universities are particularly well insulated from competitive pressure, since they get far more applicants than they can accept. In elite universities, no one is worrying that if the courses are not good enough, if the faculty doesn't teach well enough, if the feedback isn't helpful enough, then they will fail to get enough students and go bust. Since their principal rivals cannot expand, they are all but guaranteed to get the students they need. A top university can take students away from its rivals" (Leunig, 2013). This will increase challenges over middle

ranking higher education institutions in comparable to top ranking educational institutions (Hunt, 2012; Leunig, 2013).

In facing the challenges that confront UK HE, in general, and middle ranking HE institutions (universities and business schools), in particular and in the international context, UK HE institutions might work to engage in marketing activities that enable them to be more attractive for international students such as building relationships with international students. However, the strength of the relationship between customers and a company/ brand is based on the strength of customer identification with this company/ brand (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003). Therefore, it is essential to examine international postgraduate student identification towards a middle ranking business school corporate brand and the main determinants that lead international postgraduate students to this identification.

This study focused mainly on examining the international postgraduate student identification with a business school corporate brand and not a university corporate brand. This is because previous studies such as Balmer and Liao (2007) found that students who are still studying in the university's overseas collaborative partner have a strong identification with a university brand and their identification with a business school corporate brand was relatively absent. However, when students moved to study in the UK University, their identification with a business school corporate brand became clearer and stronger than their identification with the university corporate brand. This shift in their identification from university corporate brand to business school corporate brand illustrated that students acquired more knowledge, awareness and experience with a business school corporate brand when they moved to study in the UK

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while this was absent prior to that (Balmer and Liao, 2007). This thesis focuses on student identification with a business school corporate brand rather than a university corporate brand for the same reasons that are related to the knowledge, awareness and experience that international students already acquired while they are studying in the UK (Balmer and Liao, 2007).

The extant research shows that a business school has an independent entity and independent brand. Notably, Engwall and Danell (2011) argued that European business schools, including UK business schools were first established as separate institutions outside universities and they currently have their own brands. Moreover, business schools tend to recognise the importance of corporate branding and they are ahead of other academic schools in terms of corporate branding activities (Istileulova, 2010). Besides, UK business schools attract many international students and represent an essential part of offerings in most of the current universities (Engwall and Danell, 2011). Additionally, the extant literature reveals that there is a lack of empirical studies that examine student identification with business school corporate brands (Balmer and Liao, 2007; Balmer, Liao and Wang, 2010). Therefore, the focus of this study was on a business school corporate brand and more particularly at the middle ranking level.

2.2.1. The overview of business schools

Business schools are an essential sub-sector of higher education. The growth of business schools started in Europe in the beginning of 1960s and increased between the 1980s and 1990s (Ivory et al., 2006; Starkey and Tempest, 2008). For example, the UK is one of the

European countries that witnessed the emergence of its business schools in the mid1960s (Engwall, and Danell, 2011). The reputation of UK business schools is influenced by a variety of factors such as 1) the standing of the associated parent university, 2) league tables, 3) research assessment exercise (RAE) rating and 4) high-profile research groups and courses (Ivory et al., 2006).

Recently, business schools have been given growing interest by academic and practitioners. This can be reflected by the extensive studies that exists in the business schools literature (Starkey and Tempest, 2008; Balmer, Liao and Wang, 2010; Thomas and Cornuel, 2011; 2012; Almog-Bareket, 2012; Seethamraju, 2012; Wilson and Thomas, 2012; Ryazanova et al., 2013). Some of these studies such as Balmer, Liao and Wang (2010, p. 77), stated that "business schools represent a distinct zone of activity and management, and their importance to the realm of business is palpable". Moreover, in explaining the nature of business schools, Starkey and Tempest (2008) found that a business school can be seen in two views: the first view indicates that a business school has a professional nature and the second view asserts that a business school needs to be a superior social science school (Starkey and Tempest, 2008).

Scholars such as Staehli (2005) discussed the significant characteristics that differentiate a successful business school from other business schools in the educational domain. He identified the characteristics of a business school as being: 1) employing qualified and well trained lecturers, 2) having continuous cooperation with international enterprises in order to ensure that their students are always kept up to date with teaching and practical topics, 3)

defining clearly the conditions of admissions for both staffs and students and 4) acknowledged by recognised accredited organisations such as AACSB and AMBA (Staehli, 2005). However, business schools are not only interested in making a success in the educational marketplace but they also seek to maintain their success in the future. Cornuel (2007) provided several suggestions for maintaining the success of business schools in the future and these include: 1) having an adequate level of resources to concretize their mission statements and afford qualified faculty, 2) using adequately funded doctoral research programmes in the field of management and other incentives for academics in this field, 3) globalising their faculty and student body and their curricula and 4) training students to become globally responsible leaders.

The literature shows that most of the existing studies on business schools have focused on top ranking business schools where various issues such as quality, student choice, student corporate brand identification and MBA programme have been examined in this research context (Melewar and Akel, 2005; Balmer and Liao, 2007; Ivy, 2008; Balmer, Liao and Wang, 2010; Priporas and Kamenidou, 2011; Sun and Richardson, 2012). For example, some of the previous studies such as Barnett (1994), Baruch and Leeming (1996) and Sun and Richardson (2012), examined the quality of business schools at the top ranking level. Notably, Barnett (1994, p. 68) stated that "the different views of quality generate different methods of assessing quality and in particular alternative sets of performance indicators". Moreover, Baruch and Leeming (1996) and Morgan (2011) argued that the excellence of teaching and research are two main indicators for the quality of a business school's performance in that the high level of research and teaching of a business school reflects the

high quality level of its performance. However, Corley and Gioia (2000) and Siemens et al. (2005) identified ranking as a main indicator for the strength of a business school's competitiveness, capability and the quality of its performance in the business education domain. Furthermore, Cubillo et al. (2006) supported earlier studies as they asserted that ranking is considered as one of the common ways for assessing the quality of higher education institutions by students and more particularly by international students.

The literature of top ranking business schools also shows several studies (e.g. Melewar and Akel, 2005; Cubillo et al., 2006) that analysed students' choice decisions and the factors that motivate international students to choose a leading business school. Academics such as Melewar and Akel (2005, p. 52) stated that "the general rule in the market is that prospective students will often attend a leading university because of its overall reputation, even though it may be relatively weak in the specific subject chosen" (Melewar and Akel, 2005, p. 52).

Several previous studies (e.g. Goffin, 1998; Pfeffer and Fong, 2004; Ivy, 2008; Eastman et al., 2013) have examined MBA programmes. Notably, Eastman et al. (2013) gave a particular focus on MBA programmes in the USA. Pfeffer and Fong (2004, p. 1502) asserted that "US business schools dominate the business school landscape, particularly for the MBA degree". However, there are also several studies that have focused particularly on MBA programmes in the UK (Mellahi, 2000; Simpson et al., 2004) and European MBA programmes (Goffin, 1998). Moreover, there are also further studies such as Ivy (2008) who asserted the role of the 7Ps service marketing mix (product, price, place, promotion, people, physical facilities and processes) for marketing business schools and MBA programmes in South Africa.

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Reviewing the literature shows further studies that also examined top ranking business schools and focused variously on reputation (Cornelissen and Thorpe; 2002), ranking (Siemens et al., 2005), quality (Morgan, 2011; Sun and Richardson, 2012), business school management (Friga et al., 2003; Seethamraju, 2012), business school choice (Priporas and Kamenidou, 2011), student corporate brand identification (Balmer and Liao, 2007; Balmer, Liao and Wang, 2010), repositioning business schools (Pfeffer and Fong, 2004; Starkey et al., 2004), the future of business schools (Noorda, 2011; Cornuel, 2007), legitimacy (Wilson and Thomas, 2012), leadership of UK business schools (Ivory et al., 2009; Almog-Bareket, 2012; Naidoo et al., 2014), internationalising business schools (Bennett and Kane, 2011; Cort et al., 2011; Kedia and Englis, 2011). However, middle ranking business schools have received little attention by academic and practitioners (Cullen et al., 2003). Moreover, there are a lack of empirical studies that examined business school corporate brands in general (Balmer and Liao, 2007; Balmer, Liao and Wang, 2010; Priporas and Kamenidou, 2011) and business school corporate brands at the middle ranking level in particular. Therefore, this study seeks to fill partly this gap in the extant literature by examining the main determinants of international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.

2.2.2. The internationalisation of higher education and business schools

Academics have asserted that internationalisation in the HE context is not a new phenomenon and it has been recognised as one of the main characteristics of HE institutions (Chen, 2007; Ennew and Fujia, 2009). This trend emerged in the late 1980s and it is currently considered as a major trend for HE institutions and more particularly in developed countries (Bennett and Kane, 2011). Moreover, during the 1990s, the internationalisation of HE became an essential

issue in Europe and it raised a large public debate where three main terms, 'internationalisation', 'Europeanisation' and 'globalisation' were used to express the internationalisation process of HE (Teichler, 2004, p. 22). Later, Teichler (2009, p. 1, 3) differentiated between these three terms as he stated that "'internationalisation' is generally defined as increasing cross-border activities amidst persistence of borders, while 'globalisation' refers to similar activities concurrent to an erosion of borders… 'Europeanisation' is the regionally oriented version of either internationalisation or globalisation. At present it is more often the regional version of internationalisation than of globalisation". Therefore, it is essential to present further definitions that further explain the term of internationalisation in the HE context.

The literature review of internationalisation of HE shows no standard or agreed definition of internationalisation, but it provides different points of view to explain this concept. For example, Knight (2004, p. 11) stated that the internationalisation of higher education is "the process of integrating an international, intercultural, and global dimension into the purpose, functions (teaching, research, service) and the delivery of higher education". Moreover, Hatakenaka (2004) stated that internationalisation is a construct that involves many dimensions. He identified five main dimensions of internationalisation in the HE context which are: 1) student mobility, 2) staff mobility, 3) international teaching activities, 4) international collaboration and 5) transitional education (Hatakenaka, 2004). Similarly, Bennett and Kane (2011, p. 352) emphasised the multiple dimensionality of internationalisation as they stated that "internationalisation activities include, but are not limited to, international franchising, curriculum internationalisation, exchange programs, and

the recruitment of foreign teaching staff". In a similar vein, Altbach and Knight (2007) argued that international activities such as setting up overseas campuses, international collaborations and recruiting international students have been identified as a part of international operations of HE institutions and a part of their international marketing strategies. Therefore, a university can claim to be international if it is practicing any type of international activities whether, for example, it has an established overseas campuses or it invites international students to its home campus (Elkin et al., 2008).

The importance of internationalisation of HE has attracted the attention of academics and practitioners and many theoretical and empirical studies have examined this phenomenon. Notably, Altbach and Knight (2007) examined the motivations and realities of internationalisations. They argued that each type of educational institutions has different motivations to go overseas. For example, while making profits is a main motivation for profit educational institutions, enhancing the research and increasing knowledge capacity and cultural understanding are the main motivations for non-profit educational institutions (Altbach and Knight, 2007). Moreover, Hatakenaka (2004) and Knight (2004) are examples of theoretical studies that assessed the nature of internationalisation of HE and its related issues. Furthermore, Mazzarol (1998), Binsardi and Ekwulugo (2003), Gray et al. (2003) and Sarfati et al. (2013) are examples of empirical studies that discussed and analysed the phenomenon of internationalisation of HE.

In the business schools context, the literature shows several empirical and theoretical studies that examined the internationalisation of business schools (Toyne, 1992; Knight, 2004;

Bennett and Kane, 2011; Cort et al., 2011; Kedia and Englis, 2011). Some of these studies such as Knight (2004) asserted that internationalisation is of a large priority for many educational institutions and particularly for business school institutions which showed a successful story in terms of internationalisation (Knight, 2004). Moreover, Toyne (1992) discussed the strategies for internationalising business schools and he argued that each business school develops its own international strategy based on its objectives and its available recourses. He also asserted that there is no standard international strategy that can be adopted by all business schools to go overseas (Toyne, 1992). In a similar vein, Cort et al. (2011) analysed the internationalisation of business schools which have limited resources and no previous experience in internationalisation in the private and small size business school sector. Furthermore, Cort et al. (2011, p. 32) supported the findings of Toyne (1992) as they stated that "there is no universal strategy to use as a template to internationalise a business school". This is probably because business schools differ from each others in terms of its settled mission and vision, location, the available resources and affiliation which might have an influence on the internationalisation of a business school and the selection of the appropriate international strategy (Toyne, 1992; Cort et al., 2011).

There are several studies that have focused particularly on internationalisation of business schools in the USA context (Kedia and Cornwell, 1994; Kwok and Arpan, 1994; Marion et al., 1999; Ortiz, 2004; Czinkota et al., 2009). Notably, Ortiz (2004) highlighted the influence of legal, economic, political and technological conditions on the internationalisation process of business schools in North American institutions. Moreover, Czinkota et al. (2009) addressed the foreign market entry mode as one of the essential aspects of internationalisation

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of HE in the USA. They focused in their study on US business schools and more particularly on the MBA programmes and they stated that a business school would be influenced negatively if it chose an inappropriate market entry strategy. For example, a university might be associated with a negative image if it chose an inappropriate market entry mode. Moreover, it is difficult to change the market entry mode choice later on because of a large amount of money and time that will be required to do that (Czinkota et al., 2009).

Recently, scholars such as Bennett and Kane (2011) also focused on internationalisation of business schools in the UK context. They argued that the degree and speed of internationalisation within UK business schools depend on several issues such as 1) the financial situation of the host university, 2) managerial inclinations favouring internationalisation, 3) financial dependence on foreign students, 4) the desire to attract greater numbers of students from overseas, 5) the size of the business school and the age of its host university and 6) the belief among senior managers that an internationalised curriculum improved the employment and career prospects of British born as well as foreign students (Bennett and Kane, 2011). Therefore, these issues should be taken into consideration when developing the international marketing strategy of UK business schools.

Furthermore, the literature of the internationalisation of higher education and business schools show that existing studies have variously focused on motivations and realities of internationalisation (Altbach, 2004a; b; Altbach and Knight, 2007; Bennett and Kane, 2011; Sarfati et al., 2013), market entry penetration (Binsardi and Ekwulugo, 2003), sustainable competitive advantages (Mazzarol and Soutar, 1999), critical success factors (Mazzarol,

1998), internationalisation process of business schools (Cort et al., 2011), managing business schools in international markets (Kwok and Arpan, 1994), market entry mode of USA business schools and MBA programmes (Czinkota et al., 2009) and internationalisation of HE in the European context (Teichler, 2009). However, scrutinising the internationalisation of business school literature shows that there is a lack of knowledge on internationalisation of business school corporate brands in general (Priporas and Kamenidou, 2011) and at the middle ranking level in particular. Therefore, this study aims to fill partly this gap in the literature by examining the main determinants of international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.

2.3. Corporate brands

This section examines key issues related to corporate brands. It first provides a definition of corporate brands. This is followed by presenting an overview about corporate brands. The existing models on corporate brands are also examined. This section further presents the main differences between corporate brands and product brands.

2.3.1. The definition of corporate brands

Corporate brand is a new area of research. It has been emerged in the mid-1990s where one of the first articles on corporate brands was written by Balmer (1995). Balmer (2010, p. 180) emphasised that "in 1995 I wrote an article on 'Corporate Branding and Connoisseurship', which was, arguably, one of the first articles to explicitly mention corporate brands in its title and to focus on both corporate brands and identity in terms of content". Since then, corporate

brands increasingly attract the attention of academics and practitioners. This has been reflected through the extensive studies that can be found in the extant literature (Balmer, 1995; Balmer and Gray, 2003; Balmer, 2011a; b; 2012a; b; Abratt and Kleyn, 2012; Fetscherin and Usunier, 2012; Melewar et al., 2012; Pillai, 2012; Vallaster et al., 2012; He and Balmer, 2013).

In recent years, corporate brands have become a prevalent topic in academic and business discussions. A number of academics and practitioners (e.g. Ind, 1997; Balmer and Gray, 2003; de Chernatony, 2009; Abratt and Kleyn, 2012; Balmer, 2012b; Vallaster et al., 2012) have defined corporate brands from different viewpoints. Some of these researchers indicated that corporate brands are concerned about the brand value. For example, Balmer and Gray (2003, p. 973) defined corporate brands as "the additional brand values that are inherent in or associated with the corporation and its product and services". Likewise, Ind (1997, p. 13) stated that "a corporate brand is more than just the outward manifestation of an organisation—its name, logo, visual presentation. Rather it is the core of values that defines it". In a similar vein, de Chernatony (2009, p. 104) stated that a corporate brand is "a cluster of values that enables a promise to be made about a unique and welcoming experience".

Corporate brands can be also understood through experiences and emotional feelings that a company's multiple stakeholders have about a company. Gregory (2004, p. 3) stated that "a corporate brand is the product of the millions of experiences a company creates- with employees, vendors, investors, reporters, communities and customers and the emotional feeling these groups develop as a result". Similarly, Knox and Bickerton (2003, p. 1013)

argued that a corporate brand is "the visual, verbal and behavioural expression of an organisation's unique business model".

Previous studies such as Dall'Olmo Riley and de Chernatony (2000) showed that the corporate brand concept emerged from using the name of a company as the name for its products and services to reveal the relationships between a company and its customers. Moreover, Vallaster et al. (2012) supported this definition as they stated that a corporate brand involves applying a single brand across the whole company. However, the use of a company name for marketing its products and services helps in creating a relationship between a company and its customers. This relationship is built on trust and promises, in that, customers expect to get the same level of quality and value every time they buy a brand and this enhances the credibility of a brand (Heaney and Heaney, 2008).

Scholars of corporate brands such as Balmer and Gray (2003) asserted that the essence of corporate brands is brand promise where corporate brand promise (brand covenant) represents a set of promises between an institution and its main stakeholders and it involves emotional, descriptive and functional benefits they will get by purchasing a company's products and services (Balmer and Gray, 2003). Moreover, Balmer (2011a, p. 1339) supported this view of a corporate brand as he defined it as "what is promised and expected in identity terms". Likewise, Melewar et al. (2012, p. 601) supported this definition as they stated that a corporate brand is "the promise an organisation makes to its stakeholders; and this promise is controlled by managers". Similarly, Argenti and Druckenmiller (2004, p. 369) stated that a corporate brand is "a brand that spans an entire company ... conveys expectations of what the

company will deliver in terms of products, services and consumer experience". Furthermore, the benefit of brand promise is to build credibility in the relationship between a company and its main stakeholders and enhance the credibility and reliability in a company's delivering (Heaney and Heaney, 2008). Therefore, the mismatch between the company's promises and its deliveries will lead to loss of the credibility and reliability of the company and its delivering (Heaney and Heaney, 2008).

Some researchers showed that a corporate brand is more about creating the reputation of a company. Notably, Van Riel (2001) stated that a corporate brand is a systematically planned and implemented process of creating and maintaining a favourable reputation of the company with its constituent elements. Moreover, corporate brands are also defined as a tool that guarantees the quality and consistency of provided products or services (Temple, 2006). Furthermore, scholars indicated that corporate brands are more concerned with the image and the heritage of a company. A recent study by Abratt and Kleyn (2012, p. 1053) stated that corporate brands are "expressions and images of an organisation's identity … it is the mechanism that conveys the elements and builds the expectations of what the organisation will deliver for each stakeholder group ... the mechanism that allows for alignment between the desired identity and how stakeholders 'see' the identity". In a similar vein, Aaker (2004) stated that a corporate brand is a brand that represents a company and reflects its heritage, values, culture, people and strategy.

The most recent and comprehensive definition of corporate brands is provided by Balmer (2012 b, p. 6-7). He stated that "a corporate brand is a distinct identity type pertaining to one

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or more entities. It has a quasi-legal character in that it is underpinned by an informal, albeit powerful, corporate contract between the firm and its stakeholders, a corporate brand 'covenant'. This covenant relates to the expectations of customers and the other stakeholders associate with a corporate brand name (and/or marque) and a firm's values and ethos vis-à-vis product and service quality. Whereas legal ownership of a corporate brand resides with a firm, emotional ownership—and thereby its real value—belongs to customers and other stakeholders. Successful corporate brands are meaningfully differentiated from others and are profitable to stakeholders and shareholders alike. Customers and other stakeholders can accept, adapt, reject, or be ambivalent to a brand covenant. The corporate brand covenant emerges over time and, de facto, represents a synthesis of a firm's foremost corporate identity attributes. Corporate brands can be bought, sold, and borrowed by firms and can be owned (or shared) by multiple entities. Corporate brands are inextricably linked to corporate identities. Whereas the corporate brand covenant gives surety (what is promised), it is manifested by a firm's corporate identity (what is delivered)". This study defined a corporate brand as a set of expectations that customers associate with a corporate brand name and this involves emotional, descriptive and functional benefits they will get by purchasing its products and services.

2.3.2. The overview of corporate brands

Since the mid-1990s, companies have become more concerned with marketing at a corporate level than at a product level (Balmer, 1995; Ward and Lee, 2000; Hatch and Schultz, 2003; Xie and Boggs, 2006). The shift in a company's concern from a product to corporate has led to the emergence of new marketing concepts. The company brand concept is one of these

concepts which was created by the British researcher, King, in 1991. This concept refers to promoting and communicating the whole company as a brand. Later, the concept of company brand has been replaced by the corporate brand concept, which has become a more common and a more used concept by academics and practitioners (Balmer, 1995; 2010). This is because the corporate brand concept is more comprehensive than the company brand concept. It can be applicable not only to the entire company, but also to many entities such as countries, cities, nations, states, subsidiaries, alliance brands, organisations and corporations (Balmer and Gray, 2003; Balmer and Greyser, 2003; Balmer and Thomson, 2009; Balmer, 2010).

Since the emergence of a corporate brand as a new marketing strategy, companies have become more reliant on corporate brands than on product brands (Ward and Lee, 2000; Hatch and Schultz, 2003; Xie and Boggs, 2006). Moreover, many branding scholars have acknowledged the importance of corporate brands. Notably, Keller and Lehmann (2006) stated that a corporate brand has become one of the priorities for marketers. Moreover, Balmer and Gray (2003) indicated that corporate brands are significant for all companies' stakeholders such as employees, suppliers, governments, customers and others.

Reviewing the literature of corporate brands reveals that a corporate brand has its roots in marketing, economics, strategy (Knox and Bickerton, 2003; Balmer and Greyser, 2006), culture, management and communication (King, 1991; Balmer, 1995; Gregory, 2001; Meierer, 2011a; Fetscherin and Usunier 2012).

From the marketing perspective, scholars such as Knox and Bickerton (2003) highlighted the importance of a corporate brand as a powerful marketing tool that helps a company in creating its value and enhancing its culture. Similarly, Yasin et al. (2007) supported the marketing importance of corporate brands as they stated that building strong brands has become one of the marketing priorities for many companies in terms of establishing their corporate identities, increasing their profits and improving their competitive advantages in markets.

With regard to the economic perspective of corporate brands, researchers such as Balmer and Gray (2003) have examined corporate brands from the lens of the economic theory, "the resource based view of the firm". Based on this theory, a corporate brand is defined as a valuable resource/asset that provides a sustainable competitive advantage if a set of criteria has been met. This requires from corporate brands to be "rare, durable, inappropriable, imperfectly imitable, and imperfectly sustainable" (Balmer and Gray, 2003, p. 972). Likewise, Abratt and Kleyn (2012) argued that a corporate brand meets the four main criteria that make it one of a company's assets with sustainable competitive advantages. They further stated that a corporate brand is a valuable resource; it is rare, imperfectly imitable and it has no equivalent substitutes (Abratt and Kleyn, 2012).

Regarding the strategic perspective of corporate brands, Balmer (2010) stated that corporate brands are strategic in orientation and nature. Later, Balmer (2012b, p. 7) reemphasised his previous argument as he stated that "corporate brand is seen as a strategic senior management concern". Moreover, previous studies such as Urde (1999) and Knox and Bickerton (2003)

also showed that a corporate brand is used as a strategic tool for building brand value. Furthermore, Balmer and Gary (2003) argued that a corporate brand is a strategic and valuable asset that provides a company with sustainable competitive advantages. Recently, Balmer and Thomson (2009) and Abratt and Kleyn (2012) asserted that a corporate brand is strategic in nature and must be supported by brand promise.

From the cultural perspective, the importance of corporate brands is also highlighted as an organisational tool and its success requires the interaction between managers' vision with employees' culture and customers' image about the company (Hatch and Schultz, 2003; Melewar et al., 2012). Moreover, Meierer (2011a, p. 5) argued that "corporate brand is an extract of the corporate identity and thereby based on the corporate culture of an organisation". It should be noted that culture represents collective feelings of employees of what they feel they are (Balmer and Greyser, 2006). For example, employees may feel themselves as organisational members or as individuals and their feelings can be derived from the values, heritage or beliefs about the company (Balmer and Greyser, 2006). However, scholars who addressed corporate brands from the communication perspective such as Gregory (2001) and Meierer (2011a) stated that a corporate brand is a communication tool that communicates added values to customers and positions identity of a company in the marketplace.

According to Balmer (2001a; 2008) and Knox and Bickerton (2003), scrutinising the literature of corporate brands reveals four main characteristics associated with this literature. The first characteristic is that most of the literature on corporate brands has a conceptual

nature and few empirical studies can be found in that literature. However, the lack of empirical studies in the corporate branding literature is attributed to a number of challenges such as the difficulties in operationalising the existing models on corporate brands (Knox and Bickerton, 2003). The second characteristic is that the corporate brands literature lacks to studies that explore the contingency scenarios such as the new trends in businesses. The third characteristic is that most of the corporate brand research focuses on profit seeking companies. However, the other types of companies have received little attention in spite of the fact that corporate brands can be applied to all types of companies whether they are profit or non-profit seeking organisations, public or private organisations. The final characteristic is that there is a need to develop more theories on corporate brands (Balmer, 2008). Therefore, more theoretical and empirical studies are required to fill the gaps in the corporate brands literature.

Recently, Fetscherin and Usunier (2012) provided a comprehensive review of corporate brands literature covered the period of time between 1969 and 2008. Fetscherin and Usunier (2012) asserted that the corporate branding field is notably interdisciplinary as it involves articles published in several disciplines such as business, management, architecture, arts and communications. They further argued that one of the main research gaps in the corporate brands research field is that empirical studies on corporate brands are limited. Therefore, more empirical studies are required in this research field (Fetscherin and Usunier, 2012).

2.3.3. Corporate brand models

The extant literature shows several corporate brand models that were developed to understand the corporate brand concept. Knox and Bickerton (2003) classified these models into macro and micro models. The macro models were developed between the late 1980s and the early 1990s (e.g. Abratt, 1989; Dowling, 1993), whereas the micro models have been developed after the 1990s in order to address the weaknesses and limitations of corporate brand macro models.

The first macro model was developed by Abratt (1989) and focused on corporate image management. Abratt (1989) identified corporate personality, image and identity as the three main components of corporate brands. Abratt addressed these three components and their related issues. He argued that corporate personality involves issues related to what a company should believe in and what it will do. The corporate identity includes visual signals that define a company and differentiate it from competitors. The final component, corporate image, is concerned with perceptions of external stakeholders of a company.

The second macro model was developed by Dowling (1993). This model also focused on the corporate image development process. Dowling (1993) emphasised the role of corporate culture and corporate vision in developing corporate image. However, Abratt and Dowling's macro models have received some criticisms such as these two models have been limited to identifying the corporate branding mix and defining the main elements that contribute to corporate brand building, but they ignored the management of corporate brands (Knox and Bickerton, 2003). Some empirical studies have adopted Abratt's model such as Abratt and

Mofokeng (2001), but these studies also ignored the process of managing corporate brands (Knox and Bickerton, 2003).

In order to address the limitations of the macro models (e.g. Abratt's and Dawling's models) and to fill this gap in the literature, some micro models which have focused more on corporate brand management have been developed. Notably, Balmer and Soenen (1999) used Abratt's (1989) model in developing their ACID model of corporate brand management. ACID is the acronym of actual identity, communicated identity, ideal identity and desired identity (Balmer and Soenen, 1999). Actual identity refers to the actual attributes of a company which includes the management style, the type of ownership and the types of products and services a company deliver (Balmer and Greyser, 2002). Communicated identity is concerned with a company's claims about a corporate brand (Balmer, 2012b). This identity refers to the controllable communications such as advertising and sponsorship and uncontrollable communication such as word-of-mouth (Balmer and Greyser, 2002). Ideal identity indicates the best possible positioning of an institution in the marketplace, while desired identity represents the vision of senior managers for a company (Balmer and Greyser, 2002; Balmer, 2001a; 2012b).

Academics such as Balmer (2001a; b; c) provided an AC^2ID model for corporate brand management. Balmer distinguished between five main types of corporate identity. This model adds to the ACID model one more "C" identity, which stands for conceived identity. The conceived identity represents customers' perceptions of a company and it includes three main concepts which are "corporate image, corporate reputation and corporate branding" (Balmer

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and Greyser, 2002, p. 74). Moreover, managing these identities (AC^2ID) is a part of the corporate brand management process (Balmer and Greyser, 2002; Knox and Bickerton, 2003).

Balmer (2012a; b, 2010) provided a new model on corporate brand management, which is AC^4ID. Balmer re-emphasised in his model that corporate brands are identity-based and he defined seven identity types that form corporate brands which are "the actual, communicated, conceived, covenanted, cultural, ideal and desired corporate brand identities". This model adds two more "Cs" identities to the AC^2ID Test model, which stand for covenanted and cultural identities. Covenanted corporate brand identity is concerned with a company's brand promise while cultural corporate brand identity is concerned with a company's internal values (Balmer, 2012b). The strategic benefit of the AC^4ID Test model is that it is an approach that can guide senior executives in building and managing corporate brands (Balmer, 2012a).

The extant literature also reveals that one of the most popular corporate brand models was developed by Hatch and Schultz (1997; 2001; 2003). This model reveals that corporate brand management is a process that involves the integration of three main strategic elements: the vision, culture and image. Based on Hatch and Schultz's framework, the success of a corporate brand requires a consistency between the top management aspiration (vision) and the other two elements, which are the perceptions of external stakeholders (image) and the employees' values, behaviours and beliefs (culture). Moreover, these three strategic elements, or what was called by Hatch and Schultz (2001, p. 130) "the three strategic stars", are essential for the company to be able to get benefits from a corporate branding strategy and a

corporate brand management. Therefore, the company should align the three essential strategic stars, vision, image and culture (i.e., the aspiration of top management for the company with the employees' attitudes about the company and customers' perceptions of the company) in order to create a strong corporate brand (Hatch and Schultz, 2001). For example, if the company communicates an image such as friendly and efficient customer service (management vision), it is required from employees in this case to behave in a friendly and efficient way (culture) in order to reflect the friendly image to customers and position it in their minds (image) (Hatch and Schultz, 2001; 2003). Earlier studies on corporate brands such as Balmer (1995) identified corporate mission and philosophy, corporate brand personality, corporate brand identity and stakeholders' perceptions of the corporate brand as essential requirements for the success of corporate brands.

According to Hatch and Schultz (2001), the inconsistency among corporate brand strategic stars might lead to several gaps. The first gap is "vision- culture gap". This gap represents the differences between the top managers' ambition for a company and its employees' beliefs and behaviours. The second gap is "the image-culture gap". It reflects the differences between customers' perceptions of a company and its actual practice or delivery. The final gap is "image- vision gap". This gap shows the differences between a company's stakeholders' image and top managers' vision or aspirations (Hatch and Schultz, 2001, p. 130-132). All these gaps might make customers and other stakeholders confused about what corporate brands in fact are standing for.

In summary, the literature review shows several extant models on corporate brands (e.g. Abratt, 1989; Dowling, 1993; Balmer and Soenen, 1999; Balmer, 2001a; 2010; 2012a; Hatch and Schultz, 2001; 2003). However, few empirical studies have been conducted to test the extant models empirically and this has been emphasised by several scholars who attributed that to difficulties in operationalising the existing models (e.g. Balmer, 2001a; 2008; Knox and Bickerton, 2003). Therefore, this study helps in filling partly this gap in the literature by developing and testing empirically a new model on international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.

2.3.4. The differences between a product brand and a corporate brand

Many researchers have addressed the differences between a corporate brand and a product brand (e.g. King, 1991; Balmer, 1995; 2001; 2012a; b; Balmer and Gray, 2003; Balmer and Thomson, 2009; Hatch and Schultz, 2001; 2003; Knox and Bickerton, 2003; Vallaster et al., 2012). The best way to present the main points of differences between a product brand and a corporate brand is to show them in a table (see table 2.1).

Table 2.1. A comparison between a product brand and a corporate brand

Element	Product brand	Corporate brand
Management responsibility	Brand manager	Chief executive (corporate marketing director)
Functional responsibility	Marketing	Most/all departments
General responsibility	Marketing personnel	All personnel
Disciplinary roots	Marketing	Multidisciplinary/corporate marketing
Brand gestation	Short	Medium to long
Stakeholders	Customers	Multiple stakeholders
Values	Contrived	Real
Communications channels	The marketing communications mix	Total corporate communications Primary communication:

		Performance of products and services; organisational policies; behaviour of CEO and senior management; experience of personnel and discourse by personnel. Secondary communication: Marketing and other forms of controlled communication Tertiary communication: word of mouth.
Dimensions requiring alignments	Brand value (covenant) Product performance	Brand value (covenant) Corporate identity (corporate attributes/sub-culture) corporate strategy vision (as held by the CEO and senior management)
Communication platform	Marketing communication, experience/image and reputation Consumers' commitment Environment (political, economic, ethical, social, technological)	Corporate communication, experience/image and reputation Stakeholders' commitment Environment (political, economic, ethical, social, technological)
Source/based	Product identity	Corporate identity
Legal ownership	One or more entities	One or more entities
Emotional ownership	Customer communities	Stakeholder communities

Source: adapted from Balmer (2010, p. 190) and Balmer and Gray (2003, p. 978)

The table 2.1 shows that a corporate brand is more complex than a product brand in various issues such as the management, functional and general responsibility, the type of stakeholders and communication channels.

2.4. The internationalisation of corporate brands

This section discusses the internationalisation of corporate brands. It examines corporate brands in the international context. It also provides a definition for international/ global brands and explains the role of international brands in international markets.

2.4.1. Corporate brands in the international context

The field of international branding has witnessed increased attention by academics and practitioners in recent years. This can be clearly viewed through the special issues on international branding in some of the leading academic journals (the International Marketing Review, 2007, Vol. 24, No. 3 and No. 4 and the Journal of International Marketing, 2002, Vol. 10, No. 2). Recently, scholars such as Malhotra et al. (2013, p. 11) asserted that international branding is a timely issue. They further stated that the research on international branding has witnessed the fastest growth among international marketing publications in the International Marketing Review Journal. The number of papers on branding issues increased from nine (1994-2003) to twenty (2004-2011). The first studies on international branding can be traced back to the mid of 1970s. However, the majority of international branding articles have been published only after 1995s and this shows that the international branding area has only recently become of major importance (Whitelock and Fastoso, 2007).

International branding can be defined as "a field within international marketing concerned with the challenges that companies face when their brands cross national borders. These challenges relate to the essence of the brand in terms of brand name, brand visual (e.g. logo, colours) and sound elements (e.g. jingles, music), and brand personality" (Whitelock and Fastoso, 2007, p. 266).

Whitelock and Fastoso (2007) reviewed international branding literature. They found that the major focus of international branding was on standardisation and adaptation of a brand and brand name where this topic represents 38% of all topics examined in international branding

literature. Moreover, international branding studies have focused on further topics such as international branding strategies, globalness versus localness of a brand, brand image and brand architecture. These topics represent respectively (23%, 15% and 8%) of all topics examined in the field of international branding (Whitelock and Fastoso, 2007).

There are several studies of international brands that enhance Whitelock and Fastoso's findings. The extant studies of international brands have focused mainly on standardisation and adaptation issues of international brands (de Chernatony et al., 1995; Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 1999; Francis et al., 2002; Alashban et al., 2002; Ghantous and Aix-Marseille, 2008; Madden et al., 2012), international brand architecture (Douglas et al., 2001), brand image (Roth, 1995; Hsieh, 2002; Hsieh et al., 2004), globalness versus localness of a brand (Schuiling and Kapferer, 2004), international branding strategies (Wong and Merrilees, 2007), global brand equity (Hsieh, 2004), country of origin of a brand (Nebenzahl and Jaffe, 1996; Pecotich and Ward, 2007), the differences between local and international brands and the competitive advantages associated with international brands (Schuiling and Kapferer, 2004), licensing of international brands (Jiang and Menguc, 2012) and brand globalness and consumer preference of new product branding strategy (Punyatoya et al., 2014).

The extant studies on international brands have also examined customers' perspective. For example, Steenkamp et al. (2003) addressed perceived brand globalness and they argued that this perception can be generated only if customers believe that a brand is marketed in many countries and is generally recognised as global in these countries. They also stated that perceived brand globalness can be developed either by media exposure, word-of-mouth or by

marketing communications which assert the globalness of a brand even when the brand is not available all over the world (Steenkamp et al., 2003). Moreover, Özsomer and Altaras (2008) found that customers' attitudes and their purchase likelihood are influenced by their perceptions of global brands. Likewise, Steenkamp et al. (2003) argued that customers prefer an international brand to a local one and even if the quality of a local brand is higher than the quality of a global brand. This is probably related to the quality associated with international brands and the sense of prestige that customers feel when they purchase international brands (Steenkamp et al., 2003). Recently, Malhotra et al. (2013) asserted that international brands influence customer choice and reduce risks associated with purchasing a brand (Malhotra et al., 2013).

Previous studies also showed that global brands contribute to customers' identity and identification. Strizhakova et al. (2008, p. 58) stated that "global brands create an imagined global identity that they share with like-minded people". Moreover, global brands have an essential influence on customers' perceived quality and perceived prestige and this enhances their sense of belonging to superior and prestigious global brands (Steenkamp et al., 2003).

Melewar and Walker (2003) discussed the success factors of corporate brands in the international context. Melewar and Walker (2003) defined several factors that work as guidance for creating a successful corporate brand in international markets. These factors include: linking the corporate brand with corporate strategy, creating a consistent brand positioning that enables customers to have the same perceptions of a brand in any market, using a constant marketing mix and making possible adaptations that enhance the value of the

brand without changing its identity, building a strong relationship with stakeholders and mainly with customers or target markets, delivering values to customers, creating the innovation and differentiation and finally reflecting the essence of a company and what it stands for (Melewar and Walker, 2003). Moreover, the success of a corporate brand is also based on the existence of an effective product, a distinctive identity and an added value (Keegan, 2002). However, the main problem a company may have when using a corporate brand to enter international markets is that any poor quality extension or any failure of a corporate brand will lead to a complete damage to the reputation of a corporate brand (Melewar and Walker, 2003; Jiang and Menguc, 2012). This, in turn, emphasises the major advantage of using a product brand to enter international markets. Any failure of a product brand in international markets will decrease the reputation of the company, but it will not damage it completely. This is because the company can reintroduce itself by using other product brands (Melewar and Walker, 2003).

From the management and marketing perspective, earlier studies asserted that branding has been recognised as a top management priority in the international marketing context (Keller and Lehmann, 2006; Malhotra et al., 2013). Moreover, creating strong global brands is considered as one of the marketing priorities for many companies because this will offer companies many essential benefits such as: establishing their corporate identities, increasing their profits, enhancing their efficacy and their competitive advantages and achieving more economies of scale in R&D, manufacturing and marketing (Steenkamp et al., 2003; Yasin et al., 2007).

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In spite of the increased interest in the international branding research in recent years, the existing studies on international branding are still insufficient and this is emphasised by several researchers (e.g. Alashban et al., 2002; Cheng et al., 2005; Whitelock and Fastoso, 2007; Wong and Merrilees, 2007; Dimofte et al., 2010; Eisingerich and Rubera, 2010; Meierer, 2011a; b; Madden et al., 2012). In particular, few empirical studies have examined corporate brands in the international context (e.g. Alashban et al., 2002; Burt and Sparks, 2002; Melewar and Walker 2003; Meierer, 2011a; b). These studies have acknowledged this gap in the literature and they have asserted that this phenomenon is rarely examined. Moreover, these studies have called for conducting further empirical and theoretical research in the field of international corporate brands. For example, Alashban et al. (2002, p. 38) stated that "the literature on branding in an international context is somewhat sparse". Furthermore, Burt and Sparks (2002) stated that internationalisation of corporate branding is an under researched area of study and there is a lack of empirical studies on corporate brands literature in the international context.

The extant reviews of international branding, corporate brands and international marketing literature show that little attention has been given to corporate brands in the international context. Notably, Whitelock and Fastoso (2007) provided a comprehensive review of international branding literature covers 31 years of research in this area between 1975 and 2005. Surprisingly, only 40 articles are found on international branding in this comprehensive review and corporate brands appear to be the least frequent topic that has been examined in the international branding literature (Whitelock and Fastoso, 2007). Moreover, Whitelock and Fastoso (2007, p. 252) asserted that "it appears somewhat puzzling that in a recent literature

review in the field of international marketing covering almost 600 journal articles between 1990 and 2000 (Nakata and Huang, 2005), branding does not appear in the list of article topics analysed". More recently, Malhotra et al. (2013) provided another review of international marketing studies that have been published in the International Marketing Review Journal since its inception in the 1983. This review covers 29 years of publications from 1983 to 2011 and it shows that there are only 33 publications on branding issues in this journal. Furthermore, Fetscherin and Usunier (2012) also provided a comprehensive review of corporate brands literature which analysed existing studies on corporate brands that were published between 1969 and 2008. However, corporate brands in the international context do not appear in this review. This re-emphasised that the extant literature lacks theoretical and empirical studies on international brands and more particularly at a corporate level. Therefore, this study seeks to fill partly this gap in the literature by examining the internationalisation of corporate brands in the UK middle ranking business school context.

2.4.2. The definition and roles of global/international brands

By examining corporate brands in the international context, it is worth defining international/global brands and discussing their roles in international markets. Scholars such as Ghantous and Aix-Marseille (2008, p. 3) argued that "there is no consensus today in the international marketing literature on a unique terminology for international brands". However, most of the existing studies on international branding use the terminology of global brands and they are more concerned with defining global brands than international brands (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 1999; De Mooij, 2005; Ghauri and Cateora, 2006; Özsomer and Altaras, 2008; Dimofte et al., 2010).

Aaker and Joachimsthaler (1999, p. 1) said that global brands are "brands whose positioning, advertising strategy, personality, look and feel are in most respects the same from one country to another". Moreover, De Mooij (2005, p. 14) stated that a global brand is "the one that is available in most countries in the world and shares the same strategic principles, positioning and marketing in every market throughout the world, although the marketing mix can vary". In a similar vein, Ghauri and Cateora (2006, p. 311) asserted that a global brand is "the worldwide use of a name, term, sign, symbol, design or combination thereof intended to identify goods or services of one seller and to differentiate them from those of competitors". Similarly, Schuiling and Kapferer (2004, p. 98) defined global brands as "brands that use the same marketing strategy and mix in all target markets". Likewise, Dimofte et al. (2010, p. 85) stated that a global brand is a "brand that is widely available and universally recognised. It is a perceptual construct and therefore is likely to differ across individuals. What the construct means to the individual consumer depends on his or her knowledge of and experience with actual brands".

Furthermore, the literature of international branding provides two main schools of thought that help in defining global brands (Özsomer and Altaras, 2008). The first school defines global brands based on marketing standardisation literature where global brands are defined as "those that use similar brand names, positioning strategies, and marketing mixes in most of their target markets" (Özsomer and Altaras, 2008, p. 3). The main motivation for companies to build global brands is to get benefits of economies of scale in research and development, marketing and sourcing and manufacturing and to benefit from the unique and consistent

brand image across international markets (Özsomer and Altaras, 2008). The second school of thought defines global brands from the perspective of customers' perceptions. Based on this school, global brands can be defined as "those that have widespread regional/global awareness, availability, acceptance, and demand and are often found under the same name with consistent positioning, personality, look, and feel in major markets enabled by centrally coordinating strategies and programs" (Ozsomer and Altaras, 2008, p. 1). This study defines a global/ international brand as a brand that is available in most countries in the world, it is widely recognisable and acceptable by customers in these countries and it uses the same marketing strategy and mix in all target markets to differentiate it from competitors.

In turn now to the role of international brands, Whitelock and Fastoso (2007) asserted that branding is a vital constituent of the international marketing strategy. An international brand defines a company and differentiates its products and services in international markets. It also positions a company and defines its identity in these markets. Moreover, developing international brands offer companies large opportunities for survival and international expansion (Melewar and Walker, 2003). Furthermore, acquiring international/global brands is attractive for companies because this enables them to capitalise on economies of scale in research and development and marketing and to create sustainable competitive advantages (Melewar and Walker, 2003; Özsomer and Altaras, 2008; Strizhakova et al., 2008; Eisingerich and Rubera, 2010).

Scholars such as Douglass et al. (2001) asserted the critical role of corporate brands in establishing a company's visibility and position in international markets. Moreover, Wong

and Merrilees (2007) found that brand orientation and brand positioning have essential impacts on the international marketing strategy and a company's performance in international markets. In a similar vein, Cheng et al. (2005) argued that companies tend to develop brands based on global scales in order to enhance their competitive advantages during the internationalisation process. For example, developing brands that match global scales enables a company to position a high quality and prestigious perception in customers' minds. This also assists a company to attract qualified employees and partners easily and facilitates the entries' processes to international markets (Cheng et al., 2005). In spite of the important role of international brands at the corporate level, little empirical studies exist on international corporate brands (Burt and Sparks, 2002; Melewar and Walker, 2003). This study therefore seeks to fill partly this gap in the literature by examining empirically international corporate brands in the UK middle ranking business school context.

2.5. Corporate brands in the context of the study

This section provides an overview about corporate brands in the higher education and business school context. It also provides a definition of middle ranking business school corporate brands.

2.5.1. Corporate brands in the higher education and business school context

During the past decade, there has been an increasing tendency by universities in most countries around the world and particularly in the USA and Europe to brand themselves in order to enhance their competitive advantages in an increased competitive educational market

(Chapleo, 2005; 2010). Academics such as Chapleo (2005, p. 58) argued that "the USA appears to be ahead of the UK in the acceptance and implementation of branding as a concept of higher education…it seems that UK is following the US footsteps in this respect and it is timely and more appropriate to investigate further aspects of branding in the UK higher education context". Later, Chapleo (2010) re-emphasised that the recent trend in the UK HE sector is that most universities have started practicing branding activities.

The extant literature asserts the strategic importance of corporate brands in the HE sector and the need of HE institutions to build their corporate brands (Balmer and Liao, 2007; Chapleo, 2007; Curtis et al., 2009; Judson at al., 2009; Waeraas and Solbakk, 2009; Balmer, Liao and Wang, 2010; Heaney et al., 2010). Part of this importance is that corporate brands differentiate educational institutions from competitors in the competitive educational market (Chapleo, 2007; Hamsley-Brown and Goonawardana, 2007; Judson et al., 2009; Waeraas and Solbakk, 2009). Moreover, educational institutions with well-known brands will have better chances of recruiting students and staff (Curtis et al., 2009). Furthermore, a favourable corporate brand heritage enables universities to charge students premium tuition fees and this particularly occurs at the master level (Balmer, Liao and Wang, 2010).

Previous studies (e.g. Heaney and Heaney, 2008; Curtis et al., 2009; Heaney et al., 2010) showed that a corporate branding strategy is a crucial and more appropriate strategy for marketing educational institutions than a product branding strategy. This is because corporate branding strategy considers all stakeholders of an educational institution such as students, parents and other educational institutions and it communicates a consistent message to them

(Heaney and Heaney, 2008; Curtis et al., 2009; Heaney et al., 2010). As a result, developing strong brands has been recognised as a strategic tool for UK universities to respond to new challenges that have emerged from the internationalisation process of HE such as the increased competition to attract new and high qualified students (Melewar and Akel, 2005).

The literature review shows several studies that examined HE brands from students' perspective (Gray et al., 2003; Bennett and Ali-Choudhury, 2009; Heaney et al., 2010; Morgan, 2011). Notably, Ali-Choudhury et al. (2009) and Morgan (2011) confirmed the importance of a university brand in attracting students. They stated that a strong university brand can give an impression to students that a university is at a certain level of quality that makes it attractive for them. Moreover, Bennett and Ali-Choudhury (2009) argued that brand promise is recognised as a key element of a university brand that students may consider when evaluating a university and making their decisions to choose it. They added that brand promise can be conceptualised in the HE context as a concept that involves the physical and emotional benefits that a university promises to provide to students. Furthermore, Heaney et al. (2010) addressed a university brand from the students' perspective. They argued that a university's history in delivering educational services (brand heritage), a university's location, the attractiveness of a university's campus and the international recognition of a university brand are identified as major factors that attract students to a university brand (Heaney et al., 2010).

Reviewing the extant literature also shows some studies that examined HE brands from the perspectives of managers and administrators (Ali-Choudhury et al., 2009; Judson et al.,

2009). Notably, Ali-Choudhury et al. (2009) examined students' perceptions of a university brand as seen by universities' managers and marketing directors. They asserted that managers identified 10 main elements that influence students' perceptions of a university brand. These include: a university's educational identity, university location, the rate of students' employment beyond graduation, university image, university reputation, atmosphere, the provided courses, social environment, the learning environment and community (Ali-Choudhury et al., 2009). Recently, studies on HE corporate brands such as Peluse and Guido (2012) examined the influence of rebranding/renaming strategies on people's attitudes and feelings (perceptions) towards the UK HE institutions. They asserted that people prefer the city-of-location naming strategy to the origin-of-location naming strategy.

In spite of the increased importance of corporate brands for HE institutions, there is a consensus by academics and practitioners that corporate brands in the HE sector do not receive the academic attention they deserve and the existing empirical studies are limited (Balmer and Liao, 2007; Chapleo, 2007; 2008; 2010; Heaney and Heaney, 2008; Curtis et al., 2009; Judson et al., 2009; Waraas and Solbakk, 2009; Balmer, Liao and Wang, 2010).

In particular, in the business school context, researchers highlighted that a business school corporate brand is an emerging area of research and it is a potential area for researching (Balmer and Liao, 2007; Balmer, Liao and Wang, 2010; Priporas and Kamenidou, 2011). Corporate brands scholars (e.g. Balmer and Gray, 2003; Balmer and Greyser, 2003; Balmer and Thomson, 2009; Balmer, 2010) argued that corporate brands can be applied to many entities such as organisations, institutions, countries and cities. Therefore, a business school

as an entity can be considered as a corporate brand. We define a business school corporate brand in this study as a set of expectations and promises that are associated with the brand name and logo of the business school in terms of what educational services the business school will deliver to students. For instance, when people think about the London Business School brand, Warwick Business School brand or Harvard business School brand they might think of the high quality of research and teaching and high quality qualifications.

Earlier studies such as Balmer and Laio (2007) and Balmer, Liao and Wang (2010) examined corporate brand management in the leading UK business schools. They said that a business school corporate brand management represents an essential sub-sector of HE that is worth further examination. They also argued that managers of leading business schools claim that they have the best management practices and this makes the corporate brand management of their institutions worth research and scrutiny.

Balmer and Liao (2007) examined student identification towards leading business school corporate brands. They identified three types of students corporate brand identification which are brand member, brand supporter and brand owner. Besides, they defined three approaches of corporate brand identification management which are legalisation, realisation, and actualisation. They further provided a model that reveals this hierarchy of corporate brand identification management in the higher education sector. Balmer and Liao (2007) argued that students seem to view themselves as brand members in the legalisation approach, brand supporters in the realisation approach and brand owner in the actualisation approach. Moreover, the institution is more concerned with functional, legal and financial issues in the

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legalisation approach, symbolic and promotional management in the realisation approach and brand value/ corporate brand promise in the actualisation approach. Furthermore, the strength of student identification with a business school corporate brand is low in the brand legalisation, moderate in the brand realisation and high in the brand actualisation. In addition, brand actualisation where undergraduate students are found to have an emotional relationship with the brand is considered as the ideal management type which senior managers should endeavour to have in managing the business school corporate brand (Balmer and Liao, 2007).

The literature review also shows that most studies that examined business school corporate brands have focused on top ranking business schools (Balmer and Liao, 2007; Balmer, Liao and Wang, 2010; Saeed and Ehsan, 2010; Priporas and Kamenidou, 2011). These studies have variously focused on building business school corporate brand (Saeed and Ehsan, 2010), managing leading business school corporate brand (Balmer, Liao and Wang, 2010), student identification with a leading business school corporate brand (Balmer and Liao, 2007) and business school brand reputation (Priporas and Kamenidou, 2011). However, securitising the literature of corporate brands in the HE in general and the business schools context in particular leads the researcher to conclude that this research area is still in its pioneering stage as there is a lack of empirical studies in this research context (Balmer and Liao, 2007; Hemsley-Brown and Gooanawardana, 2007; Curtis et al., 2009; Balmer, Liao and Wang, 2010; Saeed and Ehsan, 2010; Priporas and Kamenidou, 2011). More particularly, there is a lack of empirical studies on corporate brands at the middle ranking business school level and in the international context. Hence, it is essential to reiterate that a corporate brand in the middle ranking business school context is an important and under researched area that merits

further explanation. This study seeks to fill partly this gap in the literature by examining the main determinants of international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.

2.5.2. The definition of a middle ranking business school corporate brand

The literature of business schools and corporate brands shows no definition of a middle ranking business school corporate brand. This study therefore provides a definition for this concept. Middle ranking business school corporate brand in the UK context can be defined as business schools within universities that have a Royal Charter and are not members of the Russell Group Universities[3]. Middle ranking business schools are not typically among the top 20 in international top ranking league tables such as the Financial Times and the Economist (and have typically not fallen within the lower levels of the aforementioned).

2.6. Customer identification with a company/brand (corporate brand identification)

Customer identification with a company can be described as "the primary psychological substrate for the kind of deep, committed, and meaningful relationships that marketers are increasingly seeking to build with their customers" (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003, p. 76). It also represents a particular form of social identification in which individuals define

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[3] The Russell Group universities represent 24 leading UK universities which are committed to maintaining the very best research, an outstanding teaching and learning experience (Russell Group, 2014).

themselves in terms of their membership in a company (Mael and Ashforth, 1992). The literature review shows that brand identification has emerged from the application of a social identity theory to customer relationship in the branding context (He and Li, 2011). Scholars such as He and Li (2011, p. 673) defined brand identification as "a consumer's sense of belonging to and perceived oneness with a company/ brand". Moreover, Lam et al. (2009, p. 2) defined customer identification with a brand as "the customer's perception, emotional significance, and value of sharing the same self-definitional attributes with a brand". However, the level of customer identification with a brand can be determined by the degree to which a brand expresses and enhances their identities (Kim et al., 2001). Furthermore, Tuškej et al. (2013, p. 53) stated that customer identification with a brand is "the individual's sense of sameness with a particular brand".

In the corporate brands context, scholars of corporate brands such as Balmer (2011a, p. 1344) argued that corporate brand identification can be defined as "the affinity (positive, negative or ambivalent) an individual or group will have with a corporate identity and/or with a corporate brand viz identification with a corporate brand identity". Likewise, Kocak et al. (2007, p. 160) emphasised that brand identification is one factor of a brand affinity and it represents "the degree to which the brand is regarded as having personal relevance". This study defines corporate brand identification as a type of brand affinity that represents customers' sense of belonging to and a perceived oneness with a corporate brand. The first articles on corporate brand identification drawing on social identity theory were by Balmer and his colleagues Balmer and Liao (2007) and Balmer, Liao and Wang (2010).

Corporate brand identification has been observed as an essential strategic issue that is necessary for companies to recognise (Balmer and Liao, 2007). This is probably because customer identification with a company/brand has essential outcomes such as creating champion customers or loyal customers who are enthusiastic to promote the company and its delivered products and services (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003). Moreover, when customers identify with a company, they become strong supporters for that company, they also feel that they are connected to its fate and destiny and they share the success and failure of that company (Ahearne et al., 2005). Furthermore, customers' reactions and behaviours towards a company/brand are based on the strength of their identification with the company/brand. For example, if customer identification with a company/ brand is strong, customers might behave in a favourable way and say a positive word-of-mouth about the company/ brand. In contrast, if customer identification with a company/ brand is not strong, they might behave in an unpleasant way and say a negative word-of-mouth about the company (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003). There are more essential outcomes of customer identification with a company that are related to communication, satisfaction and recruitment (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003).

Previous studies have examined identification in the marketing context (e.g. Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Donavan et al., 2006; Hildebrand and Bhattacharya, 2011; Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012; Marín and Ruiz, 2013). These studies argued that this type of identification focuses on customer identification with a company/ brand where an individual does not have a formal relationship or membership with a company/ brand. Moreover, identity attractiveness or the favourable evaluation of the company/ brand is essential for the occurrence of this identification (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003). According to Bhattacharya and Sen (2003),

customer identification with a company/brand is a result of two sequential steps; the first one involves that customers perceive a company/ brand as attractive. In the second step, customers' perceived attractiveness of the brand consequently leads them to identify with that company/brand.

The extant literature reveals that customer identification with a company/ brand has a cognitive nature. For example, a recent study by Marín and Ruiz (2013, p. 657) emphasised the cognitive nature of customer identification as they argued that "to the extent that a company can constitute a social group, individuals may derive their social identity, at least in part, through the establishment of cognitive links between themselves and a company (i.e. consumer-company identification)". Likewise, Curras-Perez et al. (2009, p. 548) based their argument on several previous studies (e.g. Bewer, 1991; Hogg and Terry, 2000) and they stated that "individuals derive part of their identity from organisations and working groups they formally belong to, or to which they are closely linked; this occurs through cognitive categorisation, where an individual positions him/herself as a member of an organisation by accentuating similarities with other members and differences with non-members". Furthermore, customer identification with a company is also conceptualised as a selective and volitional behaviour and it requires the satisfaction of one or more of self-definitional needs (self-similarity, self-distinctiveness and self-esteem) (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003).

The existing studies on customer identification with a company have focused on examining the antecedents and consequences of this identification. For example, Bhattacharya and Sen (2003) is a seminal study on customer identification provided a theoretical model that defines

the main antecedents and consequences of customer identification with a company. They suggested identity attractiveness as a main antecedent of customer identification with a company. Moreover, they proposed that identity similarity, identity distinctiveness and identity prestige are major factors that influence a company's identity attractiveness and lead customers to identify with a company. Furthermore, Bhattacharya and Sen (2003) suggested that company loyalty, customer recruitments, company promotion, and resilience to negative information are the main consequences of customer identification. This study has been supported by several empirical studies (e.g. Ahearne et al., 2005; Brown et al., 2005; Donavan et al., 2006; Curras-Perez et al., 2009).

Ahearne et al. (2005) examined the antecedents and consequences of customer identification with a company/ brand when a customer is not a formal member within a company. They conducted an empirical study using a survey questionnaire with high prescribing physicians. They found that the favourable evaluation of a company's characteristics, customers' favourable perceptions of salespersons' characteristics and the external image of a company are the main determinants of customer identification with a company/ brand in the pharmaceutical industry. They also argued that the strength of customer identification with a company will be increased when perceived favourability of both of a company's characteristics and sales' people characteristics are increased (Ahearne et al., 2005). Moreover, Donavan et al. (2006) examined empirically the environmental factors as main antecedents that influence an individual identification with sports brand. They concluded that environmental factors represented by the place (proximity to the entity) and people (significant others' preference) are the two main environmental factors that influence the

strength of an individual's identification with a sport brand. However, they found that the physical proximity to a college sport team has a negative influence on the individual's identification with a college sports' team. Academics such as Balmer (2011a) defined further environmental factors that might influence the type and the strength of customer identification with a corporate brand such as political, socioeconomic, technological, ethical, and legal environment.

Curras-Perez et al. (2009) investigated the influence of corporate social responsibility on customer identification with a company in the toiletries and cosmetic products sector. They asserted that corporate social responsibility increases customer identification with a company via enhancing the perceived prestige and distinctiveness of that company. They also identified brand attitude and brand purchase intention as the main direct consequences of brand identification. They emphasised that strong brand identification will enhance customers' attitudes and their intentions to purchase toiletries and cosmetic brands.

Recently, Marín and Ruiz (2013) discussed customer personality, company identity attractiveness and the need for personal connection with salesperson as the main determinants of customer identification with a company. They found that all of the aforementioned factors have a direct positive influence on customer identification with a company (Marín and Ruiz, 2013). Moreover, Stokburger-Sauer et al. (2012) examined the antecedents and consequences of customer identification with a brand. They confirmed that brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, brand social benefits, and brand experience are the main predictors of customer identification with a brand, while brand loyalty and brand advocacy are its main

consequences. Furthermore, Tuškej et al. (2013) identified a congruity of customer and brand values as the main antecedents of customer identification with a brand, while positive word of mouth and brand commitment are its main consequences.

In the corporate brand context, Sung (2011) examined customer identification with a corporate brand in the financial service context. He indicated that customer identification with a corporate brand is critical in service industries. This is because building a good relationship with customers is crucial and customer identification makes an essential contribution to the success of brands in the service sector (Sung, 2011). Moreover, Sung (2011) identified preferential treatment, customer orientation, social relationship and social recognition as the main antecedents of customer identification with a corporate brand in the financial service sector. He also identified positive word-of-mouth and consumer participation as the main consequences of this identification (Sung, 2011).

Previous studies (Homburg et al., 2009; Aspara and Tikkanen, 2011; Pérez and del Bosque, 2013) examined mainly the consequences of customer identification. Aspara and Tikkanen (2011) identified customers' determination and their decision making to invest in a company as the main consequences of their identification with that company in the stock market. They found that an individual's identification with a company influences positively their willingness to invest in a company's shares. They added that individuals' willing to invest in this company's shares was more than their willing to invest in other company's shares that have similar characteristics; such as predictable financial risks and returns (Aspara and Tikkanen, 2011). Moreover, Pérez and del Bosque (2013) argued that customer identification

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with a company has essential influences on customers' decision making process. They also asserted the importance of a favourable social image to create customer loyalty towards a company. In a similar vein, Homburg et al. (2009) confirmed that customer satisfaction and customer loyalty are the main consequences of customer identification with a company.

Although there are several studies that investigated customer identification (Kim et al., 2001; Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Sung, 2011; Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012; Tuškej et al. 2013), some of these studies asserted that there is still a lack of studies that examined antecedents and consequences of customer identification with a company, product brand or corporate brand. For example, Stokburger-Sauer et al. (2012, p. 406) highlighted that there is a lack of understanding of the antecedents of a consumer–brand identification (CBI) as they mentioned that "much less is understood, however, about the drivers of CBI—what factors cause it, when, and why". Likewise, Kim et al. (2001) argued that while much is written on organisational identification and its antecedents, little is known about the brand identification and this topic is suggested as a potential research topic. In the corporate brand context, Sung (2011) highlighted that little research has been carried out on the antecedents and consequences of customer identification with a corporate brand. Therefore, more theoretical and empirical studies are required in this research area.

In the higher education context, Mael and Ashforth (1992) proposed that alumni identification with their alma mater is based on the attractiveness, organisational distinctiveness and perceived prestige of alma mater. They further suggested that the outcomes/ consequences of alumni identification include making a financial contribution to alma mater and

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recommending it to other students (Mael and Ashforth, 1992). Moreover, Balmer and Liao (2007) provided a seminal empirical study on student corporate brand identification. They focused in their study on student identification within a leading UK university and its business school and a university's collaborative partner institution operated in Asia. They concluded that students' awareness, knowledge and experience with a brand determine their identification with this brand and influence the strength of this identification. Moreover, the strength of student identification with a leading business school corporate brand is also influenced by brand reputation, brand prestige, brand distinctiveness, corporate ethos, identity traits and brand differentiation of the higher education institution they belong to. Furthermore, Balmer and Liao (2007) found that students are categorised based on their relationship with a university/ business school corporate brand into brand member, brand supporter and brand owner. They mentioned that student identification in a brand member is based on the legal relationship between students and a university/business school and in this type a student defines himself as a member of a university/business school based on his legal membership of the educational institution. They added that student identification in a brand supporter is built on the trust between students and a UK business school brand, but with a brand owner it is based on the emotional/owner relationship between students and a business school brand.

While most existing studies have focused on student corporate brand identification in top ranking business schools (Balmer and Liao, 2007; Balmer, Liao and Wang, 2010), there is a lack of empirical studies on student corporate brand identification in the middle ranking business schools context. Therefore, this study seeks to fill partly this gap in the literature by

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examining the main determinants of international student identification with a UK middle ranking business school corporate brand.

2.6.1. Social identity theory and self -categorisation theory

Social identity theory was first developed by Tajfel and Turner (1979) to understand the psychological foundation of intergroup discrimination and to predict specific intergroup behaviours. This theory suggests that an individual's social identity is a part of his self-concept and it is acquired and maintained by his membership of a social group that he evaluates positively comparable to other groups (Tajfel and Turner, 1979). Later, Tajfel and Turner (1985) further suggested that people may define their self-concepts by connecting themselves with social groups or companies. Moreover, individuals often identify with an institution or a social group even when they have no formal membership with that group (Tajfel and Turner, 1985). Another assumption of the social identity theory is that "people classify themselves into social categories on the basis of various factors, such as the organisation they work for, and that membership in these social categories influences an individual's self-concept" (Turban and Greening, 1997, p. 660). Furthermore, the essence of the social identity theory is that "a social category (e.g. nationality, political affiliation, organisation, work group) within which one falls, and to which one feels one belongs, provides a definition of who one is in terms of the defining characteristics of the category – a self-definition that is a part of the self-concept" (Hogg and Terry, 2000, p. 3). Therefore, based on the social identity theory, a person can define himself based on his membership in a variety of social groups such as the work, an occupation, an organisation or an educational institution (Tajfel and Turner, 1985; Ashforth and Mael, 1989).

The theory of social identity is one of the most popular theories that have been employed to understand customer identification (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Curras-Perez et al., 2009; Aspara and Tikkanen, 2011; Marín and Ruiz, 2013), employee identification with an organisation (Dutton et al., 1994), alumni identification with alma mater (Mael and Ashforth, 1992) and physician identification (Dukerich et al., 2002). The theory is also applied to examine an individual identification in both the profit sector (Kuenzel and Halliday, 2008) and the non-profit sector (Bhattacharya et al., 1995). Furthermore, the theory is used to understand customer identification in the product brand and corporate brand context (Kim et al., 2001; Kuenzel and Halliday, 2008; Curras-Perez et al., 2009; Sung, 2011).

Self-categorisation theory is a constituent part of the social identity theory. It was also developed by Turner and his colleagues, Turner (1985), Tajfel and Turner (1985) and Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, and Wetherell (1987). The self-categorisation theory is related to a self-concept as it suggests that an individual has a personal identity and a social identity (Tajfel and Turner, 1985). A personal identity includes a set of characteristics and personality traits that make each individual unique from the others. A social identity involves the groups an individual belongs to including community, religion, college, and other groups (Tajfel and Turner, 1985). Self-categorisation theory assumes that a person might categorise himself within multiple groups and hence he might have multiple group memberships and multiple identities. For example, a person might identify himself as a male (based on his gender), an American (based on his nationality), a supporter of a team or an institution (based on his interest), an employee of an organisation (based on his job) or a student based on an

educational institution he is studying in (Turner, 1985; Turner et al., 1987; Mael and Ashforth, 1992).

While social identity theory and self-categorisation theory have been widely used by previous studies to understand customer identification with a company/ brand (e.g. Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Kuenzel and Halliday, 2008; Curras-Perez et al., 2009; Homburg et al., 2009; Aspara and Tikkanen, 2011; Marín and Ruiz, 2013), these two theories will also be employed in this study to understand international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.

2.7. The research gaps in the extant literature

Based on the literature review of the four main research areas, business school, corporate brands, internationalisation and customer identification with a company/ brand, the following research gaps can be reemphasised in the extant literature.

1- Most of the past studies of business schools have focused on top ranking business schools (Melewar and Akel, 2005; Balmer and Liao, 2007; Davies and Thomas, 2009; Balmer, Liao and Wang, 2010; Priporas and Kamenidou, 2011; Hirao, 2012). However, there is a lack of knowledge on middle ranking business schools which are the main focus of this thesis.

2- The literature of corporate brands is characterised by a theoretical nature. Recently, Fetscherin and Usunier (2012) indicated that one of the main research gaps in the corporate brands field is the lack of empirical studies on corporate brands. They illustrated this lack as "being partially the consequence of the absence of an integrated

conceptual framework with precise definitions and causal relationships that would allow for operationalisation and measurement of key constructs in the domain". (Fetscherin and Usunier, 2012, p. 745).

3- Scholars of corporate brands in the HE context showed that this research area is still at its pioneering stage and there is a dearth of empirical studies (Balmer and Liao, 2007; Chapleo; 2008; Heaney and Heaney, 2008; Waraas and Solbakk, 2009; Balmer, Liao and Wang, 2010). More particularly, scholars asserted that corporate brands in the business schools sector do not receive the academic attention they deserve and there is a need for further theoretical and empirical studies in this research area (Balmer and Liao, 2007; Balmer, Liao and Wang, 2010; Priporas and Kamenidou, 2011).

4- The literature review of internationalisation of branding discloses that this area of research has only recently received an attention from academics (Whitelock and Fastoso, 2007). Moreover, studies on branding in the international context are still insufficient (Whitelock and Fastoso, 2007; Wong and Merrilees, 2007; Dimofte et al., 2010; Eisingerich and Rubera, 2010; Meierer, 2011a; b; Madden et al., 2012). In the corporate brand context, scholars asserted that internationalisation of corporate brands is an under researched area of study and there is a scarcity of empirical studies that examined this area (Burt and Sparks, 2002; Melewar and Walker, 2003; Meierer, 2011a; b).

5- Reviewing the literature of customer identification shows that customer identification with a company/ brand is a potential research area and more theoretical and empirical studies are required (Kim et al., 2001; Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Badrinarayanan and Laverie, 2011; Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012). In the corporate brand context,

Sung (2011) argued that little research has been carried out on the antecedents and consequences of customer identification with a corporate brand. In particular, scholars of corporate brands such as Balmer and Liao (2007) and Balmer, Liao and Wang (2010) asserted that the corporate brand research lacks empirical studies on customer identification with corporate brands per se and, especially in the higher education context. They focused in their studies on student corporate brand identification in top ranking business school corporate brands. However, international student identification and its determinant factors in other types of business school corporate brands such as middle ranking business schools is still unexplored area of research. As a result, there is a need to conduct more empirical studies to examine this phenomenon.

6- Scrutiny of the extant literature shows that most previous studies linked customer identification with higher education/ business school and corporate brands (Balmer and Liao, 2007; Balmer, Liao and Wang, 2010), corporate brands and customer identification (Halliday and Kuenzel, 2008); internationalisation, corporate brands and higher education/ business school (Gray et al., 2003; Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka, 2006; Hemsley-Brown and Goonawardana, 2007; Priporas and Kamenidou, 2011), corporate brands and higher education (Chapleo, 2007; Curtis et al., 2009), internationalisation and branding (Burt and Sparks, 2002; Whitelock and Fastoso, 2007) and internationalisation and higher education (Teichler, 2004; Altbach and Knight, 2007). However, there is a lack of empirical studies that link together all of corporate brands, internationalisation, higher education/ business schools and

customer identification and more studies are required to address this gap in the literature.

7- The past studies have examined the antecedents and consequences of customer identification with a company/ brand (Kim et al., 2001; Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Ahearne et al., 2005; Marín and Ruiz, 2007; 2013; Curras-Perez et al., 2009; Sung, 2013). However, there is a lack of knowledge and empirical studies that examined the main determinants of customer identification with a corporate brand in the middle ranking business schools context.

8- Previous studies have focused on the importance of identity attractiveness as a main determinant of customer identification with a company/ brand (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Ahearne et al., 2005; Marín and Ruiz, 2007; 2013; Curras-Perez et al., 2009). However, little is known on the importance of corporate brand attractiveness for customer identification in HE/ middle ranking business school corporate brands. In particular, few detailed explanations are offered as to how and why middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness matters in the relationship between brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, metropolitan city brand, country brand, university physical campus, and tuition fees and international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.

9- There is a lack of empirical studies that examined the mediating influence of corporate brand attractiveness on customer identification, especially in the middle ranking business school corporate brand context. Furthermore, the moderating influence of corporate brand attractiveness on brand identification has not been the subject of

empirical studies, especially in the middle ranking business school corporate brand context.

Therefore, this study tries to fill partially these gaps in the extant literature by examining empirically the main determinants of international student identification with a UK middle ranking business school corporate brand.

2.8. Summary

This chapter provided the relevant literature review and discussed the main issues pertaining to four main research areas: HE/business schools, corporate brands, internationalisation and customer identification. The literature review shows that most of the studies have focused on top ranking business school corporate brands and examined the antecedents and consequences of customer identification with a company. However, there is a lack of understanding of a middle ranking business school corporate brand and the main determinants of customer identification in the HE/middle ranking business school sector and in the international context. Moreover, reviewing the literature has led the researcher to conclude that the extant literature, to date, has not been substantially explained through empirical research, international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand and its determinant factors.

The extant literature will be used to develop the theoretical framework and research hypotheses of this study. This will be examined in the next chapter, the theoretical framework and research hypotheses.

Chapter Three: Theoretical Framework and Research Hypotheses

3.1. Introduction

The previous chapters provided the research background and research objectives, and reviewed the main issues pertaining to higher education/ business schools, corporate brands, internationalisation, and customer identification with a company/ brand. This chapter presents the theoretical framework of this study which is developed based on the extant literature and the initial qualitative study. The theoretical framework links and postulates the main determinants of international postgraduate student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand. This chapter also identifies the possible relationships among these determinants based on extant theories and sets out the hypotheses for the empirical testing.

This chapter first presents an overview on the development of the theoretical framework based on the extant literature. Second, it defines the main determinants of international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand and discusses the relationships among them. These determinants involve: middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness, brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, metropolitan city brand, country brand, university physical campus and tuition fees. Third, this chapter proposes the mediating and moderating roles of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. Fourth, a summary of the chapter is placed at the end of it.

3.2. A theoretical framework of international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand

This study draws mainly on social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner, 1979; 1985), self-categorisation theory (Turner, 1985; Turner et al., 1987) and customer identification theory (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Ahearn et al., 2005; Curras-Perez et al., 2009) in developing the theoretical framework of this study (see figure 3.1). To date, not much has been written in terms of an identification in the corporate branding literature (Balmer and Liao, 2007; Balmer, Liao and Wang, 2010; Sung, 2011), but a good deal has been written on an identification in the corporate identity literature (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Marín and Ruiz, 2007; 2013; Marín et al., 2009; Karaosmanoglu et al., 2011). Therefore, the insights of the corporate identity literature will be used in this study to establish the theoretical framework of international postgraduate student corporate brand identification and develop the research hypotheses. The theoretical framework postulates a set of variables that determine international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand and discusses the possible relationships among these variables.

Drawing from the existing literature of customer identification, corporate brand identification and product brand identification (e.g. Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Ahearn et al., 2005; Balmer and Liao, 2007; Curras-Perez et al., 2009; Balmer, Liao and Wang, 2010) and the initial qualitative study conducted in the early stages of this study, the theoretical framework proposes that international postgraduate students are likely to identify with a middle ranking business school corporate brand when they find it to be attractive and able to satisfy their self-definition needs and enhance their social identity. However, this depends on the following

determinants: how similar a business school identity is to international postgraduate students' own identity (brand similarity) (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Karaosmanoglu et al., 2011), how distinctive it is from other business schools (brand distinctiveness) (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Curras-Perez et al., 2009), association with/ or the distance from a metropolitan city brand (Ali-Choudhury et al., 2009; Peluso and Guido, 2012), association with a country brand (Đorđević, 2008; Moilanen and Rainisto, 2009), the attractiveness of the university physical campus (Strange and Banning, 2000; Bennett and Ali-Choudhury, 2009; Eckert, 2012) and tuition fees demanded by a business school (Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002; Binsardi and Ekwulugo, 2003). Moreover, the findings of the initial qualitative study conducted in the early stages of this study confirmed the importance of brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, a metropolitan city brand, a country brand, the university physical campus and tuition fees as attractiveness factors of a business school for international students that might lead them to identify with it. Furthermore, this study proposes that middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness mediates and moderates the relationships between brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, metropolitan city brand, country brand, university physical campus and tuition fees and international postgraduate student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand. The next section will discuss these proposed determinants and the possible relationships among them. It will also discuss the mediating and moderating roles of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness.
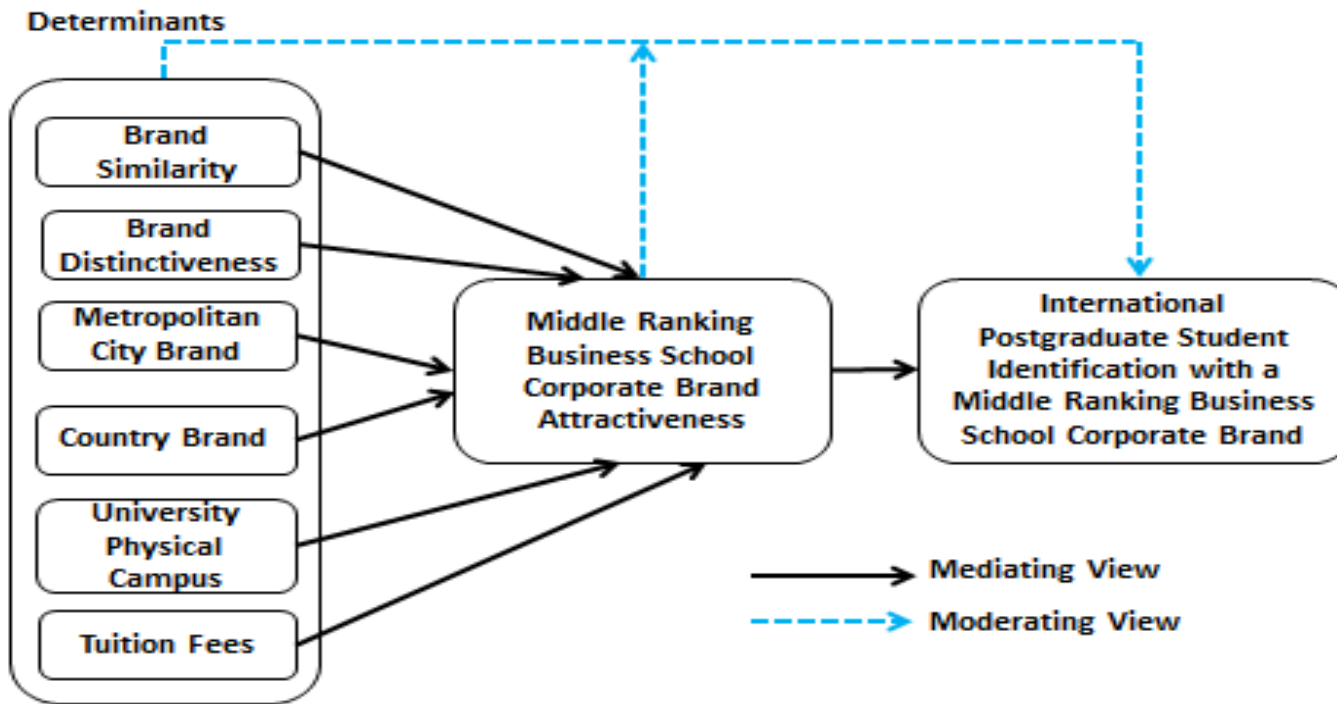
Figure 3.1. A theoretical framework- The main determinants of international postgraduate student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand

3.3. The main determinants of international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand

3.3.1. Middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness

Scholars such as Curras-Perez et al. (2009) and Marín et al. (2009) asserted that a positive and favourable evaluation of brand identity increases customers' perceived attractiveness of a brand. Moreover, Ahearne et al. (2005) emphasised that the attractiveness of a brand is based on the extent to which a customer has a favourable evaluation of its characteristics which should be seen as central, enduring and distinctive characteristics. Furthermore, Ellegaard and Ritter (2007) stated that brand attractiveness represents a power that pulls customers towards a company or a brand. In a similar vein, Peluso and Guido (2012, p. 345) extending this definition by describing brand attractiveness as "the extent to which users perceive a company to be capable of attracting and motivating stakeholders to interact with it".

According to Marín and Ruiz (2007, p. 246), a company seems to be attractive for customers when its characteristics meet, satisfy or enhance at least one principle of their self-definition needs such as: self-continuity which represents "the need to find the company's identity similar to their own" and self-distinctiveness which means the need to distinguish themselves from others in social contexts by identifying with a company that has some configurations of distinctive characteristics (Marín and Ruiz, 2007). Scholars such as Curras-Perez et al. (2009) emphasised that customers perceive a brand to be sufficiently attractive as it can satisfy one of the self-definitional needs such as self-continuity and self-distinctiveness.

The literature review shows that identity attractiveness is related to customer identification with a company/ brand (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Marín and Ruiz, 2007; 2013; Curras-Perez et al., 2009). According to social identity theory, an individual identification with a brand depends on the evaluation of its attractiveness and more particularly whether a brand helps an individual to satisfy at least one of his/her self-definition needs such as self-continuity and self-distinctiveness which match respectively, brand similarity and brand distinctiveness (Tajfel and Turner, 1985).

Earlier studies of identification have supported social identity theory as they acknowledged that the perceived attractiveness of a corporate identity is one of the main antecedents of customer identification with a company or a brand (Ahearne et al., 2005; Curras-Perez et al., 2009; Marín and Ruiz, 2007; 2013). For example, Marín and Ruiz (2007; 2013) stated that customer identification with a brand depends on the attractiveness of its identity. Marín and Ruiz (2013, p. 659) defined identity attractiveness as "the degree to which individuals are attracted to, prefer, and support relationships with a company given its enduring attributes". Ahearne et al. (2005) mentioned that customer identification is likely only if customers find a company as attractive. Ahearne et al. (2005, p. 577) further stated that "the more favourable the customers' perceptions of the company's characteristics, the stronger their C-C identification [customer-company identification]". Within the context of corporate brands, Sung (2011, p. 71) stated that "when the corporate brands' features fulfil the consumers' needs, consumers perceive the corporate brand as more attractive and distinct from other brands, and consequently they identify with the brand".

There are also several empirical studies that have been conducted in various sectors that emphasised the direct relationship between attractiveness of a product or company brand and customer identification. For example, Curras-Perez et al. (2009) provided empirical evidence from the cosmetic and toiletries sector as they stated that the attractiveness of a cosmetic and toiletries brand has a significant, direct and positive influence on customer identification with a company brand. Moreover, Kim et al. (2001) provided empirical evidence from the cellular sector using a survey questionnaire with a sample of a university's students. They confirmed that there is a significant positive relationship between the attractiveness of cellular brand personality and customer identification with a brand (Kim et al., 2001). In addition, Marín and Ruiz (2007; 2013) examined empirically customer identification in the financial sector. They confirmed that a company's identity attractiveness has a direct positive effect on customer identification with a company. However, the research shows that, to date, there are few empirical studies that examined the relationship between corporate brand attractiveness and customer identification in the middle ranking business school corporate brand context. Therefore, this study seeks to explore this relationship in aforementioned context.

In the context of this study, it can be proposed based on previous studies (e.g. Kim et al., 2001; Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Ahearne et al., 2005; Marín and Ruiz, 2007; 2013; Curras-Perez et al., 2009; Sung, 2011) that international postgraduate students are more likely to identify with a middle ranking business school corporate brand if it is attractive for them. Therefore, the following hypothesis can be stated as:

H1: Middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness has a direct positive effect on international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.

3.3.2. Brand similarity

Brand similarity can be defined as customers' perceptions that the identity (characteristics) of a brand is similar to their own identities (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003). The similarity also represents the extent to which members in a social group share the same attributes and characteristics among each other (Karaosmanoglu et al., 2011). Scholars such as Gonzalez and Chakraborty (2012) argued that people judge their similarity with a company /brand based on a similarity between them and other members within that company.

Previous studies showed that identity similarity is related to identity attractiveness (Berscheid and Walster, 1969; Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Koo, 2009; Karaosmanoglu et al., 2011). Some of these studies such as Bhattacharya and Sen (2003) indicated that identity similarity is a main predictor of identity attractiveness. They further hypothesised that "the more similar consumers perceive a company identity to be their own, the more attractive that identity is to them" (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003, p. 80). Moreover, the similarity-attraction paradigm suggested that a similarity is a main driver of attractions and a person is attracted to a social group that is similar to him (Berscheid and Walster, 1969; Karaosmanoglu et al., 2011). Furthermore, an individual evaluates a social group as attractive and seeks to have a membership within it if he/she perceives a similarity with other individuals within the group (Karaosmanoglu et al., 2011).

Academics such as Harris and de Chernatony (2001) asserted that if customers' perceptions of a corporate brand are consistent with their self-concept, they evaluate a corporate brand as an attractive one. Moreover, Marín and Ruiz (2007, p. 246) argued that a company seems to be

attractive for customers if it satisfies their self-continuity which represents "the need to find the company's identity similar to their own". Furthermore, Dutton et al. (1994) stated that similarity between a self-concept and perceived organisational identity can strengthen an individual's identification by making the perceived organisational identity more attractive. Recently, the extant studies show that when people perceive a similarity with a brand that satisfies their self-continuity needs, they perceive a brand as attractive and consequently they will identify with it (Gonzalez and Chakraborty, 2012).

The extant literature shows that identity similarity is related to customer identification with a company/ brand (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Donavan et al., 2006; Kuenzel and Halliday, 2008; Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012). Donavan et al. (2006, p. 133) stated that "we build affiliation with those similar to us and demonstrate a distinction from an out-group". Moreover, previous empirical studies emphasised the importance of identity similarity to customer identification with a brand in different sectors. For example, Kuenzel and Halliday (2008) examined empirically brand identification in the car sector. They found that brand identification is based on a similarity between what an individual feels about a company brand and what he feels about himself (Kuenzel and Halliday, 2008). Moreover, He and Li (2011) provided empirical evidence from the mobile and telecommunication service sector. They argued that a similarity between customers' physical and psychological needs and a brand's functional and symbolic attributes might lead customers to build relationship/ identification with a mobile and telecommunication service brand. Furthermore, Stokburger-Sauer et al. (2012) confirmed that brand self-similarity has a direct positive effect on customer identification with a brand. However, to date, there are few empirical studies that examined the

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relationship between brand similarity and each of corporate brand attractiveness and customer identification in the middle ranking business school corporate brand context. Therefore, this study seeks to explore this relationship in the aforementioned context.

In the context of this study, it can be proposed based on previous studies (e.g. Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Kuenzel and Halliday, 2008; He and Li, 2011; Karaosmanoglu et al., 2011; Gonzalez and Chakraborty, 2012) that international postgraduate students are more likely to evaluate a middle ranking business school corporate brand as attractive and in turn identify with it if they perceive a similarity between their own identities and the identity of a middle ranking business school corporate brand. Hence, the following hypotheses can be stated:

H2: Brand similarity has a direct positive effect on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness.

H2a: Brand similarity has a direct positive effect on international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.

3.3.3. Brand distinctiveness

According to Bhattacharya and Sen (2003), brand distinctiveness can be conceptualised as customers' perceptions that the identity (characteristics) of a brand is distinctive from competitors in terms of some dimensions they value. Previous studies referred that "distinctiveness differentiates the organisation from other organisations and provides a sharper and more salient definition for organisational members" (Mael and Ashforth, 1992, p. 107). Social identity theory is used to understand brand distinctiveness. It suggested that "people

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focus on their distinctiveness by demonstrating how they are different from the out-group"
(Donavan et al., 2006, p. 126).

The extant literature shows that identity distinctiveness is related to identity attractiveness (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003). Bhattacharya and Sen (2003, p. 80) stated that "the more distinctive consumers perceive a company's identity to be on dimensions they value, the more attractive that identity is to them". In the branding context, Curras-Perez et al. (2009) argued that brand attractiveness is based on the way in which an individual evaluates and judges the distinctiveness of brand identity (Curras-Perez et al., 2009). Therefore, comparing the identity of a company/brand with the identities of other competing brands is necessary to evaluate the distinctiveness and the level of attractiveness of a brand for customers (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Curras-Perez et al., 2009).

Scholars such as Marín and Ruiz (2007) affirmed that self-distinctiveness which is the need of customers to differentiate themselves from others in social contexts, is one of the main components of self-definitional needs. The fulfilment of this need drives customers to perceive the brand as attractive (Marín and Ruiz, 2007). Likewise, Curras-Perez et al. (2009) argued that customers might perceive a brand as attractive if it has the capability to satisfy customers' needs of distinctiveness.

Previous empirical studies supported the claims that identity/ brand distinctiveness has a positive influence on identity/ brand attractiveness in various sectors. For example, Curras-Perez et al. (2009) offered empirical evidence from the cosmetic and toiletries brand sector.

They confirmed that there is a positive relationship between the distinctiveness of a cosmetic and toiletries brand and its attractiveness for customers. Moreover, Kim et al. (2001) asserted that there is a significant positive relationship between the distinctiveness of brand personality and its attractiveness in the cellular sector.

The extant literature also shows that identity distinctiveness is related to customer identification with a company/ brand (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003). According to social identity theory, an individual aspires to be distinct and different from other people in the social context by getting an affiliation/ identification with a distinctive social group that shows the differences between him and the other people who belong to other social groups (Tajfel and Turner, 1985; Dutton et al., 1994; Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003). Therefore, individuals are likely to have strong identifications with a company/brand when they perceive a high distinctiveness level of that company/brand. This is because identification with such high distinctive brands might provide individuals with a sense of distinctiveness which might not be gained when they identify with less competitive or distinctive brands (Dutton et al., 1994). However, people also require being similar to other people and they seek to identify themselves with social groups that meet this need (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Karaosmanoglu et al., 2011; Guo, 2013). Therefore, while people need both to be similar to others on the one hand and distinctive from them on the other hand, they try to identify themselves with social groups that meet both needs. The theory of optimal distinctiveness developed by Brewer (1991) suggested that individuals need to be similar to other people and be unique at the same time (Guo, 2013). According to this theory, "people attempt to resolve the fundamental tension

between their need to be similar to others and their need to be unique by identifying with groups that satisfy both needs" (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003, p. 80).

Previous empirical studies supported social identity theory by emphasising that brand distinctiveness has a positive influence on customer identification in various sectors. For example, Ahearne et al. (2005) stated that customers who believe that a company has distinctive characteristics will find it to be an attractive target for identification in the pharmaceutical sector. Moreover, Balmer and Liao (2007) provided evidence from the higher education sector as they argued that the distinctiveness of brand community is viewed to be important for students to strengthen their identification with a top ranking business school corporate brand. In a similar vein, Mael and Ashforth (1992) asserted that the strength of alumni identification with their alma mater is related to the perceived distinctiveness of the alma mater. However, to date, there are few empirical studies that examined the relationship between brand distinctiveness and each of corporate brand attractiveness and customer identification in the middle ranking business school corporate brand context. Therefore, this study seeks to explore these relationships in the aforementioned context.

In the context of this study, it can be proposed based on previous studies (e.g. Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Donavan et al., 2006; Balmer and Liao, 2007; Curras-Perez et al., 2009) that the more distinctive international postgraduate students perceive a middle ranking business school corporate brand, the more attractive the business school corporate brand is to them and the more likely they will identify with it. Thus, the following hypotheses can be stated:

H3: Brand distinctiveness has a direct positive effect on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness.

H3a: Brand distinctiveness has a direct positive effect on international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.

3.3.4. Metropolitan city brand

City brand can be defined as "an assembly of tangible and intangible assets differentiating a city from others such as natural environment, historical features, culture, attributes, personality and values" (Yoon, 2010, p. 25). City branding scholars such as Trueman et al. (2012, p. 1015) argued that constructed city brand is "a cumulative, online account and representation of a city to create a distinctive, customer perception for which the brand may be evaluated". Moreover, Virgo and de Chernatony (2006) stated that a city brand represents functional and emotional values that enable a city to make unique and desired promises. More particularly, the environmental, political, economic, cultural, social and historical dimensions are the main values of a city brand which might influence its attractiveness to people (Yoon, 2010). London, New York and Paris are some examples of the famous city brands in the world (Hankinson, 2001). These cities market their history, lifestyle and culture in order to enhance their infrastructure and increase their attractiveness (Winfield-Pfefferkorn, 2005).

Past studies used brand image to compare cities. For example, a city with a positive and favourable brand image provides satisfaction to its residents or visitors and offers a better life to them in comparison with city brands with less favourable brand images (Yoon, 2010). Moreover, an individual's decisions to visit a city, purchase its products and services, live or

locate a company in it are influenced by a city brand image (Anholt, 2006). Therefore, a city with a favourable and positive brand perception is an attractive city for residents and visitors (Trueman et al., 2004). By contrast, cities with poor brand perceptions may reduce the likelihood of inward investment and influence negatively the number of investors (Trueman et al., 2004). Trueman et al. (2012) argued that companies in a city brand with a negative perception such as Bradford struggle to create a positive perception among stakeholders. Moreover, Trueman et al. (2008) identified twelve creative dimensions that might enhance a city brand, overcome the negative perception and create a positive one. These include a technology and research, an innovation, instability, culture, diversity, ethnicity, identity, profile, leadership, networks, education and security (Trueman et al., 2008).

The literature of higher education shows that a city brand is related to the attractiveness of a higher education institution brand for students (Chapleo, 2005; Peluso and Guido, 2012). Peluso and Guido (2012, p. 346) argued that "incorporating the place of location in a university's name creates an association between the image of that place and the image of the institution, and this encourages users to perceive and evaluate the university in relation to their perceptions of that place". Moreover, Chapleo (2005, p. 61, 62) stated that "the overall consensus appears to be that the image or brand of a city is to some degree inseparable from that of the university ... the UK cities that were seen to have undergone a 'renaissance' and be seen to some extent as 'fashionable' conferred some of those advantages on their universities". City brand scholars such as Trueman et al. (2012) indicated that there is a relationship between a company brand and a city brand.

Academics such as Peluso and Guido (2012) argued that the distinctiveness of a university and its perceived attractiveness are increased more when a university incorporates a city name with its brand name than when it links a region name with its brand name. They add that the majority of students prefer a university brand name which integrates the name of a city with its brand name to other names such as the one that links the name of a region with the name of a university. This is because a city name is more recognisable for people than a region name. Moreover, using a region of location naming strategy which links a region brand name with a university/ business school brand name might be more appropriate for attracting local students than international students (Peluso and Guido, 2012). In addition, using a city of location naming strategy is also more effective for creating a positive and distinctive image in people's minds than other names such as region name. Therefore, a university generates more benefits when integrating a city name within its brand name than when integrating the region name within its brand name (Peluso and Guido, 2012).

Empirical studies previous to the ones mentioned in the last paragraph such as Chapleo (2010) argued that the close link between a city brand and a university/ business school brand further increases the success of a university/business school brand and consequently the attractiveness of this institution brand for students and more particularly for international students. Moreover, Chapleo (2005) emphasised the importance of a city brand to a university brand and its attractiveness. He cited one of the managers' statements in his study as stating that "city location is crucial to brand perception. Bristol, Manchester, and Leeds have benefited from the city's brand while Exeter, Birmingham, and Liverpool have not benefited in the same way". In a similar vein, Moogan et al. (1999) confirmed that the facilities provided in a city where a

university/ business school is located are essential for attracting students towards that university/ business school. Likewise, Williams et al. (2008) asserted that "universities have had a deep and dynamic relationship with the economic, social and cultural life of the cities in which they are based…there are many positive examples of how cities have changed the quality of their 'offer' through provision of cultural and leisure facilities, helping the university to attract students and staff" (Williams et al., 2008, p. 43). Furthermore, Williams et al. (2008) highlighted that some universities interviewed referred to the good understanding that they had about the role of city brand to attract students.

London as a metropolitan city brand is considered among the most attractive cities in the UK and this is related to its culture, history, nightlife, shopping, infrastructure, housing, business and transportation (Anholt, 2006). Moreover, London has a positive image. It is ranked as the top city in the Anholt Nation Brand Index (2006) for the ease in finding a job, doing business and getting educational qualifications and the second top in the overall life style (Anholt, 2006). Scholars such as Ali-Choudhury et al. (2009) argued that London's associations and the distance of educational institutions from London influence the attractiveness of UK educational institution brands for students. This is because the location of a university/ business school in London (or near London) is considered as an important element of the university/ business school brand. Moreover, it has a positive influence on students' evaluation of a university/ business school brand attractiveness (Ali-Choudhury et al., 2009).

The literature of identification reveals that there is a link between a city brand and an individual's identification. For example, Donavan (2006, p. 127) argued that "the people –

place relationship encourages individuals to take pride in entities from the same location as they reside". Moreover, Lappegard (2007) stated that a place represented by city brand helps in defining a person's identity. This is because according to social identity theory, a person's self-concept is based in part on the city brand a person attaches with and he defines himself by describing what city he comes from (Lappegard, 2007). Furthermore, Kemp et al. (2012, p. 509) emphasised that the "positive attitudes toward the city's brand might increase the likelihood of a self-connection developing with the brand". Therefore, an individual's positive attitude towards a metropolitan city brand where a company/ brand is located might enhance his self-concept and, in turn, encourage his identification with a company/ brand (Lappegard, 2007; Kemp et al., 2012).

Scholars such as Chapleo (2010) emphasised that the close link between a city brand and an educational intuition brand is an important issue in international branding and it is necessary to be given attention by researchers. More particularly, to date few empirical studies have been conducted to examine the relationship between a city brand and both corporate brand attractiveness and customer identification in the middle ranking business school corporate brand context. Therefore, this study seeks to examine these relationships in the aforementioned context.

In the context of this study, it can be assumed based on previous studies (e.g. Donavan, 2006; Lappegard, 2007; Williams et al., 2008; Ali-Choudhury et al., 2009; Chapleo, 2010; Kemp et al., 2012; Peluso and Guido, 2012) that international students are more likely to perceive a

middle ranking business school corporate brand as attractive and to identify with it if it is associated with a metropolitan city brand. Therefore, the following hypotheses can be stated:

H4: A metropolitan city brand has a direct positive effect on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness.

H4a: A metropolitan city brand has a direct positive effect on international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.

3.3.5. Country brand

A country brand can be defined as "a country's whole image, covering political, economic, historical and cultural dimensions" (Fan, 2006, p. 8). Dinnie (2008, p. 15) defined a country brand as "the unique, multi-dimensional blend of elements that provide the nation with culturally grounded differentiation and relevance for all of its target audiences". Similarly, Fetscherin (2010, p. 468) stated that "a country brand is complex and includes multiple disciplines. It entails the collective involvement of the many stakeholders it must appeal to". They added that a country brand concerns with "a country's whole image, covering political, economic, social, environmental, historical, and cultural aspects" (Fetscherin, 2010, p. 468). The essential objectives of a country branding are: 1) stimulating exports, 2) attracting tourism, investments and immigration and 3) creating positive international perceptions and attitudes about the country (Fetscherin, 2010).

The literature shows that a country brand influences the way that people perceive, think and behave towards that country whether they live inside or outside of it (Dinnie and Fola, 2009). Moreover, Anholt (2000, p. 23) stated that "like corporate brands, country brands evoke certain

values, qualifications and emotional triggers in consumers' minds about the likely values of any product that comes from that country". Furthermore, Pecotich and Ward (2007) argued that customers' perceptions of a country influence their evaluations of products and services from that country. Therefore, any decision related to a country is made based on an individual's perception of the country brand whether he/she made a decision to buy a country's products and services, apply to work, visit or immigrate to that country (Dinnie and Fola, 2009).

Previous studies showed that there is a strong link between a country brand and individuals' perceived attractiveness of product brands and corporate brands originated in that country (Jaffe and Nebenzahl, 2001; Uggla, 2006; Đorđević, 2008; Moilanen and Rainisto, 2009). For example, Đorđević (2008) argued that a country brand enhances corporate brand attractiveness and their positioning in international markets. Moreover, Moilanen and Rainisto (2009) said that a country brand boosts the attractiveness of institutions, supports individuals' identity and enhances their self-esteem. Furthermore, scholars such as Uggla (2006) argued that places in general and countries in particular that are linked to corporate brands can offer immediate associations for these corporate brands. This is because a country of origin associated with a product or corporate brand can reflect the level of brand quality and help customers to create an immediate perception in their minds about that brand. For example, Spanish cars are associated with a moderate level of quality and the German cars are associated with a high level of quality (Uggla, 2006). Therefore, customers' perceived attractiveness of a brand made in these countries may be based on the relevant associations of their countries of origin in customers' minds.

Jaffe and Nebenzahl (2001) and Đorđević (2008) also emphasised that a country brand image influences an individual's perception of corporate brands originated in that country. They added that individuals perceive the image of corporate brands in accordance with its country brand image. Therefore, if the image of a country brand is positive, individuals will evaluate a corporate brand originated in that country in a positive way and consequently perceive it as an attractive brand. In contrast, if the country brand image is negative, people's perceptions of the corporate brand will be influenced negatively regardless of the quality of this corporate brand and consequently, corporate brand attractiveness for customers will be decreased (Jaffe and Nebenzahl, 2001).

Earlier empirical studies such as Pappu et al. (2006) argued that if a corporate brand changed the country where it is made in from a country that has a strong favourable perception in customers' minds (e.g. the USA) into a country that has a less favourable perception (e.g. Mexico), the brand equity will be decreased and consequently the perceived attractiveness of the corporate brand will be also decreased (Pappu et al., 2006). Similarly, Nebenzahl and Jaffe (1996) referred that the attractiveness of Japanese corporate brands such as Honda and Mazda will be decreased when they are produced in countries with less favourable brand images than Japan such as Korea or Mexico. Moreover, customers perceive Sony as a corporate brand name made in Japan better than the same brand name, Sony made in Singapore (Samiee, 2010).

In the higher education context, previous empirical studies such as Maringe and Carter (2007) emphasised that the worldwide recognition of UK HE qualification, the international quality of UK HE, the excellence of teaching and learning environments and entry requirements in the

UK HE intuitions are essential factors that making UK HE brand as attractive brand for international students (Maringe and Carter, 2007).

Scholars such as Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) asserted that international students give a priority in their choice decision to the host country in which they will continue their study. Moreover, Altbach (2004b) stated that the attractiveness of HE institutions placed in a foreign country brand such as the UK or the USA might be related to the perceived prestige of the British degree or the American degree. Furthermore, the attractiveness of a foreign university/ business school is also influenced by pull factors which are related to the host country such as the geographic proximity between the home country and the host country, the academic language and the availability of the preferred courses in the host country (Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002; Chen, 2007).

The literature of customer identification shows that a country of origin/country brand is identified among the main demographic characteristics of a company's identity which influence customer identification with a company (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003). Moreover, a country of origin/ country brand has an essential influence on customers' behaviours (Dinnie, 2004). It also contributes to shape an individual's identity (Twigger-Ross et al., 2003; Lappegard, 2007). According to the social identity theory, an individual's self-concept is based in part on the place a person is attached to and a country of origin/ country brand is valuable for an individual to define his identity and his sense of belongings to the company (i.e. identification) (Lappegard, 2007; Moilanen and Rainisto, 2009). Furthermore, a country brand influences how an individual sees or defines himself. For example, "people may refer to

themselves by describing what country they live in, what city or town they come from, or if they are a "country" or a "city person" (Lappegard, 2007, p. 1).

While previous studies have examined the relationship between a country brand and brand attractiveness (Jaffe and Nebenzahl, 2001; Pappu et al., 2006; Đorđević, 2008; Samiee, 2010) and a country brand and customer identification (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Twigger-Ross et al., 2003; Lappegard, 2007), to date, few empirical studies have examined these relationships in the middle ranking business school corporate brand context. Therefore, this study seeks to examine these relationships in the aforementioned context.

In the context of this study, it can be assumed based on previous studies (e.g. Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Twigger-Ross et al., 2003; Dinnie, 2004; Lappegard, 2007; Đorđević, 2008; Moilanen and Rainisto, 2009) that international students are more likely to perceive a middle ranking business school corporate brand as attractive and to identify with it if it is associated with a country brand (i.e. UK brand). Therefore, the following hypotheses can be stated as:

H5: A country brand has a direct positive effect on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness.

H5a: A country brand has a direct positive effect on international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.

3.3.6. University Physical campus

Academics such as Greenberg (2007, p. 1) stated that "a campus is an edited statement of the institutions self-image, how it solves problems, and how it wishes to present itself to its

students, alumni, faculty members, and the public". The extant literature of higher education shows that creating attractive campuses should be given a priority by higher education leaders. For example, Griffith (1994, p. 645) asserted that "higher education leaders should reshape their priorities to include the creation of attractive, engaging campuses that are conducive to both activity and tranquillity". Moreover, Ivy (2008) claimed that the physical evidence represents a tangible element of the service offering. He also stated that university physical evidence includes a variety of aspects such as a building's appearance and provided facilities (Ivy, 2008). Recent studies on a university physical campus such as Eckert (2012, p. 6) stated that "architectural style, climate, location, proximity to urban centres, and institutional purpose and philosophy practically guarantee uniqueness of the physical campus". Moreover, previous studies showed that a campus's layout, visible amenities and facilities are essential elements of a unique physical campus that influences students' first impressions and their behaviours (Strange and Banning, 2000).

According to Ivy (2008) and Eckert (2012), this study defined a university physical campus as tangible components of a university campus such as building's appearance and architectural style, climate, location and proximity to urban centres, safety and provided facilities that guarantee uniqueness of the university physical campus.

Although a physical campus of a higher education institution is rarely examined in a direct way by researchers, it makes appearances in the literature related to a university branding (Ali-Choudhury et al., 2009; Bennett and Ali-Choudhury, 2009), marketing educational institutions (Binsardi and Ekwulugo, 2003), recruiting prospective students (Reynolds, 2007) and students

choice decision (Soutar and Turner, 2002; Gray et al., 2003; Chapleo, 2005; Russell, 2005; Bennett and Ali-Choudhury, 2009; Padlee et al., 2010).

The literature review shows that a university physical campus is related to the attractiveness of an educational institution brand for students (Yost and Tucker, 1995; Strange and Banning, 2000; Russell, 2005; Noel-Levitz, 2007; Bennett and Ali-Choudhury, 2009; Padlee et al., 2010). Previous empirical studies such as Strange and Banning (2000) confirmed that a university physical campus develops and communicates a university image and increases a university's attractiveness for students because the university physical campus influences students' first impressions and their behaviours towards the university. Moreover, Yost and Tucker (1995) and Noel-Levitz (2007) stated that students' perceptions of an external presentation of an educational institution campus influence their perceived attractiveness and their choice decision of that institution. Furthermore, Russell (2005) asserted the importance of an effective management of physical evidence in the educational context. He argued that prospective students often evaluate an educational service by looking at the physical evidence that surrounds it. More particularly, Russell (2005) asserted that a university campus and its surroundings that form students' perceptions are important to international students. There are further empirical studies which showed that physical characteristics of a university campus (e.g. campus layout, architecture, safety and security within a campus, campus size, campus atmosphere), the type of a university campus (modern or old), a campus place (rural/urban) and facilities provided within a campus represent essential components of a university brand that attracts students (Soutar and Turner, 2002; Gray et al., 2003; Binsardi and Ekwulugo, 2003; Ali-Choudhury et al., 2009; Padlee et al., 2010).

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The extant literature also shows that a university physical campus influences students' sense of belonging (i.e. identification) with an educational institution (Sturner, 1972; Lappegard, 2007). According to social identity theory, an individual's self-concept is based in part on the place a person attaches with (Lappegard, 2007; Moilanen and Rainisto, 2009). Moreover, previous studies such as Sturner (1972) argued that students' involvements with a university campus would help to create a crucial sense of belonging (i.e. identification) with a university. Moreover, based on Lappegard (2007), Moilanen and Rainisto (2009) and Curras-Perez et al. (2009), it can be stated that the attachment to the campus is useful for fulfilling a student's self-concept which is necessary for perceived attractiveness and identification with an educational institution (university/ business school). This is probably because people are attracted to environments that fit their personality type and they behave in a way that fit these environments as soon as they become part of them (Strange and Banning, 2000).

Recently, Eckert (2012, p. 8) asserted that "students who are already enrolled at an institution experience this same physical campus environment on a daily basis and it becomes a part of their sense of "fit" on campus". Institutional fit represents "the extent to which a student feels that she or he belongs to institutions" (i.e. identify with institutions) (Melewar and Akel, 2005, p. 50). Furthermore, Price et al. (2003, p. 213) stated that a student-institution fit consists of three sets of components: 1) students' characteristics (e.g. their goals, abilities, needs, interest, and values), 2) the characteristics of an educational institution environment (e.g. physical, social and psychological aspects) and 3) the consequences of the interaction between students and an educational institution environment (e.g. students' academic achievement, their satisfaction and loyalty or their identification with the educational institution).

The literature shows further empirical studies such as Gatfield et al. (1999) and Ali-Choudhury et al. (2009) which asserted the importance of a social environment within a university campus that makes the life in the campus more enjoyable for international students and enhance their sense of fit within a university/ business school. This comprises the safety within a campus, the existence of clubs, sports and amenities and all other social facilities that contribute to a better social life for students (Gatfield et al., 1999; Ali-Choudhury et al., 2009). Consequently, a university physical campus influences student identification with that university.

While previous studies indicated the relationship between university campus and each of brand attractiveness (Strange and Banning, 2000; Russell, 2005; Noel-Levitz, 2007; Bennett and Ali-Choudhury, 2009; Padlee et al., 2010) and customer identification (Sturner, 1972; Price et al., 2003; Eckert, 2012), to date, few empirical studies have examined these relationships in the middle ranking business school corporate brand context. Therefore, this study seeks to examine these relationships in the aforementioned context.

In the context of this study, it can be proposed based on previous studies (e.g. Sturner, 1972; Yost and Tucker, 1995; Strange and Banning, 2000; Price et al., 2003; Bennett and Ali-Choudhury, 2009; Eckert, 2012) that international postgraduate students are more likely to perceive a middle ranking business school corporate brand as attractive and to identify with it if they fit with/ or have positive attitudes towards the university physical campus. Therefore, the following hypotheses can be stated:

H6: A university physical campus has a direct positive effect on the middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness.

H6a: A university physical campus has a direct positive effect on international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.

3.3.7. Tuition fees (Price)

Price can be defined as "what [a company] charges for its products and services, including the goodwill element in the valuation of its corporate and product brands" (Balmer, 2011a, p. 1339). A price in the HE context is termed as a tuition fee and it can be defined as "what is being charged for the degree or tuition fees that are required to enrol at the university" (Ivy, 2008, p. 289). Universities charge students tuition fees for educational services they provide. They also use these tuition fees as a means of competition in the higher education market (Rothschild and White, 1995). Price is known as one element of the 7ps (product, price, place, promotion, people, physical facilities and processes) that form a traditional marketing tool for marketing educational services (Ivy, 2008). It is also an essential component that drives a value perception and marketers take this in consideration when developing their pricing strategies (Jiang and Rosenbloom, 2005). It should be noted that brand value can be defined as "the trade-off between the quality or benefits [consumers] perceive in a product relative to the sacrifice they perceive by paying the price" (Jiang and Rosenbloom, 2005, p. 151).

The extant literature shows that a price or a tuition fee is essential for both educational institutions and students (Kinzie et al., 2004; Ivy, 2008). For educational institutions, a tuition fee paid by enrolled students is considered as the main source of revenue for most educational institutions. This tuition fee accounts for between 30% and 90% of revenues for these institutions (Kinzie et al., 2004). Moreover, tuition fees are considered as one of the main

elements that contribute to HE brand building (Chapleo, 2010). Furthermore, corporate branding scholars such as Balmer, Liao and Wang (2010) indicated that universities with favourable corporate brands will be able to charge students premium fees. This is particularly so at master level (Balmer, Liao and Wang, 2010). With regard to students, a tuition fee influences students' perceptions of the quality of educational services and consequently the attractiveness of an educational institution for them. It is also deemed as one of the main criteria used by students to evaluate and select educational institutions (Ivy, 2008).

The literature review indicates that a price is related to corporate brand attractiveness. For example, González-Benito et al. (2008) conducted an empirical study to examine the relationship between brand attractiveness and both brand price and market share in Spain. They found that there is a positive relationship between brand attractiveness and brand prices. Moreover, González-Benito et al. (2008) asserted that brands with high attractiveness matches brands with high prices and high market share while brands with low attractiveness matches brands with low price and low market share. Furthermore, Weigold et al. (1992) stated that the price of a brand and the perceived attractiveness of it are related positively to each other.

In the HE context, empirical studies such as Binsardi and Ekwulugo (2003) asserted that in order to increase the attractiveness of a UK higher education brand for international students, the best way to do that is to decrease tuition fees of delivered educational services. Moreover, tuition fees are also considered as one of the essential factors for developing international marketing penetration strategies of the UK universities and to attract more international students to the UK educational institutions (Binsardi and Ekwulugo, 2003). Empirical studies

such as Naidoo (2007) assumed that there is an inverse relationship between the flows of international students to the UK and the level of tuition fees in that country. Previous empirical studies further confirmed that a tuition fee is among the main characteristics that pull international students to study in a foreign country and select a higher education institution (Mazzarol et al., 1997; Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002; Binsardi and Ekwulugo, 2003; Naidoo, 2007; Maringe and Carter, 2007).

Past studies such as Voss et al. (1998) stated that price perception of a brand influences positively customers' satisfaction of that brand. Therefore, a favourable price perception will increase customers' satisfaction with a brand and make it an attractive target for identification. Overall, the strength of customer identification with a brand increases when the favourable price perception increases. However, to date, few empirical studies have been conducted to examine the relationship between tuition fees and each of corporate brand attractiveness and customer identification in the UK middle ranking business school corporate brand. Therefore, this study seeks to examine these relationships in the aforementioned context.

In the context of this study, it can be assumed based on previous studies (e.g. Mazzarol et al., 1997; Voss et al., 1998; Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002; Binsardi and Ekwulugo, 2003; Maringe and Carter, 2007; Naidoo, 2007) that international postgraduate students are more likely to perceive a middle ranking business school corporate brand as attractive and to identify with it if tuition fees demanded by the middle ranking business school decreases. Therefore, the following hypotheses can be stated:

H7: Tuition fees have a negative effect on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness

H7a: Tuition fees have a negative effect on international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.

3.4. The mediating and moderating roles of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness

The argument for the impact of brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, metropolitan city brand, country brand, university physical campus and tuition fees on international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand is persuasive. However, a careful inspection indicates that the argument implicitly assumes the mediating role of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. As was argued previously, the existence of brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, metropolitan city brand, country brand, university physical campus and tuition fees determine middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Naidoo, 2007; Ali-Choudhury et al., 2009; Curras-Perez et al., 2009; Chapleo, 2010; Padlee et al., 2010; Samiee, 2010; Peluso and Guido, 2012; Eckert, 2012). Moreover, middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness strengthens international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Curras-Perez et al., 2009). Moreover, Bhattacharya and Sen (2003) suggested that identity attractiveness is important for the occurrence of customer identification with a company and this identification is a result of two sequential steps; customers perceive a company as attractive in the first step and they identify with it in the second step. Thus, this study proposes that all of brand similarity, brand

distinctiveness, metropolitan city brand, country brand, university physical campus and tuition fees affect international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand indirectly through the mediating effect of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. Based on the logic of mediation (Baron and Kenny, 1986), this discussion suggests the following hypothesis:

H8: Middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness mediates the effects of a) brand similarity, b) brand distinctiveness, c) metropolitan city brand, d) country brand, e) university physical campus, and f) tuition fees on international postgraduate student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.

According to Baron and Kenny (1986), a latent construct can have both mediating and moderating status in the research model. Previous empirical studies such as De Luca and Atuahene-Gima (2007) have examined the mediating and moderating roles of the same latent construct (knowledge integration mechanisms (KIMs)). They assumed that KIMs mediate and moderate the effect of cross-functional collaboration and market knowledge on product innovation performance. Following Baron and Kenny (1986) and De Luca and Atuahene-Gima (2007), this study will assume that middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness has both mediating and moderating roles in the developed research model. Therefore, the influence of brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, metropolitan city brand, country brand, university physical campus and tuition fees on international postgraduate student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand may be changed according to the level of attractiveness of middle ranking business school corporate brand

attractiveness for international postgraduate students. Based on (Baron and Kenny, 1986; De Luca and Atuahene-Gima, 2007), this study suggests the following hypothesis:

H9: Middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness moderates the effects of a) brand similarity, b) brand distinctiveness, c) metropolitan city brand, d) country brand, e) university physical campus, and f) tuition fees on international postgraduate student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.

3.5. Summary

This chapter provided a theoretical framework on international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand. It investigated why and under what conditions international postgraduate students enter into a strong, committed, and meaningful identification with a certain middle ranking business school corporate brand. It further assumed the mediating and moderating influence that middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness may have on the relationships between brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, metropolitan city brand, country brand, university campus and tuition fees on international postgraduate student identification. This chapter together with the literature review chapter form a theoretical basis that informs the appropriate methodology of this study which will be discussed in detail in the next chapter, the methodology.

Chapter Four: Methodology

4.1. Introduction

The previous chapter provided the theoretical framework and research hypotheses of this study. The aim of this chapter is to provide and justify the appropriate methodology used to collect the empirical data that are necessary to test the theoretical framework and research hypotheses. This chapter defines a case study approach and identifies the types of a case study. It also provides a justification for selecting a theory building case-based survey as an appropriate research methodology. It discusses the research strategy (initial qualitative study and main quantitative study) and research methods. It provides the data collection process for both the initial qualitative study and the main quantitative study. A summary of the chapter is provided at the end of it.

4.2. Research methodology

A theory building case-based survey (Eisenhardt, 1989; Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007) undertaken among international postgraduate students at a middle ranking business school corporate brand (Brunel Business School) was used as an appropriate research methodology. More specifically, this research is informed by data derived from an initial qualitative study and a main quantitative study. Given the lack of understanding of the examined phenomenon, an initial qualitative study was conducted in the early stages of this study in order to gain in-depth understanding of the phenomenon, develop the theoretical framework and the questionnaire (Maxwell, 1996; Zikmund, 2013). Semi structured interviews with senior figures

at UK higher education institutions and focus group discussions with international students in Brunel Business School were used as appropriate research methods to collect the empirical qualitative data. Moreover, a main quantitative study was employed in the last stages of this study in order to test the developed hypotheses. A questionnaire survey distributed to international postgraduate students (master and doctorate) in Brunel Business School was employed as an appropriate quantitative research method to collect the empirical quantitative data.

4.2.1. The definition and nature of case study research

Case study has been acknowledged as a common research method in many research areas such as marketing, business and education (Yin, 2009). Scholars have provided several definitions of case study research and the majority of these definitions indicated that case study research focuses on examining a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of information. For example, Yin (2009, p. 18) defined a case study as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident". Similarly, Robson (2002, p. 178) asserted that case study research is "a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence". These sources of evidence might include, for example, conducting interviews with people, distributing surveys, reviewing documents or making observations of the examined field (Yin, 2009). Moreover, Bryman and Bell (2007) argued that a case study is a detailed exploration of a specific case which can be a community, a person, or an organisation.

Researchers such as Riege (2003) stated that case study research is preferable in qualitative studies. However, there are some researchers who argued that case study research can also be used in quantitative studies. For example, Zhou (2000, p. 179) criticised the view that it is not acceptable to use a case study approach in quantitative research as he asserted that "there is no compelling reason to suggest that case study research could not be conducted on a quantitative basis, or that such an orientation would lack value". Similarly, Yin (1994) indicated that case study research is useful when a researcher is trying to examine casual relationships and not just seeking to explore or describe a particular situation. Therefore, case study research might have either a qualitative or a quantitative nature. Case study research is qualitative when the main research strategy used for collecting the empirical data is qualitative (e.g., unstructured interviews, semi-structured interviews, focus groups) and the relationship between a theory and research is inductive (Bryman and Bell, 2007). However, a case study is quantitative when the main research strategy used for collecting the empirical data is quantitative (e.g. questionnaire survey) and the relationship between the theory and research is deductive (Bryman and Bell, 2007).

4.2.2. The types of case study research

According to Gillham (2000) and Yin (1994; 2003; 2009), case study research can be a single case study or multiple cases. A single case study addresses only one case such as an individual (e.g. a family or a class), an institution (e.g. a school or a factory) or a community (e.g., a town or an industry). However, multiple case studies focus on examining two or more case studies (Yin, 2003; 2009).

Scholars have addressed each type of case study research and the reasons that make it as an appropriate research approach (Yin, 1994; 2004; 2009; Riege, 2003; Bryman and Bell, 2007). For example, there are several advantages of using multiple case studies such as: 1) strengthening the findings, making them more compelling and robust and improving the interpretations, 2) decreasing the risks accompanied by using a single case study because if one of the multiple case studies is failed to be completed, the researchers will still have the opportunity to complete the rest of the case studies, 3) comparing and contrasting the findings generated from each case with the rest of the cases, 4) increasing the opportunity of generalising from the findings and 5) providing researchers with the possibility of doing direct replication (Yin, 2004; 2009; Bryman and Bell, 2007).

With regard to a single case study approach, Yin (2009, p. 52) identified five main situations under which a single case study is considered as an appropriate research approach as he argued that "the single case design is eminently justifiable under certain conditions- where the case represents (a) a critical test of existing theory, (b) a rare or unique circumstance, or (c) a representative or typical case, or where the case serves as a (d) revelatory or (e) longitudinal purpose". Table (4.1) shows a brief explanation of these situations.

Table 4.1. An explanation of situations under which a single case study is considered as an appropriate research approach

The situation	Explanation
A single case represents a critical case that tests a significant theory	A critical single case study meets all necessary conditions to test the theory. It is useful for verifying whether a theory's set of hypotheses are confirmed or rejected. Moreover, it contributes to knowledge and theory building as it can confirm, reject or extend a theory.
A single case represents a rare or unique circumstance	This case is common in clinical psychology where any case is considered as a rare case that is worth examination.
A single case represents a representative or typical case	In this situation, a researcher is interested in the circumstances and conditions of everyday situations.
A single case represents a revelatory case	In this situation, the researcher has an opportunity to examine a phenomenon that few social researchers have considered before.
A single case represents a longitudinal case	This situation involves examining the same case study in various points of time. In this situation, a researcher is interested in examining the changes of a specific condition over time.

Adapted from Yin (2009, p. 47- 52)

However, like any other research methods, a single case study approach has some criticisms that make it sometimes less preferable or less appropriate to be used in comparison with other research methods. The essential criticism of using a single case study is related to the generalisability of findings where there is little basis for statistical generalisability (Yin, 2003; 2009). Whilst the statistical generalisability of findings generated from a single case study is limited, the insights are still analytically generalisable (Yin, 2003; 2009).

4.2.3. Justification for selecting a theory building case-based survey as an appropriate research approach in this study

Scholars such as Eisenhardt (1989), Amaratunga and Baldry (2001), Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) and Yin (2009) confirmed the efficiency of a case study approach as a means for theory building. Moreover, Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007, p. 25) asserted that "building theory from case studies is a research strategy that involves using one or more cases to create theoretical constructs, propositions and/or midrange theory from case-based". Furthermore, Eisenhardt (1989, p. 533) provided a roadmap for building theory from case study research. This involves several steps and activities: 1) defining the research question, 2) selecting cases, 3) clarifying instruments, 4) collecting empirical data, 5) analysing empirical data, 6) shaping hypotheses, 7) comparing findings with existing literature and 8) conclusion.

Case study scholars such as Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) also asserted that studies that build theory from case studies are often regarded as the most interesting studies and they are the most highly cited studies in several academic journals such as the Academy of Management Journal (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007).

In this study, a theory building case-based survey undertaken among international students in a London-based middle ranking business school was employed as an appropriate research methodology because this study represents a critical case that tests a significant theory. It contributes to knowledge and theory building as it can confirm, reject or extend a theory (Yin, 2009). Moreover, a theory building case study methodology was appropriate since this approach is most appropriate when little is known about a phenomenon (international student

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identification towards a middle ranking business school corporate brand) and consequently there can be little reliance on the extant literature (Gill and Johnson, 1991). Furthermore, as Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007, p. 27, 30) stated that, a theory built from single-case studies "can richly describe the existence of a phenomenon … [and] can enable the creation of more complicated theories than multiple cases, because single-case researchers can fit their theory exactly to the many details of a particular case".

A theory building case-based survey methodology was also appropriate because using a case study with a survey questionnaire will help in first developing a theory which can subsequently be tested using a questionnaire (Gable, 1994). Using this approach is recommended by scholars such as Gable (1994) who also mentioned that survey research is significantly improved when employed in conjunction with other qualitative research methods such as case study (Gable, 1994). Moreover, a theory building case study is especially appropriate in contemporary topic areas (international student corporate brand identification) and it is useful for producing an accurate, original, interesting, testable and valid theory (Eisenhardt, 1989; Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007). Furthermore, case study scholars such as Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007, p. 25) asserted that "a major reason for the popularity and relevance of theory building from case studies is that it is one of the best (if not the best) of the bridges from rich qualitative evidence to mainstream deductive research. Its emphasis on developing constructs, measures, and testable theoretical propositions makes inductive case research consistent with the emphasis on testable theory within mainstream deductive research" (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007, p. 25).

The extant literature shows several previous studies that employed a theory building case-based survey as an appropriate research methodology to examine a particular phenomenon. For example, Modell and Lee (2001) employed a case study with a survey to examine the relationship between decentralisation of decision-making authority and reliance on the controllability principle. Moreover, Hopwood (1973) used a case study with a survey to examine attitudinal and behavioural effects of budgetary control. Furthermore, the extant literature also shows several previous empirical studies such as Vallaster and de Chernatony (2006), Balmer and Liao (2007), Balmer and Thomson (2009) and Curtis et al. (2009) which employed a single case study approach as a main research methodology in the marketing and corporate brands research fields.

4.3. Research strategy and methods

According to Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007), the evidence of case studies might be of a qualitative or a quantitative nature and case studies might typically combine multiple research methods such as interviews, focus groups, questionnaires and observations. Figure (4.1) shows the research design and data collection methods of this study. More specifically, the data was collected using qualitative and quantitative study. An initial qualitative study was conducted in the early stages of this study using three semi-structured interviews with senior figures in UK higher education institutions and two focus group discussions with international students in Brunel Business School. A quantitative study was conducted in the last stages of the study by distributing a survey questionnaire to international postgraduate students (master and doctorate) in Brunel Business School. A questionnaire was developed based on the literature

review and the qualitative study findings. Prior to distributing the main survey, a pilot study was conducted to examine face validity and improve survey design.

Figure 4.1. A research design and data collection methods
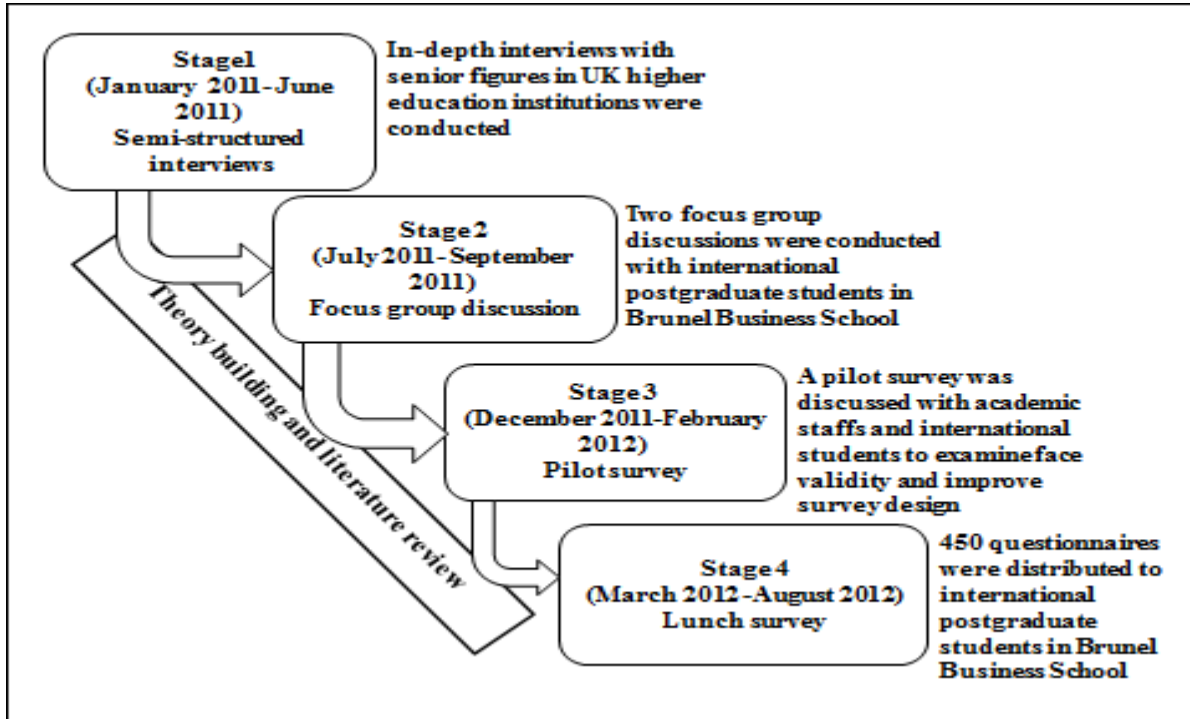
4.3.1. Qualitative research

Qualitative research can be defined as "an umbrella term covering an array of interpretative techniques which seek to describe, decode, translate and otherwise come to terms with the meaning, not the frequency, of certain more or less naturally occurring phenomena in the social world" (van Maanen, 1979, p. 520). Scholars such as Hancock and Algozzine (2006) confirmed that qualitative research is useful when little is known about the examined phenomena. Moreover, qualitative research focuses on the inductive approach in explaining the

relationship between a theory and research, it is more concerned with interpretivism and it has a subjectivist conception of a social reality (Bryman and Bell, 2007).

4.3.1.1. Qualitative research methods

In this study, a semi-structured interview and a focus group discussion were employed to collect the empirical qualitative data.

A semi-structured interview was considered as an appropriate research method to collect the empirical qualitative data in this study for several reasons: 1) a semi-structured interview is considered as one of the popular qualitative methods to collect the empirical qualitative data (Maxwell, 1996; Bryman and Bell, 2007; Saunders et al., 2009; Zikmund, 2013), 2) it saves time and it is especially useful for interviewing people where time is valuable such as managers, bureaucrats, and elite members of a community-people (Bernard, 2000) and 3) it is a flexible and a useful method to get in-depth understanding of the examined phenomenon (Robson, 2002).

The literature review shows that semi-structured interviews can be undertaken using various techniques such as face to face interview, telephone interview and internet interview (Bryman and Bell, 2007; Saunders et al., 2009). In this study, the semi-structured interviews were undertaken using the telephone interview technique because of several advantages associated with this technique such as: 1) a telephone interview technique is more convenient than a face to face interview because it is cheaper and costs less than face to face interviews, 2) it is fast to collect the data and it saves time of a researcher, 3) it is beneficial if the interviewees are

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widely dispread and interviewing them requires interviewers to travel to them which will cost an interviewer much time and effort, 4) it is a common method in marketing research (Bryman and Bell, 2007; Saunders et al., 2009). In addition, the senior figures who agreed to participate in this study suggested this technique to undertake the interviews with them. However, in spite of these important advantages of the telephone interview, this technique has some disadvantages such as: this type of interview cannot be conducted when interviewees might not be contactable. Moreover, the interviewer will miss the opportunity of observing and responding to interviewees' reaction when questions are asked (Bryman and Bell, 2007).

A focus group discussion is also considered as an appropriate research method in this study because it is one of the most popular methods for collecting empirical qualitative data (Hussey and Hussey, 1997; Saunders et al., 2009). Moreover, it provides an opportunity for researchers to gain access to different opinions which are especially required when the researcher examines an unexplored phenomenon (international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand) (Bryman and Bell, 2007; Saunders et al. 2009).

4.3.1.2. An initial qualitative study: data collection process, analysis and findings

In this study, given the lack of understanding of the examined phenomenon "the determinants of international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand", an initial qualitative study was conducted in the early stages of the study in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the examined phenomenon (Maxwell, 1996; Zikmund, 2013). This involved two stages. In the first stage, three initial semi-structured interviews were undertaken by telephone between January 2011 and June 2011 with senior figures in three different

ranking levels of UK universities: a top ranking university (a Russell Group University), a middle ranking university, and a low ranking university. The senior figures have respectively the positions of pro-vice chancellor, director of corporate communication and vice chancellor. The interviews in this study lasted 45-90 minutes (see Appendices 12.a for more details on the profile of the interviewees).

The senior figures of the UK universities were selected to be interviewed in this study because they are experts in a corporate brand management and in delivering corporate brands to international markets (King, 1991; Balmer and Gary, 2003; Balmer and Liao, 2007). Moreover, the top decision makers such as senior figures are likely to be more predictive of internationalisation (Reuber and Fischer, 1997). Furthermore, senior figures are "'key informants who can draw upon their professional experience and specialist knowledge to attempt to define the fundamental characteristics of relevant matters" (Tremblay, 1982, p. 19). In addition, interviewing expert people will decrease the possibility of straying into an unproductive subject area (Ali-Choudhury et al., 2009).

The researcher used Royal Charter, Russell Group Universities and international ranking league tables such as the Financial Times to classify UK universities/ business schools into three categories: top, middle and low ranking universities/ business schools (see appendices 13). This study identified the level of internationalisation of the UK universities and business schools based on their international operations. However, since most of the UK universities recruit overseas students in their home campuses, this study gave a particular focus to contact senior figures of universities and business schools that set up overseas campuses, do

international franchising, twinning, overseas partnership and other international operations. This was useful to identify 3 cases selected carefully to represent three types of UK universities/ business school corporate brands (top, middle and low) with different strategies of internationalisation (multi- overseas campuses, international franchising, overseas partnership and overseas students recruitment). The researcher selected the three types of university/business school corporate brands with different international marketing strategies because her first research interest was to examine the internationalisation of UK universities and business schools corporate brands at three ranking levels (top, middle and low). More particularly, how does the strength of UK universities and business schools corporate brands affect their market entry choice decision to international markets?

The senior figures of the three selected universities/ business schools who agreed to participate in this study were contacted again via email to thank them for participating in this study and to schedule appointments with them to conduct the interviews. Moreover, the issues of confidentiality were assured for them and that the information they provide would be kept strictly confidential and would be used only for academic research purposes. Prior to conducting the semi-structured interviews, an interview guide was developed to ensure an appropriate coverage of the main issues that will be addressed during the interviews. Subsequently, a list of interview questions was developed based on the interview guide. The interview guide was divided into a number of topics that were derived from the existing literature and the objective of the study. Generally, the interviews were focused on the following issues: the internationalisation of the UK University and Business School corporate brands, the attractiveness factors of the UK university and business school corporate brand for

international students from the perspective of senior figures, the particular importance of a city brand and a country brand as attractiveness factors of UK university and business school corporate brands and the university and business school corporate brand management in international markets. Open-ended questions were used in designing the interview guide because this type of question can create room for discussing issues that might arise from the interview and to serve as a point of departure for further discussion (Bryman and Bell, 2007). Furthermore, this type of question has "the virtue of allowing the subjects to tell the interviewer what's relevant and what's important rather than being restricted by the researchers' preconceived notions about what is important" (Berry, 2002, p. 681).

In the second stage of this study, two focus group discussions were carried out with international students at Brunel Business School between July and September 2011. The aim of using focus group discussions was to examine international students' perceptions of the attractiveness factors of the Brunel Business School corporate brand that led them to identify with it. In each of these focus groups which lasted about 45 minutes, five international students were randomly chosen from international postgraduate students who were studying in Brunel Business School. The number of participants is ideal for providing an opportunity for each participant to express his point of view. It is also easier for the researcher to manage such number of participants than using larger number of participates (Bryman and Bell, 2007).

All interviews and focus group discussions were recorded using a professional recorder after taking permissions from the interviewees in order to increase the accuracy of collected data and decrease any possible error that might be generated if a recorder was not used. Moreover, using

a recorder also provides the interviewer with the opportunity to be more attentive to the interviewees (Bryman and Bell, 2007). The interviews and focus group discussions were taped and transcribed verbatim for analysis. Furthermore, data collection and data analysis were conducted simultaneously following the common procedure of qualitative research (Gummesson, 2005).

In analysing the collected qualitative data (see appendices 12.b, c), this study used the three stage coding process (open-coding/axial-coding/selective coding) that is popular in qualitative research (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Easterby-Smith et al., 2002). Following Miles and Huberman (1994) and Easterby-Smith et al. (2002), the initial conceptual framework derived from the extant literature was used as guidance for the coding process. In the first stage, open coding was employed and this involved examining the text carefully to create categories of similar information. In the second stage, axial coding was used and this involved connecting the categories or codes generated in the open coding stage. The selective coding was used in the final stage and it involved selecting specific codes from the empirical qualitative data to develop the desired theory (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Easterby-Smith et al., 2002). In addition, data was coded by hand rather than by using computer software because this makes the researcher close to the data. While trustworthiness is considered as an essential criterion for assessing the quality of qualitative results (Marshall, 1996), the researcher repeated the coding process more than one time in order to enhance the findings' trustworthiness and in turn enhance the quality of the qualitative findings.

The findings of the initial qualitative study showed that the senior figures of the three UK universities asserted the importance of internationalisation for UK business school corporate brands. Moreover, the senior figures asserted the importance of brand distinctiveness, a city brand, the country brand, the university campus and tuition fees as attractiveness factors of UK business school corporate brands for international students which led them to identify with a university/ business school corporate brand. Furthermore, international students also asserted the importance of the aforementioned factors for the attractiveness of the Brunel Business School corporate brand and in turn their identification with it. Additionally, the senior figures of the top and middle ranking universities agreed that their universities and business schools are considered respectively as top and middle ranked university/ business school corporate brand. The findings of the initial qualitative study were used to develop and verify the theoretical framework derived from the existing literature and developed for the purpose of this study. They were also used to refine the measurement scales and develop the questionnaire. The findings were further used to support the findings of the quantitative study that was conducted in the last stages of this study as will be shown in the discussion chapter.

4.3.2. Quantitative research

Quantitative research is considered as a common research approach and a predominant strategy in social research (Bryman, 2008). Researchers such as Saunders et al. (2009, p. 151) argued that "quantitative is predominantly used as a synonym for any data collection technique (such as questionnaire) or any data analysis procedure such as (graphic or statistic) that generates or uses numerical data". Quantitative research focuses on a deductive approach in explaining the relationship between a theory and research (Bryman and Bell, 2007). Moreover, it has a

positivist philosophical position and an objectivist conception of the social reality (Bryman and Bell, 2007). Furthermore, quantitative research is relatively an easy and a fast approach for collecting empirical data (Hussey and Hussey, 1997).

A questionnaire is considered to be a popular research method in quantitative research (Collis and Hussey, 2003). It can be defined as "a list of carefully structured questions, chosen after considerable testing with a few of eliciting reliable responses from a chosen sample. The aim is to find what a selected group of participants do, think and feel" (Collis and Hussey, 2003, p. 173). This study used a questionnaire as an appropriate research method because of several advantages associated with it such as: 1) questionnaire is a simple and a reliable method, 2) it is cheaper than the other research methods such as interviews and experiments (Hussey and Hussey, 1997; Collis and Hussey, 2003; Bryman and Bell 2007), 3) it is a fast technique, easy to distribute and less time-consuming for collecting the empirical data (Creswell, 2003) and 4) using large sample sizes is useful to facilitate the generalisability of results (Bryman and Bell, 2007). Moreover, questionnaire has gained popularity in the research of marketing and more particularly it is the most popular method in the international branding field (Whitelock and Fastoso, 2007). Furthermore, questionnaire is recommended as one of the appropriate methods that can be used to test customer identification with a company in the marketing context (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003).

A quantitative study was conducted in the last stages of this study. The purpose of conducting the quantitative study was to provide empirical evidence of the main determinants of international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand in

the UK context. It also aimed to test the hypothesised relationship between the predicted concepts identified in the theoretical framework. The quantitative data were collected in a numerical form and mainly via the questionnaire. A questionnaire was developed based on the literature review and the qualitative study findings. A structured questionnaire was designed where research constructs used in the theoretical framework were reflected in the questionnaire through inclusion of statements about the indicators. Furthermore, the questionnaire was prefaced by an introductory letter that briefly presented the main elements of the research, including the examined research phenomenon and the aim of the research. The introductory letter also included a confirmation for international students that the information they provide will be kept strictly confidential. Additionally, cosmetic aspects such as the appearance, the layout and the length of the questionnaire were also considered in developing and designing the questionnaire.

4.3.2.1. Measurement of constructs

Scholars such as Churchill (1979, p. 67) provided guidance for developing measurement variables as he stated that "literature searches, experience surveys, and insight stimulating examples, are generally productive here…critical incidents and focus groups also can be used to advantage at the item generation stage". This study followed Churchill's (1979) recommendations in developing the measurement variables of latent constructs included in the theoretical framework. The measurement variables were developed by adapting the existing measurement variables used in the previous empirical studies (see table 4.2). Moreover, the findings of the initial qualitative study were employed to refine the measurement variables derived from the existing literature and to develop the questionnaire.

The study employed multi-items measurements with more than three indicators per factor in order to measure the latent constructs. This is because multi-items measurements increase the reliability, decrease the measurement errors, and allow the most explicit assignment of meaning to the estimated constructs (Anderson and Gerbing, 1984; 1988). Moreover, a measurement model with less than three indicators per factor can be problematic and it needs larger sample size to attain a converged and a proper solution (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). Furthermore, all latent constructs identified in the theoretical framework were measured using a five-point Likert- scale (strongly disagree = 1, disagree = 2, neutral = 3, agree = 4, strongly agree = 5) because this measurement scale is one of the most popular ways of measuring attitudes and it is easier and quicker to be answered by respondents (Wilson, 2006). Additionally, several empirical studies in the customer identification and organisational identification literature used this measurement scale (e.g. Mael and Ashforth, 1992; Bhattacharya et al., 1995; Kuenzel and Halliday, 2008; Curras-Perez et al., 2009).

In this study, the latent constructs were measured as following (see table 4.2): international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand was measured by 6 items adapted from Mael and Ashforth (1992). Middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness was measured by 11 items developed for this study based on Bhattacharya and Sen (2003), Marín and Ruiz (2007) and Marín et al. (2009) and the initial qualitative study. Brand similarity was measured by 9 items adapted from Bhattacharya and Sen (2003) and Karaosmanoglu et al. (2011). Brand distinctiveness was measured by 8 items adapted from Bhattacharya and Sen (2003) and Curras-Perez et al. (2009). City brand was measured by 9 items adapted from Anholt (2006), Zenker (2009; 2011) and Yoon (2010). Country brand was

measured by 9 items adapted from Gray et al. (2003), Yasin et al. (2007) and Fetscherin (2010). University physical campus was measured by 9 items adapted from Strange and Banning (2000) and Bennett and Ali-Choudhury (2009) and the initial qualitative study. Course tuition fee was measured by 7 items adapted from Voss et al. (1998) and Ivy (2008). The findings of the initial qualitative study were employed to verify the measurements of all latent constructs. The measurements items were employed to develop the survey questionnaire of this study (see appendices 1). Table (4.2) represents the latent constructs, the measurement items and the sources from which the measurement items were adapted and developed.

Table 4.2. Measurement items for the constructs of the study

Latent construct	Measurement items	Sources
International student identification with the middle ranking business school corporate brand	**a.** The Brunel Business School brand's successes are my successes. **b.** I am interested in what people think about the Brunel Business School brand. **c.** When someone praises the Brunel Business School brand, I feel happy. **d.** When someone criticises the Brunel Business School brand, I feel sad. **e.** When I talk about the Brunel Business School brand with outsiders, I usually discuss it as mine rather than theirs. **f.** If there is bad news about the Brunel Business School brand in the media, I feel embarrassed.	Mael and Ashforth (1992)
Middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness	**a.** I think that the Brunel Business School brand is one of the attractive business school brands in London. **b.** I think that Brunel Business School has an	Bhattacharya and Sen (2003), Marín and Ruiz (2007), Marín et al.

	attractive brand name.	(2009)
	c. I think that Brunel Business School offers attractive and high quality degrees.	Qualitative study
	d. I think that Brunel Business School offers a high quality teaching.	
	e. I think that Brunel Business School offers a high quality research.	
	f. I think that Brunel Business School has a high quality academic staff.	
	g. I think that Brunel Business School atmosphere is lively and attractive.	
	h. I think that Brunel Business School is attractive, lively and forward looking.	
	i. I think that Brunel Business School's support student is attractive.	
	j. I think that Brunel Business School provides interesting courses.	
	k. I think that the rate of employing graduate students from Brunel Business School is high.	
Brand similarity	**a.** At Brunel Business School, I fit in easily.	Bhattacharya and Sen (2003),
	b. At Brunel Business School, my personality fits in.	Karaosmanoglu et al. (2011),
	c. At Brunel Business School, someone like me fits in.	Qualitative study
	d. My perception is that the students of Brunel. Business School are similar to me in terms of social status.	
	e. My perception is that the students of Brunel Business School are similar to me in terms of character.	
	f. My perception is that the students of Brunel business school brand are similar to me in terms of	

	background.	
	g. My perception is that the students of Brunel Business School brand are similar to me in terms of interests.	
	h. My perception is that the students of Brunel Business School brand are similar to me in terms of the way they dress.	
	i. My perception is that the students of Brunel Business School brand are similar to me in terms of the financial status.	
Brand distinctiveness	**a.** I think that the Brunel Business School brand is different from top ranking business school brands.	Bhattacharya and Sen (2003), Curras-Perez et al. (2009), Qualitative study
	b. I think that the Brunel Business School brand is different from middle ranking business school brands.	
	c. I think that the Brunel Business School brand is different from lower ranking business school brands.	
	d. I think that the Brunel Business School brand is similar to top ranking business school brands such as the London Business School brand.	
	e. I think that the Brunel Business School brand is similar to middle ranking business school brands such as the Bradford Business School brand.	
	f. I think that Brunel Business School brand is similar to lower ranking business school brands such as the Harrow Business School brand.	
	g. I think that business school ranking as mentioned in, for example, the Financial Times, the Economist and the Guardian, is important when making the choice of the Brunel Business School brand.	
	h. I think that the Brunel Business School brand has	

	distinctive characteristics (identity).	
City brand	**a.** The city where Brunel Business School is located has a high standard level in educational environment. **b.** The city where Brunel Business School is located provides high educational qualification. **c.** It is easy to find a job in the city where Brunel Business School is located. **d.** The city where Brunel Business School is located is beautiful and exciting. **e.** The city where Brunel Business School is located is a good location (good transportation, airport). **f.** The city where Brunel Business School is located has a pleasant social environment (e.g. sports, facilities, amenities, clubs, shops, theatres, health facilities and friendly people). **g.** The city where Brunel Business School is located is attractive. **h.** The city where Brunel Business School is located has a good geographical environment (e.g. climate, clean, low pollution, many parks). **i.** The city where Brunel Business School is located is safe.	Anholt (2006), Zenker (2009; 2011), Yoon (2010), Qualitative study
Country brand	**a.** I think that the country where Brunel Business School is located has a long tradition and heritage in terms of higher education. **b.** I think that the country where Brunel Business School is located provides high quality qualifications. **c.** I think the country where Brunel Business School is located is innovative in higher education. **d.** I think that the country where Brunel Business School is located is associated with a sense of	Gray et al. (2003), Yasin et al. (2007), Fetscherin (2010), Qualitative study

	prestige in terms of higher education services.	
	e. I think that the country where Brunel Business School is located has a stable political environment.	
	f. I think that the country where Brunel Business School is located is a safe country.	
	g. I think that the country where Brunel Business School is located is beautiful.	
	h. I think that the country where Brunel Business School is located provides a good hospitality for students.	
	i. I think the country where Brunel Business School is located provides easy immigration procedures for international students.	
University physical campus	**a.** I like the Brunel University campus because it is in London.	Strange and Banning (2000), Bennett and Ali-Choudhury (2009), Qualitative study
	b. I like the Brunel University campus because it is in the UK.	
	c. I like the Brunel University campus because it is in England.	
	d. I like the Brunel University campus because it is in Uxbridge.	
	e. I like the Brunel University campus because it is near the Heathrow airport.	
	f. I like Brunel University campus because it provides a cheap and affordable accommodation.	
	g. I like Brunel University campus because it is safe.	
	h. Brunel University campus provides many attractive facilities and entertainments.	
	i. Brunel University campus has attractive layout and design.	

Tuition fees	a. I think there is a flexibility of the payment arrangements of the tuition fees in Brunel Business School.	Voss et al. (1998), Ivy (2008), Qualitative study
	b. I think that the course tuition fees at Brunel Business School are low.	
	c. I think that the course tuition fees at Brunel Business School are expensive.	
	d. I think that the course tuition fees at Brunel Business School are reasonable.	
	e. I think that the course tuition fees at Brunel Business School are acceptable (satisfactory).	
	f. I think that the Brunel Business School brand is good value for money.	
	g. I think that Brunel Business School provides students with a low cost of living.	

4.3.2.3. Pilot Study

A pilot study is valuable to assess face validity which represents "agreement that a question, scale, or measure appears logically to reflect accurately what it was intended to measure" (Saunders et al., 2013, p. 671). This involves refining the questionnaire and evaluating questions' wording and suitability in order to ensure that questions were clear and understandable and respondents will have no problems in answering the questions (Saunders et al., 2009; 2013). Besides, assessing face validity also requires evaluating the questions, scales, or measures in order to ensure that they are relevant to the construct and reflect accurately what they were intended to measure (Saunders et al., 2009; 2013). Moreover, a pilot study allows an assessment of the reliability which represents "a measure of the degree to which a set of indicators of a latent construct is internally consistent in their measurements" (Hair et al., 2010,

p. 634). Furthermore, a pilot study is also useful for assessing the expected response rate, a questionnaire's layout and design, and the expected time required by a respondent to complete the questionnaire (Churchill, 1979; Saunders et al., 2013; Zikmund, 2013).

With regard to the assessment of face validity, scholars such as Saunders et al. (2013) suggested that the face validity can be established by sending the initial version of a questionnaire to an expert or a group of experts who might comment on the suitability and clarity of questions and the structure of the questionnaire. They added that face validity can be assessed using focus group discussions where each focus group discussion may consist of five to twelve people (Saunders et al., 2013).

Regarding the assessment of reliability, the most common way of measuring the reliability and internal consistency of measurement scales is using a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient (Pallant, 2007). The minimum value of the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient that is required to show an internal consistency and reliability of measurement scales is 0.7 and above (Pallant, 2007). Moreover, in order increase the reliability of measurement scales, the inter-item correlation and item-total correlation should be taken into consideration. This requires that all values of the inter-item correlation should be positive and all values of item-total correlation should be above 0.33 (Pallant, 2007).

Scholars such as Churchill (1979), Saunders et al. (2009; 2013) and Zikmund (2013) stated that the reliability and internal consistency of measurement variables can be tested with a group of people that are similar to the final population of the study. Moreover, the sample size of a pilot

study that is required to test the reliability and internal consistency of measurement scales is generally small. Luck and Rubin (1987) recommended the use of 10 to 30 respondents as a sufficient sample size. Similarly, Fink (2008) suggested that the minimum number that is considered as an adequate sample size of a pilot study is 10 respondents.

As indicated previously, quantitative study was conducted in the last stages (i.e. stage three and four) of this study. In stage three, a questionnaire was developed based on the literature review and the qualitative study findings. Prior to distributing the main survey, a pilot study was conducted in the third stage of this study between December 2011 and February 2012. A pilot study was first conducted using a focus group discussion technique to assess the face validity. The questionnaire was assessed for the issues of face validity two times by conducting two consequent focus group discussions with international postgraduate students in Brunel Business School. The first group consisted of six international doctorate and master students and the second group[4] consisted of 18 international doctorate students. In each focus group discussion, all issues of face validity were evaluated. These involved the assessment of questions' wording, suitability and clarity in order to ensure that questions are understandable and respondents will not face difficulties in answering them. Moreover, the questions, scales, or measures were also evaluated in order to ensure that they were relevant to the construct and reflected accurately what they were intended to measure. Furthermore, a questionnaire's layout and design and the expected time to fill in the questionnaire were also evaluated. In addition, the face validity was assessed for the third time by discussing the questionnaire with the researcher's two academic supervisors who are also corporate branding experts and marketing

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[4] students in the this group were attending a workshop in Brunel Business School that discussed "the issues of quantitative research methods, questionnaire development and design, pilot study, face validity and reliability" and the current study questionnaire was discussed as an example in that workshop

lecturers at Brunel Business School. At each discussion, the suggested amendments were taken into consideration and were incorporated in the questionnaire to improve the face validity and develop new versions of the questionnaire.

After examining the face validity, the pilot questionnaire was used to assess the reliability and internal consistency of measurement scales. In this step, 60 pilot questionnaires were distributed to international students in Brunel Business School. All distributed questionnaires were returned but 10 questionnaires were excluded because the respondents were British students. Based on Fink (2008), the sample size of the pilot study was adequate to evaluate the reliability and internal consistency of the measurement scales.

Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) programme version 18.0 was used to analyse the pilot study data and assess the reliability and internal consistency of measurement scales. In this study, the measurement scales showed a satisfactory level of reliability and internal consistency where Cronbach's alpha was more than the minimum required level (0.7) for each construct used in the proposed theoretical framework (Nunnally, 1978; Pallant, 2007). Moreover, the overall Cronbach's Alpha value for this study was 0.915 and the individual construct reliability ranges between 0.789 and 0.921 (see table 4.3).

Table 4.3. Cronbach's Alpha values for each construct

Factors	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha
ID (international student identification with middle ranking business school corporate brand)	6	0.827
ATTR (middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness)	11	0.921
SIM (brand similarity)	9	0.781
DIS (brand distinctiveness)	8	0.815
CITY (city brand)	9	0.835
COUN (country brand)	9	0.802
CAMP (university physical campus)	9	0.807
FEE (tuition fees)	7	0.789

Finally, the final version of the questionnaire (see appendices 1) was developed and distributed to international postgraduate students in Brunel Business School who were the main research population of this study.

4.3.3. Quantitative study: data collection process

This section presents the rational for choosing Brunel Business School in this study also discusses the sampling issues.

4.3.3.1. The rationale for choosing Brunel Business School in this study (research site)

Scholars such as Hussey and Hussey (1997) and Zhou (2000) argued that the main stage when using a case study as a main research approach is to select the appropriate case(s) and identify participants/ respondents who will be interviewed or will receive a questionnaire.

In this study, Brunel Business School was selected as a typical case of a London-based middle ranking business school corporate brand to examine the phenomenon "international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand". This section presents some relevant background about Brunel Business School and the reasons for selecting it as an appropriate case study in this research.

Brunel Business School is one of the largest schools in Brunel University with a campus located in Uxbridge, London. Brunel University was founded in 1966 when the Brunel College of Advanced Technology was awarded a Royal Charter and became Brunel University (The Complete University Guide, 2014b). Moreover, Brunel Business School is a home for more than 2000 students. More particularly, the school has approximately 600 postgraduate students, including 150 doctorate students (Brunel Business School, 2014a). Besides, the school recruits a large number of international students, especially at postgraduate level with more than 450 international postgraduate students (Brunel Business School, 2014a). Furthermore, the school employs more than 100 academic and administrative members of staffs with international academic profiles (Brunel Business School, 2014a).

Brunel Business School has six research centres which are: the Accounting and Auditing Research Centre, the Centre for Research into Entrepreneurship, the International Business and Innovation in Emerging Markets, the Centre for Research in Marketing, Information Systems Evaluation and Integration Group, the Operations and Supply Chain Systems Group, the Work and the Organisation Research Centre (Brunel Business School, 2014a).

International ranking league tables such as the Guardian University Guide ranked Brunel Business School as 7th in London and 44th in UK for Business and Management Studies in 2014. The Times Good University Guide ranked it as 6th in London and 45th in the UK for Business and Management Studies in 2013. Likewise, The Financial Times ranked it as 6th in London, 20th in the UK and 73rd in Europe in 2011 (Brunel Business School, 2014b).

The rationale for choosing Brunel Business School as an appropriate case study in this research is related to several reasons such as: Brunel Business School is within a university that has a Royal Charter. Besides, it is not a member of the Russell group universities and it is not typically among the top 20 in international ranking league tables such as the Financial Times and the Economist (it has typically not fallen within the lower levels of the aforementioned). This corresponds with the definition of a middle ranking business school corporate brand that mentioned previously in the literature review chapter (see section 2.5.2). Therefore, Brunel Business School can be considered as one of the London-based middle ranking business school corporate brands in the UK.

Brunel Business School is also selected in this study because it is easier for the researcher to have access to respondents and data comparable to other business schools. This is because Brunel Business School is the school where the researcher is studying. As a result, it is easier to collect the empirical data and this saves the time and costs for the researcher. In addition, Brunel Business School is selected because of the issues related to sensitivity and confidentially as other business schools often refuse to give access to their data to students who

are not their own. Therefore, selecting Brunel Business School provided rich information that might not be obtained if using other business schools.

There are further reasons that make Brunel Business School an appropriate case such as: although Brunel Business School/ Brunel University is not a high ranking business school in this study as it is not a member of the Russell Group Universities and it is not in the top 20 of the international ranking league tables, it has an essential role in the corporate brands research field. For example, it is one of the main institutions that are leading this field and this was emphasised by Fetscherin and Usunier (2012, p. 736) who stated that "the most productive and influential institutions are from the USA and the UK, including the University of Bradford, Brunel University".

Regarding the reasons that led this study to focus on international postgraduate students in Brunel Business School, the majority of Brunel Business School's students at the postgraduate level are international students (Brunel Business School, 2014a). Moreover, there is a lack of empirical studies that examined student corporate brand identification from the perspective of international postgraduate students as existing studies have focused on identification of undergraduate students in top ranking business schools (Balmer and Liao, 2007). The respondents for this study are identified as the international postgraduate students who were studying for the Brunel Business School degree at both master and doctorate level in the academic year 2011- 2012.

4.3.3.2. Sampling

The empirical quantitative data was collected in the fourth stage of this study from March 2012 to August 2012. The questionnaire was distributed to the whole population, international postgraduate students (master and doctorate) in Brunel Business School. Most of questionnaires were distributed face to face to international master students while attending academic lectures and to doctorate students while presenting their papers in Brunel Business School Annual Doctoral Symposium 2012. Moreover, the questionnaires were distributed to doctorate students in their offices in Brunel Business School such as the Gardener, Chadwick and Elliot Jacques buildings. Furthermore, a part of the questionnaires was distributed to master and doctorate students in the library, the student centre, the Coccoro-Café and the accommodation campus.

450 questionnaires were distributed to international postgraduate students (master and doctorate) who were studying at Brunel Business School. 65 questionnaires were not returned. 130 questionnaires were excluded because 43 questionnaires were uncompleted, 52 questionnaires were filled in by UK students and 35 questionnaires were filled in by international undergraduate students. A total of 255 valid questionnaires for the analyses were obtained, with an acceptable response rate of 56 percent. The response rate was satisfactory according to Malhotra and Birks (2006) who argued that response rates of 15 per cent are common. The study sample size was adequate to run the required analyses such as descriptive analysis, CFA and SEM analysis based on Iacobucci (2009), Kline (2010) and Kenny (2012) who argued that sample sizes of 200 and above are sufficient samples for conducting research analyses such as descriptive analysis, CFA and SEM analysis.

To sum up, table (4.4) provides a summary of the research strategies and data collection methods used in each stage of this study.

Table 4.4. A summary of the research strategies and data collection methods

Research strategy	Research stages	Date	Methods	Description
Qualitative study	Stage one	January 2011-June 2011	Semi-structured Interviews	in-depth interviews with senior figures in UK higher education institutions were conducted
	Stage two	July 2011-September 2011	Focus group discussion	Two focus group discussions were conducted with international postgraduate students who are studying in a London based middle ranking business school corporate brand.
Quantitative study	Stage three	December 2011-February 2012	Pilot survey	A pilot survey was discussed with international students in two focus group discussions. It was also discussed with two marketing experts in Brunel Business School to examine the face validity and improve survey design A pilot survey was further distributed to 60 international students in Brunel Business School to examine the reliability and internal consistency of measurement scales
	Stage four	March 2012-August 2012	Questionnaire	450 questionnaires were distributed to international postgraduate students (master and PhD) in Brunel Business School. 255 valid questionnaires were collected

4.4. Summary

This chapter discussed the appropriate methodology used in this study. It defines a case study approach and provides a justification for selecting a theory building case-based survey as an

appropriate research methodology in this study. Moreover, it presented the research strategy (initial qualitative and main quantitative research) and research methods used for collecting the empirical qualitative and quantitative data (semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and a questionnaire). Furthermore, it provided data collection process, analysis and findings of the initial qualitative study. In addition, the chapter presented the research measurements and pilot study. It examined data collection process of the main quantitative study, provided a justification for choosing Brunel Business School corporate brand as a typical case in this study and discussed the sampling issues. The data analysis process of the main quantitative study and research findings will be explained in detail in the next chapter, the research analysis and findings.

Chapter Five: Research Analysis and Findings

5.1. Introduction

The previous chapter presented a detailed discussion on the research methodology. It presented a justification for the appropriate research methodology and research methods used for collecting the empirical data. It also presented the data collection process. This chapter aims to present the data analysis process and findings of the main study (i.e. survey). This study employed SPSS 18.0 and AMOS 18.0 to analyse the data. Moreover, it used a two-step approach recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988) to evaluate the measurement model fit, examine the reliability and construct validity and test the developed hypotheses.

The findings of this study showed that brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, metropolitan city brand, country brand and university physical campus are the main corporate brand identification dimensions of international postgraduate students – in terms of attractiveness – of a middle ranked business school (Brunel Business School). Moreover, middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness works as a mediator but not a moderator on the relationship between brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, association with a metropolitan city brand, country brand and university physical campus and international student identification. Whilst tuition fees have an insignificant effect on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness, they have an inverse and unmediated effect on international student corporate brand identification.

5.2. Data analysis (main quantitative study)

This study used a statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 18.0 to analyse the collected data. Responses were first coded and entered to SPSS software (see appendices 2). The data was screened and cleaned for the issues of missing values, outliers, normality, linearity and multicollinearity. Moreover, descriptive statistics were conducted to provide an overview of the sample and details of respondents (see appendices 3). The mean and standard deviation were calculated to show the central tendency and dispersions of the variables. Skewness and kurtosis were used to assess the normal distribution of data. This study used the two-step approach of SEM recommended by Anderson and Gerbeng (1988). In the first step, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used in AMOS 18.0 to test the measurement model fit and evaluate the construct validity. In the second step, a structural model was employed to test the developed hypotheses.

5.2.1. Details of the respondents

Some details about the respondents such as the country they come from, their age and gender, their study level, the course of study, study status and funding, were asked in the questionnaire. The details of respondents were analysed using descriptive statistics and frequencies in SPSS 18.0 (see table. 5.1). The results showed that the majority of respondents came from Asia (44.7 percent, n =114) and the rest of the respondents came from the Middle East, Europe and Africa (25.9, 14.9, 14.5 per cent) respectively. This confirms that Asia, the Middle East and Africa represent the main sources of international students in the UK (Lawton, 2010). Moreover, the majority of respondents were female (54.9 percent, n = 140). The largest group of the respondents were aged between 20 and 25 years old (35.3 percent, n = 90). The majority of

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respondents were master (67.1 percent, n = 171), full time (95.7 percent, n = 244) and self-funding students (54.1 percent, n = 138).

The results also showed that the largest number of master students were studying marketing (20 percent, n = 51) or management (13.3 percent, n = 34). Moreover, the majority of respondents considered that Brunel Business School was a middle ranking business school corporate brand (81.2 percent, n = 207). The majority of respondents considered that the UK, England and London are important to the Brunel Business School corporate brand (76.9, 73.3, 80.8 percent) respectively. A summary of the details of respondents is presented in table (5.1).

Table 5.1. Details of respondents

Respondents' details	Category	N	Percent
Country of respondent	Africa	37	14.5
	Asia	114	44.7
	Europe	38	14.9
	Middle East	66	25.9
Study level	Master	171	67.1
	Doctorate	84	32.9
Course Study	MSc. Applied Corporate Brand Management	17	6.7
	MSc. Global Supply Chain Management	8	3.1
	MSc. Human Resource Management	19	7.5
	MSc. Human Resource and Employment Relations	7	2.7
	MSc. International Business	17	6.7
	MSc. Management	34	13.3
	MSc. Marketing	51	20.0
	MBA	18	7.1
	PhD	84	32.9
Age	20-25	90	35.3
	26-30	77	30.2
	31-35	47	18.4
	36-40	28	11.0
	Over 40 years	13	5.1
Gender	Female	140	54.9
	Male	115	45.1

Funding	Sponsored	96	37.6
	Self-funding	138	54.1
	Partial	21	8.2
Study status	A full time student	244	95.7
	A part time student	11	4.3
Brunel Business School category	Top ranking business school corporate brand	40	15.7
	Middle ranking business school corporate brand	207	81.2
	Low ranking business school corporate brand	8	3.1
The importance of the UK, England, London and Uxbridge	UK	196	76.9
	England	187	73.3
	London	206	80.8
	Uxbridge	116	45.5

Source: developed by the researcher for this study

5.2.2. Data screening

The purpose of data screening is to ensure that the data have been entered correctly and to identify any missed values. Moreover, data screening is useful for assessing the outliers, the normality, linearity and multicollinearity because all of these issues may influence the outcomes of the analysis and the relationship between variables (Pallant, 2010). Therefore, before running any statistical analysis, all these issues should be screened and resolved.

5.2.2.1. Incorrect data entry

In this study, descriptive statistics and frequencies were used to identify whether the data have been entered correctly. The data entry process was scrutinised twice in order to ensure an accurate entry of the data. Moreover, descriptive statistics and frequencies were employed to identify all numbers or values that were out of range or invalid and then deleted them.

5.2.2.2. Missing data

Missing data occurs when a respondent fails to give an answer to one or more questions in the survey and this means that some information is not available in some cases while it might be available in other cases (Hair et al., 2010). Moreover, missing data may cause several problems such as: it might decrease the sample size available for statistical analysis, lead to a bias and reduce the statistical power (Cordeiro et al., 2010). Furthermore, missing data might also influence the accuracy of calculated statistics and distort final results because it provides less information than completed data and consequently it might influence the purpose of the conducted research (Hair et al., 2010).

Scholars such as Tabachnick and Fidell (2006) argued that there are three types of missing data: missing completely at random (MCAR), missing at random/ignorable response (MAR) and missing not at random/non-ignorable response (MNAR). Moreover, Kim and Curry (1977) and Tabachnick and Fidell (2006) stated that problems emerge from random missing values are less serious than that emerge from the non-random missing data. Furthermore, Hair et al. (2010) asserted that the study may not be able to measure the selected constructs when the missing data is classified under the non-random type.

Tabachnick and Fidell (2006) and Hair et al. (2010) suggested three main ways to deal with missing values. The first one involves leaving the data with its missed values and this way is preferable when the data has a small number of missed values. Scholars such as Hair et al. (2010) indicated that missing data less than 10% of an individual case can be ignored except when the missing values are the non-random type. Moreover, Tabachnick and Fidell (2006)

suggested that missing data less than 5% at item level is considered mild and can be ignored. Similarly, Cohen et al. (2003) suggested that missing data less than 5% or even 10% at item level is not large and can be ignored.

The second way to deal with missing values includes the use of only complete data where the researcher can exclude the cases that have missing values or delete the variables that respondents failed to give answers (Kim and Curry, 1977; Hair et al., 2010). Scholars such as Hair et al. (2010) suggested that 15 % at item level can be deleted. Moreover, Hair et al. (2010) argued that a researcher can either choose listwise deletion or pairwise deletion using SPSS to exclude the missing values. They indicated that by choosing listwise deletion, SPSS will exclude all cases with missing values from analysis but the criticism of using this approach is that it causes loss of data. Furthermore, Hair et al. (2010) stated that by using a pairwise deletion, SPSS will not exclude the whole case from the analysis but only the precise missing values will be excluded. Besides, a pairwise deletion is preferable when the sample size is small or there are a large number of missed values but it is criticised because it reduces the sample size of the data (Hair et al., 2010). Additionally, Schafer and Olsen (1998) indicated that deleting missing data may cause a bias in results, especially if the cases with complete data are unrepresentative of the entire sample.

The third way to deal with missing values involves estimating the missing values and replacing their values (Kim and Curry, 1977; Hair et al., 2010). This way is useful because it improves parameter estimations and retains as many cases as possible in constructing scales out of many variables (Kim and Curry, 1977). Moreover, there are several methods that can be used to

replace the missing values such as: expectation maximisation, regression imputation, hot or cold desk imputation, mean substitution, case imputation, multiple imputations, and full information maximum likelihood (Olinsky et al., 2003; Tabachnick and Fidell, 2006; Hair et al., 2010).

In this study, the researcher used the missing value analysis (MVA) method in SPSS version 18.0 in order to detect and identify the pattern and the extent of missing data. The findings of the expectation maximisation (EM) technique showed that Little's MCAR test was insignificant at each item level (a. Little's MCAR test: Chi-Square = 1254.216, DF = 1213, Sig. = 0.200). Therefore, the pattern of missing values was completely at random (MCAR) (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2006). Moreover, the missing data in this study was ranging between 0.4 to 0.8 percent at the individual item level (see appendices 4). The presence of missing data in this study is not large and it can be ignored or treated with any available imputation method. Expectation maximisation (EM) is used in this study to replace the missing data because it is an effective method to manage missing data; it is a useful computational method for an efficient estimation of incomplete data and it is applicable to manage random missing data (MCAR) (Schafer and Olsen, 1998; Schafer, 1997). Moreover, using this technique will avoid the substantial loss of the overall sample size. The only open-ended question used in the questionnaire ("Kindly, explain why did you choose Brunel Business School?") was deleted because only a few respondents answered it.

5.2.2.3. Outliers examination

Outliers represent a case with an extreme value or score that is very different from the other cases in the dataset where this value is either well below or well above the other scores (Hair et al., 2010; Pallant, 2010). Researchers such as Hair et al. (2010) argued that outliers might occur because of a technical error, extraordinary event, extraordinary observations or observations unique in their combination of values. Moreover, Tabachnick and Fidell (2006) identified four main reasons for the existence of outliers which are (1) errors in data entry, (2) the failure in identifying missing values codes which might lead to treat them as real data, (3) the case is not a part of the population's sample and (4) the case is a part of the population but the distribution of the variable has more extreme values than the normal distribution. Furthermore, Field and Hole (2003), Tabachnick and Fidell (2006) and Hair et al. (2010) argued that outliers might cause several problems such as: they might distort statistical results, influence the normality of distribution and consequently decrease the fitness of a research model (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2006; Hair et al., 2010). Therefore, it is important for a researcher to identify outlier values in order to reduce their influence and increase the fitness degree of the model.

Scholars such as Tabachnick and Fidell (2006) and Hair et al. (2010) identified two types of outliers: 1) a univariate outlier represents a case with an extreme value on only one variable and 2) a multivariable outlier represents a strange combination of scores on two or more variables.

The statistical distribution of observations for each variable is used to examine outliers where the case that falls in the outer range of distribution is considered as a potential outlier

(Tabachnick and Fidell, 2006; Hair et al., 2010). More particularly, the univariate outliers can be detected in SPSS by using the standard score of the variable or the Z-score and this can be done by converting all scores of the variables to a standard score (Z-score). Scholars such as Hair et al. (2010) argued that in small samples with 80 cases or less, the case is an outlier if the standard score is 2.5 or above (i.e. $Z \geq 2.5$, $p < 0.001$, two tailed test) but in large samples with more than 80 cases, the case is an outlier if the Z-score is 4 or above. However, Tabachnick and Fidell (2006) and Field (2009) were more specific in defining the Z-score and they suggested that a case is an outlier when the Z-score is 3.29. Furthermore, multivariate outliers can be detected using the Mahalanobis D^2 measure and this method is useful for measuring the distance of each case from the centre of all cases on a set of variables (Hair et al., 2010; Tabachnick and Fidell, 2006). Researchers such as Tabachnick and Fidell (2006) and Hair et al. (2010) stated that a case is considered as a multivariate outlier when the probability associated with Mahalanobis D^2 is < 0.001 (i.e. $p < 0.001$) resulting in values of 2.5 for small samples and 3 or 4 in larger samples.

According to Field (2009), there are three main ways of dealing with outlier cases and reducing their influences on a normal distribution. The first way involves removing the cases that led to outliers but this can only be possible when the researcher has evidence that the outlier case is not from the population he examines (Field, 2009; Hair et al., 2010). The second way includes transformation of data by changing the outlier score to the next highest/lowest (non-outlier) number. The third way involves converting or changing the outlier's score. Field (2009) suggested three options that can be adopted when "changing the score" is the selected solution to reduce the influence of outliers which are: 1) replacing the score with "the next highest score

plus one", 2) replacing the outliers with the mean plus 3 times standard deviation and 3) replacing the outliers with the mean plus 2 times standard deviation. In addition, Tabachnick and Fidell (2006) stated that while outliers exists because of errors in data entry, checking the data for any entry error and correcting this error might decrease the influence of outliers.

This study used the Z –score approach in SPSS to detect the univariate outliers. Moreover, this study followed Tabachnick and Fidell (2006) and Field (2009) and it used Z-score = 3.29 instead of 4 as a criterion for identifying the outlier scores because it is more specific and useful to identify the largest number of the likely outlier scores. Furthermore, the study used Mahalanobis D^2 values associated with (p < 0.001) in Amos in order to detect the multivariate outliers (see appendices 5 for detected univariate and multivariate outliers). In this study the researcher chose not to remove the outliers because the researcher has no clear evidence that the outliers were not from the population (Field, 2009; Hair et al., 2010). Moreover, keeping the outliers is a way to prove a generalisability of the whole population and to avoid the decrease in the sample size (Hair et al., 2010). Furthermore, the researcher chose not to transform the data or change the outlier values because this may not reflect the actual data.

5.2.2.4. Normality test

A normal distribution involves the majority of scores being distributed around the centre of distribution (Field, 2009). Scholars such as Field (2009) and Hair et al. (2010) stated that the normality of distribution is necessary for analysing the data and it is considered as an essential assumption to run the statistical analysis. Moreover, Hair et al. (2010) indicated that the key characteristic of normal data is that the median, mean, and trimmed means of data are similar

and the data has a perfect normal distribution when the mean is equal to the median and trimmed mean. Therefore, any difference between these three central tendency measures means that the distribution of data is skewed either to the left or to the right (Hair et al., 2010).

Normality can be tested using graphical or statistical methods (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2006). With regard to the graphical methods, the normality can be tested by checking the histogram of a variable visually where the normal distribution is characterised by a bell shaped curve and the highest frequencies of scores are distributed in the middle while small frequencies are distributed at the ends (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2006; Pallant, 2007; Field, 2009; Hair et al., 2010). Moreover, the normality of distribution can be also assessed visually using the normal probability plot (Q-Q plot) and this method is more common and easier than the other methods (Pallant, 2007). Furthermore, Pallant (2007) highlighted that the distribution is normal when the expected values take a straight line shape and the observed values represented by individual dots are placed exactly on that straight line (i.e. the observed valued are distributed as the expected values). Therefore, any deviation of individual dots from that straight line means that the distribution is not normal (Pallant, 2007).

With regard to the statistical way that can be used to test the normality of distribution, this involves assessing the values of skewness and kurtosis (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2006; Field, 2009; Hair et al., 2010). Scholars such as Hair et al. (2006) stated that the range of skewness and kurtosis where the distribution is normal is less than ($\pm$ 2.58). Moreover, Field (2009) and Hair et al. (2010) argued that the skewness of distribution describes the balance of the distribution where skewness occurs if the distribution is unbalanced and most of the frequent

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scores gathered at one end of the scale. They added that the distribution has a positive skewness if it is shifted to the left and a negative skewness if it is shifted to the right (Hair et al., 2010; Field, 2009). However, the kurtosis reflects the height of the distribution and it represents the degree of flatness or peakedness of the distribution (Hair et al., 2010). Furthermore, the distribution is flatted if the kurtosis is negative whereas it is peaked if the kurtosis is positive (Hair et al., 2010). According to Hair et al. (2010, p. 77), the effect of normality is effectively diminished with a sample size of 200 or more. Moreover, with large sample sizes, a researcher becomes less concerned with non-normal variables (Hair et al., 2010, p. 72). Likewise, Tabachnick and Fidell (2006) said that the effect of skewness and kurtosis is reduced in large sample sizes. Therefore, the deviation from normality might not make substantive differences in further analysis.

This study used the graphical ways (assessing the histogram of distribution and normal probability plot (Q-Q plot)) and the statistical way (examining the values of skewness and kurtosis) to assess the normality of the distribution. The visual check of this histogram and the normality plot showed that all the variables are fairly normally distributed (see Appendices 6.a). Moreover, the statistical assessment of skewness and kurtosis values showed that the distribution of the variables is within the acceptable range for normal distribution (i.e. less than ± 2.58) (see Appendices 6.b). The results showed that skewness values ranges between (- 1.345 and + 0.477) and kurtosis values ranges between (- 0.936 and + 2.190). This means that all variables have a reasonably normal distribution.

5.2.2.5. Linearity

Linearity reveals that the correlation between independent and dependent variables can be presented as a straight line and consequently any changes in a dependent variable is related to changes in one or more independent variables (Saunders et al., 2013). Scholars such as Tabachnick and Fidell (2006, p. 83) said that the main assumption of linearity is that "there is a straight-line relationship between two variables (where one or both of the variables can be combinations of several variables". Moreover, Hair et al. (2010, p. 76) stated that "an implicit assumption of all multivariate techniques based on correlational measures of association, including multiple regression, logistic regression, factor analysis and structural equation modeling is linearity".

Linearity can be assessed using the scatterplot or the Pearson correlation technique (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2006; Field, 2009; Hair et al., 2010). Scholars such as Hair et al. (2010) highlighted that identifying nonlinear patterns in the data is considered to be the most common way of examining the linearity and this involves assessing the scatterplots of all variables. Moreover, Pallant (2007) claimed that the visual shape of the scatterplot should roughly have a straight line not a curve. However, Field (2009) stated that using the Pearson correlation technique is preferable to assess the linearity because the Pearson correlation's value lies between 0 which indicates that there is no effect or no correlation between variables, and 1 which means that there is a perfect correlation between them.

This study used the Pearson's correlation because it is a preferable way to assess the linearity (Field, 2009). It employed the bivariate correlation matrix at a 0.01 significance level (2-tailed

test) to assess the linearity between variables. The results showed that there is a significant positive correlation between independent variables and dependent variables and consequently there is linearity between all variables (see appendices 7.a). More specifically, the results showed that there is a significant positive correlation between all variables at 0.01 and 0.05 significant levels, except the relationship between (DIS) and (ID, SIM and CITY) and the relationship between FEE and ID. However, the relationships between these variables are still significant and meaningful at one tailed test (0.1) level. Hence, the results of the Pearson's correlation test showed that all variables have a linear relationship between each other.

5.2.2.6. Multicollinearity

Multicollinearity is the expression of the correlation between more than two independent variables (Hair et al., 2010). Scholars such as Tabachnick and Fidell (2006) and Hair et al. (2010) stated that multicollinearity occurs when the correlation between any independent variable and the other set of independent variables is high (0.9 or more). In particular, there is a lack of multicollinearity when the correlation coefficient is 0 and there is an extreme case of multicollinearity when the correlation coefficient is 1 (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2006; Hair et al., 2010).

According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2006) and Pallant (2007), multicollinearity can be assessed using two popular ways: (1) examining the bivariate or multivariate correlations between independent variables and (2) calculating the variance inflation factors (VIF) and tolerance effect. Researchers such as Pallant (2007) stated that the tolerance effect represents the extent to which the variability specified by an independent variable is unique (i.e. it is not

explained by the other independent variables used in the model). She added that the VIF value represents the inverse of the tolerance value. Moreover, multicollinearity exists when the VIF value is large (more than 10) and the tolerance value is low (less than 0.1) (Pallant, 2007, p. 156).

In this study, multicollinearity was examined using the above two aforementioned ways. More particularly, this study used the Pearson's correlation to examine the bivariate correlation (see appendices 7.a). The results showed that none of the bivariate correlations was above 0.7 for independent variables and therefore there is no evidence of multicollinearity problems. Furthermore, the results showed that the VIF and tolerance values are out of the ranges suggested for the existence of multicollinearity. More specifically, all interaction terms have a variance of inflation factor (VIF) less than 10 and a tolerance value more than 0.1 (see appendices 7.b). This also ensures that there is no evidence of multicollinearity problems.

5.3. Structural equation modeling (SEM)

Structural equation modeling (SEM) is a "multivariate technique combining aspects of factor analysis and multiple regression that enables the researcher to simultaneously examine a series of interrelated dependence relationships among the measured variables and latent constructs (variates) as well as between several latent constructs" (Hair et al., 2010, p. 634). Moreover, SEM is useful for testing and confirming a theory and it provides researchers with a comprehensive method for evaluating and modifying proposed theoretical models (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988; Hair et al., 2010). Furthermore, SEM is considered as one of the most appropriate methods of analysing data if the tested model includes multiple latent variables

(Hair et al., 2010). In addition, scholars such as Iacobucci (2009) and Malhotra et al. (2013) observed that SEM is a popular technique in marketing research and more particularly in international branding research.

According to Hair et al. (2010), SEM is useful for assessing three main issues which are: 1) the goodness of fit of the measurement model where the model is supported if it has an acceptable fit, 2) validity and reliability of the measurement variables, 3) structural relationships between the independent and dependent variables and whether these relationships are significant or not. Moreover, SEM is different from other techniques in that it examines the relationships between multiple independent variables and more than one dependent variable, whereas the other techniques such as regression technique can only be used to examine the relationship between multiple independent variables and one dependent variable (Hair et al., 2010).

Maximum likelihood estimation (ML) is considered as one of the main and most used estimation techniques in SEM programmes and it has the advantages of being a flexible, unbiased, consistent, and efficient approach (Hair et al., 2010). Moreover, ML is valuable for testing and developing a theory and it provides the most efficient parameter estimates (Anderson and Gerbeng, 1988). Scholars such as Brown (2006), Field (2009) and Hair et al. (2010) highlighted the advantages of using AMOS programme for running statistical analysis and more particularly SEM and CFA. For example, Field (2009, p. 636) stated that "testing hypotheses about the structures of latent variables and their relationships to each other requires considerable complexity and can be done with computer programmes such as AMOS". Moreover, Hair et al. (2010, p. 663) argued that "AMOS is a programme that gained popularity

because in addition of being a model in SPSS, it was also among the first SEM programmes to use a graphical interface for all functions so that a researcher never has to use syntax commands or computer code". Furthermore, Brown (2006) asserted that Amos software is a graphical interface which has become an increasingly popular method for modeling programme, particularly with researchers new to CFA and SEM.

Scholars such as Anderson and Gerbing (1988) suggested that the SEM process includes two main steps: 1) using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to examine the relationship between measurement variables and latent constructs and 2) using the confirmatory structural model to examine the causal relationships among latent constructs. Likewise, Hair et al. (2010, p. 692) stated that the two–step SEM process is defined as "an approach to SEM in which the measurement model fit and construct validity are first assessed using CFA and then the structural model is tested, including an assessment of the significance of the relationships. The structural model is tested only after adequate measurement and construct validity are established" (Hair et al., 2010, p. 692).

In this study, SEM was conducted using maximum likelihood estimation (ML) in AMOS 18.0 to test the proposed research framework. The two-step approach of SEM as recommended by Anderson and Gerbeng (1988) was applied. In the first step, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used in AMOS 18.0 to examine the relationship between measurement variables and latent constructs, test the measurement model fit and evaluate the construct validity. A structural model was employed in the second step to assess the causal relationship between latent constructs and test the developed hypotheses.

The following section discusses in more detail a two-step approach of SEM (confirmatory measurement model and structural model) used in this study.

5.3.1. Confirmatory factor analysis

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) represents "a way of testing how well measured variables represent a smaller number of constructs" (Hair et al., 2010, p. 693). Moreover, CFA is used to evaluate the measurement model in SEM and it has an assumption that all latent variables are exogenous and there is a relationship between each two variables in the measurement model (Hair et al., 2010). Furthermore, CFA is associated with theory testing; it is valuable to assess the measurement model fit, evaluate the construct validity and to examine the relationships between the measurement variables (indicators) and latent constructs (Anderson and Gerbeng, 1988; Tabachnick and Fidell, 2006; Hair et al., 2010).

In this study a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) in AMOS 18.0 was employed in the first step to test the fit of measurement model and evaluate the construct validity (Anderson and Gerbeng, 1988; Hair et al., 2010). The following sections discuss the assessment of measurement model fit and construct validity.

5.3.1.1. Assessment of the measurement model fit

Scholars such as Anderson and Gerbeng (1984) and Hair et al. (2010) stated that Chi-square statistic (X^2) is one of the most common statistics of evaluating the fit of the measurement model and it assesses whether there is a significant difference between the estimated covariance matrix and the observed one. Moreover, X^2 is also useful for "comparing a model

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against general alternative models based on correlated variables" (Bentler and Bonett, 1980, p. 588). Furthermore, Anderson and Gerbeng (1984) and Hair et al. (2010) argued that the probability (p value) associated with X^2 is also considered as one of the goodness of fit indices. The model is acceptable if it shows a good fit and this can be achieved when the X^2 value is low and the p value is not significant ($p > 0.05$). In contrast, the model is rejected when it shows a poor fit and this can be achieved when X^2 is large and the p value is significant ($p < 0.05$) (Anderson and Gerbeng, 1984; Hair et al., 2010). However, one criticism of this goodness of fit index is that the p value is sensitive to the sample size and it becomes significant when the sample size is large even if the model has a good fit (Hair et al., 2010). Bentler and Bonett (1980, p. 588) supported this criticism as they stated that "in view of the large sample size, it is likely that no factor model with positive degrees of freedom could be found that would fit the data with probability greater than 0.05; that is, no model could be established that would adequately account for all of the statistically reliable data in this large sample". They added that "in large samples virtually any model tends to be rejected as inadequate, and in small samples various competing models, if evaluated, might be equally acceptable" (Bentler and Bonett, 1980, p. 592). Therefore, the model may be rejected when the sample size is high whereas it may show an adequate fit and consequently be accepted when the sample size is small (Bentler and Bonett, 1980; Anderson and Gerbeng, 1984). While the model fit is sensitive to the sample size and the complexity of the model, simple measurement models with small sample sizes require more strict fitness standards than that required for the sophisticated models with a large sample size (Hair et al., 2010).

Scholars identified minimum sample sizes that are adequate for conducting CFA and SEM. For example, Anderson and Gerbing (1988, p. 416) suggested that "a sample size of 150 will usually be sufficient to obtain a converged and proper solution for models with three or more indicators per factor". Joreskog and Sorbom (1984) argued that "reasonably robust estimates could be obtained in samples smaller than the optimal $N = 200$". However, Lei and Wu (2007) indicated that the general rule of thumb is that the minimum sample size in SEM should be no less than 200. In a similar vein, Iacobucci (2009), Kline (2010) and Kenny (2012) argued that sample sizes of 200 and above are sufficient samples for conducting SEM analysis. The sample size of this study is 255. Based on (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988; Lei and Wu, 2007; Iacobucci, 2009; Kline, 2010; Kenny, 2012), this is a sufficient sample size for conducting CFA and SEM.

Because of the criticism of Chi-square (X^2) and its associated p value as an indicator for the measurement model fit, other alternative fit indices are suggested besides Chi-square (X^2) to measure the fit of the model (Hair et al., 2010). Hair et al. (2010) identified three types of these fit indices. The first one is absolute fit indices which indicate how well the estimated model reproduces the observed data and how well the suggested theory fits the collected data. The most widely used absolute fit indices, include the goodness-of-fit index (GFI), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) and the root main square residual (RMR). The second type of fit indices is incremental fit indices which indicate how well the estimated model fits relative to some alternative baseline models. The most widely used incremental fit indices include comparative fit index (CFI), the Normed fit index (NFI) and Tucker-Lweis index (TLI). The last type is parsimony fit indices that show which is the best of the other competing.

The most widely used parsimony fit indices include the adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI), and parsimonious fit index (PFI). The indices GFI, CFI, NFI and TLI represent the goodness of fit indices, while RMR, SRMR and RMSEA represent the badness of fit indices (Hair et al., 2010).

With regard to the model fit evaluation, using three to four fit indices usually provides sufficient evidence of a model fit (Hair et al., 2010). Hair et al. (2010) suggested that when evaluating a model fit, the researcher should report at least one incremental fit index and one absolute fit index besides the X^2 value and its associated degree of freedom. More specifically, Hair et al. (2010, p. 672) stated that "reporting the X^2 value and degrees of freedom, the CFI or TLI and the RMSEA will usually provide sufficient unique information to evaluate a model". Hair et al. (2010) added that X^2/df is acceptable when its value ranges between 2 and 5 and it is preferable when this value is less than 2. Moreover, models of a good fit would expect a significant X^2 p-value for a sample size above 250 and constructs with more than 30 measurement variables. Furthermore, the commonly accepted rule of thumb for both absolute and incremental fit indices which demonstrates that the model has a good fit are recommended as follows: [CFI or TLI ≥ 0.90; RMR ≤ 0.08; RMSEA < 0.08] (Hair et al., 2010).

According to Hair et al. (2010), in order to improve the measurement model fit, there are three main issues that should be taken into consideration. The first issue is the modification indices for covariance where it is possible to covary error terms within the same factor. However, it is not possible to covary error terms that are not part of the same factor or to covary the error terms with observed variables or latent variables. Moreover, modification

indices of approximately 4.0 or higher indicate that the model fit could be improved significantly by freeing the corresponding path to be estimated. Furthermore, it is not recommended to do changes on the model based only on modification indices because "doing this would be inconsistent with the theoretical bases of CFA and SEM in general" (Hair et al., 2010, p. 712). The second issue that should be considered to improve the measurement model fit is the standardised regression weight or what is known as a factor loading. The rule of thumb is that the factor loading should be 0.5 or above for all measurement variables. Therefore, all variables with factor loading less than 0.5 are subject to be removed in order to improve the model fit (Iacobucci, 2009; Hair et al., 2010). The third issue that should be considered is the standardised residual covariance. The rule of thumb is that standardised residuals less than 2.5 do not suggest a problem but they deserve attention when their values are between 2.5 and 4.0. However, standardised residuals (above 4.0) indicate unacceptable degree of error and it is preferable to remove one of the items associated with a residual higher than 4.0 (Hair et al., 2010).

In this study, the measurement model was developed using CFA in AMOS 18.0 (see appendices 8). The results of CFA showed that 35 variables loaded significantly on the expected constructs, providing evidence for convergent validity and discriminate validity of the measures. Moreover, the fit indices of the measurement model indicated that the model fits the data reasonably well. Furthermore, following the recommendations of Hair et al. (2010, p. 672), this study used X^2/df , absolute fit indices (RMSEA, RMR) and incremental fit indices (CFI, TLI) in order to report the adequacy of the model fit because these selected indices usually provide sufficient unique information to evaluate a model fit (Hair et al., 2010).

The results showed that X^2 is 865.852 with 520 degrees of freedom ($p < 0.05$) and the normed chi-square is 1.665. This value is acceptable because it is within the suggested guideline that a normed chi-square less than 2 is acceptable (Hair et al., 2010). However, the probability (P value) associated with X^2 is significant ($p < 0.05$). This significance is expected given the large sample size (N = 255) used in this study (Anderson and Gerbeng, 1984; Hair et al., 2010). Therefore, the outputs of the X^2/df show that the CFA model has an acceptable fit.

With regard to the absolute fit indices, Root mean square error of approximation [RMSEA= 0.051]. This value is acceptable because it is less than the required value of 0.08. The value of [RMSEA] also ranges between 0.045 and 0.057 when using 90% confidence interval. Moreover, Root mean square residual [RMR = 0.056]. This value is also an acceptable value because it is less than the minimum required value of 0.08 for a model of this complexity and sample size (Hair et al., 2010). Therefore, all the selected absolute fit indices satisfy the required minimum level of good model fit and provide evidence that the measurement model has an adequate fit.

Regarding the incremental fit indices, the results of CFA showed that comparative fit index [CFI = 0.922] and Tucker-Lweis [TLI = 0.911] exceeded the recommended value of 0.9 for a model of this complexity and sample size. Therefore, the results showed that all selected incremental fit indices also satisfy the required minimum level of good model fit and also provide evidence that the measurement model has a good fit.

In this study, modification indices, standardised regression weight and standardised residual covariance were used to improve the measurement model fit. Therefore, items with high modification indices were freed. Moreover all items with low factor loading (less than 0.5) and high standardised residual covariance (above 4.0) that might cause trouble, reduce the fit of the measurement model and decrease its validity and reliability were subject to be removed, when necessary, to improve the model fit. In result, 32 items were deleted to improve the fit of the measurement model and increase the construct validity and reliability. Table (5.2) presents a summary of results of CFA.

Table 5.2. A summary of CFA, deleted items and remaining indicators, factor loading and t-value

Construct	Deleted items	Indicators (remaining items)	Estimated factor loading	t-value
International student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand	ID5, ID6	ID1: The Brunel business school brand's successes are my successes.	.685	**a**
		ID2: I am interested in what people think about the Brunel Business School brand.	.810	11.156
		ID3: When someone praises the Brunel Business School brand, I feel happy.	.875	11.581
		ID4: When someone criticizes the Brunel Business School brand, I feel sad.	.536	7.751
Middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness	ATTR5, ATTR8, ATTR11	ATTR1: I think that the Brunel Business School brand is one of the attractive business school brands in London.	.738	a
		ATTR2: I think that Brunel Business School has an attractive brand name.	.795	15.330
		ATTR3: I think that Brunel Business School offers attractive and high quality degrees.	.833	12.826
		ATTR4: I think that Brunel Business School offers a high quality teaching.	.662	10.126
		ATTR6: I think that Brunel Business School has a high quality academic staff.	.685	10.537
		ATTR7: I think that Brunel Business School atmosphere is lively and attractive.	.666	10.213
		ATTR9: I think that Brunel Business School's support student is attractive.	.747	10.291
		ATTR10: I think that Brunel Business School provides interesting courses.	.663	10.075
Brand similarity	SIM1, SIM2, SIM3, SIM8,	SIM4: My perception is that the students of Brunel Business School are similar to me in terms of social status.	.572	a

	SIM9	SIM5: My perception is that the students of Brunel Business School are similar to me in terms of character.	.760	8.357
		SIM6: My perception is that the students of Brunel business school brand are similar to me in terms of background.	.805	7.700
		SIM7: My perception is that the students of Brunel Business School brand are similar to me in terms of interests.	.712	6.983
Brand distinctiveness	DIS1, DIS2, DIS4, DIS5, DIS6	DIS3: I think that the Brunel Business School brand is different from lower ranking business school brands.	.705	**a**
		DIS7: I think that business school ranking as mentioned in, for example, the Financial Times, the Economist and the Guardian, is important when making the choice of the Brunel Business School brand.	.749	9.393
		DIS8: I think that the Brunel Business School brand has distinctive characteristics (identity).	.758	9.369
City brand	CITY1, CITY4, CITY8, CITY9	CITY2: The city where Brunel Business School is located provides high educational qualification	.712	10.590
		CITY3: It is easy to find a job in the city where Brunel Business School is located.	.507	7.887
		CITY5: The city where Brunel Business School is located is a good location (e.g. good transportation, airport).	.755	a
		CITY6: The city where Brunel Business School is located has a pleasant social environment (e.g. sports, facilities, amenities, clubs, shops, theatres, health facilities and friendly people).	.714	11.379
		CITY7: The city where Brunel Business School is located is attractive.	.867	13.222
Country brand	COUN5,	COUN1: I think that the country where Brunel	.773	**a**

	COUN6, COUN7, COUN8, COUN9	Business School is located has a long tradition and heritage in terms of the higher education.		
		COUN2: I think that the country where Brunel Business School is located provides high quality qualifications.	.864	14.188
		COUN3: I think that the country where Brunel Business School is located is innovative in higher education.	.774	12.626
		COUN4: I think that the country where Brunel Business School is located is associated with a sense of prestige in terms of the higher education services.	.787	12.870
University physical campus	CAMP4, CAMP5, CAMP6, CAMP7	CAMP1: I like the Brunel University campus because it is in London.	.688	a
		CAMP2: I like the Brunel University campus because it is in the UK.	.818	11.315
		CAMP3: I like the Brunel University campus because it is in England.	.868	11.678
		CAMP8: Brunel University campus provides many attractive facilities and entertainments.	.565	8.163
Tuition fees	FEE1, FEE3, FEE6, FEE7	FEE2: I think that the course tuition fees at Brunel Business School are low.	.500	**a**
		FEE4: I think that the course tuition fees at Brunel Business School are reasonable.	.830	7.729
		FEE5: I think that the course tuition fees at Brunel Business School are acceptable (satisfactory).	.900	7.518

Notice: a not estimated when parameter is a fixed value (i.e., 1.0)

In summary, the results of CFA demonstrated that the hypothesised eight factors (international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand, middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness, brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, metropolitan city brand, country brand, university physical campus and tuition fees) fit the data well. Moreover, the fit indices of the measurement model in this study indicated that the measurement model fits the data reasonably well. The X^2/df has a good value ($X^2/df = 1.665$). The P value is significant but this is an expected and normal result given the large sample size (255) used in this study. Furthermore, all of the selected absolute fit indices (RMSEA, RMR) and incremental fit indices (CFI, TLI) meet the minimum recommended level of a good fit for a model with this complexity and sample size. A summary of the selected goodness of fit statistics for the confirmatory factor analysis model is presented in table (5.3).

Table 5.3. Goodness of fit statistics for the confirmatory factor analysis model

Fit indices	Statistics
Chi-square (X^2)	
Chi-square	865.852 (P = 0.00)
Degree of freedom	520
Absolute fit measures	
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	0.051
90 percent confidence interval for RMSEA	(0.045; 0.057)
Root mean square residual (RMR)	0.056
Goodness-of-fit index (GFI)	0.841
Normed Chi-square	1.665
Incremental fit indices	
Comparative fit index (CFI)	0.922
Tucker-Lweis [TLI]	0.911

Normed fit index (NFI)	0.828
Relative fit index (RFI)	0.804
Parsimony fit indices	
Adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI)	0.807
Parsimony normed fit index (PNFI)	0.724

Developed for this study

5.3.1.2. Assessment of construct validity

After developing the measurement model and assessing its fit, the next step is to test the construct validity. Scholars such as Hair et al. (2010) showed that it is essential to provide evidence that the measurement model has an acceptable fit and acceptable construct validity because a structural model cannot be developed and tested based on a measurement model with bad measures and unacceptable validity. Construct validity represents the "extent to which a set of measured variables actually represent the theoretical latent construct they are designed to measure" (Hair et al., 2010, p. 631). Moreover, construct validity deals with the accuracy of measurements and examining construct validity is necessary to develop and test a theory (Steenkamp and van Trijp, 1991).

According to Hair et al. (2010), construct validity consists of four main elements and examining the construct validity requires the assessment of these elements which are:

1. Convergent validity

2. Discriminate validity

3. Nomological validity

4. Face validity

The following section discusses each element of construct validity.

1. Examining convergent validity

Convergent validity represents "the extent to which indicators of a specific construct converge or share a high proportion of variance in common" (Hair et al., 2010, p. 689). Examining whether the construct has a convergent validity is essential because if the construct does not show a convergent validity, this means that the measurement variables do not have a good correlation with each other within the latent factor they are used to measure (Hair et al., 2010). In contrast, the high level of convergent validity reflects the high internal consistency among the measurement variables that represent the same latent construct (Hair et al., 2010).

According to Anderson and Gerbing (1988, p. 411), "the measurement model provides a confirmatory assessment of convergent validity and discriminate validity". Moreover, Hair et al. (2010) suggested that in order to examine the convergent validity, three main measures should be taken into consideration. The first measure is the factor loading or what is known as standardised regression weight/lambda in the AMOS programme. The factor loading of all measurement variables should be 0.5 and above and it is preferable to be 0.7 or above. The second measure of convergent validity that should be considered is an average variance extracted (AVE) which represents "a summary measure of convergence among a set of items representing a latent construct. It is the average percentage of variation explained (variance extracted) among the items of a construct" (Hair et al., 2010, p. 688). Hair et al. (2010) suggested that the AVE value should be at least 0.5 to reflect an adequate convergent validity.

Furthermore, AVE can be calculated as the sum of the squared standardised factor loading divided by the number of the items as showed in the following formula:

$$AVE = \frac{\sum_{I=1}^{n} \lambda i^2}{n}$$

Where AVE is an average variance extracted, λ_i is the standardised factor loading, i and n are the number of items.

The last measure of convergent validity that should be taken into consideration is construct reliability (CR) which represents a "measure of reliability and internal consistency of the measured variables representing a latent construct" (Hair et al., 2010, p. 689). The rule of thumb is that construct reliability should be 0.7 or above in order to have a good reliability and support the convergent validity (Hair et al., 2010). However, a construct reliability value of between 0.6 and 0.7 is still acceptable to show a good reliability and a good convergent validity (Hair et al., 2010). The construct reliability for each latent construct can be calculated using the following formula:

$$CR = \frac{(\sum_{i=1}^{n} \lambda_i)^2}{(\sum_{i=1}^{n} \lambda_i)^2 + (\sum_{i=1}^{n} \delta_i)}$$

Where CR is the construct reliability, Delta δ is the error variance terms for a construct. It can be calculated as 1 minus the item reliability, λ is the standardised factor loading (Hair et al., 2010).

In this study, CFA in AMOS 18.0 was used to examine the three main measures of convergent validity. The results of CFA showed that the factor loading of all measurements variables satisfy the minimum value of 0.5 which is required for achieving an adequate convergent validity. More particularly, the lowest loading value is [FEE2 = 0.50] and the largest loading one is [FEE5 = 0.9]. There are 11 items with factor loading less than 0.7 (ID1, ID4, ATTR4, ATTR6, ATTR7, ATTR10, SIM4, CITY3, CAMP1, CAMP8, FEE2) and six of the aforementioned items with factor loading just below 0.7 (ID1 = 0.685, ATTR4 = 0.662, ATTR6 = 0.685, ATTR7 = 0.666, ATTR10 = 0.663, CAMP1 = 0.688). The rest of the measurement variables have factor loadings more than 0.7 (see table 5.4 for more details).

Moreover, AVE is calculated for each latent construct using the suggested formula mentioned above. The results showed that the AVE value for each latent construct satisfies the acceptable criterion of a good convergent validity which is 0.5 and above. More particularly, the lowest value of AVE is brand similarity [SIM = 0.515] and the largest value is country brand [COUN = 0.641]. Furthermore, construct reliability is calculated for each latent construct using also the above suggested formula. The results showed that construct reliability estimated for each latent construct is exceeding the acceptable criterion of 0.7. The lowest value is brand distinctiveness [DIS = 0.782] and the largest value is middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness [ATTR = 0.899] (see table 5.4 for more details). Therefore, the three main measures that are necessary for achieving convergent validity are satisfied and this provides adequate evidence that the latent constructs have a good convergent validity. A summary of the three main measures of convergent validity is presented in table (5.4).

Table 5.4. Latent constructs, indicators' description, factors loading, construct reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Cronbach's alpha

Latent constructs	Indicators	Factor loading
International postgraduate student identification with a middle ranking Business school corporate brand (ID) AVE= 0.545 CR=0.823 α= 0.806	ID1: The Brunel business school brand's successes are my successes.	.685
	ID2: I am interested in what people think about the Brunel Business School brand.	.810
	ID3: When someone praises the Brunel Business School brand, I feel happy.	.875
	ID4: When someone criticizes the Brunel Business School brand, I feel sad.	.536
Middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness (ATTR) AVE=0.527 CR=0.899 α=0.90	ATTR1: I think that the Brunel Business School brand is one of the attractive business school brands in London.	.738
	ATTR2: I think that Brunel Business School has an attractive brand name.	.795
	ATTR3: I think that Brunel Business School offers attractive and high quality degrees.	.833
	ATTR4: I think that Brunel Business School offers a high quality teaching.	.662
	ATTR6: I think that Brunel Business School has a high quality academic staff.	.685
	ATTR7: I think that Brunel Business School atmosphere is lively and attractive.	.666
	ATTR9: I think that Brunel Business School's support student is attractive.	.747
	ATTR10: I think that Brunel Business School provides interesting courses.	.663
Brand similarity (SIM) AVE=0.515 CR=0.807 α=0.823	SIM4: My perception is that the students of Brunel Business School are similar to me in terms of social status.	.572
	SIM5: My perception is that the students of Brunel Business School are similar to me in terms of character.	.760
	SIM6: My perception is that the students of Brunel business school brand are similar to me in terms of background.	.805
	SIM7: My perception is that the students of Brunel Business School brand are similar to me in terms of interests.	.712
Brand distinctiveness (DIS) AVE=0.545 CR=0.782 α=0.779	DIS3: I think that the Brunel Business School brand is different from lower ranking business school brands.	.709
	DIS7: I think that business school ranking as	.755

	mentioned in, for example, the Financial Times, the Economist and the Guardian, is important when making the choice of the Brunel Business School brand.	
	DIS8: I think that the Brunel Business School brand has distinctive characteristics (identity).	.749
City brand (CITY) AVE=0.519 CR=0.840 α=0.828	CITY2: The city where Brunel Business School is located provides high educational qualification.	.712
	CITY3: It is easy to find a job in the city where Brunel Business School is located.	.507
	CITY5: The city where Brunel Business School is located is a good location (good transportation, airport).	.755
	CITY6: The city where Brunel Business School is located has a pleasant social environment (e.g. sports, facilities, amenities, clubs, shops, theatres, health facilities and friendly people).	.714
	CITY7: The city where Brunel Business School is located is attractive.	.867
Country brand (COUN) AVE=0.641 CR=0.877 α=0.876	COUN1: l I think that the country where Brunel Business School is located has a long tradition and heritage in terms of the higher education.	.773
	COUN2: I think that the country where Brunel Business School is located provides high quality qualifications.	.864
	COUN3: I think that the country where Brunel Business School is located is innovative in higher education.	.774
	COUN4: I think that the country where Brunel Business School is located is associated with a sense of prestige in terms of the higher education services.	.787
University physical campus (CAMP) AVE=0.554 CR=0.829 α=0.811	CAMP1: I like the Brunel University campus because it is in London.	.688
	CAMP2: I like the Brunel University campus because it is in the UK.	.818
	CAMP3: I like the Brunel University campus because it is in England.	.868
	CAMP8: Brunel University campus provides many attractive facilities and entertainments.	.565
Tuition fees (FEE) AVE=0.582 CR=0.798 α=0.772	FEE2: I think that the course tuition fees at Brunel Business School are low.	.500
	FEE4: I think that the course tuition fees at Brunel Business School are reasonable.	.830
	FEE5: I think that the course tuition fees at Brunel Business School are acceptable (satisfactory).	.900

2. Examining discriminate validity

Discriminate validity represents the extent to which a latent construct is accurately distinct from the other latent constructs (i.e. unidimensional) (Hair et al., 2010). Scholars identified several ways of assessing discriminate validity. For example, Anderson and Gerbing (1988, p. 416) stated that "discriminate validity can be assessed for two estimated constructs by constraining the estimated correlation parameter (φ_{ij}) between them to 1.00 and then performing a chi-square difference test on the values obtained for the constrained and unconstrained model". Moreover, Hair et al. (2010) argued that discriminate validity can also be assessed using CFA by comparing the average variance extracted values (AVE) for each construct with the corresponding squared interconstruct correlation estimate (SIC) between that construct and other constructs. The construct has a discriminate validity or unidimensionality if AVE > SIC (Hair et al., 2010).

This study employed CFA in AMOS 18.0 in order to examine the discriminate validity. Mainly, it used the comparison between AVE and SIC because this way is considered as a rigorous test of discriminate validity (Hair et al., 2010). The results showed that all latent constructs have a discriminate validity because AVE of all constructs is higher than the squared interconstruct correlation estimate SIC (see table 5.5). This provides adequate evidence that the constructs have a good discriminate validity.

Table 5.5. AVE and SIC of each two latent constructs

Latent construct	ID	ATTR	SIM	DIS	CITY	COUN	CAMP	FEE
ID	**0.545**							
ATTR	0.277	**0.527**						
SIM	0.008	0.157	**0.515**					
DIS	0.078	0.121	0.042	**0.545**				
CITY	0.123	0.446	0.165	0.042	**0.519**			
COUN	0.212	0.324	0.053	0.097	0.332	**0.641**		
CAMP	0.063	0.252	0.114	0.031	0.285	0.226	**0.554**	
FEE	0.001	0.012	0.022	0.072	0.017	0.009	0.051	**0.582**

Note: AVE is the diagonal of the table in bold (ID = international postgraduate student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand, ATTR = middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness, SIM = brand similarity, DIS = brand distinctiveness, CITY = city brand, COUN = country brand, CAMP = university physical campus, FEE= tuition fees)

3. Examining nomological validity

Nominological validity is the third component of construct validity. It represents the extent to which the correlations among constructs in the measurement model make sense (Hair et al., 2010). Scholars such as Hair et al. (2010) stated that CFA can be used to examine nominological validity by assessing whether the correlations among latent constructs in the measurement model make sense and consequently the latent constructs have nominological validity.

In the current study, CFA is employed to assess the nomological validity. More particularly, the correlation matrix is used to examine the extent to which latent constructs are expected to correlate with each other. Moreover, descriptive statistics were used to calculate the mean and the standard deviation and show the central tendency and dispersions of the variables. The results (see table 5.6) showed that all latent constructs have positive correlations with each other. The only exception is the correlation between ID and FEE which is negative but still

significant. However, this negative correlation was predicted in international student corporate brand identification theory which hypothesised that there is a negative relationship between tuition fees and international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand. Therefore, the results support the prediction that all constructs have correlations with each other and these correlations make sense. This in turn provides adequate evidence that latent constructs show a nomological validity.

Table 5.6. Constructs correlation matrix and descriptive statistics of measures

	ID	ATTR	SIM	DIS	CITY	COUN	CAMP	FEE
ID	1.00	0.277	0.008	0.078	0.123	0.212	0.063	0.001
ATTR	.527	1.00	0.157	0.121	0.446	0.324	0.252	0.012
SIM	.090	.397	1.00	0.042	0.165	0.053	0.114	0.022
DIS	.280	.349	.206	1.00	0.042	0.097	0.031	0.072
CITY	.351	.668	.407	.206	1.00	0.332	0.285	0.017
COUN	.461	.570	.232	.312	.577	1.00	0.226	0.009
CAMP	.252	.502	.338	.177	.534	.476	1.00	0.051
FEE	-.032	.111	.150	.270	.132	.099	.227	1.00
Mean	3.732	3.532	3.393	3.269	3.540	3.728	3.509	2.915
SD	.678	.696	.596	.632	.701	.589	.664	.657

Note: Values below the diagonal are correlation estimates. Values above the diagonal are squared correlations (ID = international postgraduate student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand, ATTR = middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness, SIM = brand similarity, DIS = brand distinctiveness, CITY = city brand, COUN = country brand, CAMP = university physical campus, FEE= tuition fees)

4. Examining face validity

Face validity represents "agreement that a question, scale, or measure appears logically to reflect accurately what it was intended to measure" (Saunders et al., 2013, p. 671). Face validity in this study has been examined during the pilot study and before running CFA (see pilot study section).

To sum up, the four main components of construct validity (convergent validity, discriminate validity, nomological validity and face validity) have been assessed and confirmed. According to Hair et al. (2010, p. 664), the validity of measurement model depends on establishing an acceptable level of goodness of fit for the measurement model and providing empirical evidence for construct validity. The results showed that the measurement model has an acceptable fit and good construct validity and reliability. Therefore, the measurement model has acceptable validity. This in turn provides an empirical evidence for a logical development of structural model in the second step and this structural model will be built based on good, reliable and valid measurement scales.

5.3.2. Structural model

After demonstrating that the measurement model developed in the first step using CFA in Amos 18.0 has an acceptable fit and good construct validity, the second step suggested by Anderson and Gerbeng (1988) was applied. This step involves developing the structural model to assess the causal relationship between latent constructs and to test the developed hypotheses. Scholars such as Iacobucci (2009) and Hair et al. (2010) stated that structural model distinguishes between variables where exogenous variables represent independent variables and endogenous variables represent dependent variables. However, measurement model does not have this distinction between variables where all variables are considered as exogenous variables (Iacobucci, 2009; Hair et al., 2010).

This study used SEM in Amos 18.0 to develop the structural model 1 (see appendices 9). This model consists of six exogenous/ independent variables [brand similarity (SIM), brand

distinctiveness (DIS), metropolitan city brand (CITY), country brand (COUN), university physical campus (CAMP) and tuition fees (FEE)] and two endogenous/ dependent variables [middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness (ATTR) and international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brands (ID)]. The hypothesised model (1) posits that all of brand similarity (SIM), brand distinctiveness (DIS), metropolitan city brand (CITY), country brand (COUN), university physical campus (CAMP) and tuition fees (FEE) influence middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness (ATTR). It also hypothesises that middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness (ATTR) influences international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand (ID) (see appendices 9). Therefore, according to the model, all of brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, association with a metropolitan city brand, country brand, university physical campus and tuition fees predicts middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness which in turn predicts the extent to which international postgraduate students will identify with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.

An additional model (the structural model 2) was also developed using SEM in AMOS 18.0 (see appendices 10). Structural model 2 includes all paths in the hypothesised model (1) as well as direct paths from the six independent variables to international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand. Therefore, the path model (2) hypothesises that all of brand similarity (SIM), brand distinctiveness (DIS), metropolitan city brand (CITY), country brand (COUN), university physical campus (CAMP) and tuition fees (FEE) influence middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness (ATTR) and

international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand (ID). It also hypothesises that middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness (ATTR) influences directly international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand (ID). Furthermore, the structural model 2 hypothesises that middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness (ATTR) mediates and moderates the relationship between the independent variables [brand similarity (SIM), brand distinctiveness (DIS), metropolitan city brand (CITY), country brand (COUN), university physical campus (CAMP) and tuition fees (FEE)] and the dependent variable [international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand (ID)].

5.3.2.1. The fit of structural models

The overall fit of the structural model is useful for confirming the consistency between the theoretical model and the estimated model which is based on the observed values (Hair et al., 2010). Scholars such as Hair et al. (2010) argued that the fit of the structural model can be assessed in the same way used to assess the fit of the measurement model. However, as explained earlier, assessing the fit of a measurement model requires reporting the X^2 value and its associated degree of freedom and at least one absolute fit index and one incremental fit index (Hair et al., 2010). Therefore the same is required for assessing the fit of the structural model. Reporting mainly X^2(df), CFI, and RMSEA provide sufficient information for assessing the fit of the structural model (Anderson and Gerbeng, 1988; Hair et al., 2010). Furthermore, evaluating the structural model fit requires comparing the structural model GOF with the measurement model GOF and "the closer the structural model GOF comes to the measurement model, the better the structural model fit" (Hair et al., 2010, p. 675).

In this study, X^2/df, RMSEA, RMR, CFI, ITL were selected to report the fit of structural models (1 and 2) because they are considered as the most common fit indices and they provide sufficient information for assessing the fit of measurement model and structural model (Anderson and Gerbeng, 1988; Hair et al., 2010).

With regard to the fit of the structural model (1), the results showed that X^2/ df is 883.513 with 526 degrees of freedom and the normed chi-square is 1.680. This value is acceptable because it is within the suggested guidelines that a normed chi-square value less than 2 is acceptable (Hair et al., 2010). Moreover, the probability (P value) associated with X^2 is significant ($p < 0.05$) but this significance is expected given the large sample size (N = 255) used in this study (Anderson and Gerbeng, 1984; Hair et al., 2010). Furthermore, the results of SEM in the model (1) showed that the absolute fit indices such as Root Mean Square Error of Approximation [RMSEA = 0.052] and Root Mean Square Residual [RMR= 0.058] are also acceptable because they are less than the recommended criterion of 0.08 specified for a model with this complexity and sample size (Hair et al., 2010). Besides, RMSEA ranges between 0.045 and 0.057 when using a 90% confidence interval. In addition, the results of SEM showed that the incremental fit indices such as Comparative Fit Index [CFI = 0.920] and Tucker-Lweis [TLI = 0.909] are exceeding the recommended value of 0.9 for a model of this complexity and sample size (Hair et al., 2010). Therefore, all fit indices [X^2/df, RMSEA, RMR, CFI, ITL] selected to assess the model fit meet the recommended criteria of adequate fit for a model of this complexity and sample size and this provide empirical evidence that the structural model (1) has an adequate fit.

Regarding the fit of the structural model (2), the results of SEM showed that X^2/df is 865.852 with 520 degrees of freedom and the normed value for the structural model is 1.665. This value is acceptable because it is within the suggested guideline that a normed chi-square value less than 2 is acceptable (normed values of 3.0 or even 5.0 are also acceptable) (Hair et al., 2010). Moreover, the probability (P value) associated with X^2 is significant ($p < 0.05$) but this significance is expected given the large sample size (N = 255) used in this study (Anderson and Gerbeng, 1984; Hair et al., 2010). Furthermore, the results of SEM showed that the selected absolute fit indices such as Root Mean Square Residual [RMR= 0.056] and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation [RMSEA = 0.051] are acceptable values because they are less than the recommended value of 0.08 specified for a model with this complexity and sample size. Besides, RMSEA also ranges between 0.045 and 0.057 when using 90% confidence interval. In addition, the results of SEM showed that the selected incremental fit indices such as Comparative Fit Index [CFI= 0.922] and Tucker-Lweis [TLI = 0.911] are exceeding the recommended value of 0.9 for a model of this complexity and sample size (Hair et al., 2010). Therefore, all fit indices [X^2/df, RMSEA, RMR, CFI, ITL] selected to assess the model fit meet the recommended criteria of adequate fit for a model of this complexity and sample size and this provides empirical evidence that structural model (2) has an adequate fit.

In summary, examining the X^2, the absolute fit indices [RMSEA and RMR] and incremental fit indices [CFI and ITL] which are required for adequate model fit showed that the values of both models (1 and 2) are within the expected ranges of a good model fit. This provides evidence that both structural models (1 and 2) have adequate fits (table 5.7 reports goodness

of fit statistics for all tested models). However, comparing the models in table (5.7) showed that a significant X^2/df improvement was found by including direct paths from independent variables to international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand. Whilst the best model is the one with a smallest X^2/df (Diamantopoulos and Siguaw, 2000), this indicates that the fit of structural model (2) is better than the fit of structural model (1) and model (2) is the best structural model.

Table 5.7. Goodness of fit statistics for all models tested

Model	X^2(df)	p	CFI	ITL	RMSEA	RMR
Saturated model (CFA)	865.852 (520)	≤0.01	0.922	0.911	0.051	0.056
Hypothesised model (structural model 1)	883.513 (526)	≤0.01	0.920	0.909	0.052	0.058
Hypothesised model with additional direct path to international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand (structural model 2) best model	865.852 (520)	≤0.01	0.922	0.911	0.051	0.056

5.3.2.2. Testing of the hypothesised relationships between the latent constructs

This study used the structural model in AMOS version 18.0 to test the hypothesised relationships between the latent constructs (H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6, H7, H2a, H3a, H4a, H5a, H6a, and H7a) (see Chapter Three, Sections 3.3.1 to 3.3.7). A regression analysis was used to test the influence of brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, metropolitan city brand, country brand, university physical campus and tuition fees on both middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness and international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand. It was also used to test the influence of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness on international student identification

with a middle ranking business school corporate brand. This study reports the results of model (2) because it is the best model.

Testing the hypothesised relationships in the model (2) (see Figure 5.1) showed that nine paths were statistically significant and specified in the expected direction. Therefore, H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6, H3a, H5a, H7a were accepted. However, no evidence was provided in support of H7, H2a, H4a and H6a. More specifically, the results showed that middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness had statistically a significant, positive and direct relationship with international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand ($\beta = 0.443$, $p \leq 0.001$) and H1 was accepted. This indicated that international students are more likely to identify with a middle ranking business school corporate brand if it is attractive for them (see table 5.8).

The results also showed that all of brand similarity ($\beta = 0.113$, $p \leq 0.1$), brand distinctiveness ($\beta = 0.172$, $p \leq 0.05$), association with a metropolitan city brand ($\beta = 0.410$, $p \leq 0.001$), country brand ($\beta = 0.195$, $p \leq 0.05$) and university physical campus ($\beta = 0.135$, $p \leq 0.05$) had statistically a significant, positive and direct relationship with middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness (see table 5.8). This is in support of H2, H3, H4, H5 and H6. This indicates that international students are more likely to evaluate a middle ranking business school corporate brand as attractive when the business school is similar to their own identity, distinctive from the other business schools, associated with a metropolitan city brand and a country brand and has an attractive university physical campus. However, the path coefficient of tuition fees on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness

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was insignificant (β = - 0.056, p > 0.05) and H7 was rejected. This indicated that international postgraduate students do not consider tuition fees as an important dimension for the attractiveness of a middle ranking business school corporate brand (see table 5.8).

Of the five attractiveness dimensions accepted for this study, metropolitan city brand had the largest effect (β = 0.410, p $\leq$ 0.001). This means that metropolitan city brand is the most valuable dimension for increasing the attractiveness of a middle ranking business school corporate brand for international students and in turn enhancing their identification. The effect size of metropolitan city brand indicates that every standardised point increase in a city brand will lead to a 0.41 point increase in middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. Moreover, the results showed that country brand has the second largest effect size (β = 0.195, p $\leq$ 0.05) and brand similarity has the least effect size (β = 0.113, p $\leq$ 0.1) on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness (see table 5.8). This means that international students consider a country brand as the second most important factor after metropolitan city brand and brand similarity as the least important factor for the attractiveness of a middle ranking business school corporate brand and their identification with that corporate brand.

The results also showed that brand similarity (β = - 0.131, p $\leq$ 0.1), brand distinctiveness (β = 0.116, p $\leq$ 0.1), country brand (β = 0.240, p $\leq$ 0.05) and tuition fees (β = - 0.108, p $\leq$ 0.1) had an effect on international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand. In spite of its statistical significance, the sign for the relationship between brand similarity and international student corporate brand identification was the opposite of

the hypothesised direction. Therefore, only H3a, H5a and H7a were supported whereas H2a was rejected. Results further showed that metropolitan city brand (β = - 0.028, p > 0.05) and university physical campus (β = - 0.021, p > 0.05) did not have a significant influence on international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand; hence, H4a and H6a were rejected. A summary of the results of the hypothesised structural model 2 is shown in both: table (5.8) and figure (5.1).

Table 5.8. Standardised path coefficients and t-values for the structural mode 2

Hypothesized paths	Expected Sign	Standardized Coefficient	t-value	Hypothesis test
H1: ID → ATTR	+	0.443	(4.138)***	Accepted
H2: ATTR → SIM	+	0.113	(1.758)*	Accepted
H3: ATTR → DIS	+	0.172	(2.697)**	Accepted
H4: ATTR → CITY	+	0.410	(4.972)***	Accepted
H5: ATTR → COUN	+	0.195	(2.647)**	Accepted
H6: ATTR → CAMP	+	0.135	(1.925)**	Accepted
H7: ATTR → FEE	_	-0.056	(- 0.989)	Rejected
H2a: ID →SIM	+	-0.131	(1.700)*	Rejected
H3a: ID → DIS	+	0.116	(1.504)*	Accepted
H4a: ID → CITY	+	-0.028	(-0.276)	Rejected
H5a: ID → COUN	+	0.240	(2.665)**	Accepted
H6a: ID → CAMP	+	-0.021	(- 0.254)	Rejected
H7a: ID → FEE	_	-0.108	(- 1.573)*	Accepted

*** (p < 0.001), ** (p ≤ 0.05), * (p ≤ 0.1) (ID = international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand, ATTR = middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness, SIM = brand similarity, DIS = brand distinctiveness, CITY = city brand, COUN = country brand, CAMP = university physical campus, FEE= tuition fees)

Figure 5.1. The results of structural model (2)

After assessing the relationships between the latent constructs in the structural model (2) developed for this study based on the theoretical model in chapter three, all unacceptable relationships were deleted and a new and modified model (structural model 3) was developed. The structural model (3) was developed and rerun using AMOS 18.0 with only the acceptable relationships between latent constructs (see appendices 11). The results showed that the structural model (3) had an acceptable fit where all fit indices that are necessary to assess the model fit meet the minimum level required for a good model fit [i.e., Chi-Square = 870.661 with 524 degrees of freedom and 1.662 normed of fit, CFI = 0.922, TLI = 0.911, IFI = 0.923, RMSEA = 0.051, RMR = 0.056]. The findings further showed that all the hypothesised relationships were acceptable. A summary of the results of the hypothesised structural model 3 is shown in both: table (5.9) and figure (5.2).

Table 5.9. Standardised path coefficients and t-values for the structural mode 3

Hypothesised paths	Expected Sign	Standardised coefficient	t-value	Hypothesis test
H1: ID → ATTR	+	0.365	(4.202)***	Accepted
H2: ATTR → SIM	+	0.106	(1.665)*	Accepted
H3: ATTR → DIS	+	0.155	(2.552)**	Accepted
H4: ATTR → CITY	+	0.409	(4.953)***	Accepted
H5: ATTR → COUN	+	0.205	(2.790)**	Accepted
H6: ATTR → CAMP	+	0.120	(1.757)*	Accepted
H3a: ID → DIS	+	0.118	(1.560)*	Accepted
H5a: ID → COUN	+	0.228	(2.775)**	Accepted
H7a: ID → FEE	_	- 0.131	(- 1.927)**	Accepted

*** (p < 0.001), ** (p≤0.05), * (p≤ 0.1) (ID = international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand, ATTR = middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness, SIM = brand similarity, DIS = brand distinctiveness, CITY = city brand, COUN = country brand, CAMP = university physical campus, FEE= tuition fees
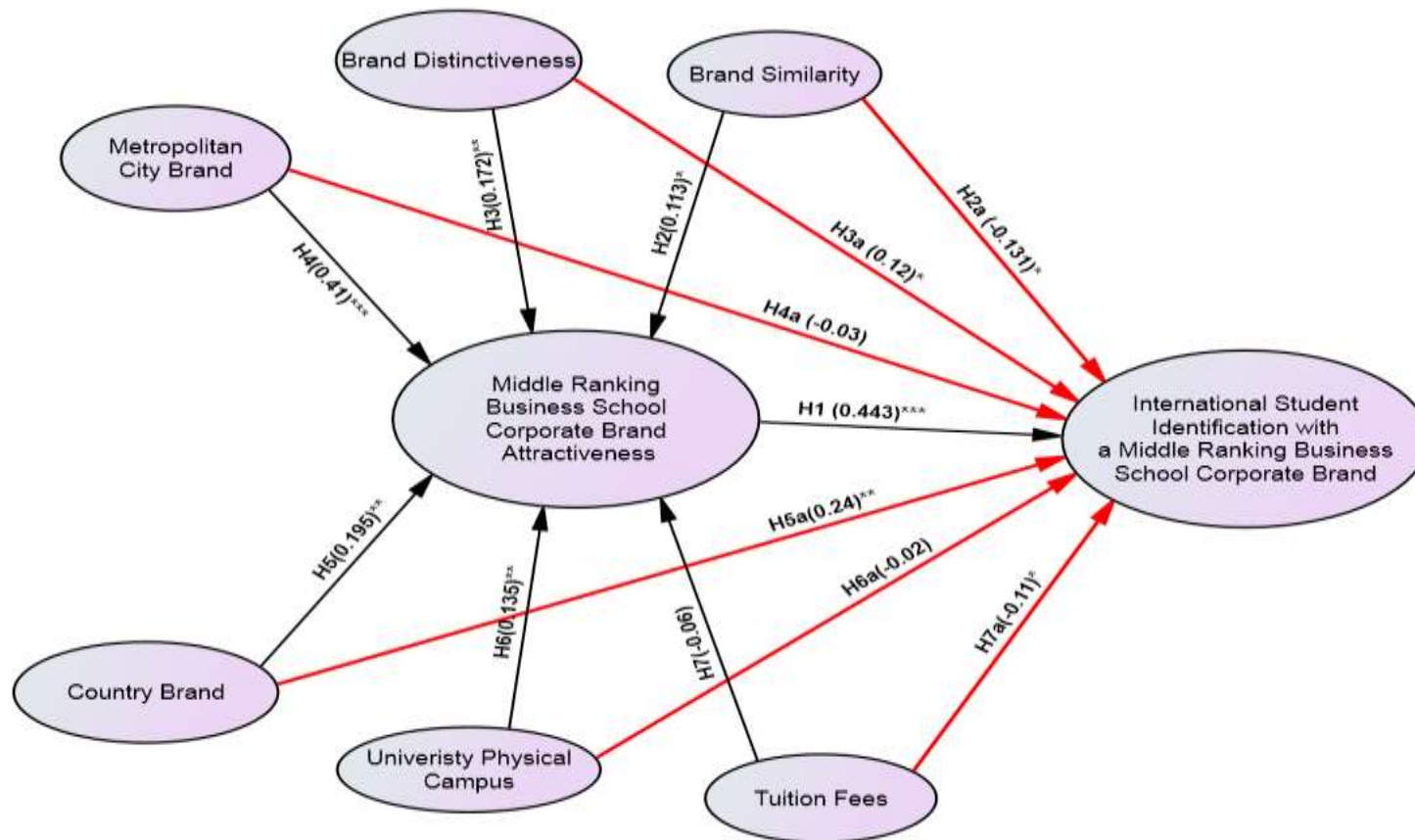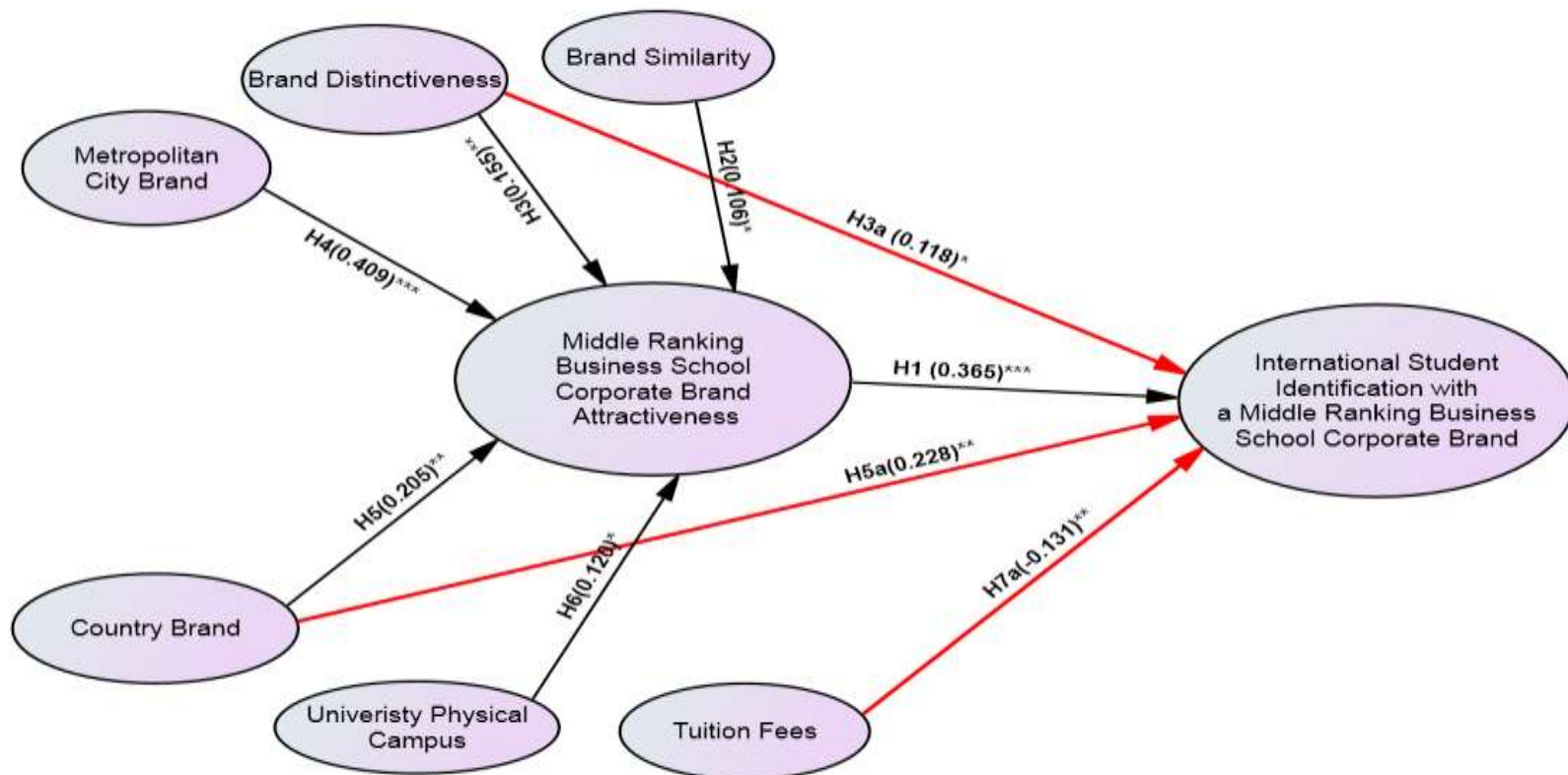
Figure 5.2. The results of structural model (3)

5.3.2.3. Examining the mediating effect of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness

A mediator (M) is a third variable that explains why a relationship between an independent variable and a dependent variable or any two constructs exists (Hair et al., 2010). Moreover, mediator can also be defined as a third variable which represents a mechanism through which a focal independent variable (IV) is able to influence a dependent variable (DV) of interest (Baron and Kenny, 1986). Scholars such as Baron and Kenny (1986, p. 1177) suggested three main regression equations to test the mediating role of a third variable: "first, regressing the mediator on the independent variable; second, regressing the dependent variable on the independent variable; and third, regressing the dependent variable on both the independent variable and on the mediator". Furthermore, Baron and Kenny (1986) added that there are three conditions that should be met in order to claim that the variable has a mediating influence. (1) IV is significantly related to M in the first equation, (2) IV is significantly related to DV in the second equation, and (3) M is significantly related to DV in the third equation. In addition, Baron and Kenny (1986) stated that the variable is a mediator if the effect of IV on DV is diminished when M exists in the model (i.e. the effect of IV on DV is less in the third equation than in the second equation).

While examining the mediating influence of a third construct, it is necessary to define direct and indirect effects. A direct effect is defined as "those relationships that link two constructs with a single arrow" (Hair et al., 2010, p. 766). However, an indirect effect is defined as "those relationships that involve a sequence of relationships with at least one intervening construct involved. Thus, an indirect effect is a consequence of two or more direct effects

(compound path) and is represented visually by multiple arrows" (Hair et al., 2010, p. 766). Figure (5.3) represents both the direct effect from K to E and an indirect effect of K on E through M (i.e. it involves a sequence K →M →E).

The indirect effect (K→ M→ E) represents the mediating influence of construct M on the relationship between K and E
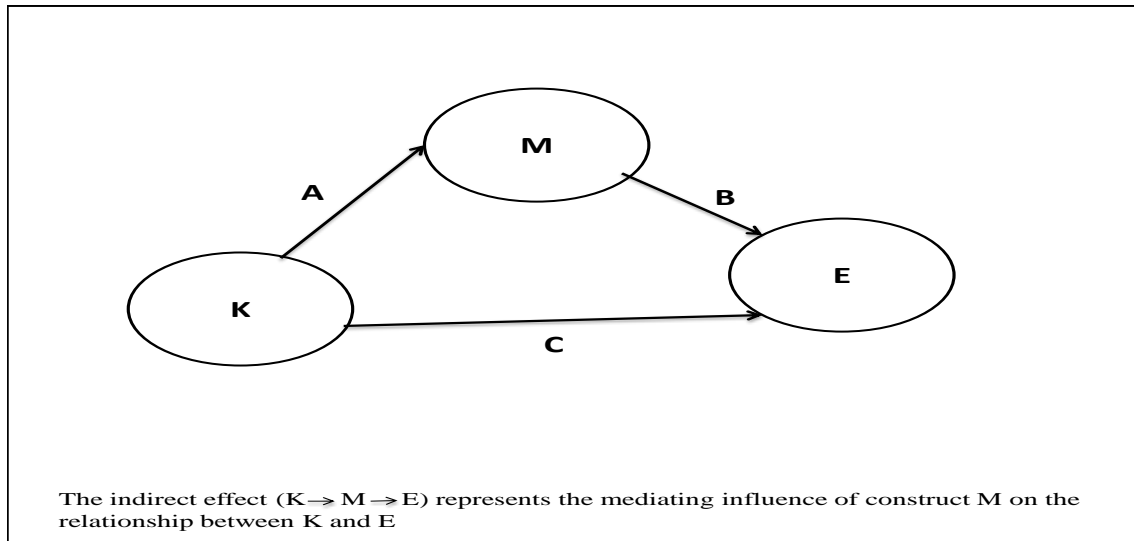
Figure 5.3. The direct effect of K on E, and indirect effect of K on E (through M)

According to Hair et al. (2010, p. 753), mediation includes the comparison of a direct effect between two constructs while including an indirect influence through a third construct. Full mediation occurs when the direct effect between two constructs becomes insignificant when including the indirect effect of a third construct. Moreover, partial mediation occurs if a direct effect between two constructs is reduced but still significant when including an indirect effect of a third construct (Hair et al., 2010). Furthermore, an indirect effect means that the direct effect between IV and DV is not significant but there is a significant direct effect between IV and M and there is a significant direct effect between M and DV (Gaskin, 2012b). However, no mediation occurs if an indirect effect between IV and DV is not significant with the existence of the mediator. It also occurs if a direct effect of IV on M is insignificant or if a direct effect of M on IV is insignificant (Baron and Kenny, 1986).

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This study examined the mediating effect of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness represented by the hypotheses (H8a, H8b, H8c, H8d, H8e and H8f). The study followed the three regression equations that Baron and Kenny (1986) recommended to test the mediating role of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness (see figure 5.4). Model (1) represents the effect of independent variables on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. The results showed that each of brand distinctiveness, metropolitan city brand, country brand and university physical campus has a significant and positive effect on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness at two tailed test ($\beta = 0.172$, 0.409, 0.197, 0.135, respectively, $p \leq 0.05$). Moreover, the effect of brand similarity on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness is positive and meaningful at one tailed test ($\beta = 0.114$, $p \leq 0.1$). However, the effect of tuition fee on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness is not significant ($\beta = -0.053$, $p > 0.05$) (see table 5.10). We examined the effect of independent variables on dependent variables without the existence of the mediator (model 2). The findings of model (2) showed that the effect of brand distinctiveness ($\beta = 0.195$, $p \leq 0.05$), city brand ($\beta = 0.157$, $p \leq 0.1$), country brand ($\beta = 0.324$, $p \leq 0.01$), tuition fees ($\beta = -0.135$, $p \leq 0.05$) on international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand were significant. However, the effects of brand similarity ($\beta = -0.078$, $p > 0.05$) and university physical campus ($\beta = 0.040$, $p > 0.05$) on international postgraduate student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand were insignificant (see table 5.10).

The inclusion of the mediator, middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness, in the relationships between independent variables and dependent variables (model 3) leads to a slight decrease in the effect of brand distinctiveness (from $\beta = 0.195$ to $\beta = 0.116$, $p \leq 0.1$) and country brand (from 0.324 to 0.240, $p \leq 0.05$) but the effects remain significant suggesting a partial mediation. In addition, the effect of metropolitan city brand on international postgraduate student identification with the existence of mediator was not significant ($\beta = -0.028$, $p > 0.05$), suggesting a full mediation (see table 5.10).

The effects of brand similarity and the university physical campus on international postgraduate student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand were insignificant in model 2, so Baron and Kenny's (1986) second test condition was violated. However, scholars such as De Luca and Atuahene-Gima (2007, p. 103) suggested that "several recent studies in various fields of research have argued that this constraint may be relaxed without hampering the validity of the mediation analysis … Specifically, Sobel's (1982) test enables the investigation of indirect effects of independent variables, regardless of the significance of their total effects on the dependent variable". Moreover, Gaskin (2012b) stated that indirect effect predicts that the direct effect between IV and DV is not significant before including the indirect effect of the mediator. Sobel's (1982) test indicated that the indirect effect of brand similarity and the university physical campus on international student identification was significant at one tailed test ($\beta = 0.050$, 0.060, respectively, $p \leq 0.1$) suggesting an indirect effect. This is in support of H8a and H8e. Therefore, each of brand similarity and the university physical campus has an indirect effect on international student identification through the mediating effect of middle ranking business school corporate brand

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attractiveness. However, the results showed that the indirect relationship between tuition fees and international postgraduate student identification was not significant (β = - 0.025, p > 0.05) suggesting no mediation effect. Thus, H8f was rejected. In summary, by investigating the mediating effect of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness, the findings of this study showed that each of brand similarity and the university physical campus has an indirect effect on international postgraduate student identification through the mediating effect of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. Moreover, the effect of brand distinctiveness and the country brand on international student identification are partially mediated and the effect of city brand is fully mediated. However, tuition fee has an inverse, unmediated effect on international student identification. A summary of the results of the mediating effect of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness is presented in table 5.10.

Table 5.10. Results of regression analysis: standardised path coefficient (t-value)

Independent variable	Middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness	International postgraduate student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand	
	Model 1	**Model2**	**Model 3**
Main effect			
Brand similarity	0.114 (1.776)*	- 0.078 (- 0.992)	- 0.131 (- 1.700)*
Brand distinctiveness	0.172 (2.691)**	0.195 (2.457)**	0.116 (1.504)*
City brand	0.409 (4.961)***	.157 (1.628)*	- 0.028 (- 0.276)
Country brand	0.197 (2.669)**	0.324 (3.432)***	0.240 (2.665)**
University physical Campus	0.135 (1.927)**	0.040 (.467)	- 0.021 (- 0.254)
Tuition fees	- 0.053 (- 0.938)	- 0.135 (-1.870)*	- 0.108 (-1.573)*

Mediating effect			
Middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness			0.443 (4.138)***

*(p ≤ 0.1), ** (p ≤ 0.05), *** (p ≤ 0.001)

It is important to indicate that the three models (1, 2 and 3) figure (5.4) of mediating analysis have a good fit with data. The fit indices of model 1 is [X^2 (df) = 669.221 (401), CFI = 0.932, and RMSEA = 0.051]. Moreover, the fit indices of model 2 is [X^2 (df) = 541.327 (300), CFI= 0.921, and RMSEA = 0.056]. Furthermore, the fit indices of model 3 is [X^2 (df) = 865.852 (520), CFI = 0.922, and RMSEA = 0.051].

Figure 5.4. The three regression equations of mediation

Mediation

First model	Second model

Third model		Models' fit			

Model fit indices	X² (df)	CFI	RMSEA
Model 1	669.221 (401)	0.932	0.051
Model 2	541.327 (300)	0.921	0.056
Model 3	865.852 (520)	0.922	0.051
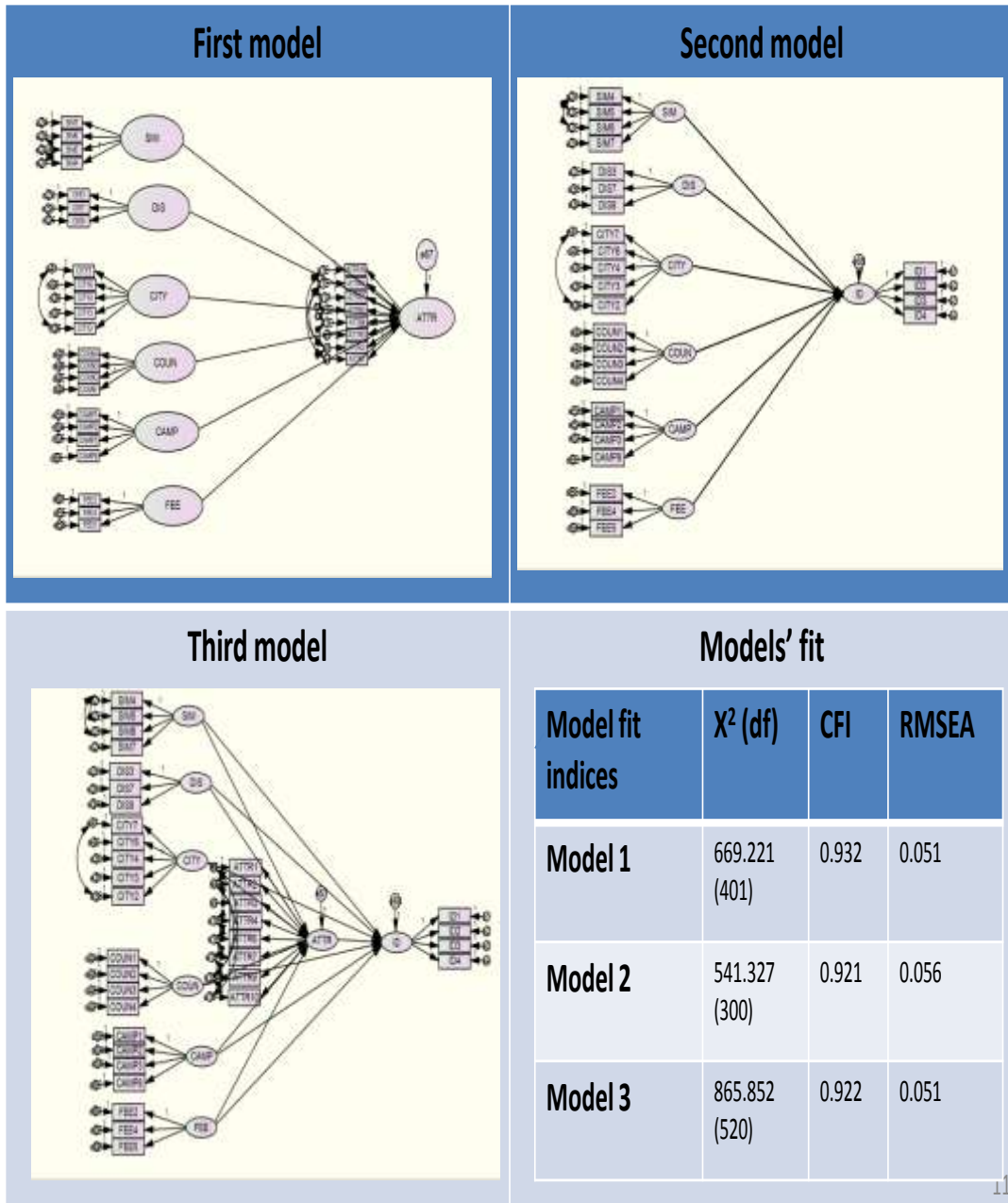
Developed for this study

5.3.2.4. The moderating effect of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness

A moderator can be defined as a third variable that changes the direction of the relationship between two other variables (Baron and Kenny, 1986). Moreover, Hair et al. (2010) stated that moderation means that the relationship between two variables changes with the level of moderating variables. They added that the moderator variable influences either the strength or the direction of the relationships between two other variables (Hair et al., 2010). For example, a moderator might have an enhancing role where increasing the moderator would increase the effect of a predictor (IV) on the outcome (DV). It might also play a barrier role where increasing the moderator would decrease the effect of the predictor on the outcome. It might also have an antagonistic role where increasing the moderator would reverse the influence of the predictor on the outcome. Moderator can be a qualitative variable such as sex, race and class or a quantitative variable such as the level of reward variable that influences the direction and/or strength of the relation between an independent variable and a dependent variable (Baron and Kenny, 1986).

Scholars such as Anderson (1986) and Cohen et al. (2003) recommend the use of hierarchical moderated regression analysis in order to investigate the effect of moderating variables. Moderating effect is expressed as the interaction between a predictor (IV) and a moderator (Baron and Kenny, 1986). A significant moderating effect is supported when the interaction effect is significant and the change in R^2 (ΔR^2) for the interaction term between step two and step three is significant (Anderson, 1986; Kim et al., 2001).

This study examined the moderating effect of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness on the direction of the relationship between all of independent variables (brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, metropolitan city brand, country brand, university physical campus and tuition fees) and a dependent variable (international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand). The hierarchical moderated regression analysis recommended by Cohen et al. (2003) and Anderson (1986) was employed. Figure (5.5) represents three steps that shape the moderating model of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness in this study.

Figure 5.5. The three steps that shapes the moderating model of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness

The three steps that shapes the moderating model of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness

Step one: involves examining the linear effect of independent variables

Independent variables (X)

Brand similarity (X_1)

Brand distinctiveness (X_2)

Metropolitan city brand (X_3)

Country brand (X_4)

University physical campus (X_5)

Tuition fees (X_6)

A dependent variable
International student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand

Step two: adding moderating variable to step one

Middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness (Z)

Step three: adding interaction term to step two

Interaction term variables (X x Z)

Brand similarity x middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness (X_1Z)

Brand distinctiveness x middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness (X_2Z)

Metropolitan city brand x middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness (X_3Z)

Country brand x middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness (X_4Z)

University physical campus x middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness (X_5Z)

Tuition fees x middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness (X_6Z)

In this study, figure (5.5) shows that the moderating variable is designed as an independent variable to test the moderating effect. The interaction term is calculated by multiplying independent variables by the moderator variable. In this model where middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness (Z) is predicted to moderate the relationship between independent variables (X1 to X6) and the dependent variable (international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand (Y)), the interaction terms are expressed as (X_1Z to X_6Z).

In the regression equation, the moderated relationship of Z is expressed as:

$Y=b_0+b_1X_1+b_2X_2+b_3X_3+b_4X_4+b_5X_5+b_6X_6+b_7Z+b_8X_1Z+b_9X_2Z+b10X_3Z+b_{11}X_4Z+b_{12}X_5Z+b_{13}X_6Z$.

Three regression equations must be estimated in order to determine whether the moderator effects are significant. First, the original equation which includes the linear effects of the six independent variables (X_1 to X_6) is estimated (step one: $Y= b_0+b_1X_1+b_2X_2+b_3X_3+b_4X_4+b_5X_5+b_6X_6$). Second, the moderator factor (Z) is added to the original equation as an independent variable (step two: Y=

$b_0+b_1X_1+b_2X_2+b_3X_3+b_4X_4+b_5X_5+b_6X_6+b_7Z$). Third, the interaction term is added to the second equation (step three:

$Y=b0+b1X1+b2X2+b3X3+b4X4+b5X5+b6X6+b7Z+b8X1Z+b9X2Z+b10X3Z+b11X4Z+b12X5Z+b13X6Z$). The problem of multicollinearity that may result when the variables being multiplied to generate the interaction term was reduced by centering the predictors and the moderator variable (Kim et al., 2001). This was accomplished by subtracting the mean from the respective variable. The results showed that there was no evidence of multicollinearity problems. A summary of the results of moderating effect of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness is presented in table 5.11.

Table 5.11. The moderating effect of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness

Predictor variable	Dependent variable: international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness					
	Step 1		Step2		Step3	
	B	t-value	B	t-value	β	t-value
SIM	.078	1.204	.040	.633	.110*	1.670
DIS	.011	.186	.001	.018	.017	.311
CITY	.165**	2.020	.081	.986	.090	1.126
COUN	.228**	3.002	.144	1.872	.145*	1.872
CAMP	.111	1.432	.079	1.032	.084	1.129
FEE	- .003	- .056	- .010	- .174	- .033	- .579
ATTR			.284***	3.745	.288**	3.717
SIM x ATTR					.237	2.898
DIS x ATTR					.008	.118
CITY x ATTR					.217	1.615
COUN x ATTR					- .129	- .876
CAMP x ATTR					- .113	- .877
FEE x ATTR					- .040	- .685
F	12.386***		13.178***		9.451***	
R^2	0.231		0.270		0.338	
ΔR^2			0.039		0.068	

*Significant at p < 0.1, ** Significant at p < 0.05, *** Significant at p <0.001
(ID = international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand, ATTR = middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness, SIM = brand similarity, DIS = brand distinctiveness, CITY = city brand, COUN = country brand, CAMP = university physical campus, FEE= tuition fees)

The results of this study showed that both the interaction effects between independent variables and moderator and the changes of R^2 were not significant (see table 5.11). This indicates that middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness does not have a moderating effect on the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. Therefore, the theory of international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand confirmed that middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness does not have a moderating effect on the relationship between brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, metropolitan city brand, country brand, university physical campus and tuition fees and international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.

5.3.2.5. Examining the moderating effects of international students' home country

This study examined the moderating role of international students' home country on the relationships between examined variables using Amos 18.0. This study categorised the respondents within four main categories based on the region they come from (Asian students, African students, European students, and Middle Eastern students). However, the results showed that the structured models did not demonstrate an adequate level of fit to report the findings because all fit indices necessary to assess the fit of structural model did not meet the minimum criterion required for adequate model fit [CFI or TLI ≥ 0.90; RMR ≤ 0.08; RMSEA < 0.08]. The results showed that CFI and TLI are less than 0.9, RMR and RMSEA are above 0.08. This lack of the model fit might be related to the small sample size in each group which was not adequate enough to run SEM and have a good model fit. Therefore, the

findings of the structural model related to a moderating role of international students' home country were not reported.

To sum up, this study used the structural model to test the developed hypotheses. It examined the direct relationships between brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, metropolitan city brand, country brand, university physical campus and tuition fees and each of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness and international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand. Moreover, it examined the direct relationship between middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness and international student corporate brand identification. Furthermore, it examined the mediating and moderating effect of middle ranking business schools corporate brand attractiveness on the effect between brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, metropolitan city brand, country brand, university physical campus and tuition fees and international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.

This research has led to the theory of international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand. This theory was found to be underpinned by five main attractiveness dimensions: brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, association with a metropolitan city brand, country brand and university physical campus. Whilst tuition fee was a constituent part of the initial theoretical framework, this variable was not shown to have a significant relationship with middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. Moreover, the theory of international student corporate brand identification also showed that each of brand similarity and the university physical campus has no direct effect on

international postgraduate student identification but an indirect effect through middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. Furthermore, the theory indicated that whereas the effects of brand distinctiveness and country brand are partially mediated and the effect of city brand is fully mediated, a tuition fee has an inverse, unmediated effect on international student identification. In addition, the theory of international student corporate brand identification confirmed that middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness works only as a mediator but not as a moderator on the relationship between brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, association with a metropolitan city brand, country brand and university physical campus and international student identification. However, middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness is neither mediator nor moderator on the relationship between tuition fees and international student identification. A summary of the findings is presented in table 5.12.

Table 5.12. A summary of the findings

Hypotheses	Hypotheses statements	Evaluation
H1	Middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness has a direct, positive effect on international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.	Accepted
H2	Brand similarity has a direct positive effect on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness.	Accepted
H2a	Brand similarity has a direct positive effect on international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.	Rejected
H3	Brand distinctiveness has a direct positive effect on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness.	Accepted

H3a	Brand distinctiveness has a direct positive effect on international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.	Accepted
H4	A metropolitan city brand has a direct positive effect on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness	Accepted
H4a	A metropolitan city brand has a direct positive effect on international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.	Rejected
H5	Country brand has a direct positive effect on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness.	Accepted
H5a	Country brand has a direct positive effect on international postgraduate student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand	Accepted
H6	University physical campus has a direct positive effect on the middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness.	Accepted
H6a	University physical campus has a direct positive effect on international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.	Rejected
H7	Tuition fees have an inverse effect on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness	Rejected
H7a	Tuition fees have an inverse effect on international postgraduate student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand	Accepted
H8a	Middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness positively mediates the effect of brand similarity on international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand	Accepted (Indirect effect)
H8b	Middle ranking business school corporate brand	Accepted

	attractiveness positively mediates the effect of brand distinctiveness on international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand	(Partial mediation)
H8c	Middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness positively mediates the effect of metropolitan city brand on international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand	Accepted (Full mediation)
H8d	Middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness positively mediates the effect of country brand on international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand	Accepted (Partial mediation)
H8e	Middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness positively mediates the effect of university physical campus on international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand	Accepted (Indirect effect)
H8f	Middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness positively mediates the effect of tuition fees on international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand	Rejected (No mediation)
H9a, b, c, d, e, f	Middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness moderates the effects of a) brand similarity b) brand distinctiveness, c) metropolitan city brand, d) country brand, e) university physical campus, and f) tuition fees on international postgraduate student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.	Rejected

5.4. Summary

This chapter presented the data analysis and the findings of the main quantitative study. It presented a detailed explanation on the data screening (missing data, outliers, normality, linearity and multicollinearity). It also presented a two-step approach recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). This study conducted CFA as a first step recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988) to evaluate the reliability and construct validity (convergent validity, discriminate validity, nomological validity and face validity). Moreover, it used the structural model analysis as the second step recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988) to test the suggested hypotheses.

Overall, the results of this study suggested seven main conclusions. First, all of brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, metropolitan city brand, country brand, university physical campus have a direct and positive effect on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. Second, middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness has a direct and positive influence on international postgraduate student identification. Third, the tuition fees have an insignificant effect on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness but an inverse and unmediated effect on international student corporate brand identification. Fourth, whilst the direct effect of brand similarity, city brand and university physical campus on international postgraduate student identification is not significant, the indirect effect through middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness is significant. Fifth, each of brand distinctiveness and country brand has a significant direct and partial mediation effect (through middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness) on international postgraduate student identification. Sixth, the effect of city

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brand on international student corporate brand identification is fully mediated by middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. Seventh, middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness has no moderation effect on the relationship between brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, metropolitan city brand, country brand, university physical campus and tuition fees and international postgraduate student identification. The findings of this study will be discussed in the context of the extant theories and literature in the next chapter, the discussion.

Chapter Six: Discussion

6.1. Introduction

The previous chapter presented the findings of this study. The aim of this chapter is to discuss in more detail these findings in the context of the extant theories and literature. It also provided new insights into middle ranking business school corporate brands in the UK context. The findings of the initial qualitative study were used to support the findings of the main quantitative study.

This chapter first discusses the hypothesised relationships between the main determinants of international postgraduate student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand in the context of the extant literature. Moreover, the mediating and moderating effects of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness are also clarified. A summary of the chapter is placed at the end of it.

6.2. Discussion of the hypothesised relationships

This study aims to advance the international marketing literature by examining the main determinants of international postgraduate student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand in the UK context. More particularly, this study provides empirical evidence showing the complex relationships between brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, metropolitan city brand, country brand, university physical campus and tuition fees and both middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness and international postgraduate student identification with a middle ranking business school

corporate brand. It also examines the mediating and moderating effect of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness on the effect of independent variables (brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, metropolitan city brand, country brand, university physical campus and tuition fees) on the dependent variable (international student corporate brand identification). It further investigates the moderating effect of international students' home country.

The study reveals that international postgraduate students do identify with a middle ranking business school corporate brand in the UK. The following section discusses the hypothesised relationships between the main determinants of international postgraduate student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.

6.2.1. Determinants of international postgraduate student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand:

6.2.1.1. Middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness

The findings of this study showed that middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness has a direct positive effect on international postgraduate student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand. This is consistent with social identity theory which assumes that customers identify with a company/ brand when they perceive the company/ brand to be attractive for them (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003). Moreover, this study supports the findings of previous studies which asserted that identity attractiveness is a main determinant of customer identification with a company/ brand in different contexts such as the financial sector, cosmetic and toiletries sector, pharmaceutical sector and cellular sector

(Kim et al., 2001; Ahearne et al., 2005; Marín and Ruiz, 2007; 2013; Curras-Perez et al., 2009; Sung, 2011).

Overall, the findings of this study indicated the great effectiveness of corporate brand attractiveness dimensions on international student corporate brand identification. The findings show that middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness positively influences international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand. The findings also supported the majority of hypotheses that corporate brand attractiveness dimensions (brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, association with a metropolitan city brand, country brand and university physical campus) effectively enhance middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. This finding indicates that, excluding tuition fees, all corporate brand attractiveness dimensions of a middle ranking business school represent the main antecedents driving international student corporate brand identification.

6.2.1.2. Brand similarity

The findings show that brand similarity has a significant, direct, and positive effect on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. This is consistent with social identity theory which assumes that a brand seems to be attractive for customers when the characteristics of the brand meet and satisfy self-continuity. This is one of the self-definition needs and it represents the need of customers to find that a company's identity is similar to their own (Marín and Ruiz, 2007; 2013; Curras-Perez et al., 2009). Moreover, this study supports the similarity-attraction paradigm which suggests that similarity is a main driver of attractions and a person is attracted to a social group that is similar to him (Berscheid and

Walster, 1969). Furthermore, this study supports the findings of past studies which asserted the importance of brand similarity or identity similarity for identity attractiveness in different contexts (e.g. Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Halliday and Kuenzel, 2008; Koo, 2009; Karaosmanoglu et al., 2011; Gonzalez and Chakraborty, 2012).

The findings show that the effect size of brand similarity on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness is the lowest effect comparable with other attractiveness dimensions. This means that international students consider that a similarity between their characteristics and the characteristics of a middle ranking business school corporate brand is the least in importance among other dimensions for the attractiveness of middle ranking business school corporate brand and their identification with that corporate brand. This may be explained by the priorities that international students may consider when making their choice of an educational institution (Ojo and Yusofu, 2013). The findings of this study showed that international students prioritise in evaluating the attractiveness of a middle ranking business school corporate brand a metropolitan city brand and a country brand over brand similarity. This is consistent with previous studies such as Cubillo et al. (2006) which proposed that international students give a higher priority to particular factors such as a city image and a country image than other factors when making their choice decision of an overseas educational institution.

This study finds that although the effect of brand similarity on international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand was significant, contradictory to what was expected this effect was negative and not in the expected positive

direction. This is inconsistent with the previous studies which asserted that brand similarity has a direct positive effect on customer identification with a company/ brand and this identification occurs when customers perceive a similarity between their identity and a company's/ brand's identity (He and Li, 2011; Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012). The contradictory finding may be explained by the approach whereby the brand similarity construct is measured in this research. This study used identity similarity in defining brand similarity (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003) and it conceptualised it as customers' perceptions that the characteristics (identity) of a brand are similar to their own identities. This study might not have included sufficient items that show the similarity between characterises of international students and characteristics of a middle ranking business school corporate brand. Some of the used items that show this similarity were deleted in this study in order to ensure an acceptable fit of the measurement model and acceptable construct validity (convergent and discriminate validity). Instead, the findings show that brand similarity affects international postgraduate student identification indirectly through the mediating effect of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness.

This study offers a new insight into a middle ranking business school corporate brand in the UK context. It asserts the importance of brand similarity for middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness for international postgraduate students. Moreover, it argues that brand similarity has no direct positive influence on international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand but an indirect influence through middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. Furthermore, it emphasises

that middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness is important for making brand similarity more valuable for international student corporate brand identification.

6.2.1.3. Brand distinctiveness

The findings show that brand distinctiveness has a significant, direct and positive effect on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. This means that international students evaluate the distinctiveness of a middle ranking business school corporate brand as a valuable dimension for its attractiveness and their identification with the corporate brand. This study supports the past studies which found that brand distinctiveness is a main predictor of brand attractiveness as the more distinctive customers perceive a brand to be on dimensions they value, the more attractive the brand is to them (Balmer and Liao, 2007; Curras-Perez et al., 2009). Moreover, this study is consistent with social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner, 1985) which suggests that a brand seems to be attractive for customers when the characteristics of the brand meet, satisfy or enhance their self-distinctiveness which is one of their self-definitional needs (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Marín and Ruiz, 2007; Curras-Perez et al., 2009). The effect size of brand distinctiveness showed that it has the third strongest effect on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. This means that international students consider brand distinctiveness as the third most important factor in the priority list when evaluating middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness.

This study also provided empirical evidence that brand distinctiveness has a direct positive effect on international student corporate brand identification. This is consistent with social identity theory which assumes that an individual aspires to be distinct and different from

others by getting an affiliation with a distinctive social group that shows their differences from other people who belong to other social groups (Tajfel and Turner, 1985; Bhattacharya and Sen 2003; Donavan et al., 2006). Moreover, this study also supports past studies which demonstrated the relationship between brand distinctiveness or identity distinctiveness and customer identification in different contexts such as health care systems, household brands, team sport setting and higher education (Ahearne et al., 2005; Balmer and Liao, 2007; Koo, 2009; Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012).

Furthermore, the findings provide new empirical evidence that brand distinctiveness also has an indirect effect (through middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness) on international student corporate brand identification. In addition, the findings show that middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness partially mediates the effect of brand distinctiveness on international student corporate brand identification.

The qualitative findings of this study also supported the quantitative findings. The senior figures asserted that brand distinctiveness is essential for the attractiveness of UK business school corporate brands for international students. For example, the senior figure of the university 2 stated that:

"I think that every business school has a distinctive corporate brand which distinguishes it from the other business schools and makes it attractive for international students. We are not a Russell Group- research intensive- university. We are a university which focuses on business, humanities, education and sport science. These are the factors why we are involved overseas. We play on our strengths which are strong student support, good student

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experience, friendly environment and good teaching and learning. We are not research intensive; we are what we call teaching-led. We rate student support very high on our list of priorities. That is what we try to communicate to the markets which we seek to enter".

(Vice Chancellor, University 2, brand distinctiveness)

Consistent with that, the senior figure of university 1 stated that:

"We place a lot of emphasis on the notion that we are international, that we are research-intensive and that we believe that there is something distinct and valuable about our education that takes place in the context of an international research-intensive university. Our Business School has been ranked as both internationally 'excellent' for research and also 'excellent' for teaching, placing it at the very top of UK rankings of its Business Schools. This increases the attractiveness of our business school for international students".

(Pro-Vice Chancellor, University 1, brand distinctiveness)

The importance of brand distinctiveness for the attractiveness of a middle ranking business school corporate brand is also confirmed by international students interviewed within the focus group discussions. For example, one international student stated that:

The distinctiveness of the business school is very important. Brunel Business School is distinctive in terms of the interesting courses it provides. For example, if you look at the top ranking business schools in the UK, they do not offer the course that I am interested in which I am currently studying. That is also a factor for me. If you want to study Corporate Brand Management, you do not go to Oxford. So it is a unique course. For me top ranking business

schools have a stronger corporate brand but they do not have what you want (focus group 2, Res 2, brand distinctiveness).

This study provides another new insight into a middle ranking business school corporate brand in the UK context. It confirms the importance of brand distinctiveness for the attractiveness of a middle ranking business school corporate brand for international postgraduate students. It emphasises that brand distinctiveness affects international student corporate brand identification in two ways. The first one is a positive direct affect and the second is an indirect effect through the effect of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. Moreover, this study asserts that middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness partially mediates the effect of brand distinctiveness on international student corporate brand identification.

6.2.1.4. Metropolitan city brand

This study used a metropolitan city brand as a constituent element for middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness and international student corporate brand identification. The findings of this study show that metropolitan city brand has a significant, direct and positive effect on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. These findings reinforce previous studies which showed that a city brand increases the attractiveness of higher education institution brands for students (e.g. Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002; Binsardi and Ekwulugo, 2003; Chapleo, 2005; 2010; Ali-Choudhury et al., 2009; Peluso and Guido, 2012). Moreover, this study confirms the findings of earlier empirical studies such as Ali-Choudhury et al. (2009) which asserted that London (and near London) is

a valuable element of a university brand. It has a fundamental role on attracting students as linking London name with a university name increases the university's capability of recruiting more students (Ali-Choudhury et al., 2009). Furthermore, the study also supports the findings of Peluso and Guido (2012) which emphasised that the city of location naming strategy which involves integrating the name of a city with the name of a higher educational institution is a more appropriate strategy when the main aim of the educational institution is to attract students and more particularly international students.

The findings of this study show that a metropolitan city brand has the largest effect size on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness among other attractiveness dimensions. This means that international students consider a metropolitan city brand as the most important element for the attractiveness of a UK middle ranking business school corporate brand and for their identification with it. That might be explained as London is considered among the most attractive cities in the UK because of its culture, history, nightlife, shopping, infrastructure, housing, business and transportation (Anholt, 2006). The Mayor of London (2003) stated that "London is an attractive destination for overseas students (24% of whom attend London universities) and for people from other more distant parts of the United Kingdom due perhaps to London's extensive social, entertainment and cultural amenities" (Mayor of London, 2003 cited in Ali-Choudhury et al., 2009, p. 16). Moreover, previous studies such as Ali-Choudhury et al. (2009, p. 21) asserted the importance of the London brand name for educational institutions. They cited a respondent who stated that "London [has] a 'huge selling point, especially for international students', a 'guaranty of a great social life' and 'meaning you can go to really exciting places'". Another respondent said that

"London of course has all the advantages of London. It has a brand of its own right that it globally recognised. London has a stronger brand than the university".

This study proposes business schools outside metropolitan cities might find it more difficult to attract international students than business schools which are based in metropolitan cities. Previous studies such as Trueman et al. (2008) indicated the importance of a city brand for reinforcing or altering a brand perception. Trueman et al. (2012) argued that companies in a city brand with a negative perception such as Bradford struggle more to create positive perceptions in stakeholders' minds. This study recommends that managers of a middle ranking business school corporate brand should consider a city brand in developing international marketing strategies. More particularly, managers should emphasise a metropolitan city brand when communicating a middle ranking business school corporate brand to international markets as this will increase its attractiveness for international students and in turn enhance their identification with it.

This study finds no empirical evidence for the direct positive effect of a metropolitan city brand on international postgraduate student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand. Instead, it shows that metropolitan city brand affects international student corporate brand identification indirectly through the mediating effect of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. This supports Bhattacharya and Sen (2003) who argued that identity attractiveness is essential for the occurrence of customer identification with a company and this identification is a result of two sequential steps; the first one involves customers perceiving a company as attractive and this attractiveness leads

them to identify with it in the second step. Moreover, this study is consistent with previous studies such as Lappegard (2007) which observed a significant role that a city brand plays in satisfying an individuals' self-concept and defining his identity (i.e. creating identification). Besides, this study supported both Donavan (2006, p. 127) as he stated that "the people – place relationship encourages individuals to take pride in entities from the same location as they reside" and Kemp et al. (2012, p. 509) who emphasised that "positive attitudes toward the city's brand might increase the likelihood of a self-connection developing with the brand". This is because an individual's positive attitude towards a metropolitan city brand where a company/ brand is located might enhance his self-concept and, in turn, encourage his identification with a company/ brand (Lappegard, 2007; Ali-Choudhury et al., 2009).

The statistical findings of this study have been confirmed by the findings of the qualitative study. For example, by asking the senior figures of the three UK universities, about the importance of city brand as an attractiveness factor for international students, the senior figure of university 3 asserted that:

The city brand is very important. For example, Edinburgh is a hugely attractive city and when we are recruiting people from overseas to come to Edinburgh we use Edinburgh, the city brand. Our business school does not have a location in its name. It is not like the Manchester Business School for example. So, you have to ensure that people know that you are actually British, Scottish and in Edinburgh. We push this fact, we are in a good location that is in Britain, Scotland, and Edinburgh.

(Director of Corporate Communication, University 3, city brand)

The senior figure of university 2 stated that:

We have an institution which is relatively small. We, for example, are not in the centre of the city, so we don't recruit students as those in big cities or bright cities do.

(Vice-Chancellor, University 2, city brand)

The importance of a metropolitan city brand for the attractiveness of a middle ranking business school corporate brand is also confirmed by international students interviewed within the focus group discussions. This study cited some of the international students' statements:

The brand of Oxford compared to Brunel, there is if you like, a large gap. The quality of Oxford is far higher than Brunel. But Brunel is in the city of London and this makes Brunel more valuable for me. Brunel for me is the most valuable because it is in London. (Focus group 1, Res 4, city brand).

For some personal reasons in that I am a self-funded student. I wanted to take a course that is not too expensive and I wanted something that is close to the central London. (Focus group 1, Res 1, city brand).

Because Brunel Business School is in London, I could say that I get my degree from London, which is prestigious. For my country, London and the UK are prestigious. (Focus group 1, Res 2, city brand).

Brunel Business School is in London. It is convenient for transport and its ranking is quite good. (Focus group 2, Res 1, city brand).

Well, the major factor was being close to the city of London. I think that was a huge plus for me. (Focus group 2, Res 3, city brand).

This study offers new further insights into a middle ranking business school corporate brand in the UK context. It highlights the importance of a metropolitan city brand for a middle ranking business school corporate brand. It also asserts the significance of a metropolitan city brand in being the most powerful effect on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. Moreover, it argues that metropolitan city brand has no direct positive effect on international student corporate brand identification but it has an indirect effect through middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. Furthermore, it asserts that middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness fully mediates the effect of metropolitan city brand on international student corporate brand identification.

6.2.1.5. Country brand

This study used country brand as a constituent element for middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness and international student corporate brand identification. The findings of this study confirm that country brand has a significant, direct and positive effect on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. It showed that favourable perceptions that international students have about the UK HE brand increases the attractiveness of a middle ranking business school corporate brand. This study underpins

previous studies which assumed that a country brand has a strong influence on brand attractiveness (e.g. Nebenzahl and Jaffe, 1996; Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002; Pappu et al., 2006; Đorđević, 2008; Moilanen and Rainisto, 2009). It also supports both Đorđević (2008) who asserted that a country brand increases the attractiveness of corporate brands made in it and enhances their positioning in international markets and Moilanen and Rainisto (2009) who stated that a country brand boosts the attractiveness of institutions placed in that country.

The findings also show that a country brand has the second most powerful effect on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. Hence, international students evaluate a country brand as the second most important factor for the attractiveness of a middle ranking business school corporate brand and their identification with that brand. In order of importance, it directly follows metropolitan city brand but it is more important than the other three dimensions: brand similarity, brand distinctiveness and university physical campus. This can be explained by the UK education brand being well established for its high status and prestige. Besides the heritage and long tradition of UK higher education which goes back many hundreds of years, increase its attractiveness for international students and distinguish the UK from the other competing countries such as Australia, the USA, and European counties (The Economist, 2010a). This study found that Brunel Business School has recognised the importance of a city brand and a country brand for communicating its corporate brand to international students. The business school integrated the London name to its corporate brand name and it is communicating itself to international students as one of the UK business schools with a campus based in London. It is known as Brunel Business School-London. This study recommends that managers of a middle ranking business school corporate

brand should consider a country brand when communicating a middle ranking business school corporate brand to international markets as this will increase its attractiveness and in turn enhance international student corporate brand identification.

The findings of this study further provide empirical evidence to show that country brand affects international student corporate brand identification directly and positively. It also finds that middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness partially mediates the effect of country brand on international student corporate brand identification. This is consistent with previous studies which indicated the significant role that a country brand plays in creating an individual's self-identity (Twigger-Ross et al., 2003; Lappegard, 2007). Moreover, this study supports previous studies which assumed that a country of origin has an influence on customer identification with a company and identity attractiveness is necessary for the occurrence of this identification (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003).

The statistical findings of the quantitative study were supported by the findings of the initial qualitative study conducted in the early stages of this study. For example, by asking the senior figures of the three UK universities about the importance of a country brand as an attractiveness factor of UK universities and business schools for international students, the senior figure of university 3 stated that:

Yes it is an important and interesting question because it is important in terms of British and UK brands. Also the Scottish brand is very important and we have to balance that and sometimes the Scottish brand is more important than the UK brand. In terms of UK branding, three parts you would have to explain to international students, where the UK is; where

Scotland is (Scotland itself has a strong brand. We use the Scottish brand in terms of education and heritage) and the third part where Edinburgh is. We push the fact that we are in a good location in Britain, Scotland and Edinburgh.

(Director of Corporate Communication, University 3, country brand)

The senior figure of university 3 further asserted that:

People in Dubai do not know where Scotland is, so we have to do more in terms of explaining about Scotland; about why Scotch education is a good education to have; and why a British education is a good education to have. That is a necessary thing to do in Scotland. So in a sense of the communication of a brand, we change the emphasis relative to the culture in other countries.

(Director of Corporate Communication, University 3, country brand)

Consistent with that, the senior figure of university 2 highlighted that:

It is a difficult and interesting question. The important thing that we have is that we have a long history and tradition in higher education. It is not only about tradition in the higher education but also about perceived quality. In sense about the perceived quality, I am not sure that the quality that we provide is significantly better than the quality provided elsewhere but students' perceptions is that the UK brand is a high quality brand and I think we still gain from that. But I do not think that is the same for other countries. They are growing their brands rapidly. That is why we emphasise tradition. We have a very long tradition in the UK of higher education that goes back many hundreds of years. It is not the

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case in Australia, not the case of New Zealand and not the case of the USA. I think we are

still greedy in using our history.

 (Vice-Chancellor, University 2, country brand)

Furthermore, the senior figure of university 1 stated that:

I think the UK brand is certainly very attractive for international students because I think UK

higher education still has good reputation. Our unique selling point is that we offer a British

education.

 (Pro- Vice-Chancellor, University 1, country brand)

The importance of a country brand for the attractiveness of a middle ranking business school corporate brand is also confirmed by international students interviewed within the focus group discussions. The following are extracts from statements by international students:

I chose the UK because of the heritage, experience and history associated with UK higher education. Moreover, the quality of education is also very good and it is also recognised in my home country, Nigeria. (Focus group 2, Res 1, country brand).

UK higher education brand is very developed. (Focus group 2, Res 3, country brand).

UK higher education brand is prestigious. (Focus group 1, Res 2, country brand).

As compared to back Home country, UK higher education brand is very high class. (Focus group 1, Res 4, country brand).

The study provides further insights into a middle ranking business school corporate brand. It confirms the importance of a country brand for middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness and in turn international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand. Moreover, it argues that the more positive the attitude that international students have towards the county brand where the business school is located, the more attractive the middle ranking business school corporate brand will be for them and consequently the more willing they will have to identify with a middle ranking business school corporate brand. Furthermore, this study also confirms that country brand has a direct positive influence on international student corporate brand identification and also an indirect influence through the effect of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. In addition, this study finds out that middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness partially mediates the influence of country brand on international student corporate brand identification.

6.2.1.6. University physical campus

This study used university physical campus as a constituent element for middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness and international student corporate brand identification. The findings show that university physical campus has a significant and positive effect on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. These findings support previous studies which found that university physical campus is important for the attractiveness of HE institution (e.g. Strange and Banning, 2000; Binsardi and Ekwulugo, 2003; Gray et al., 2003; Chapleo, 2005; Melewar and Akel, 2005; Bennett and Ali-Choudhury, 2009). Moreover, the effect size of university physical campus on middle

ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness showed that a university physical campus has the fourth most powerful influence on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness among the other examined factors in this study. Therefore, in order of importance, university physical campus is the fourth for evaluating middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. This can be explained by international students prioritising some factors over others when choosing a particular overseas educational institution (Ojo and Yusofu, 2013). In this study, university physical campus is important for evaluating the attractiveness of a middle ranking business school corporate brand because it influences international students' first impression and their behaviours towards a university or a business school (Strange and Banning, 2000), but it is still less important than the other factors addressed in this study such as the country and the city where a middle ranking business school is located and the distinctiveness of a business school from the other business schools.

This study found no evidence for the direct positive effect of university physical campus on international postgraduate student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand. Instead, university physical campus affects international postgraduate student identification indirectly through the mediating effect of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. This also supports previous studies such as Bhattacharya and Sen (2003) which suggested that identity attractiveness is an essential element for the occurrence of customer identification with a company.

The statistical findings of the quantitative study were supported by the findings of the initial qualitative study. The qualitative study showed the importance of university physical campus for increasing the attractiveness of a middle ranking business school corporate brand for international students. The following are some citations of international students' statements:

In central London there is no university with a big campus that provides lots of facilities. Brunel is the only one that has a big campus and has good facilities. (Focus group 1, Res 3, university campus).

One reason is campus size; you have access to everything within Brunel, you do not have to go for different campuses, for different lectures. There are other universities in London where the lectures are in different campuses and you are not sure where you will be in the morning or in the evening. Here, you can get everything in one place and the accommodation is nearby. It is easily accessible to the town and it is easily accessible to London as well. Moreover, it is easily accessible to Heathrow Airport. (Focus group 1, Res 5, university campus).

Infrastructure and the size of the campus in London are very important because in London, nothing is as big. Brunel University also has a modern, nice and big campus. (Focus group 1, Res 4, university campus).

For the business school itself, I found that they have all facilities in one place. This is a factor for me, because I do not want to travel from the lecture centre to the library. In some schools, they have campuses here and another campus outside. I found that all the facilities were in

one local community, and that was the factor enclosed for me as well and that is why I chose

Brunel Business School. (Focus group 2, Res 3, university campus).

Brunel is one of the universities that have campus facilities in London. Yes, I think it is

fantastic. (Focus group 2, Res 2, university campus).

Brunel University has a modern campus. For the campus it is very good, it has a new

building, including infrastructure. (Focus group 1, Res 5, university campus).

This study provides new insights into a middle ranking business school corporate brand. It confirms the importance of a university's physical campus for increasing the attractiveness of a middle ranking business school corporate brand for international students. Moreover, it finds that university physical campus has no direct positive influence on international student corporate brand identification but indirect influence through middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness.

6.2.1.7. Tuition fees

This study used tuition fees as a constituent element for middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness and international student corporate brand identification. The findings of this study surprisingly showed that the effect of tuition fees on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness was not significant and H7 was rejected. This is inconsistent with previous studies which mentioned that tuition fees are among the essential components of UK higher education brands that attract international students (Mazzarol and

Soutar, 2002; Binsardi and Ekwulugo, 2003; Chapleo, 2007; Naidoo, 2007). The rejection of this hypothesis (H7) might be related to the high tuition fees demanded by UK higher education institutions compared with tuition fees provided by higher education institutions in competing countries such as the USA, Australia, New Zealand and the rest of Europe. In a similar vein, previous studies such as Hatakenaka (2004, p. 5) argued that "it is interesting that the market for overseas students became dominated by Anglophone countries in the 1990s, in spite of the fact that these countries charge full cost fees whereas other countries such as Germany or France, charge low or no fees". Likewise, Baker (2010) highlighted that the UK universities' campuses are very expensive in terms of the high tuition fees and the expensive cost of living in British campuses. Furthermore, the high tuition fees demanded by the UK higher education institutions is also confirmed by several previous studies such as Binsardi and Ekwulugo (2003, p. 321) who strongly recommended that "the best way to attract more international students is to concentrate on the price variable such as lowering UK tuition fees". In addition, Ali Choudhury et al. (2009) stated that the high tuition fees and cost of accommodation decrease the attractiveness of an educational institution brand for students and therefore these tuition fees should be decreased to attract more students.

This statistical finding of the quantitative study is supported by the findings of the initial qualitative study. The senior figures of the UK universities consider that tuition fees in UK higher education institutions are very expensive comparing with other institutions overseas. For example, the senior figure of university 2 stated that:

"There is now a lot of competition from the USA, Australia and New Zealand and also from the rest of the Europe because the UK HE is expensive. Whatever model we are operating, it is an expensive model compared with other institutions overseas".

(Vice-Chancellor, University 2, tuition fees).

Moreover, this study provides empirical evidence that tuition fees have an inverse effect on international postgraduate student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand. This is consistent with previous studies such as Voss et al. (1998) who argued that a favourable price perception (i.e. low price) will increase customer satisfaction with a brand and make it an attractive target for identification. However, middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness has no mediating influence on the relationship between tuition fees and international student corporate brand identification. This is because the relationship between tuition fees and middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness was not significant ($p > 0.05$).

This study provides further new insight into middle ranking business school corporate branding. It confirms that the influence of tuition fees on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness is not significant. It also demonstrates that tuition fees have only an inverse relationship with international student corporate brand identification but no indirect or mediating effect exists via middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness.

6.2.1.8. The moderating influence of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness and international students' home country

This study examined the moderating influence of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness on international student corporate brand identification. The findings of this study confirm that middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness has no moderating effect on the relationship between brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, city brand, country brand, university physical campus, tuition fees and international student corporate brand identification. This result may be explained by the interaction effects of the independent variables and the moderator, middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness were not significant. This study is inconsistent with previous studies such as Baron and Kenny (1986) who suggested that a latent construct can have both mediating and moderating status in the research model. However, the findings of this study are consistent with findings of some previous studies such as De Luca and Atuahene-Gima (2007) which examined the mediating and moderating roles of the same latent construct (knowledge integration mechanisms (KIMs)). They found that KIMs mediate but do not moderate the effect of cross-functional collaboration and market knowledge on product innovation performance.

This study provides new insights to a middle ranking business school corporate brand in that, while middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness plays a mediating role on the effect of brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, metropolitan city brand, country brand and university campus on international student corporate brand identification, the moderating role of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness has not been supported.

Furthermore, this study also examined the moderating role of international students' home country on the relationships between examined variables but the findings have not been reported because the structural model showed an unacceptable fit.

6.3. Summary

This chapter discussed the findings of this study in the context of the extant literature. The findings of the initial qualitative study were employed to support the statistical findings of the main quantitative study. Both statistical findings and initial qualitative findings supported that the theory of international student corporate brand identification is underpinned by five main attractiveness dimensions: brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, metropolitan city brand, country brand and university physical campus. Moreover, this chapter presents new insights that this study provides to the UK middle ranking business school corporate brands. The theoretical and managerial contributions to the extant literature, the research limitations and future studies will be discussed in the next chapter, the conclusion.

Chapter seven: Conclusion

7.1. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present the main theoretical and managerial contributions of this study. Moreover, it articulates the weakness/ limitations of the research substantive theory that is analytically generalisable. Furthermore, it suggests further research that could be conducted in the future.

7.2. Theoretical contributions

This study makes essential theoretical contributions to the areas of middle ranking business schools, corporate brands, internationalisation, and customer identification in different ways.

First, this study makes a theoretical contribution vis-à-vis the main determinants of international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand in the UK context. This study – focusing on a middle ranking business school corporate brand, internationalisation/international marketing and identification – appears to be the first of its kind. Moreover, it is one of the first attempts to provide a theoretical undertaking regarding the main determinants of international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.

Second, the findings of this study are of foundational significance for theory building. A substantive theory of international postgraduate student identification with a UK middle ranking business school corporate brand was introduced. This theory was underpinned by five

attractiveness dimensions, namely brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, association with a metropolitan city brand, country brand and university physical campus. Moreover, the theory of international student corporate brand identification confirmed that brand distinctiveness and country brand have significant positive effects on international student corporate brand identification while the effects of brand similarity, city brand and university physical campus on international student corporate brand identification were not significant.

Third, this study makes a theoretical contribution by examining the mediating effect of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. The theory of international student corporate brand identification confirmed the mediating effect of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness on most of the examined dimensions. This study also confirmed that each of brand similarity and university physical campus affects international postgraduate student identification indirectly through the mediating effect of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. Moreover, whilst the effects of brand distinctiveness and country brand are partially mediated and the effect of city brand is fully mediated, tuition fees have an inverse, unmediated effect on international student corporate brand identification.

Fourth, this study examined the moderating effect of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness. The theory of international student corporate brand identification confirmed that the effects of brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, association with a metropolitan city brand, country brand, university physical campus and tuition fees on

international student corporate brand identification were not moderated by the effect of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness.

Fifth, this study is one of the first attempts to define the concept of middle ranking business school corporate brand in the UK context. It defined this concept as business schools within universities that have a Royal Charter and are not members of the Russell Group universities. Middle ranking business schools are not typically among the top 20 in international top ranking league tables such as the Financial Times and the Economist (and have typically not fallen within the lower levels of the aforementioned).

Sixth, the study examined the concept of customer identification in the middle ranking business school corporate brand context. Moreover, it extends Balmer and his colleagues' approach (e.g. Balmer and Liao, 2007; Balmer, Liao and Wang, 2010) that focused on student identification in the UK top ranking business school corporate brand context by focusing on international student corporate brand identification at the middle ranking level. Furthermore, the theoretical model developed in this study can inform other studies in this research area and it forms a theoretical basis for further studies that can be undertaken in other research contexts.

Seventh, this study contributes to the social identity and customer identification literature in the middle ranking business school corporate brand context. According to social identity theory, people may define their self-concepts by connecting themselves with social groups or companies (Tajfel and Turner, 1985). This study provided empirical evidence for social

identity theory in the middle ranking business school corporate brand context. It confirmed the importance of a middle ranking business school as a social group that helps in defining the social identity of international postgraduate students and satisfying their self-definitional needs. Furthermore, the study confirmed previous studies which suggested that a corporate brand is a means to build the identity of an individual (Balmer and Gray, 2003).

Eighth, most of the extant literature on identification has focused on employee identification (Dutton et al., 1994), alumni identification (Mael and Ashforth, 1992), customer identification (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Marín and Ruiz, 2013), consumer identification with a corporate brand (Sung, 2011), and student identification with a top ranking business school corporate brand (Balmer and Liao, 2007, Balmer, Liao and Wang, 2010). This study extends extant research on identification to the domain of UK middle ranking business school corporate brands and in the international context.

Ninth, the extant literature shows extensive studies on corporate brands (Balmer, 1995; 2011a; b; 2012a; b; Abratt and Kleyn, 2012; Fetscherin and Usunier, 2012; He and Balmer, 2013). However, there has only been a small number of previous studies that examined corporate brands in the international context (Alashban et al., 2002; Burt and Sparks, 2002; Melewar and Walker, 2003; Meierer, 2011a; b) and little research has been carried out on the antecedents of customer identification with a corporate brand in the service sector (Sung, 2011). This study contributes to the literature of corporate brands and customer identification in the international context by addressing this essential aspect of internationalisation of

corporate brands in the UK middle ranking business school context (international student corporate brand identification).

7.3. Managerial contribution

This study provides managerial advice for middle ranking business school corporate brand managers.

7.3.1. Maximising international student corporate brand identification by increasing the level of attractiveness at Brunel Business School.

The findings of this study confirmed the direct positive relationship between middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness and international student corporate brand identification. This study suggests that managers can maximise international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand by increasing the levels of its attractiveness for international students. This should be emphasised in the business school's corporate brand communication strategy.

7.3.2. Increasing corporate brand attractiveness as a means of increasing student corporate brand identification through five main dimensions at Brunel Business School

This study suggests that managers can increase the levels of attractiveness of a middle ranking business school corporate brand for international students by emphasising five main attractiveness dimensions namely, brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, metropolitan city brand, country brand and university physical campus. Brunel Business School managers are recommended to increase corporate brand attractiveness as a means of increasing student

corporate brand identification through these five main dimensions. These five dimensions should inform the Brunel Business School corporate brand communication strategy.

7.3.3. Emphasising city brand and country brand in particular as a means of maximising international student corporate brand identification at Brunel Business School

The findings of this study showed that metropolitan city brand and country brand have the strongest effects on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness in terms of international student corporate brand identification. International students are likely to find a middle ranking business school more attractive and, in turn, identify with it if the business school is a British business school and in a metropolitan city. Managers are strongly recommended to consider these dimensions as the two most important corporate brand attractiveness dimensions when developing an international corporate branding strategy. Managers should emphasise city brand and country brand in particular as a means of maximising international student corporate brand identification at Brunel Business School. These two dimensions should be emphasised in the Brunel Business School corporate brand communication strategies. For example Brunel Business School should emphasise that it is in the UK and in London.

7.3.4. Decreasing tuition fees can increase international student corporate brand identification at Brunel Business School

The findings of this study showed that tuition fees have an inverse effect on international student corporate brand identification. Managers should appreciate that international student corporate brand identification can be maximised by *reducing* rather than *increasing* tuition

fees. Although this insight is likely to be contentious if not controversial- to implement, it should be considered by Brunel Business School managers all the same.

7.3.5. Recommendations for other middle ranking business school corporate brands in the UK and overseas

This study is one of the first attempts to examine international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand based in a metropolitan city. The above recommendations (section 7.3.1- 7.3.4) might be used for other middle ranking business school corporate brand in other cities in the UK and perhaps overseas.

7.4. Research limitations and future studies

This study has several limitations that should be addressed. First, the international student corporate brand identification model was applied to a single case study (Brunel Business School corporate brand) and therefore the generalisability of the findings is limited. Future studies should establish the generalisability of the reformulated model and confirm the saliency of the findings by applying it to various middle ranking business school corporate brands.

Whilst the statistical generalisability of the findings generated from a single case study is limited, the insight (a theory of international student corporate brand identification) can be analytically generalisable. Moreover, this insight may form the basis of future research undertaken in other research settings.

Second, this study focused on UK middle ranking business school corporate brands as a main research context to establish the theory of international student corporate brand identification and therefore this theory merits further exploration using other types of business school corporate brands such as top ranking business school or low ranking business school corporate brands. Moreover, the theory of international student corporate brand identification was formulated by investigating international postgraduate students (a combination of master and doctorate students) and therefore this theory merits further exploration using separately master and doctorate students. In addition, this theory merits further exploration using a variety of student categories such as undergraduate students, students of different masters' programmes in business schools such as MBA students.

Third, this study tested the developed hypotheses by distributing a survey questionnaire to international postgraduate students (master and doctorate) in Brunel Business School. Future studies might test this model with larger samples in other middle ranking business schools. In addition, the international student corporate brand identification model might be established using other types of corporate brands such as school, college and university corporate brands.

Fourth, other possibilities for academic enquiry involve using national, cultural and international contexts. For example, it would be interesting to examine international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand using international contexts such as the USA and Australia as they are the main competitors of UK higher education institutions.

Fifth, this study focused on middle ranking business schools in a metropolitan city. Other studies might consider middle ranking business schools in other cities which are not metropolitan in character (smaller in size).

Sixth, this study examined the moderating effect of international students' home country on international student corporate brand identification by categorising respondents within four groups based on regions they came from (Asian students, African students, European students and Middle Eastern students). However the findings have not been reported because the structural model did not show a satisfactory fit due to the small sample size used in each group. Therefore, it might be interesting to examine the moderating effect of international students' home country by using a larger sample size in each group which is necessary to get a better model fit.

Seventh, this study examined the mediating and moderating roles of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness on the effects of the independent variables (brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, city brand, country brand, university campus and tuition fees) on the dependent variable (international student corporate brand identification). Therefore, future studies might consider examining the moderating effects of further factors, such as brand salience and the embeddedness of customer relationships with a company, which Bhattacharya and Sen (2003) suggested moderate the effect of identity attractiveness on customer identification with a company.

Eighth, this study focused on the main determinants (antecedents) of international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand. However, the consequences of international student corporate brand identification are yet to be examined and it is an important and under-researched area that merits further examination. Previous studies on top ranking business school corporate brands such as Balmer and Liao (2007) and Balmer, Liao and Wang (2010) identified the ownership of a corporate brand as a main consequence of student corporate brand identification. Moreover, studies such as Bhattacharya and Sen (2003), He and Li (2011) and Stokburger-Sauer et al. (2012) identified some consequences of customer identification with a company/ brand such as customer recruitment, loyalty, advocacy, word-of-mouth and satisfaction. Therefore, future studies might examine these consequences in the middle ranking business school corporate brand context.

Ninth, this study focused on brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, association with a metropolitan city brand, country brand, university physical campus and tuition fees as main determinants of international student identification- in terms of attractiveness- with a middle ranking business school corporate brand. Future studies might consider examining further dimensions that might influence international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand.

7.5. Summary

This thesis makes a theoretical contribution to the knowledge vis-à-vis examining the main determinants of international postgraduate student identification with a UK middle ranking

business school corporate brand. Moreover, it investigated the mediating and moderating effect of middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness on the relationship between brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, metropolitan city brand, country brand, university campus and tuition fees and international student corporate brand identification. This study – focusing on a middle ranking business school corporate brand, internationalisation/international marketing and identification – appears to be the first of its kind. The findings of this study are of foundational significance in theory building terms.

This study provided a systematic review of four main research areas: business schools, corporate brands, internationalisation and customer identification. Moreover, a theoretical model was developed based on the extant literature and the findings of the initial qualitative study. The theoretical model postulates the main determinants of international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand and the hypothesised relationships among these factors.

A theory building case-based survey undertaken among international students at Brunel Business School was employed to inform this study. An initial qualitative study was used in the early stages of the research in order to gain in-depth understanding of the examined phenomenon, develop the theoretical model and the survey questionnaire. This involved conducting semi-structured interviews with three senior figures in three universities in the UK. Moreover, two focus group discussions were conducted with international students who were studying in Brunel Business School (five students in each focus group discussion) in the academic year 2011- 2012. The collected qualitative data were reviewed, coded, categorised,

and interpreted manually. Furthermore, a quantitative study was conducted in the later stages of this study to test the theoretical model in the UK middle ranking business school context. This involved distributing a survey questionnaire to international postgraduate students (master and doctorate) who were studying in Brunel Business School. The collected quantitative data was analysed using SPSS version 18.0 and AMOS version 18.0. The researcher followed a two-step approach recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). A confirmatory factor analysis was used in the first step to test the measurement model fit and examine the reliability and construct validity (convergent, discriminate and nomological validity). The measurement model showed an acceptable fit and a satisfactory level of reliability and construct validity. SEM was employed in the second step to test the developed hypotheses.

The findings of this study confirmed five main attractiveness dimensions that underpin the theory of international postgraduate student identification with a UK middle ranking business school corporate brand, namely brand similarity, brand distinctiveness, association with a metropolitan city brand, country brand and university physical campus. Moreover, this study stresses that metropolitan city brand and country brand have the strongest effects on middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness that lead to international student corporate brand identification. Therefore, this study suggests that managers of a middle ranking business school corporate brand should consider these five attractiveness dimensions when developing international corporate branding strategy and communicating a corporate brand to international markets. Moreover, managers should emphasise city brand and country

brand in particular as a means of maximising international student corporate brand identification at Brunel Business School.

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Appendices

1. Survey questionnaire

Research Objectives
This research aims to examine international student identification with the middle ranking business school corporate brand and its determinants as part of my PhD research project

Confidentiality
The information you provide will be kept strictly confidential:
• It will not be possible to identify the respondents involved in this study.
• The data will be used for statistical purposes and analysed at an aggregate, not individual level.

Your participation in this questionnaire and your personal opinion on the subject are highly appreciated and very important. This questionnaire is structured so that its completion will be as easy and quick. It will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. For any question please contact me on the email: rudaina.mahmoud@brunel.ac.uk

Section One: International Student Identification with Middle Ranking Business School Corporate Brand and its Determinants

INSTRUCTION: This section asks questions which use rating scales. The questions in this section are related to international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand and its determinants. Please tick your agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements using the following scale: strongly disagree, disagree, neither disagree nor agree, agree, or strongly agree.

1. The following statements are related to the international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. The Brunel business school brand's successes are my successes	○	○	○	○	○
b. I am interested in what people think about the Brunel Business School brand	○	○	○	○	○
c. When someone praises the Brunel Business School brand, I feel happy	○	○	○	○	○
d. When someone criticizes the Brunel Business School brand, I feel sad	○	○	○	○	○
e. When I talk about the Brunel Business School brand with outsiders, I usually discuss it as mine rather than theirs	○	○	○	○	○
f. If there is bad news about the Brunel Business School brand in the media, I feel embarrassed	○	○	○	○	○

2. The following statements are related to middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness where corporate brand can be defined as the set of expectations that you associate with the logo and the brand name in terms of what educational services that the business school will deliver to the students. For example, when people think about Oxford Business School brand or London Business School brand they might think of the high quality of research and teaching.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. I think that the Brunel Business School brand is one of the attractive business school brands in London	○	○	○	○	○
b. I think that Brunel Business School has an attractive brand name	○	○	○	○	○
c. I think that Brunel Business School offers attractive and high quality degrees	○	○	○	○	○
d. I think that Brunel Business School offers a high quality teaching	○	○	○	○	○
e. I think that Brunel Business School offers a high quality research	○	○	○	○	○
f. I think that Brunel Business School has a high quality academic staff	○	○	○	○	○
g. I think that Brunel Business School atmosphere is lively and attractive	○	○	○	○	○
h. I think that Brunel Business School is attractive, lively and forward looking	○	○	○	○	○
i. I think that Brunel Business School's support student is attractive	○	○	○	○	○
j. I think that Brunel Business School provides interesting courses	○	○	○	○	○
k. I think that the rate of employing graduate students from Brunel Business School is high	○	○	○	○	○

3. The following statements are related to the brand similarity

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. At Brunel Business School, I fit in easily	○	○	○	○	○
b. At Brunel Business School, my personality fits in	○	○	○	○	○
c. At Brunel Business School, someone like me fits in	○	○	○	○	○

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d. My perception is that the students of Brunel Business School are similar to me in terms of social status	○	○	○	○	○
e. My perception is that the students of Brunel Business School are similar to me in terms of character	○	○	○	○	○
f. My perception is that the students of Brunel business school brand are similar to me in terms of background	○	○	○	○	○
g. My perception is that the students of Brunel Business School brand are similar to me in terms of interests	○	○	○	○	○
h. My perception is that the students of Brunel Business School brand are similar to me in terms of the way they dress	○	○	○	○	○
i. My perception is that the students of Brunel Business School brand are similar to me in terms of financial status	○	○	○	○	○

4. What category do you think the Brunel Business School brand belongs to:

☐ Top ranking business school corporate brands

☐ Middle ranking business school corporate brands

☐ lower ranking business school corporate brands

5. The following statements are related to the brand distinctiveness

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. I think that the Brunel Business School brand is different from top ranking business school brands	○	○	○	○	○
b. I think that the Brunel Business School brand is different from middle ranking business school brands	○	○	○	○	○
c. I think that the Brunel Business School brand is different from lower ranking business school brands	○	○	○	○	○
d. I think that the Brunel Business School brand is similar to top ranking business school brands such as the London Business School brand	○	○	○	○	○
e. I think that the Brunel Business School brands is similar to middle ranking business school brands such as the Bradford Business School brand	○	○	○	○	○
f. I think that Brunel Business School brand is similar to lower ranking business school brands such as the Harrow Business School brand	○	○	○	○	○

g. I think that business school ranking as mentioned in, for example, the Financial Times, the Economist and the Guardian, is important when making the choice of the Brunel Business School brand	○	○	○	○	○
h. I think that the Brunel Business School brand has distinctive characteristics (identity)	○	○	○	○	○

6. The following section is related to the place brand

Using scales: Not important at all, not important, neutral, important, very important, please tick how important all of following locations to the Brunel Business School brand are:

	Not important at all	Not important	Neither unimportant nor important	Important	Very important
a. UK	○	○	○	○	○
b. England	○	○	○	○	○
c. London	○	○	○	○	○
d. Uxbridge	○	○	○	○	○

7. By defining the place brand as a city, please tick your agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements using the following scale: Strongly disagree, disagree, neither disagree nor agree, agree, strongly agree

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. The city where Brunel Business School is located has a high standard level in educational environment	○	○	○	○	○
b. The city where Brunel Business School is located provides high educational qualification	○	○	○	○	○
c. It is easy to find a job in the city where Brunel Business School is located	○	○	○	○	○
d. The city where Brunel Business School is located is beautiful and exciting	○	○	○	○	○
e. The city where Brunel Business School is located is a good location (good transportation, airport)	○	○	○	○	○
f. The city where Brunel Business School is located has a pleasant social environment (e.g. sports, facilities, amenities, clubs, shops, theatres, health facilities, friendly	○	○	○	○	○

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people)					
g. The city where Brunel Business School is located is attractive	○	○	○	○	○
h. The city where Brunel Business School is located has a good geographical environment (e.g. climate, clean, low pollution, many parks)	○	○	○	○	○
i. The city where Brunel Business School is located is safe	○	○	○	○	○

8. By defining the place brand as a country, please tick your agreement or disagreement of the following statements using the following scale: Strongly disagree, disagree, neither disagree nor agree, agree, strongly agree.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. I think that the country where Brunel Business School is located has a long tradition and heritage in terms of the higher education	○	○	○	○	○
b. I think that the country where Brunel Business School is located provides high quality qualifications	○	○	○	○	○
c. I think that the country where Brunel Business School is located is innovative in higher education	○	○	○	○	○
d. I think that the country where Brunel Business School is located is associated with a sense of prestige in terms of the higher education services	○	○	○	○	○
e. I think that the country where Brunel Business School is located has a stable political environment	○	○	○	○	○
f. I think that the country where Brunel Business School is located is a safe country	○	○	○	○	○
g. I think the country where Brunel Business School is located is beautiful	○	○	○	○	○
h. I think the country where Brunel Business School is located provides a good hospitality for students	○	○	○	○	○
i. I think the country where Brunel Business School is located provides easy immigration procedures for international students	○	○	○	○	○

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9. By defining place brand as the Brunel University physical campus, please tick your agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements using the following scale: Strongly disagree, disagree, neither disagree nor agree, agree, strongly agree

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. I like the Brunel University campus because it is in London	○	○	○	○	○
b. I like the Brunel University campus because it is in the UK	○	○	○	○	○
c. I like the Brunel University campus because it is in England	○	○	○	○	○
d. I like the Brunel University campus because it is in Uxbridge	○	○	○	○	○
e. I like the Brunel University campus because it is near the Heathrow airport	○	○	○	○	○
f. I like the Brunel University campus because it provides a cheap and affordable accommodation	○	○	○	○	○
g. I like Brunel University campus because it is safe.	○	○	○	○	○
h. Brunel University campus provides many attractive facilities and entertainments .	○	○	○	○	○
i. Brunel University campus has attractive layout and design	○	○	○	○	○

10. The following statements are related to the course's tuition fees delivered by Brunel Business School

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
a. I think there is a flexibility of the payment arrangements of the tuition fees in Brunel Business School	○	○	○	○	○
b. I think that the course tuition fees at Brunel Business School are low	○	○	○	○	○
c. I think that the course tuition fees at Brunel Business School are expensive	○	○	○	○	○
d. I think that the course tuition fees at Brunel Business School are reasonable	○	○	○	○	○

e. I think that the course tuition fees at Brunel Business School are acceptable (satisfactory)	○	○	○	○	○
f. I think that the Brunel Business School brand is good value for money	○	○	○	○	○
g. I think that Brunel Business School provides students with a low cost of living	○	○	○	○	○

Section Two: Information about Yourself

11. What country do you come from? (please write down your answer in the space)

[   ]

12. What is your current study level (please tick one answer)

○ Bachelor   ○ Master   ○ Doctorate

13. The course of study (please tick your answer)

○ BSc. Business and Management   ○ BSc. Business and Management with Placement Year   ○ BSc. Business and Management (Accounting)   ○ BSc. Business and Management (Accounting) with Placement Year   ○ BSc. Business and Management (Marketing)   ○ BSc. Business and Management (Marketing) with Placement Year   ○ BSc. International Business   ○ BSc. International Business with Placement Year   ○ MSc. Applied Corporate Brand Management   ○ MSc. Global Supply Chain Management   ○ MSc. Human Resource Management   ○ MSc. Human Resource and Employment Relations   ○ MSc. International Business   ○ MSc. Management   ○ MSc. Marketing   ○ MBA   ○ PhD   ○ others .

14. Age group (please tick one answer)

○ Less than 20 years   ○ 20-25   ○ 26-30   ○ 31-35   ○ 36-40   ○ over 40 years

15. Gender (please tick one answer)

○ Female   ○ Male

16. Are you sponsored or self funding (please tick one answer)

○ Sponsored   ○ Self-funding   ○ Partial

17. Study status (please tick one answer)

○ A full time student   ○ A part time student
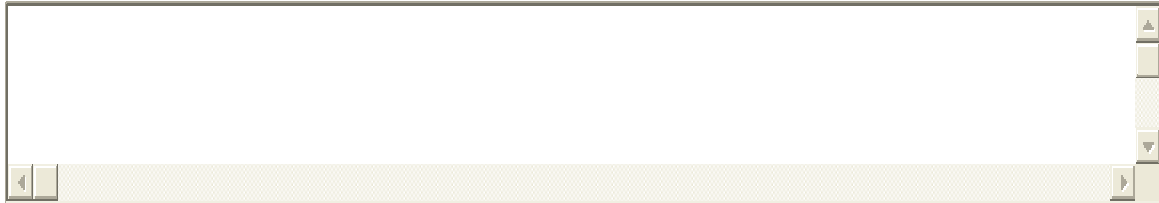
18. Assuming Brunel Business school is a middle ranking Business school brand did you ever apply to higher ranking business school brands (e.g. London Business School, Warwick Business School)

○ Yes ○ No

19. Assuming Brunel Business school is a middle ranking Business school brand did you ever apply to the lower ranking business schools (e.g. Harrow Business School)

○ Yes ○ No

20. Kindly, explain why did you choose Brunel Business School?

2. Coding book

1. Coding Book (measurement items of the latent constructs and its codes)

Latent constructs	Code	Items	Code
International Student Identification with a Middle Ranking Business School Corporate Brand	**ID**	The Brunel business school brand's successes are my successes.	ID1
		I am interested in what people think about the Brunel Business School brand.	ID2
		When someone praises the Brunel Business School brand, I feel happy.	ID3
		When someone criticises the Brunel Business School brand, I feel sad.	ID4
		When I talk about the Brunel Business School brand with outsiders, I usually discuss it as mine rather than theirs.	ID5
		If there is bad news about the Brunel Business School brand in the media, I feel embarrassed.	ID6
Middle Ranking Business School Corporate Brand Attractiveness	**ATTR**	I think that the Brunel Business School brand is one of the attractive business school brands in London.	ATTR1
		I think that Brunel Business School has an attractive brand name.	ATTR2
		I think that Brunel Business School offers attractive and high quality degrees.	ATTR3
		I think that Brunel Business School offers a high quality teaching.	ATTR4
		I think that Brunel Business School offers a high quality research.	ATTR5
		I think that Brunel Business School has a high quality academic staff.	ATTR6
		I think that Brunel Business School atmosphere is lively and	ATTR7

		attractive.	
		I think that Brunel Business School is attractive, lively and forward looking.	ATTR8
		I think that Brunel Business School's support student is attractive.	ATTR9
		I think that Brunel Business School provides interesting courses.	ATTR10
		I think that the rate of employing graduate students from Brunel Business School is high.	ATTR11
Brand Similarity	**SIM**	At Brunel Business School, I fit in easily.	SIM1
		At Brunel Business School, my personality fits in.	SIM2
		At Brunel Business School, someone like me fits in.	SIM3
		My perception is that the students of Brunel Business School are similar to me in terms of social status.	SIM4
		My perception is that the students of Brunel Business School are similar to me in terms of character.	SIM5
		My perception is that the students of Brunel business school brand are similar to me in terms of background.	SIM6
		My perception is that the students of Brunel Business School brand are similar to me in terms of interests.	SIM7
		My perception is that the students of Brunel Business School brand are similar to me in terms of the way they dress.	SIM8
		My perception is that the students of Brunel Business School brand are similar to me in terms of financial status.	SIM9
Brand Distinctiveness	**DIS**	I think that the Brunel Business School brand is different from top ranking business school brands.	DIS1
		I think that the Brunel Business School brand is different from middle ranking business school brands.	DIS2

		I think that the Brunel Business School brand is different from lower ranking business school brands.	DIS3
		I think that the Brunel Business School brand is similar to top ranking business school brands such as the London Business School brand.	DIS4
		I think that the Brunel Business School brand is similar to middle ranking business school brands such as the Bradford Business School brand.	DIS5
		I think that Brunel Business School brand is similar to lower ranking business school brands such as the Harrow Business School brand.	DIS6
		I think that business school ranking as mentioned in, for example, the Financial Times, the Economist and the Guardian, is important when making the choice of the Brunel Business School brand.	DIS7
		I think that the Brunel Business School brand has distinctive characteristics (identity).	DIS8
Metropolitan city brand	**CITY**	The city where Brunel Business School is located has a high standard level in educational environment.	CITY1
		The city where Brunel Business School is located provides a high educational qualification.	CITY2
		It is easy to find a job in the city where Brunel Business School is located.	CITY3
		The city where Brunel Business School is located is beautiful and exciting.	CITY4
		The city where Brunel Business School is located is a good location (good transportation, airport).	CITY5
		The city where Brunel Business School is located has a pleasant	CITY6

		social environment (e.g. sports, facilities, amenities, clubs, shops, theatres, health facilities and friendly people).	
		The city where Brunel Business School is located is attractive	CITY7
		The city where Brunel Business School is located has a good geographical environment (e.g. climate, clean, low pollution, many parks).	CITY8
		The city where Brunel Business School is located is safe.	CITY9
Country brand	**COUN**	I think that the country where Brunel Business School is located has a long tradition and heritage in terms of the higher education.	COUN1
		I think that the country where Brunel Business School is located provides high quality qualifications.	COUN2
		I think that the country where Brunel Business School is located is innovative in higher education.	COUN3
		I think that the country where Brunel Business School is located is associated with a sense of prestige in terms of the higher education services.	COUN4
		I think that the country where Brunel Business School is located has a stable political environment.	COUN5
		I think that the country where Brunel Business School is located is a safe country.	COUN6
		I think the country where Brunel Business School is located is beautiful.	COUN7
		I think the country where Brunel Business School is located provides a good hospitality for students.	COUN8
		I think the country where Brunel Business School is located provides easy immigration procedures for international students.	COUN9
University Physical Campus	**CAMP**	I like the Brunel University campus because it is in London.	CAMP1
		I like the Brunel University campus because it is in the UK.	CAMP2

		I like the Brunel University campus because it is in England.	CAMP3
		I like the Brunel University campus because it is in Uxbridge.	CAMP4
		I like the Brunel University campus because it is near the Heathrow airport.	CAMP5
		I like Brunel University campus because it provides a cheap and affordable accommodation.	CAMP6
		I like Brunel University campus because it is safe.	CAMP7
		Brunel University campus provides many attractive facilities and entertainments.	CAMP8
		Brunel University campus has attractive layout and design.	CAMP9
Tuition fees	**FEE**	I think there is a flexibility of the payment arrangements of the tuition fees in Brunel Business School.	FEE1
		I think that the course tuition fees at Brunel Business School are low.	FEE2
		I think that the course tuition fees at Brunel Business School are expensive.	FEE3
		I think that the course tuition fees at Brunel Business School are reasonable.	FEE4
		I think that the course tuition fees at Brunel Business School are acceptable (satisfactory).	FEE5
		I think that the Brunel Business School brand is good value for money.	FEE6
		I think that Brunel Business School provides students with a low cost of living.	FEE7

3. Descriptive statistics of main data

3.a. Descriptive statists of variables

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
ID1	255	1	5	3.75	.931	-.780	.153	.668	.304
ID2	255	1	5	3.87	.851	-1.031	.153	1.621	.304
ID3	255	1	5	4.09	.874	-1.345	.153	2.690	.304
ID4	255	1	5	3.56	1.047	-.442	.153	-.524	.304
ID5	255	1	5	3.50	.967	-.545	.153	-.073	.304
ID6	255	1	5	3.62	1.000	-.631	.153	.070	.304
ATTR1	255	1	5	3.38	.961	-.648	.153	.057	.304
ATTR2	255	1	5	3.49	.913	-.858	.153	.572	.304
ATTR3	255	1	5	3.51	.930	-.994	.153	.986	.304
ATTR4	255	1	5	3.38	.952	-.495	.153	-.159	.304
ATTR5	255	1	5	3.56	.884	-.783	.153	.616	.304
ATTR6	255	1	5	3.55	.950	-.612	.153	.053	.304
ATTR7	255	1	5	3.74	.971	-.883	.153	.788	.304
ATTR8	255	1	5	3.65	.910	-.918	.153	1.007	.304
ATTR9	255	1	5	3.52	.979	-.759	.153	.320	.304
ATTR10	255	1	5	3.53	.951	-.531	.153	-.027	.304
ATTR11	255	1	5	3.55	.845	-.597	.153	.679	.304
SIM1	255	1	5	3.75	.866	-1.132	.153	1.804	.304
SIM2	255	1	5	3.64	.806	-.848	.153	1.214	.304
SIM3	255	1	5	3.61	.810	-.748	.153	1.250	.304
SIM4	255	1	5	3.44	.871	-.611	.153	.143	.304
SIM5	255	1	5	3.26	.911	-.410	.153	-.048	.304
SIM6	255	1	5	3.20	.948	-.150	.153	-.608	.304
SIM7	255	1	5	3.43	.870	-.588	.153	.129	.304
SIM8	255	1	5	3.18	.962	-.360	.153	-.250	.304
SIM9	255	1	5	3.05	.965	-.315	.153	-.429	.304
BBSCATEGORY	255	1	3	1.87	.416	-.823	.153	1.842	.304
DIS1	255	1	5	3.44	1.013	-.806	.153	.351	.304
DIS2	255	1	5	3.04	1.028	-.131	.153	-.583	.304
DIS3	255	1	5	3.60	1.173	-.809	.153	-.064	.304
DIS4	255	1	5	3.00	1.186	.008	.153	-.936	.304
DIS5	255	1	5	2.62	.969	.128	.153	-.416	.304
DIS6	255	1	5	3.42	1.187	-.504	.153	-.501	.304

DIS7	255	1	5	3.67	1.061	-.893	.153	.571	.304
DIS8	255	1	5	3.37	1.023	-.687	.153	-.018	.304
UKIMPO	255	1	5	3.93	1.011	-1.131	.153	1.106	.304
ENGLANDIMPOR	255	1	5	3.87	.946	-.938	.153	.909	.304
LONDONIMPOR	255	1	5	4.11	.934	-1.251	.153	1.793	.304
UXBRIDGEIMPOR	255	1	5	3.22	1.291	-.242	.153	-1.000	.304
CITY1	255	1	5	3.50	1.007	-.436	.153	-.226	.304
CITY2	255	1	5	3.57	.927	-.542	.153	.097	.304
CITY3	255	1	5	2.97	1.053	.083	.153	-.417	.304
CITY4	255	1	5	3.38	1.043	-.507	.153	-.384	.304
CITY5	255	1	5	3.89	.935	-.922	.153	.872	.304
CITY6	255	1	5	3.80	.985	-.770	.153	.232	.304
CITY7	255	1	5	3.57	.989	-.352	.153	-.537	.304
CITY8	255	1	5	3.62	.931	-.707	.153	.238	.304
CITY9	255	1	5	3.55	.962	-.568	.153	.067	.304
COUN1	255	1	5	3.82	.970	-.839	.153	.540	.304
COUN2	255	1	5	3.96	.884	-.757	.153	.515	.304
COUN3	255	1	5	3.89	.891	-.717	.153	.411	.304
COUN4	255	1	5	3.95	.912	-.707	.153	.383	.304
COUN5	255	1	5	3.77	.815	-.878	.153	1.308	.304
COUN6	255	1	5	3.66	.885	-.554	.153	.236	.304
COUN7	255	1	5	3.78	.852	-.826	.153	.933	.304
COUN8	255	1	5	3.68	.872	-.805	.153	.559	.304
COUN9	255	1	5	3.04	1.095	-.104	.153	-.861	.304
CAMP1	255	1	5	3.94	.922	-1.096	.153	1.338	.304
CAMP2	255	1	5	3.83	.910	-.820	.153	.845	.304
CAMP3	255	1	5	3.72	.937	-.689	.153	.358	.304
CAMP4	255	1	5	3.12	1.139	-.241	.153	-.705	.304
CAMP5	255	1	5	3.64	1.116	-.680	.153	-.195	.304
CAMP6	255	1	5	2.90	1.159	-.014	.153	-.820	.304
CAMP7	255	1	5	3.60	.890	-.765	.153	.498	.304
CAMP8	255	1	5	3.19	1.057	-.250	.153	-.672	.304
CAMP9	255	1	5	3.65	.923	-.696	.153	.479	.304
FEE1	255	1	5	3.25	.969	-.478	.153	-.361	.304
FEE2	255	1	5	2.41	1.057	.477	.153	-.446	.304
FEE3	255	1	5	2.38	1.015	.419	.153	-.398	.304
FEE4	255	1	5	3.02	.958	-.365	.153	-.625	.304
FEE5	255	1	5	3.20	.942	-.446	.153	-.435	.304
FEE6	255	1	5	3.23	.899	-.375	.153	-.150	.304
FEE7	255	1	5	2.91	1.058	-.008	.153	-.804	.304
RESCOUNTRY	255	1	8	2.93	1.502	.571	.153	-.906	.304
STUDYLEVEL	255	1	2	1.33	.471	.730	.153	-1.478	.304
COURSESTUDY	255	1	9	6.53	2.492	-.842	.153	-.345	.304

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AGE	255	2	6	3.20	1.183	.749	.153	-.371	.304
GENDER	255	1	2	1.45	.499	.198	.153	-1.976	.304
FUNDING	255	1	3	1.71	.611	.265	.153	-.619	.304
STUDYSTATUS	255	1	2	1.04	.204	4.524	.153	18.613	.304
HRBS	255	1	2	1.54	.500	-.150	.153	-1.993	.304
LRBS	255	1	2	1.82	.382	-1.707	.153	.922	.304
Valid N (listwise)	255								

3.b. Descriptive statists of latent constructs

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
FEE	255	.64	2.91	1.8254	.49072
CAMP	255	.84	4.05	3.0378	.59366
COUN	255	1.11	4.94	3.8351	.70878
CITY	255	1.00	5.10	3.6308	.74862
DIS	255	1.16	4.80	3.4030	.74124
SIM	255	.58	3.17	2.1024	.45147
ATTR	255	1.16	4.99	3.5311	.67866
ID	255	.77	4.10	3.1987	.59593
Valid N (listwise)	255				

(ID = international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand, ATTR = middle ranking business school corporate brand, SIM = brand similarity, DIS = brand distinctiveness, CITY = city brand, COUN = country brand, CAMP = university physical campus, FEE= tuition fees).

4. Missing data

Univariate Statistics							
			Std.	Missing		No. of Extremes[b]	
	N	Mean	Deviation	Count	Percent	Low	High
ID1	255	3.75	.931	0	.0	7	0
ID2	255	3.87	.851	0	.0	.	.
ID3	255	4.09	.874	0	.0	12	0
ID4	255	3.56	1.047	0	.0	7	0
ID5	255	3.50	.967	0	.0	8	0
ID6	255	3.62	1.000	0	.0	9	0
ATTR1	254	3.38	.962	1	.4	12	0
ATTR2	255	3.49	.913	0	.0	10	0
ATTR3	255	3.51	.930	0	.0	14	0
ATTR4	255	3.38	.952	0	.0	9	0
ATTR5	254	3.56	.886	1	.4	7	0

ATTR6	255	3.55	.950	0	.0	7	0
ATTR7	255	3.74	.971	0	.0	10	0
ATTR8	255	3.65	.910	0	.0	9	0
ATTR9	254	3.52	.981	1	.4	12	0
ATTR10	255	3.53	.951	0	.0	7	0
ATTR11	255	3.55	.845	0	.0	6	0
SIM1	255	3.75	.866	0	.0	8	0
SIM2	255	3.64	.806	0	.0	5	0
SIM3	254	3.61	.810	1	.4	6	0
SIM4	253	3.43	.873	2	.8	6	0
SIM5	255	3.26	.911	0	.0	10	0
SIM6	255	3.20	.948	0	.0	0	0
SIM7	255	3.43	.870	0	.0	6	0
SIM8	255	3.18	.962	0	.0	14	0
SIM9	255	3.05	.965	0	.0	0	0
BBSCATEGORY	255	1.87	.416	0	.0	.	.
DIS1	255	3.44	1.013	0	.0	18	0
DIS2	255	3.04	1.028	0	.0	0	0
DIS3	255	3.60	1.173	0	.0	23	0
DIS4	254	3.00	1.181	1	.4	0	0
DIS5	253	2.61	.972	2	.8	0	6
DIS6	253	3.42	1.188	2	.8	24	0
DIS7	255	3.67	1.061	0	.0	17	0
DIS8	255	3.37	1.023	0	.0	17	0
UKIMPO	255	3.93	1.011	0	.0	25	0
ENGLANDIMPOR	255	3.87	.946	0	.0	7	0
LONDONIMPOR	255	4.11	.934	0	.0	14	0
UXBRIDGEIMPOR	255	3.22	1.291	0	.0	0	0
CITY1	254	3.50	1.009	1	.4	9	0
CITY2	255	3.57	.927	0	.0	6	0
CITY3	255	2.97	1.053	0	.0	0	0
CITY4	255	3.38	1.043	0	.0	13	0
CITY5	253	3.89	.939	2	.8	0	0
CITY6	255	3.80	.985	0	.0	6	0
CITY7	255	3.57	.989	0	.0	4	0
CITY8	255	3.62	.931	0	.0	6	0
CITY9	255	3.55	.962	0	.0	8	0
COUN1	255	3.82	.970	0	.0	7	0
COUN2	255	3.96	.884	0	.0	0	0
COUN3	255	3.89	.891	0	.0	3	0
COUN4	254	3.95	.912	1	.4	0	0
COUN5	255	3.77	.815	0	.0	4	0

COUN6	253	3.66	.884	2	.8	4		0
COUN7	255	3.78	.852	0	.0	4		0
COUN8	255	3.68	.872	0	.0	4		0
COUN9	255	3.04	1.095	0	.0	0		0
CAMP1	255	3.94	.922	0	.0	22		0
CAMP2	255	3.83	.910	0	.0	6		0
CAMP3	255	3.72	.937	0	.0	6		0
CAMP4	255	3.12	1.139	0	.0	0		0
CAMP5	255	3.64	1.116	0	.0	14		0
CAMP6	253	2.90	1.164	2	.8	0		0
CAMP7	255	3.60	.890	0	.0	6		0
CAMP8	255	3.19	1.057	0	.0	0		0
CAMP9	255	3.65	.923	0	.0	7		0
FEE1	254	3.25	.965	1	.4	12		0
FEE2	255	2.41	1.057	0	.0	0		8
FEE3	255	2.38	1.015	0	.0	0		6
FEE4	255	3.02	.958	0	.0	0		0
FEE5	255	3.20	.942	0	.0	11		0
FEE6	254	3.24	.898	1	.4	9		0
FEE7	255	2.91	1.058	0	.0	0		0
RESCOUNTRY	255	2.93	1.502	0	.0	0		0
STUDYLEVEL	255	1.33	.471	0	.0	0		0
COURSESTUDY	255	6.53	2.492	0	.0	0		0
AGE	255	3.20	1.183	0	.0	0		0
GENDER	255	1.45	.499	0	.0	0		0
FUNDING	255	1.71	.611	0	.0	0		0
STUDYSTATUS	255	1.04	.204	0	.0	.		.
HRBS	255	1.54	.500	0	.0	0		0
LRBS	255	1.82	.382	0	.0	.		.
a. Indicates that the inter-quartile range (IQR) is zero.								
b. Number of cases outside the range (Q1 - 1.5*IQR, Q3 + 1.5*IQR).								

5. Outlier

Univariate and multivariate outliers

	Univariate Outlier		Multivariate Outliers		
Variables	Cases with standardised values Z-score exceeding ± 3.29	Outlier cases	Mahalanobis d-squared	p1	p2
ID1	No cases	38	139.257	0	0
ID2	29, 38, 57, 72, 219,	124	137.527	0	0
ID3	29, 38, 57, 72, 192,210, 219,	224	134.931	0	0
ID4	No cases	83	131.51	0	0

ID5	No cases	210	128.66	0	0
ID6	No cases	145	126.567	0	0
ATTR1	No cases	143	126.086	0	0
ATTR2	No cases	183	118.238	0	0
ATTR3	No cases	125	117.809	0	0
ATTR4	No cases	79	116.949	0	0
ATTR5	No cases				
ATTR6	No cases				
ATTR7	No cases				
ATTR8	No cases				
ATTR9	No cases				
ATTR10	No cases				
ATTR11	No cases				
SIM1	No cases				
SIM2	No cases				
SIM3	No cases				
SIM4	No cases				
SIM5	No cases				
SIM6	No cases				
SIM7	No cases				
SIM8	No cases				
SIM9	No cases				
DIS1	No cases				
DIS2	No cases				
DIS3	No cases				
DIS4	No cases				
DIS5	No cases				
DIS6	No cases				
DIS7	No cases				
DIS8	No cases				
CITY1	No cases				
CITY2	No cases				
CITY3	No cases				
CITY4	No cases				
CITY5	No cases				
CITY6	No cases				
CITY7	No cases				
CITY8	No cases				
CITY9	No cases				
COUN1	No cases				
COUN2	57, 146, 147				
COUN3	No cases				
COUN4	No cases				
COUN5	38, 146, 147, 183				
COUN6	No cases				
COUN7	No cases				
COUN8	No cases				
COUN9	No cases				

CAMP1	No cases				
CAMP2	No cases				
CAMP3	No cases				
CAMP4	No cases				
CAMP5	No cases				
CAMP6	No cases				
CAMP7	No cases				
CAMP8	No cases				
CAMP9	No cases				
FEE1	No cases				
FEE2	No cases				
FEE3	No cases				
FEE4	No cases				
FEE5	No cases				
FEE6	No cases				
FEE7	No cases				

6. Assessment of normality

6. a. Assessment of normality Q-Q Plot

Normal Q-Q Plot of Identiifcation

Normal Q-Q Plot of Similarity

Normal Q-Q Plot of Attractivenss

Normal Q-Q Plot of Distinctiveness

Normal Q-Q Plot of City

Normal Q-Q Plot of Fee

Normal Q-Q Plot of Counrty

Normal Q-Q Plot of Campus
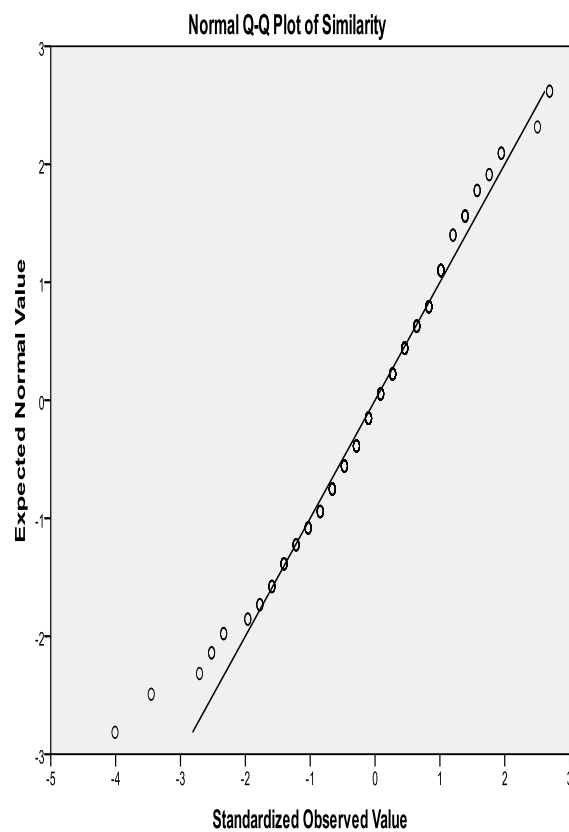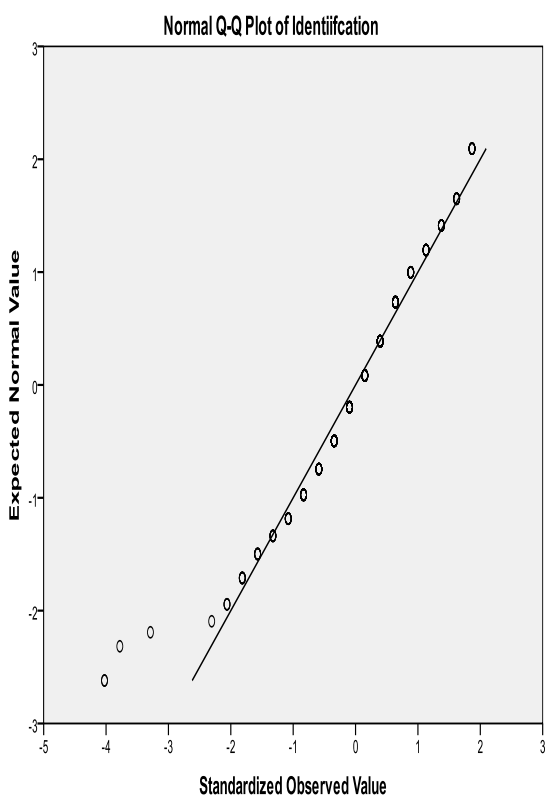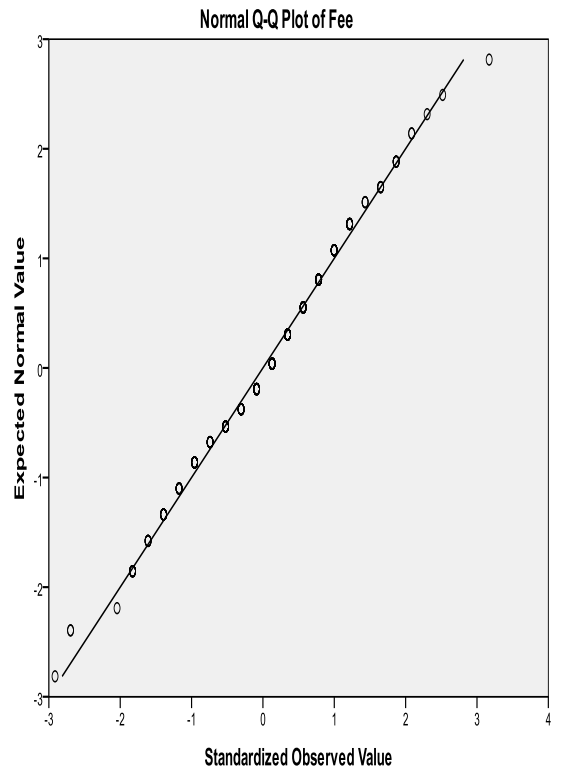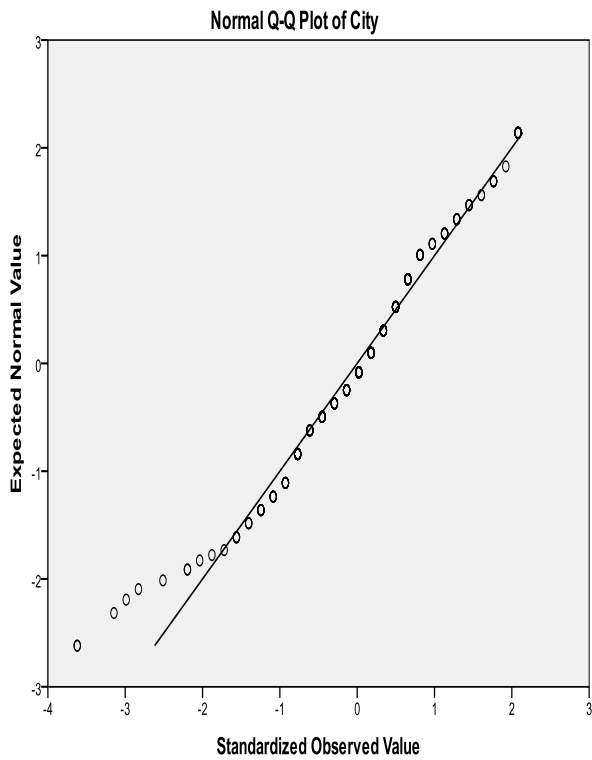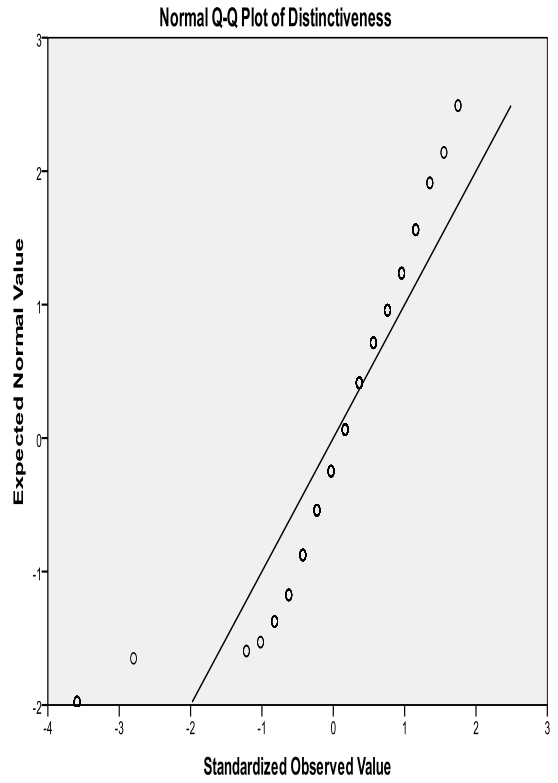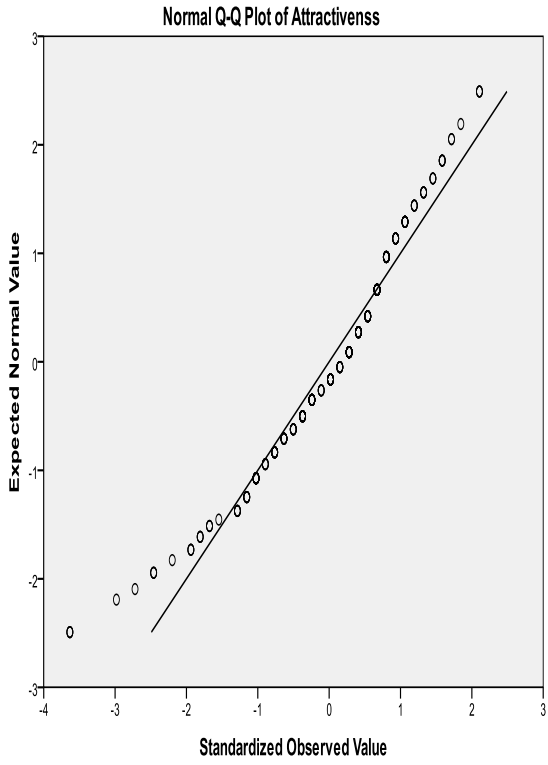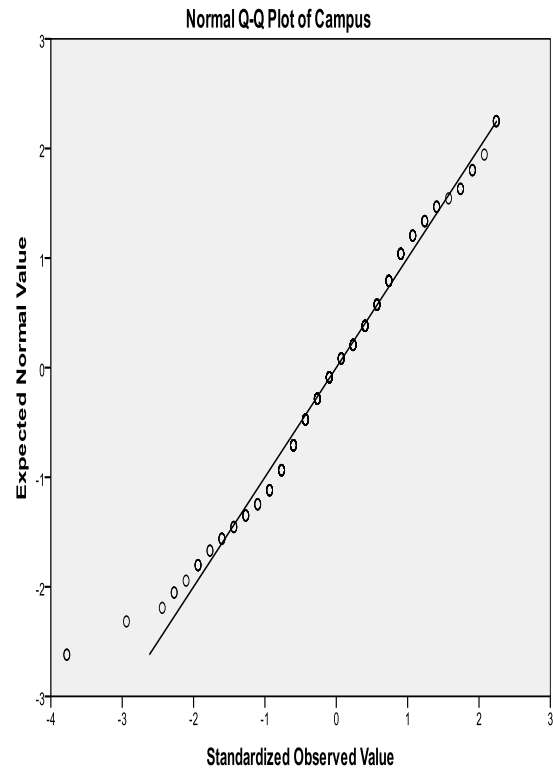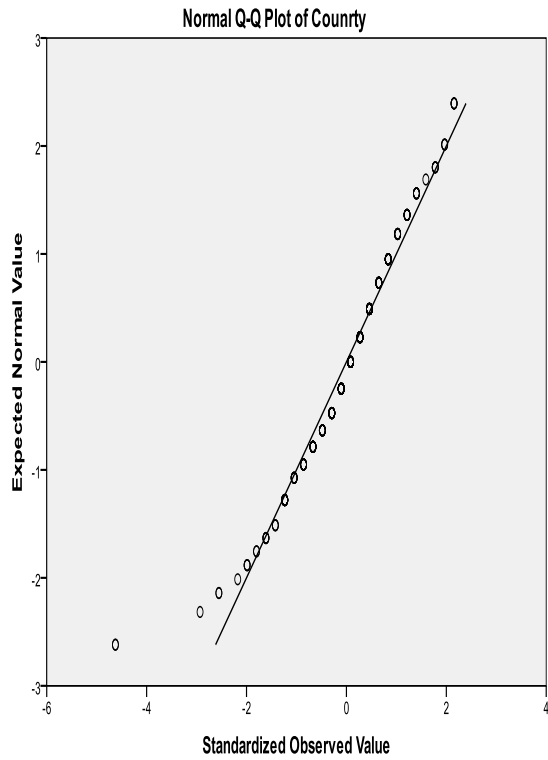
6.b descriptive statistics, assessing skewness and kurtosis

	N	Mini mum	Maxi mum	Mean	Std. Deviati on	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statisti c	Statis tic	Statis tic	Statisti c	Statisti c	Statistic	Std. Error	Statisti c	Std. Error
ID1	255	1	5	3.75	.931	-.780	.153	.668	.304
ID2	255	1	5	3.87	.851	-1.031	.153	1.621	.304
ID3	255	1	5	4.09	.874	-1.345	.153	2.190	.304
ID4	255	1	5	3.56	1.047	-.442	.153	-.524	.304
ID5	255	1	5	3.50	.967	-.545	.153	-.073	.304
ID6	255	1	5	3.62	1.000	-.631	.153	.070	.304
ATTR1	255	1	5	3.38	.961	-.648	.153	.057	.304
ATTR2	255	1	5	3.49	.913	-.858	.153	.572	.304
ATTR3	255	1	5	3.51	.930	-.994	.153	.986	.304
ATTR4	255	1	5	3.38	.952	-.495	.153	-.159	.304
ATTR5	255	1	5	3.56	.884	-.783	.153	.616	.304
ATTR6	255	1	5	3.55	.950	-.612	.153	.053	.304
ATTR7	255	1	5	3.74	.971	-.883	.153	.788	.304
ATTR8	255	1	5	3.65	.910	-.918	.153	1.007	.304
ATTR9	255	1	5	3.52	.979	-.759	.153	.320	.304
ATTR10	255	1	5	3.53	.951	-.531	.153	-.027	.304

The table title "Descriptive Statistics" spans the top of the table.

ATTR11	255	1	5	3.55	.845	-.597	.153	.679	.304
SIM1	255	1	5	3.75	.866	-1.132	.153	1.804	.304
SIM2	255	1	5	3.64	.806	-.848	.153	1.214	.304
SIM3	255	1	5	3.61	.810	-.748	.153	1.250	.304
SIM4	255	1	5	3.44	.871	-.611	.153	.143	.304
SIM5	255	1	5	3.26	.911	-.410	.153	-.048	.304
SIM6	255	1	5	3.20	.948	-.150	.153	-.608	.304
SIM7	255	1	5	3.43	.870	-.588	.153	.129	.304
SIM8	255	1	5	3.18	.962	-.360	.153	-.250	.304
SIM9	255	1	5	3.05	.965	-.315	.153	-.429	.304
DIS1	255	1	5	3.44	1.013	-.806	.153	.351	.304
DIS2	255	1	5	3.04	1.028	-.131	.153	-.583	.304
DIS3	255	1	5	3.60	1.173	-.809	.153	-.064	.304
DIS4	255	1	5	3.00	1.186	.008	.153	-.936	.304
DIS5	255	1	5	2.62	.969	.128	.153	-.416	.304
DIS6	255	1	5	3.42	1.187	-.504	.153	-.501	.304
DIS7	255	1	5	3.67	1.061	-.893	.153	.571	.304
DIS8	255	1	5	3.37	1.023	-.687	.153	-.018	.304
CITY1	255	1	5	3.50	1.007	-.436	.153	-.226	.304
CITY2	255	1	5	3.57	.927	-.542	.153	.097	.304
CITY3	255	1	5	2.97	1.053	.083	.153	-.417	.304
CITY4	255	1	5	3.38	1.043	-.507	.153	-.384	.304
CITY5	255	1	5	3.89	.935	-.922	.153	.872	.304
CITY6	255	1	5	3.80	.985	-.770	.153	.232	.304
CITY7	255	1	5	3.57	.989	-.352	.153	-.537	.304
CITY8	255	1	5	3.62	.931	-.707	.153	.238	.304
CITY9	255	1	5	3.55	.962	-.568	.153	.067	.304
COUN1	255	1	5	3.82	.970	-.839	.153	.540	.304
COUN2	255	1	5	3.96	.884	-.757	.153	.515	.304
COUN3	255	1	5	3.89	.891	-.717	.153	.411	.304
COUN4	255	1	5	3.95	.912	-.707	.153	.383	.304
COUN5	255	1	5	3.77	.815	-.878	.153	1.308	.304
COUN6	255	1	5	3.66	.885	-.554	.153	.236	.304
COUN7	255	1	5	3.78	.852	-.826	.153	.933	.304
COUN8	255	1	5	3.68	.872	-.805	.153	.559	.304
COUN9	255	1	5	3.04	1.095	-.104	.153	-.861	.304
CAMP1	255	1	5	3.94	.922	-1.096	.153	1.338	.304
CAMP2	255	1	5	3.83	.910	-.820	.153	.845	.304
CAMP3	255	1	5	3.72	.937	-.689	.153	.358	.304
CAMP4	255	1	5	3.12	1.139	-.241	.153	-.705	.304
CAMP5	255	1	5	3.64	1.116	-.680	.153	-.195	.304
CAMP6	255	1	5	2.90	1.159	-.014	.153	-.820	.304

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev	Skewness	Std. Error	Kurtosis	Std. Error
CAMP7	255	1	5	3.60	.890	-.765	.153	.498	.304
CAMP8	255	1	5	3.19	1.057	-.250	.153	-.672	.304
CAMP9	255	1	5	3.65	.923	-.696	.153	.479	.304
FEE1	255	1	5	3.25	.969	-.478	.153	-.361	.304
FEE2	255	1	5	2.41	1.057	.477	.153	-.446	.304
FEE3	255	1	5	2.38	1.015	.419	.153	-.398	.304
FEE4	255	1	5	3.02	.958	-.365	.153	-.625	.304
FEE5	255	1	5	3.20	.942	-.446	.153	-.435	.304
FEE6	255	1	5	3.23	.899	-.375	.153	-.150	.304
FEE7	255	1	5	2.91	1.058	-.008	.153	-.804	.304
Valid N (listwise)	255								

7. Assessment of linearity and Multicollinearity

7.a. Correlations between variables (Pearson's test)

		ID	ATTR	SIM	DIS	CITY	COUN	CAMP	FEE
ID	Pearson Correlation	1	.480**	.296**	.080	.414**	.426**	.366**	.096
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.200	.000	.000	.000	.125
	N	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	255
ATTR	Pearson Correlation	.480**	1	.441**	.133*	.616**	.606**	.492**	.162**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.034	.000	.000	.000	.009
	N	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	255
SIM	Pearson Correlation	.296**	.441**	1	.081	.437**	.415**	.443**	.122
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.195	.000	.000	.000	.052
	N	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	255
DIS	Pearson Correlation	.080	.133*	.081	1	.068	.176**	.105	.141*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.200	.034	.195		.277	.005	.094	.025
	N	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	255
CITY	Pearson Correlation	.414**	.616**	.437**	.068	1	.634**	.607**	.137*

		ID	ATTR	SIM	DIS	CITY	COUN	CAMP	FEE
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.277		.000	.000	.028
	N	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	255
COUN	Pearson Correlation	.426**	.606**	.415**	.176**	.634**	1	.515**	.162**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.005	.000		.000	.010
	N	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	255
CAMP	Pearson Correlation	.366**	.492**	.443**	.105	.607**	.515**	1	.253**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.094	.000	.000		.000
	N	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	255
FEE	Pearson Correlation	.096	.162**	.122	.141*	.137*	.162**	.253**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.125	.009	.052	.025	.028	.010	.000	
	N	255	255	255	255	255	255	255	255

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

(ID = international student identification with a middle ranking business school corporate brand, ATTR = middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness, SIM = brand similarity, DIS = brand distinctiveness, CITY = city brand, COUN = country brand, CAMP = university physical campus, FEE= tuition fees)

7.b. Regression of assessing VIF and tolerance values

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.446	.324		4.455	.000		
	Attractiveness	.276	.074	.284	3.745	.000	.514	1.947
	Similarity	.046	.073	.040	.633	.528	.720	1.389
	Distinctiveness	.001	.060	.001	.018	.986	.949	1.053
	City	.079	.080	.081	.986	.325	.432	2.314
	Country	.166	.089	.144	1.872	.062	.495	2.020
	Campus	.080	.078	.079	1.032	.303	.508	1.969
	Fee	-.010	.059	-.010	-.174	.862	.916	1.091

Coefficients^a

| Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.446	.324		4.455	.000		
	Attractiveness	.276	.074	.284	3.745	.000	.514	1.947
	Similarity	.046	.073	.040	.633	.528	.720	1.389
	Distinctiveness	.001	.060	.001	.018	.986	.949	1.053
	City	.079	.080	.081	.986	.325	.432	2.314
	Country	.166	.089	.144	1.872	.062	.495	2.020
	Campus	.080	.078	.079	1.032	.303	.508	1.969
	Fee	-.010	.059	-.010	-.174	.862	.916	1.091

a. Dependent Variable: Identification
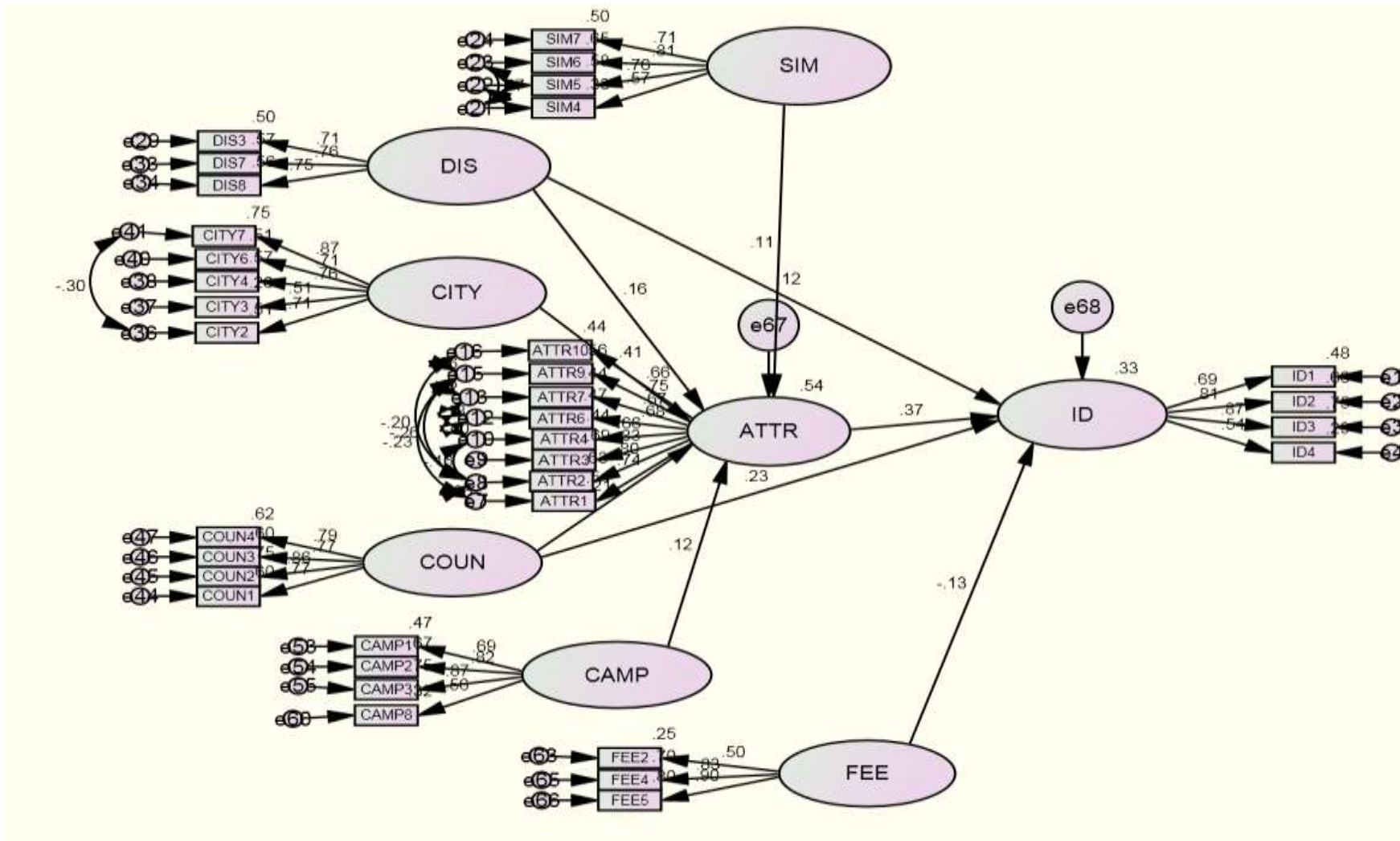
8. Measurement model (CFA) using AMOS 18
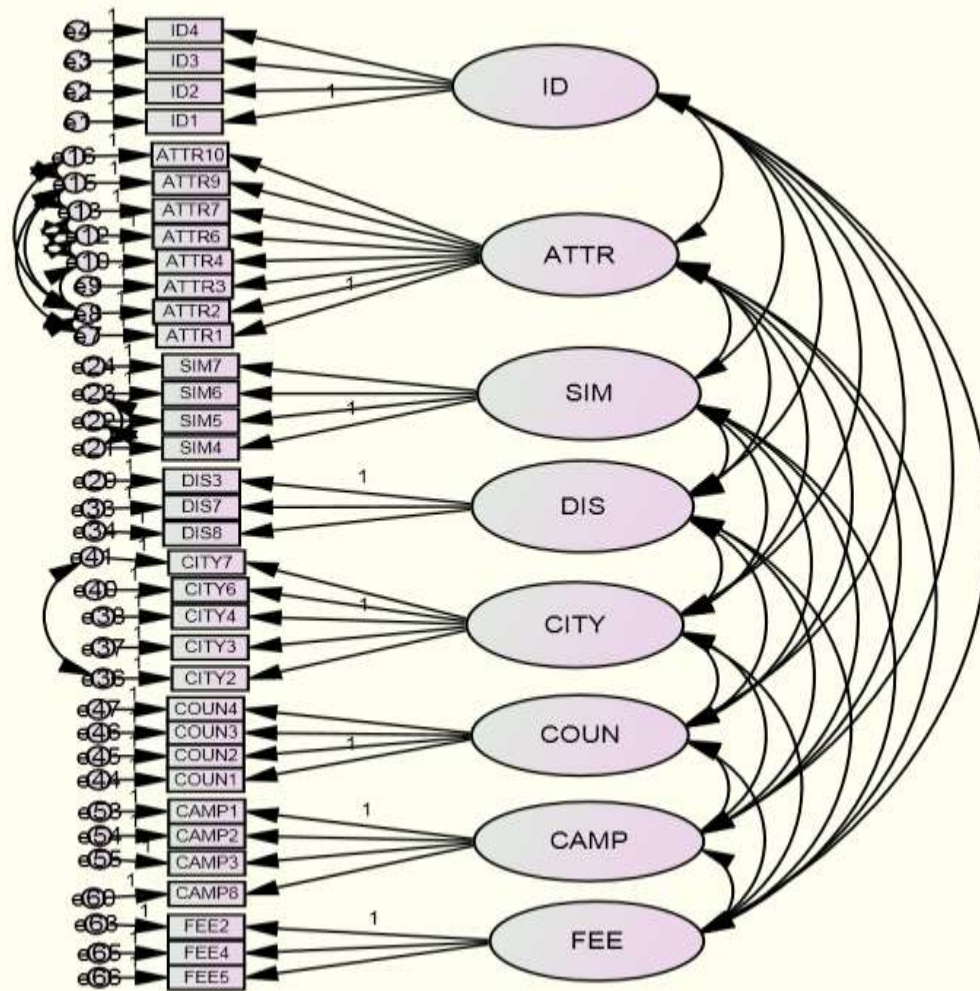
9. Standardised estimates structural model 1
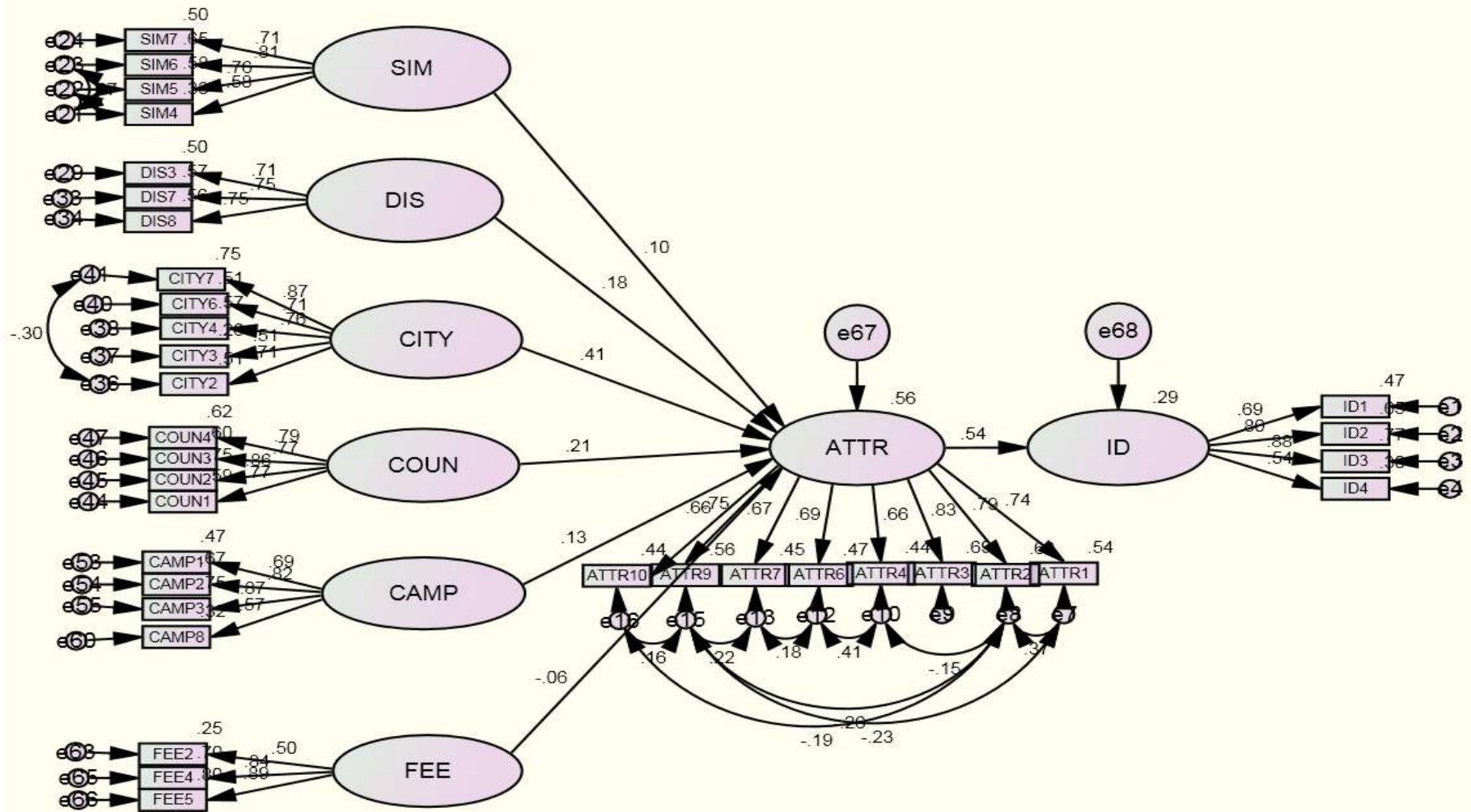
10. Standardised estimates structural model 2
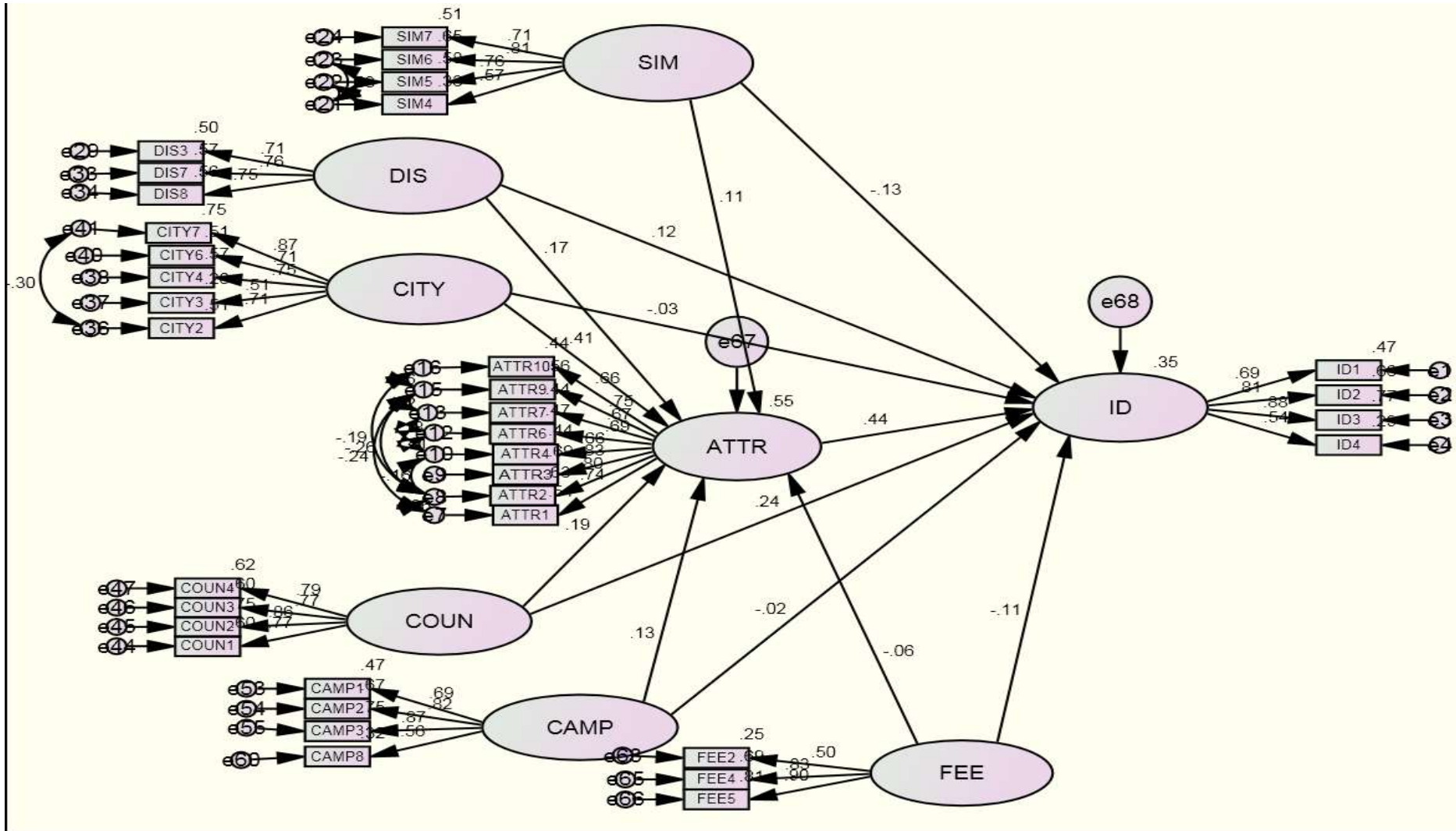
11. Standardised estimates structural model 3

12. Qualitative analysis

12. a. Profile of interviews and focus group discussion

Profile of interviews and focus group discussion

Interview number	Interview type	Interviewer position	Date and time	Long
1	Semi-structured interview, undertaken via phone	Pro-Vice Chancellor	Wednesday, 12th January 2011, 9 am	45 minute
2	Semi-structured interview, undertaken via phone	Vice Chancellor	Friday, 25th March 2011, 2 pm	90 minute
3	Semi-structured interview, undertaken via phone	Director of Corporate Communication	Friday, 3rd June, 2011, 1 pm	45 minute
4	Focus group discussion, undertaken via face to face in Brunel library	Students	Tuesday, 12th July 2011, 3 pm	45 minute
5	Focus group discussion, undertaken via face to face in Brunel library	Students	Monday, 5th September 2011, 11 am	45 minute

12. b. Analysis of interviews

1. Business school corporate brand attractiveness

The senior figure of university 2 stated that:

All what attract international students are the reputation, location and course. We recruit students who are looking for spoiler environment and friendlier one that is the kind of image that we tried to project. What is attractive for international students when they are coming here is the salient points that we have as a UK university and a business school. They go to the business school because they accepted the brand. These salient points represented by: 1) the friendly environment, 2) good students support, 3) good students' experience, 4) good teaching and learning and 5) commitment to sustainability.

(Vice Chancellor, University 2, business school corporate brand attractiveness)

The senior figure of university 3 stated that:

I think it is something about the quality of education and the heritage of the university which goes back to 200 years. It is also about providing a very valuable education. Moreover, the employability skills and the ability to get a job are very important. Obviously, the relevant of the course to the students' study will be extremely important to make their decisions. I think it

is very important for them to know that the university brand communicates a high quality education, good student experience, good student support service and good quality of learning and teaching. That is the strongest brand that we have.

(Director of Corporate Communication, University 3, business school corporate brand attractiveness)

2. Brand distinctiveness

The senior figure of university 1 defined brand distinctiveness factors as following:

1. International dimension (international recognition).

2. Research intensive.

3. Distinctive and valuable education.

We place a lot of emphasis on the notion that we are international, that we are research-intensive and that we believe that there is something distinct and valuable about our education that takes place in the context of an international research-intensive university. This increases the attractiveness of business school for international students.

(Pro-Vice Chancellor, University 1, brand distinctiveness)

"Nottingham University Business School has been ranked as both 'internationally excellent' for research and also 'excellent' for teaching, placing it at the very top of UK rankings of its Business Schools. In addition, it has been ranked as one of the top five business schools for research in Europe by the Financial Times" (Ennew, 2013).

(Pro-Vice Chancellor, University 1, brand distinctiveness)

The senior figure of university 2 said:

I think that every business school has a distinctive corporate brand which distinguishes it from the other business schools and makes it attractive for international students. We are not a Russell Group- research intensive- university. We are a middle-ranking university which focuses on business, humanities, education and sport science. These are the factors why we involved overseas. We play on our strengths which are strong students support, good students' experience, friendly environment and good teaching and learning. We are not research intensive; we are what we call teaching-led. We rate student support very high on our list of priorities. That is what we try to communicate to the markets which we seek to enter. (Vice Chancellor, University 2, brand distinctiveness)

The senior figure of university 2 defined brand distinctiveness factors as:

1. *The quality of student's experience*

2. *Innovation in teaching and learning*

3. *Very high level of student support*

4. *Very friendly environment that links to the study*

5. *Our commitment to sustainability. We have a good trade record in sustainability and we have always been in the top of that. That is one of our solid points but not a unique one*

6. *We are not research intensive; we are what we call teaching-led.*

(Vice Chancellor, University 2, brand distinctiveness)

The senior figure of university 3 defined brand distinctiveness factors as:

- *The heritage of the university.*

- *Achievements of research.*

- *Providing solution and industry for economy.*

- *We have a large international recruitment which is part of our brand.*

- *We have a very focused and relevant education.*

- *We have strong employability.*

- *We provide good quality learning and teaching.*

(Director of Corporate Communication, University 3, brand distinctiveness)

3. City brand

The senior figure of university 2 supported the importance of city brand as he confirmed that

Regarding city brand, it is important. We have an institution which is relatively small. We, for example, are not in the centre of the city, so we don't recruit students as those in big cities or bright cities do.

(Vice-Chancellor, University 2, city brand)

The senior figure of university 3 said:

The city brand is very important. For example, Edinburgh is a hugely attractive city and when we are recruiting people from overseas to come to Edinburgh we use Edinburgh, the city brand. Our business school does not have a location in its name. It is not like the

Manchester Business School for example. So, you have to ensure that people know that you are actually British, Scottish and in Edinburgh. We push this fact, we are in a good location that is in Britain, Scotland, and Edinburgh.

(Director of Corporate Communication, University 3, city brand)

4. Country brand

The senior figure of university 1 stated that:

I think the UK brand is certainly very attractive for international students because I think UK higher education still has good reputation. Our unique selling point is that we offer a British education.

(Pro- Vice-Chancellor, University 1, country brand)

The senior figure of university 2 asserted that:

It is a difficult and interesting question. The important thing that we have is that we have a long history and tradition in higher education. It is not only about tradition in the higher education but also about perceived quality. In sense about the perceived quality, I am not sure that the quality that we provide is significantly better than the quality provided elsewhere but students' perception is that the UK brand is a high quality brand and I think we still gain from that. But I do not think that is the same for other countries. They are growing their brands rapidly. That is why we emphasise tradition. We have a very long tradition in the UK of higher education that goes back many hundreds of years. It is not the case in Australia, not the case of New Zealand and not the case of the USA. I think we are still greedy in using our history.

(Vice Chancellor, University 2, country brand)

The senior figure of university 3 stated that:

Yes, it is an important and interesting question because it is important in terms of British and UK brands. Also the Scottish brand is very important and we have to balance that and sometimes the Scottish brand is more important than the UK brand. In terms of UK branding, three parts you would have to explain to international students, where the UK is; where Scotland is (Scotland itself has a strong brand. We use the Scottish brand in terms of education and heritage) and the third part where Edinburgh is. We push the fact that we are in a good location in Britain, Scotland and Edinburgh. People in Dubai do not know where

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Scotland is, so we have to do more in terms of explaining about Scotland; about why Scotch education is a good education to have; and why a British education is a good education to have. That is a necessary thing to do in Scotland. So in a sense of the communication of a brand, we change the emphasis relative to the culture in other countries.

(Director of Corporate Communication, University 3, country brand)

5. Tuition fees

The senior figure of university 2 said that:

There is now a lot of competition from the USA, Australia and New Zealand and also from the rest of the Europe because the UK HE is expensive. Whatever model we are operating, it is an expensive model compared with other institutions overseas".

(Vice-Chancellor, University 2, tuition fees)

6. University brand

The senior figure of university 2 argued that:

The strategic benefit of focusing on university brand is that it keeps the message simple. If for example you want to focus on school brand or course brand, you focus on ten; fifteen to twenty brands at the same time and the message could be very confused. That is why in the international markets we focus first and foremost on the university brand. It is the UK first and foremost. The important decisions are: firstly, which countries overseas students want to study in and secondly, which institution overseas students want to choose. If students have a very clear idea of what kind of university they want to study in and where that university is and what its reputation is. If students know already, then obviously the course brand is important. I would say that course brand is secondly important behind the university brand.

(Vice Chancellor, University 2, university brand)

7. The internationalisation of university and business school

The senior figure of university 1 stated that:

Recruiting international students and establishing overseas campuses are the two main market entry modes. "The University of Nottingham is one of the UK's most internationally active universities, enrolling around 9,000 international students in the UK and 9,000 students offshore. I think that obscures the fact that we have a very broad-based internationalisation strategy. If you start off at the UK campus, then we've got a lot of work

going on around the internationalisation of the curriculum, around content and skills"
(Christine Ennew cited in Thomas, 2012)
(Pro-Vice Chancellor, University 1, internationalisation)

The senior figure of university 2 said that:
There are three different modes of approaching
The first one is the standard franchised and validated modes whereby the University of Gloucestershire is delivered in the countries under our control.
The second one is an articulation mode whereby the students of the first year or first two years study in their own country and then precede here for years two and three.
The third one is the simply direct entry mode to the UK where student typically go to year one or they go to undertake postgraduate programme or the research programme.
(Vice Chancellor, University 2, internationalisation)

The senior figure of university 3 confirmed that:
We have recruited students from overseas to our campus in the UK, We have a campus in Dubai, we teach overseas through a series of academic partners and we also have a number of independent learners working independently overseas.
(Director of Corporate Communication, University 3, internationalisation)

8. The importance of internationalisation

The senior figure of university 1 stated that the importance of internationalisation for the university and business school is represented by:

a) It is an opportunity for the university or business school to access different markets, spread its education to international markets and achieve global presence

Internationalisation is a way for the university and the business school to access different markets, spread their educations to international markets and achieve global presence. From our perspective, establishing international campuses was a way of offering University of Nottingham's educations to a much large market of students who would not come to the UK. We can make the higher education enabled to a different and much larger market and we can enhance a lot of choices that students have.

b) Enhancing the research opportunity

We are looking to new research opportunities. I think it is fair to say that internationalisation provides the university opportunities for doing different and new types of research: research perhaps could not be done in the UK, could not easily be done in the UK, or could cost effectively to be done in the UK.

c) Meeting the international demand over the courses the university offer

Changing patterns of demand internationally is one of the main drivers of internationalisation. Internationalisation provides an opportunity to meet the demand over the courses the university offer.

d) Attracting more international students and teaching staff

I think that attracting the best staff and students is among the main drivers of internationalisation.

e) Providing international experience to staff and students

I think that internationalisation is a way for enhancing the international experience of the University's students and staff.

(Pro-Vice Chancellor, university 1, the importance of internationalisation 1)

The senior figure of university 2 confirmed that the importance of internationalisation for the university and business school can be represented by:

a) It is an opportunity for the university to access different markets, spread its education to international markets and achieve global presence

We believe that internationalisation has a long history for the expansion of higher education.

b) Providing distinctive mobility opportunity for students and staff

We believe that internationalisation is a vital part of students' experience. It is also about expanding opportunities and providing distinctive mobility for students and staff.

c) Attracting more international students and teaching staff

The number of students that we can recruit from the UK has been limited. However, the number of students that we can recruit from overseas has not been limited but it is increased.

(Vice Chancellor, University 2, the importance of internationalisation)

The senior figure of University 3 said that the importance of internationalisation for the university and business school is represented by:

a) It is an opportunity for the university to access different markets, spread its education to international markets and achieve global presence

We become an international provider education. So, there is a benefit in posting ourselves as a very international university because that means that we will have more international students' population. The reason seems to be a need to know a marketplace that dispread British degree overseas. Whilst people do not need to travel across the world to get the same quality of degree, we have strategic benefits of internationalisation in terms of exporting high quality education from Scotland and the UK to overseas.

b) Meeting the international demand over the courses the university offer

We have recruited students from overseas to our campus in the UK. We have a campus in Dubai, we teach overseas through a series of academic partners and we also have a number of independent learners working independently overseas. So, the basic thing of why we do any of those international activities is that there is an overseas demand over the courses that we offer and internationalisation provides opportunity to meet this demand.

c) Attracting more international students and teaching staff

The strategic benefit of internationalisation is that we become an international provider of education. There is a benefit in posting ourselves as a very international university which means that we will have more international students' population and this will also allow us to attract more international research and teaching staff.

d) Maintaining the success of the university business model

We have a very good product; we have one of the best MBA in the World. So, there is a business model to work to keep that so successful.

e) It is an opportunity to enhance the performance and reputation of the university

Why we do internationalisation in that way is that it is an opportunity to enhance the performance and reputation of the university.

(PV3, University3, the importance of internationalisation)

9. The role of corporate brands on international market entry decision making

The senior figure of university 1 stated that:

It is usually important. Decision making for the students and for the sponsors is always extremely difficult. In that context, we know that the corporate brand usually becomes more important and influential; it is something that we see as a considerable strategic significance. It is also something which we are very concerned to protect and enhance.

(Pro-Vice Chancellor, University 1, role of corporate brands in the university international market entry)

The senior figure of university 2 highlighted that:

We played to our strength which is a smart sport over side institution, strong students support, and strong innovation in teaching and learning and researching forms. We are not research intensive; we are what we call teaching led. We rate student support and student support system very high on our list of priorities.

(Vice Chancellor, University 2, role of corporate brands in the university international market entry)

The senior figure of university 3 confirmed that

The brand should be central for everything, so the brand obviously offer a number of different facets to Herriot watt such as a good quality education and quite a cutting edge of experience. We are a good university, we are a university of orient education. So, the brand does some aspects, the brand is a part of any communication and any interaction. It is so that the role of corporate brand in the foreign market entry choice.

12. c. Analysis of focus group discussions

1. International student corporate brand identification

When I speak about Brunel business school with people from outside Brunel, I say positive things about it (focus group 1, Res 4, international student identification).

2. Middle ranking business school corporate brand attractiveness

Some people I knew said that Brunel is a known name in London (focus group1, Res 3, brand attractiveness).

Brunel has some lecturers who are excellent but there are some lecturers who are below average (focus group 1, Res 4, brand attractiveness).

I chose Brunel Business School because of good lecturers and good staff (focus group 1, Res 2, brand attractiveness).

I chose Brunel Business School because of good supervisors that I wanted to work with (focus group 1, Res 1, brand attractiveness).

Brunel is one of the universities that have campus facilities in London. Yes, I think, it is fantastic (focus group 2, Res 2, brand attractiveness).

The name of the business school, Brunel Business School and the name of the course have got my attention (focus group 2, Res 5, brand attractiveness).

One of my cousins has studied engineering in Brunel and he recommended that Brunel University has a good brand name (focus group 2, Res 2, brand attractiveness).

I chose Brunel Business School because its atmosphere is good (focus group 2, Res 2, brand attractiveness).

The brand itself, Brunel Business School will be in charge of all activities within the business school. You do not have to go to any person; they make it comfortable for you to go for enquiring. It makes convenient and easy access to information. Location and university atmosphere are also important (focus group 2, Res 2, brand attractiveness).

3. Brand similarity

I fit in easily in Brunel Business School (focus group 1, Res 1, brand similarity).

Yes, I agree, I fit in easily and several colleagues told me that they fit in easily in Brunel Business School (focus group 1, Res3, brand similarity).

Yes, I share same interests with my colleagues who are studying the same course with me (focus group 1, Res 3, brand similarity).

4. Brand distinctiveness

The distinctiveness of the business school is very important. Brunel Business School is distinctive in terms of the interesting courses it provides. For example, if you look at the top ranking business schools in the UK, they do not offer the course that I am interested in which I am currently studying. That is also a factor for me. If you want to study Corporate Brand Management, you do not go to Oxford. So it is a unique course. For me top ranking business schools have a stronger corporate brands but they do not have what you want (focus group 2, Res 2, brand distinctiveness).

5. City brand

I spoke to many friends of mine and they told me to come to a place that is close to a big city so you will have more chance to get a job there. That is why I chose Brunel. For some personal reasons in that I am a self-funded student. I wanted to take a course that is not too expensive and I wanted something that is close to the central London (focus group 1, Res 1, city brand).

I looked to different things such as: I looked whether the business school is in city that is easy to find a part job, whether it is close to London or not. Moreover, because Brunel Business School is in London, I could say that I get my degree from London, which is prestigious. For my country, London and the UK are prestigious (focus group 1, Res 2, city brand).

Brunel is internationally known (recognised), basically, why do not I choose Oxford. In terms of the quality of the brand, the brand of Oxford compared to Brunel, there is if you like, a large gap. The quality of Oxford is far higher than Brunel. But Brunel is in the city of London and this makes Brunel more valuable for me. Brunel for me is the most valuable because it is in London (focus group 1, Res 4, city brand).

Brunel Business School is in London. It is convenient for transport and its ranking is quite good (focus group 2, Res 1, city brand).

Well, the major factor was being close to the city of London. I think that was a huge plus for me (focus group 2, Res 3, city brand).

6. Country brand

As compared to back Home country, UK higher education brand is very high class and there is a level of interaction, the way they teach is very different from what I was used to (focus group 1, Res 4, country brand).

I chose the UK because of the quality of services they provide (focus group 1, Res 5, country brand).

I chose the UK because UK higher education brand is prestigious (focus group 1, Res 2, country brand).

I chose the UK because UK higher education brand is very developed (focus group 2, Res 3, country brand).

I chose the UK because of the heritage, experience and history associated with UK higher education. Moreover, the quality of education is also very good and it is also recognised in my home country, Nigeria (focus group 2, Res 1, country brand).

I chose the UK because UK higher eructation brand is very developed, a kind of facilities they have in education (focus group 2, Res 3, country brand).

7. University campus

I chose Brunel Business School because I wanted something that is close to the central London (focus group 1, Res 1, university campus).

In central London there is no university with a big campus that provides lots of facilities. Brunel is the only one that has a big campus and has good facilities (focus group 1, Res 3, university campus).

Well-connected is very important, infrastructure and the size of the campus in London are very important because in London, nothing is as big. Brunel University also has a modern, nice and big campus (focus group 1, Res 4, university campus).

One reason is campus size; you have access to everything within Brunel, you do not have to go for different campuses, for different lectures. There are other universities in London where the lectures are in different campuses and you are not sure where you will be in the morning or in the evening. Here you can get everything in one place and the accommodation is nearby. It is easily accessible to the town and it is easily accessible to London as well. Moreover, it is easily accessible to Heathrow Airport (focus group 1, Res 5, university campus).

I chose Brunel Business School because it is located in London (focus group 2, Res 1, university campus).

Brunel is one of the universities that have campus facilities in London. Yes, I think it is fantastic (focus group 2, Res 2, university campus).

For the business school itself, I found that they have all facilities in one place. This is a factor for me, because I do not want to travel from the lecture centre to the library. In some schools, they have campuses here and another campus outside. I found that all the facilities were in one local community, and that was the factor enclosed for me as well and that is why I chose Brunel Business School (focus group 2, Res 3, university campus).

Brunel University has a modern campus. For the campus it is very good, it has a new building, including infrastructure (focus group 1, Res 5, university campus).

8. Tuition fees

For some personal reason, I am a self-funding student and I wanted to take a course that is not too expensive. The course in the UK was one year. So it was not too expensive and I may be able to fund it (focus group 1, Res 1, tuition fees).

Brunel Business School was not too expensive. This was one factor for me plus the location of business school and to have access to a part time job (focus group 1, Res 3, tuition fees).

I looked at the US and the UK, the US was two years programme and the UK was one year programme. My preference was for one year programme as it is less expensive than two years programme (focus group 1, Res 4, tuition fees).

13. Categories of the UK Universities and Business Schools

Categorising the UK Universities and Business Schools to top, middle and low ranked universities

Universities that have a royal charter and they are members in Russell Group universities **(Top ranking universities and business schools)**	Universities that have a royal charter and not members in the Russell Group universities **(Middle ranking universities and business schools)**	Universities that do not have a royal charter, and not members in in Russell Group universities **(Low ranking universities and business schools)**
University of Birmingham Birmingham Business School	Bradford University (Royal Charter in 1966) Bradford School of Management	Gloucestershire University School of Business and Management
University of Bristol Bristol Business School	Brunel University (Royal Charter in 1966) Brunel Business School	University of Westminster Westminster Business School
University of Cambridge Cambridge Business School	University of Heriot-Watt (Royal Charter in 1966)	Greenwich University Greenwich Business School
Cardiff University Cardiff Business School	City University London (Royal Charter in 1966) Cass Business school at City University London	University of Huddersfield University of Huddersfield Business School
Durham University Durham Business School	University of Bath (Royal Charter in 1966) Bath School of Management	University of Bedfordshire Bedfordshire Business School
University of Edinburgh Edinburgh Business School	Lancaster University (Royal Charter in 1964) Lancaster University Management School	Oxford Brookes University Oxford Brookes Business School
University of Exeter Exeter Business School	University of Surrey (Royal Charter in 1970) Surrey Business School	University of East Anglia Norwich Business School is the business school of the University of East Anglia
University of Glasgow Glasgow Business School	Loughborough University (Royal Charter in 1966) School of Business and Economics	University of Lincoln Lincoln Business School
Imperial College London	University of Leicester (Royal Charter in 1957) Leicester Business School	University of Hertfordshire Hertfordshire Business School
King's College London	Aston University (Royal Charter in 1966) Aston Business School	Coventry University Coventry Business School
University of Leeds Leeds Business School	University of Kent (Royal Charter in 1965) Kent Business School	Bournemouth University Bournemouth business school
University of Liverpool Liverpool Business School	University of London (Royal Charter in 1836)	Northampton university Northampton Business School
London School of Economics	University of Sussex (Royal Charter in 1961) Business, Management and Economics	University of Northumbria Newcastle Business School

University of Manchester Manchester Business School	University of Reading (Royal Charter in 1926) Henley Business School at the University of Reading	Birmingham City University Birmingham City University business school
Newcastle University Newcastle Business School	University of Essex (Royal Charter in 1965) Essex Business School	University of Portsmouth Portsmouth Business School Faculty of Engineering and Technology
University of Nottingham Nottingham Business School	University of Strathclyde (Royal Charter in 1964) Strathclyde Business School	University of Winchester Faculty of Business, Law and Sport
University of Oxford Oxford Business School	University of Abertay Dundee (Royal Charter in 1967) Dundee Business School	Aberystwyth University School of Management and Business
Queen Mary University of London School of Business and Management	University of Stirling (Royal Charter in 1967) Stirling Management School	University of Chester University of Chester Business School
Queen's University Belfast Queen's University Belfast Management school	Swansea University (Royal Charter in 1920) The School of Management	Plymouth University Plymouth Business School
University of Sheffield Sheffield Business School	University of Keele (Royal Charter in 1962) Keele Management School	Brighton university Brighton Business School
University of Southampton Southampton Management School	University of Hull (Royal Charter in 1954) Hull University Business School	University of Ulster Ulster Business School
University College London	University of Buckingham (Royal Charter in 1983) Buckingham Business School	Middlesex University Middlesex business school
University of Warwick Warwick Business School	Bangor University (Royal charter in 1885) Bangor Business School	University of Chichester The School of Enterprise Management and Leadership
University of York York Management School		Leeds Metropolitan university The Faculty of Business and Law
		London Metropolitan University School of Business
		University of Bolton Bolton business school
		University of East London Royal Docks Business School
		University of West London the Business School
		Roehampton University Business School
		Kingston University Kingston business school