



Brunel Business School

The Education Quality Model: Saudi and British Perspectives on Pillars of Quality in Education

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

By

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Abstract

Research Purpose: This study aims to build a new model of quality for education based on a Saudi-British consensus regarding the major factors contributing to education quality and after considering other models (such as EFQM) and other authors' perspectives.

Research Methodology: The research relies on realism philosophy and as a multiple case study with 15 cases, it utilises a mainly qualitative research design that employs semi-structured interview as its research instruments. This study has adopted an 'Inductive' approach to build a new model. Primary data in this study was collected by interviewing 33 Saudi and 30 British academics and higher education authorities from six Saudi and nine British universities. Content Analysis was used for analysis.

Research Findings: While the degree of agreement with each of the 11 propositions was varied (a range from totally agree to totally disagree), all of the Saudi and British participants believe that eleven pillars/criteria of quality education are: Leadership and Strategic Management; Students, Academics and Staff Recruitment; Syllabus/ Curriculum; Research/Teaching; Pedagogy; Learning & research support; Knowledge management; Academics' achievements; Students' progress, success & satisfaction; Universities/Schools' achievements; and Innovation and Change Management.

Recommendations: Decision makers in education sector are recommended to consider all eleven identified factors and their connection to each other while developing policies for quality of education. Universities and other educational institutes should plan and allocate required budgets for implementation and maintenance of all aspects of quality in education.

Research Contributions: The main contribution of this research is developing the 'Education Quality Model'. Although there has been some research regarding the quality of education, seemingly they have not led to the development of a research-based customised model such as the Education Quality Model. Another contribution is preparing a new and broad 'Taxonomy of Quality'. In previous taxonomies, either the only focus is on education or in contrast, education is missing in these taxonomies. Furthermore, possibly for the first time, perspectives of Saudi academics are presented alongside their British counterparts regarding quality of education.

Declaration

I declare that this thesis has not already been accepted in substance for any degree and is not concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree. It is the result of my own independent research except where otherwise stated.

Mohammed Abaalkhail

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I dedicate this work to my parents and my wife who encouraged me to finish my study.

Publications based on this Research

- 1- Abaalkhail, M. & Irani, Z. (2012). *Pillars of Quality in Education: British Perspective*. Proceedings of the European Business Research Conference; European Centre for Business and Economic Research (ECBER); 27-28 August 2012, Rome, Italy.
- 2- Abaalkhail, M. & Irani, Z. (2012). *Critical Success Factors in Education Quality*. Proceedings of the Advances in Business-Related Scientific Research Conference; Advances in Business-Related Scientific Research Conference (ABSRC); 5-7 September 2012, Olbia, Italy.
- 3- Abaalkhail, M. & Irani, Z. (2012). *A Study of Influential Factors on Quality of Education*. Proceedings of the International Conference on Arts, Management and Law; Planetary Scientific Research Centre; 16-17 September 2012, Jakarta, Indonesia.
- 4- Abaalkhail, M. & Irani, Z. (2013). *Pillars of Quality in Education: British Perspective*. International Journal of Innovation and Knowledge Management in the Middle East and North Africa (IJKMMENA).

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. Introduction

This study is concerned with the area of quality development in higher education. Quality development in higher education has gained attention particularly over the last decade (Jessop *et al.*, 2012). Among higher education institutions worldwide, there have been various responses to this trend, ranging from implementing direct quality measurement scales to self-audit processes (Green, 1994). Increasingly, the rationale for quality development has been driven by funding mechanisms, accreditation tests, keeping pace with international practice and national audits (Harvey, 2005; Lomas, 2007). Saudi Arabia has commenced a number of major developmental projects that seek to fill the gap between its higher education system and other more advanced systems around the world.

Issues of quality and its importance are not new; however, not all sectors have received the same amount of attention. This study is concerned with the area of quality development in higher education. The tendency towards having a single quality model/theory that can universally cover all aspects of all sectors has led to the development of generalist models that ignore the essential characteristics of different sectors like education.

This study concentrates on the perspectives of academics and senior managers from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom to allow a more in-depth investigation.

The first chapter starts with an introduction, and then continues with the background (the need for the research and the selection of Saudi Arabia and Britain); the research question, aim, objectives and propositions; the scope and context of the research. The main body of this chapter is dedicated to brief discussions regarding the research rationale; the contribution of the research; an outline of the methodology; the research process; the research limitations and, finally, ethical considerations. This chapter will close with a findings summary as well as the dissertation's structure and outline.

1.2. Background

1.2.1. Educational Context

Higher education is important for many reasons due to its positive impact on different aspects of people's lives around the world. One of the crucial effects of quality higher education is on the world economy in general and the economy of each country in particular (Jones, 2003). The economies of countries and their bases have changed markedly in the last century. In the nineteenth century, almost all economies were based on producing and trading agricultural products, though after the 'industrial revolution' in Europe some countries gradually moved towards industrialisation, which was based on mass production. Today, countries are moving towards a 'knowledge economy' (Harman and Meek, 2000) and 'knowledge management' (Mathias, 2004), which means that knowledge and scientific research have become the main sources of income and economic prosperity (Lomas, 2007a and 2007b).

According to Newton (2002), quality is a "contested" issue. There are a number of interpretations of quality, which sometimes complement and sometimes contradict one another.

For example, Lomas (2004) argued that there are two major approaches to quality improvement: "*quality assurance and quality enhancement*". In his view, quality assurance is oriented mainly towards the product or service being of good standard. It is a "*preventative*" measure, which is "*regarded as a means of improving overall quality*" (Lomas, 2004, p. 158) and it relates to the notion of "*fitness for purpose*". Quality enhancement, on the other hand, is "*directly concerned with adding value, improving quality...and implementing transformational change*". In relation to an individual academic, this concept is "*based on the premise that they want their students to do well*" (Lomas, 2004, p. 158). Adding to Lomas's argument, Jones (2003) outlined several dichotomies when approaching higher education quality:

"One views quality improvement at the macro or university level, another focuses at the micro or educational-delivery level. One sees quality assessment as an administrative 'check-off', the other sees quality as a continuous improvement in educational delivery. One values quantitative measures to demonstrate quality, the other values qualitative measures" (Jones, 2003, p. 223).

Jones argued that there is a need for integration of these dichotomies, so that quality improvements at the educational-delivery level are complemented and reflected at the university level.

Kogan and Hanney (2000) referred to quality as “*the most potent of the change agents [in higher education]*” (p. 240). In that context, Watty (2003) investigated change as a result of quality initiatives. She revealed “*two schools of thought*”: one relating to context and the other relating to stakeholders. “*The first attaches quality to a context and as a consequence quality becomes meaningful... For example, [this might be] references to the quality of assessment, student intake, academic programmes, teaching and learning...*” (Watty, 2003, p. 213). From the second perspective, quality acquires “*a stakeholder-specific meaning*” (Watty, 2003, p. 213). Quality is considered in relation to a variety of stakeholders with an interest in higher education, and each of these stakeholders may potentially perceive quality differently. Westerheijden *et al.* (1994) argue that quality is multi-dimensional. Westerheijden *et al.* referred to Brennan *et al.* (1992) who suggest that: “*there are (at least) as many definitions of quality in higher education as there are categories of stakeholders... times the number of purposes, or dimensions, these stakeholders distinguish*” (Brennan *et al.*, 1992, p. 17).

Looking at British higher education, Harvey (2005) outlined the range of quality monitoring mechanisms, which have been historically employed in the UK:

“The UK has had several processes for monitoring the quality of higher education. These include the external examiner system, professional accreditation of programmes, inspection of provision, quality audit of institutional processes, assessment of programmes, and research assessment.” (Harvey, 2005, p. 263).

Since the 1980s there has been a gradual emergence of what Westerheijden *et al.* (1994) refer to as “*new*” approaches to quality assessment “*as a result of the expansion of higher education systems in combination with limited budgets, of internationalisation of higher education and of economic competition, of more openness of governments in general and...of ideologies of neo-liberalism and deregulation...*” (Westerheijden *et al.*, 1994, p. 19).

1.2.2. Need for the Research

Quality in education is not just an option but a necessity in order to be able to deal with students' expectations as customers and governments as financers or at least as quality monitors. Quality monitoring has become a mechanism for governments worldwide to tackle these competing factors, and frequently also to disguise the dominant focus on accountability rather than enhancement (Harvey, 2005). Many of the quality monitoring models and systems applied to higher education originated in the manufacturing and business sectors. These models and systems were frequently found unsuitable or only partially suitable for the higher education sector, as they largely disregarded the nature of higher education and its employees, in particular the academics (Birnbaum, 2000; Green, 1994).

Governments are only one of the triggers of developing and maintaining quality in universities and schools. Students, their parents and even organisations that sponsor students want value for the money they pay and the time they spend (Spradlin, 2009). They might compromise on some non-core issues such as size, reputation, or distance of their chosen educational institutions, though they will not disregard the quality of education in these universities or schools (Roelofs and Terwel, 2009). Graduation from low quality educational establishments is not going to help graduates in getting their expected jobs or further studies. Thus nowadays students, their parents and sponsors expect quality education more than before (Tippin *et al.*, 2012). So doing research regarding influential factors on quality of education is highly in demand.

The main gaps identified in the current literature are: first, not having any research-based customised quality models for education and educational institutions (Roelofs and Terwel, 2009), together with the lack of a comparative study of the higher education systems in Saudi Arabia with the UK that would help in the development of this customised model of quality for education.

Despite the crucial impact of higher education on the well-being and the standard of living of nations, the issue of quality in higher education has not received sufficient attention from academics (Green, 1994). This difficulty in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is more acute due to the lack of any academic research about quality in higher education.

It is a generally accepted fact that 'if something is worth doing, it's worth doing well'. According to UNESCO (The United Nations Educational, Scientific and

Cultural Organization), having higher education in any country is considered one of the most important signs of a high standard of living and quality of life in that country. The future of nations depends considerably on educated people who can perform at a high level, make their economy flourish and govern their countries properly (Blom and Meyers, 2003). The major key to having educated people is having quality tertiary institutions (Aspin and Chapman, 1994; Baker, 1997). The quality of higher education institutions cannot be taken for granted without having a well-designed and customised quality system for these universities and research centres (Stoddart, 2004; Van Berkel and Wolfhagen, 2002).

That is to say, in addition to the economic impact, quality higher education positively contributes to a more universal and tolerant culture (Watson, 1995), the development of knowledge and technology (Largrosen *et al.*, 2004), the personal and mental well-being of people (Craft, 1994), perhaps a more intellectual society (Stoddart, 2004) and many other things. These advantages of higher education can be achieved successfully only if higher education is of the required quality. One of the required qualities in higher education is the quality of pedagogy.

Higher education and its related quality have many dimensions, one of which is the quality of teaching methods in these academic institutions. Poor quality, ineffective and inadequate teaching methods sharply reduce the quality of higher education (Roelofs and Terwel, 2009) and consequently undermine the expected results and advantages of higher education.

Although numerous developmental changes continue to be introduced to the Saudi educational system, many managerial and structural developments are still needed. This study will consider the distinctive features and aspects of each system (British and Saudi) and determine the similarities and differences between the two systems to create the required specifications for building a quality model that matches the perspectives of both Western and Eastern academics and education managers.

1.2.3. Selection of Saudi Arabia and Britain

The researcher has chosen to investigate the higher education system of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a culturally different educational system, distinct from the English higher education system, and more broadly from the Anglo-Saxon higher education tradition. In brief, two main reasons for choosing Saudi Arabia and Britain as contexts for this research are reasonably good access to potential participants in these countries as well as the important position of Saudi and the UK in the East and the West, respectively.

No countries, even those in the same region, are totally similar so one country cannot fully represent a region. That is to say, the researcher does not claim that one country can completely represent one region or continent. Each of these countries is considered only as a typical country in their region so they are chosen. The majority of countries in the Middle East are Arab and/or Muslim, thereby, Saudi as an Arab country that is the origin of Islam can be acceptable as a typical country for this area. Britain is considered as a typical Western country because it does have considerable similarities to other Western countries in terms of culture, religion and educational system.

In particular, it can be argued that it is the unique position of Saudi Arabia in the Middle East between Asia and Africa, and thus its unique political and social history, that have had an impact on the specific development of the Saudi higher education system and the Saudi educational system overall. The researcher is Saudi, and has been working in the education sector, so it is reasonable to contribute to the education system in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in this research. It is an acceptable fact that a research study cannot be conducted if an investigator does not have access to potential participants or participants do not like to share their opinions with a researcher. Thus, due to access to Saudi academics, this country becomes an ideal choice for research.

The researcher elected to investigate the British higher education system because England, and more broadly the UK, was one of the first countries in the world, and certainly the first in Europe (Westerheijden *et al.*, 1994), to introduce formal quality assurance systems into higher education. In addition, the researcher lives and studies in the UK, which gives him more access to British academics for data collection.

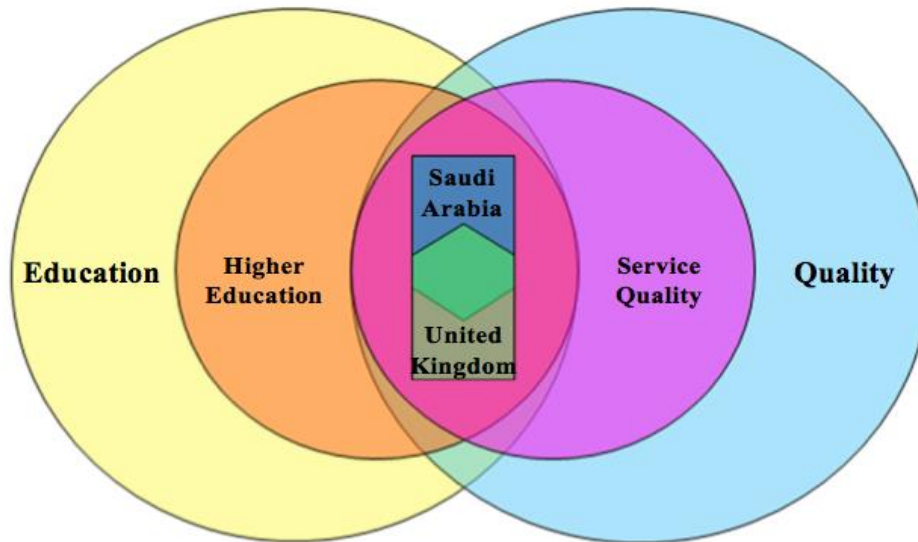
1.2.4. Scope and Context of Research

Any research has its own scope and limitations (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). There are some important issues outwith the scope of a study that can have an effect on research, researchers or research participants; however, it is not feasible to consider all influential factors in the research because they are not within the scope of the research (Lancaster, 2007). All research has some limitations (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). The chosen scope of the research itself has been big enough to take more than four years for the researcher to complete the study, so adding any other variable to this research will go beyond its limited time, budget, and manpower. There is no perfect research because it is impossible to assess the possible impact of all the factors that might have effects on a research study, the researcher or participants (Bryman and Bell, 2008). Even in a very large scale research of wide scope that has a big budget and hundreds of researchers to work on it, it is not probable to consider all pertinent issues.

The study focuses on the area of higher education quality in Britain and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and, in particular, on the partial perspectives of academics and higher education leaders within the two higher education systems. The researcher elected to investigate the English higher education system, because England, and more broadly the UK, was one of the first countries in the world, and certainly the first in Europe (Westerheijden *et al.*, 1994), to introduce formal quality assurance systems into higher education.

On the other hand, the logic behind selection of the higher education system of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for study is twofold. The first reason is that the higher education system in Saudi Arabia is a synthetic style that combines different forms of education systems together. This synthetic system has borrowed some elements of Western higher education systems as well as existing education systems in the Middle East with some Islamic flavours. This is the main reason why the researcher maintains that this system is worth investigating. The second reason for choosing Saudi's education system is familiarity with this system. To keep the research more focused, the investigator decided to restrict the examination of higher education quality to the areas of humanities and the social sciences. This aligned with the researcher's interest, experience and tertiary background (see figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1: The context and scope of the research



Source: developed for this research

Furthermore, any research has its specified research question to answer, the research aim and some research objectives to achieve (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). Not only is it not necessary to discuss issues that are not mentioned in the research question or research aim or objectives, but also, many scholars believe that it is inappropriate to consider any issue that has nothing to do with the research aim, objectives or the research question (Bryman and Bell, 2008; Cadden *et al.*, 2010; Hattie, 2009).

The research question of this study is “*How do the main education quality drivers have an impact on the quality development of education in general and higher education in particular?*”. The research aim is ‘to build a new model of quality for education based on a Saudi-British consensus regarding the major factors contributing to education quality and after considering other models (such as EFQM) and other authors’ perspectives’. The research objectives are to assess the impact of each of the 11 main ‘education quality drivers’ on the quality of education. As it is very clear from the aforementioned aim, objectives and question, this study is NOT going to consider why participants gave the answers that they did or what factors (either macro-environmental or micro-environmental) had an impact on their given answers.

There are so many macro-environmental and micro-environmental elements that might have some degrees of effect on research, researcher, or participants (Cadden *et al.*, 2010). Macro-environmental issues are very widespread and general factors that might affect everything and anything. The effects of macro-environmental factors are

generally (but not always) indirect and limited (Agranoff and Radin, 1991). Macro-environmental factors are generally grouped into six main domains including political, economical, socio-cultural, technological, environmental, and legal domains that are known as PESTEL (Agranoff and Radin, 1991).

There are also many ‘*cultural*’ factors that might have some influence on research, researcher, or research participants (Schultz and Hinings, 2012). Some of these cultural factors are religion, language, values, norms, perceptions, learning styles, attitudes, etiquettes, expectations, rules, gender role, approaches to problem-solving, patterns of handling emotions, social interactions, decision-making patterns, notions of beauty, literature and even types of food participants eat or types and colours of dress participants wear are part of their culture (Hofstede *et al.*, 2010; Van-den-Berg and Wilderom, 2004). As has been mentioned, consideration of the possible effects of participants’ culture on the variation of answers given to interview questions has never been one of the research objectives nor is it within the scope of this research. Even if assessing the impact of participants’ culture on their given answers was one of the research objectives or was within the scope of research, conducting such an assessment was too complicated because culture comprises so many aspects (Hattie, 2009). Even if a researcher decides to select a limited number of aspects of culture to examine, this research would be non-defensible because it can assess only a very tiny impact of culture, ignoring the vast majority of aspects of culture (Hofstede *et al.*, 2010). The other problem is the way in which culture would be assessed. While some valuable efforts have been made by few scholars such as Hofstede (1984) or Trompenaars (1995) to quantify culture, it cannot be disregarded that culture is a subjective issue so it is not possible to measure the exact effect of any aspect of culture on participants’ answers (Schultz and Hinings, 2012).

Micro-environmental issues are more specific, limited and personal factors with important and direct effects on researchers or participants (Duke and Mallette, 2004). These micro-environmental factors can be divided into some domains such as life style, personality, disposable income, level of education, age group, gender, type of job, marital status, sexual orientation, race and possessions (Karahanna *et al.*, 2005). These issues might have some effect on research participants and their answers; however, they should only be considered if they are asked in either the research question, aim, research objectives or scope of the research (Bloxham and Boyd, 2007).

In addition to macro-environmental and micro-environmental factors, research participants can even be influenced by occasional events or the current time situation (Gibbs and Dunbar-Goddet, 2009). Receiving a phone call or email with important bad or good news a few minutes before interviews are examples of these occasional events that may influence the answers of participants. The content of an interview can even be affected by a situation such as having bad air-conditioning or a noisy room during the interview (Duke and Mallette, 2004). Is it really possible for a researcher to consider or control all of these issues in his/her research? The answer is ‘no’.

So, in brief, it cannot be denied that contextual and environmental factors might have an impact on any research; however, it is not necessary to consider these environmental issues in every study (Cadden *et al.*, 2010). Although, it can be claimed that hundreds of issues might have a partial effect on the given answer by participants in a research study, a researcher is required to consider these issues only if the research aim, objectives or research question mention these issues (Bloxham and Boyd, 2007).

1.3. Research Rationale

The tendency towards having a single quality model/theory that can universally apply to all types of sector has led to the development of generalised models that ignore the essential characteristics of different sectors like education. There are some theories/models in quality management such as TQM, TQC, Quality Management System (ISO 9000), and MBNQA (Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award) which have been used by different organisations around the world; however, apart from the Baldrige Education Criteria that is a non-research based model, no other models were developed specifically for the education sector so they never completely match the unique characteristics and requirements of education and educational institutions. Thus, this research has aimed to develop a customised model of quality for educational institutions (schools and universities) by collecting primary data from both Saudi and British academics and senior managers.

Despite the crucial impact of higher education on the well-being and the standard of living of nations, the issue of quality in higher education has not received sufficient attention from academics (Green, 1994). This difficulty in Saudi is more acute due to the lack of any academic research about quality in higher education.

On the subject of quality in higher education, the researcher further identified some academic papers concerned with British higher education, which drew on qualitative studies of academic perspectives. These papers highlight the lack of an academic voice in the area of higher education quality, and also a mismatch between the official rhetoric (used by national quality bodies, such as the Quality Assurance Agency in England) and the experience of academics on the ground.

All the articles acknowledge their limitations in terms of the extent of the studies they report on, and underline the need for further, more extensive in-depth research into the two-sided (Saudi and British) academic voice in higher education quality. This research, therefore, aims to fill this gap by undertaking an in-depth investigation of the influential factors on quality of education based on consensus among Saudi and British academics using semi-structured interviews as the data collection method. Personal experience of the researcher was only an initial motive to conduct research in the area of quality of education. However, in conducting the research, the researcher maintained an impartial stance and disregarded his own experience in the field to ensure an unbiased research.

1.4. Research Question, Aim & Objectives

Research Question

While there are many parameters that can directly or indirectly contribute to the quality of education in general and the quality of higher education in particular, only a limited number of these elements can have a substantial impact on the sustainable quality development of education, so the **Research Question** is:

How do the main education quality drivers have an impact on the quality development of education in general and higher education in particular?

Research Aim

This study aims to build a new model of quality for education based on a Saudi-British consensus regarding the major factors contributing to education quality and after considering other models (such as EFQM) and other authors' perspectives.

Research Objectives

The 'Research Objectives' originate directly from the 'Research Aim' and its related literature review. In fact, the research objectives provide the required leverage to fully achieve the 'Research Aim'. The aim of this research is to build a model of quality of education so this aim can be achieved only by identifying the main 'education quality drivers' that comprise the components of this model. No model can be built without knowing its building blocks. The research objectives are to assess the impact of each of these main 'education quality drivers' on the quality of education to make ensure the model would be built on the genuinely effective components/factors. Conducting a literature review is the only reliable way to determine potential 'education quality drivers'.

Based on analytical and critical literature reviews that are discussed in chapters two and three, especially in section 3.3, 11 main factors are identified to have noticeable effects on the quality of education. These quality drivers are *Leadership and Strategic Management; Students, Academics and Staff Recruitment; Syllabus/Curriculum; Research/Teaching; Pedagogy; Learning and research support; Knowledge management; Academics' achievements; Student progress, success and satisfaction; University/School achievements; and Innovation and Change Management*. Building a model for quality of education is the 'Aim' of this research. These identified

‘education quality drivers’ can be used to build the model only if each of these elements has an effect on the quality of education. Thus to fulfil the research aim, each of these ‘education quality drivers’ is need to be assessed. Assessing the impact of each of these factors that are building blocks of the model are the ‘Research Objectives’ of this research. The literature review that helped to identify these 11 components of the model can be found in section 3.3. After considering the ‘Research Aim’ as the origin and indicator of objectives, these 11 influential factors on the quality of education, plus recommendations have shaped the 12 ‘Research Objectives’ of this study as follows:

1. To examine the impact of *Leadership and Strategic Management* in educational institutions on the quality of education;
2. To assess the contribution of appropriate *Students, Academics and Staff Recruitment* on the quality of education;
3. To evaluate the degree to which a quality *Syllabus/Curriculum* is important for quality education;
4. To explore how the quality of education is influenced by *Research/Teaching*;
5. To identify the effects of *Pedagogy* on the quality of education;
6. To investigate the correlation between good *Learning and research support* and an increase in the quality of education;
7. To determine the relationship between suitable *Knowledge management* in educational institutions and the quality of education;
8. To test the extent to which the level of *Academics’ achievements* can indicate the quality of education;
9. To establish the connectivity between *Student progress, success and satisfaction* and the perceived quality of education;
10. To evaluate any meaningful relationship between the quality of education and *University/School achievements*;
11. To assess the importance of appropriate *Innovation and Change Management* in higher education institutions for the quality of education;
12. To provide some recommendations to academics and education authorities regarding ways to improve the quality of education.

1.5. Ethical Considerations

The primary data in this research relies on interviewing academics and senior education managers who participated voluntarily in the study. First, informed consent would be sought by sending information about the purpose and functions of the research to potential interviewees. The confidentiality of the collected data and anonymity of the participants would be respected.

The secondary data in this research would be collected from official published government data and other regulatory bodies and educational institutions as well as information in books and journals. Plagiarism will be avoided and all data sources would be acknowledged. In the case of copyright materials, the permission of the copyright holder would be sought before use.

Nobody would be harmed and the researcher would be completely impartial in doing the research and interpreting the findings.

In other words, this study involved some ethical considerations in order to avoid any damage to the subjects participating in it. The main ethical considerations during the research process are the privacy of the participants, voluntary participation, the consent of the participants, the confidentiality of data, participants' reactions and the researcher's behaviour (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). The following ethical considerations were respected:

- The interviewees would not be put under any pressure in order to gain their participation.
- The language and questions would be sensitive and careful at all times.
- The information obtained would be considered in a fair way, without including personal opinions or bias.
- Anonymity was guaranteed unless the participants allowed the publication of their names.
- The collected data would be kept and used solely for academic purposes.
- The interviewees would not be misled about the research objectives.

1.6. Findings Summary

The collected data from Saudi and British academics and education managers was analysed by using the content analysis technique. In the process of content analysis of the interviews conducted with both Saudi as well as British education managers and academics, the content of each interview was coded, then similar codes were classified into a separate theme, and the repetition and degree of each code and each theme in each interview and all interviews were quantified. As a result, some interesting quantitative findings emerged from the qualitative interviews.

In the post-interview stage (process of data analysis) five Likert scale options (totally agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and totally disagree) were hypothetically considered as possible answers to each question/proposition in order to quantify the results of the interviews. By considering the words or statements that were used by each interviewee to explain their opinions regarding each question/proposition, the closest option among the five options (totally agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and totally disagree) was selected to represent each answer of each respondent.

By considering the summarised findings in Table 1.1, it is evident that there is a consensus among Saudi and British academics and senior managers regarding their medium to strong support of all 11 propositions in this research. While nobody ‘totally disagreed’ with the propositions, a few of the interviewees ‘disagreed’ with 5-6 of the propositions. While the degree of agreement with each of these propositions varied, all the Saudi and British participants believed that the 11 pillars/criteria of quality education are: Leadership and Strategic Management; Students, Academics and Staff Recruitment; Syllabus/Curriculum; Research/Teaching; Pedagogy; Learning and research support; Knowledge management; Academics’ achievements; Student progress, success and satisfaction; Universities’/Schools’ achievements; and Innovation and Change Management.

Table 1.1. Brief Summary of the Findings (Frequency)

<i>The Research Propositions</i>		Quantification of Given Answers				
		Totally agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Totally disagree
P1: Having professional and appropriate <i>Leadership and Strategic Management</i> can lead to higher quality education	Saudi	23/33	9/33	1/33	0	0
	British	24/30	6/30	0	0	0
P2: Quality people create quality results so <i>Student, Academic and Staff Recruitment</i> have an impact on the quality of education	Saudi	30/33	3/33	0	0	0
	British	22/30	6/30	1/30	1/30	0
P3: What is supposed to be taught to the student in terms of <i>Syllabus/Curriculum</i> is another determinant of the quality of education	Saudi	22/33	9/33	2/33	0	0
	British	23/30	6/30	0/30	1/30	0
P4: The quality of education depends on the quality of <i>Research/Teaching</i> , which are the main activities at educational institutions	Saudi	23/33	10/33	0	0	0
	British	9/30	17/30	4/30	0	0
P5: <i>Pedagogy</i> , or the suitability of the way in which a syllabus is taught to students can contribute to the quality of education	Saudi	21/33	8/33	4/33	0	0
	British	25/30	4/30	1/30	0	0
P6: Effective and quality <i>Learning and research support</i> can lead to higher quality education	Saudi	28/33	5/33	0	0	0
	British	20/30	9/30	1/30	0	0
P7: Reliable and effective <i>Knowledge management</i> can help educational institutions to enhance the quality of their education	Saudi	22/33	10/33	1/33	0	0
	British	15/30	14/30	1/30	0	0
P8: The level of <i>Academics' achievements</i> can demonstrate the level of quality of education and quality of the educational institution	Saudi	8/33	10/33	7/33	8/33	0
	British	8/30	16/30	5/30	1/30	0
P9: <i>Student progress, success and satisfaction</i> is one of the important indicators of the quality of education	Saudi	6/33	11/33	6/33	10/33	0
	British	15/30	12/30	1/30	2/30	0
P10: High <i>University/School achievements</i> are one of the signs of having high quality education	Saudi	10/33	10/33	8/33	5/33	0
	British	4/30	17/30	4/30	5/30	0
P11: Continuous, purposeful and well-planned <i>Innovation and Change Management</i> is one of the keys to high quality education	Saudi	20/33	8/33	5/33	0	0
	British	20/30	7/30	1/30	2/30	0

Source: Developed by the author

Table 1.2. Brief Summary of the Findings (Percentage)

<i>The Research Propositions</i>		Percentage of Given Answers				
		Totally agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Totally disagree
P1: Having professional and appropriate <i>Leadership and Strategic Management</i> can lead to higher quality education	Saudi	70%	27%	3%	0%	0%
	British	80%	20%	0%	0%	0%
P2: Quality people create quality results so <i>Student, Academic and Staff Recruitment</i> have an impact on the quality of education	Saudi	90%	10%	0%	0%	0%
	British	73.33%	20%	3.33%	3.33%	0%
P3: What is supposed to be taught to the student in terms of <i>Syllabus/Curriculum</i> is another determinant of the quality of education	Saudi	67%	27%	6%	0%	0%
	British	76.66%	20%	0%	3.33%	0%
P4: The quality of education depends on the quality of <i>Research/Teaching</i> , which are the main activities at educational institutions	Saudi	69%	31%	0%	0%	0%
	British	30%	56.66%	13.33%	0%	0%
P5: <i>Pedagogy</i> , or the suitability of the way in which a syllabus is taught to students can contribute to the quality of education	Saudi	63%	25%	12%	0%	0%
	British	83.33%	13.33%	3.33%	0%	0%
P6: Effective and quality <i>Learning and research support</i> can lead to higher quality education	Saudi	85%	15%	0%	0%	0%
	British	66.66%	30%	3.33%	0%	0%
P7: Reliable and effective <i>Knowledge management</i> can help educational institutions to enhance the quality of their education	Saudi	66%	31%	3%	0%	0%
	British	50%	46.66%	3.33%	0%	0%
P8: The level of <i>Academics' achievements</i> can demonstrate the level of quality of education and quality of the educational institution	Saudi	24%	30%	22%	24%	0%
	British	26.66%	53.33%	16.66%	3.33%	0%
P9: <i>Student progress, success and satisfaction</i> is one of the important indicators of the quality of education	Saudi	18%	33%	18%	31%	0%
	British	50%	40%	3.33%	6.66%	0%
P10: High <i>University/School achievements</i> are one of the signs of having high quality education	Saudi	30%	30%	25%	15%	0%
	British	13.33%	56.66%	13.33%	16.66%	0%
P11: Continuous, purposeful and well-planned <i>Innovation and Change Management</i> is one of the keys to high quality education	Saudi	60%	25%	15%	0%	0%
	British	66.66%	23.33%	3.33%	6.66%	0%

1.7. Novelty and Contribution

This study is novel in terms of its methodology, discussions, findings, and usefulness. The main contribution of this research is introducing and developing the 'Education Quality Model'. Although there has been some research regarding the quality of education, seemingly it has not led to the development of a research-based customised model such as the Education Quality Model. Although there is one quality model regarding education (Baldrige Education Criteria) that is assembled based on a panel discussion of few staff who shared their professional experience (USA NIST, 2011), the researcher after a wide literature review could not find any research-based quality model for education. Thus, possibly the 'Education Quality Model' is the first customised quality model for education and educational institutions based on a comparative study of Saudi and British education systems.

Given that the Baldrige model is not an academic and research-based model, it seems, the Education Quality Model is possibly the only model/ theory of quality that has been developed solely for research, education and higher education at educational and research institutions by conducting academic research. Other existing models are either too general or inappropriate for a highly sensitive and valuable sector such as education.

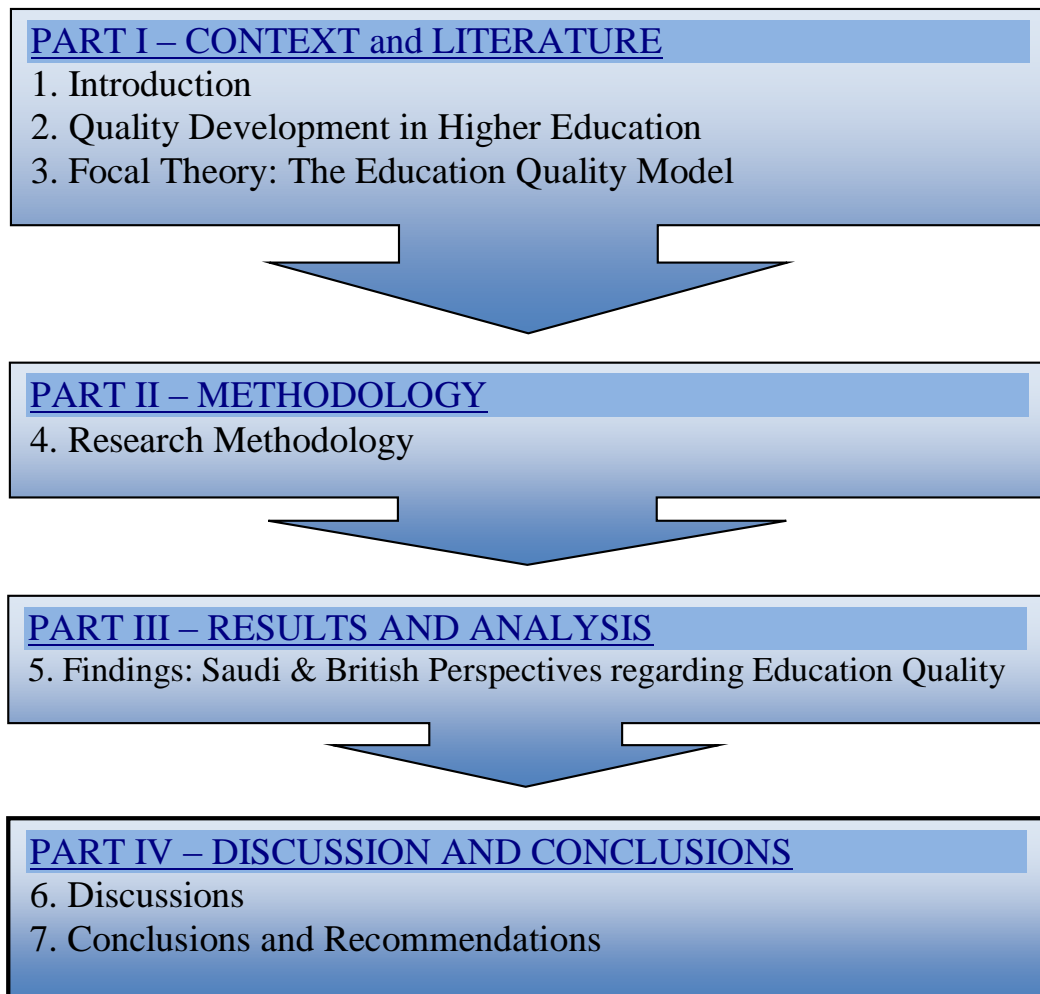
Another important contribution of this research is preparing a new and comprehensive 'Taxonomy of Quality'. In previous taxonomies, either the only focus is on education or, in contrast, education is missing in these taxonomies. The new 'Taxonomy of Quality' with a comprehensive perspective, encompasses all possible aspects and sectors including education.

In addition to the model (the Education Quality Model), this research has contributed to the current body of literature in quality and education by introducing Saudi perspectives on the quality of education. While there is much research regarding the points of view of Western scholars, academics or authorities, almost no one has paid any attention to the perspective of Saudi academics and education authorities. This thesis is used as a platform to present these views. Suggested recommendations for future research are helpful in developing this area of research in more depth.

1.8. Thesis Structure and Outline

This thesis consists of seven chapters divided into four main parts. This is shown in the flowchart in Figure 1.2 below.

Figure 1.2: Thesis contents – Flowchart





Chapter 2

A Review of Quality Development in Higher Education

The Second Chapter's Abstract

While there are several views and theories about quality and quality in education and the number of these perspectives has increased considerably in a short time, it is possible to classify and group this wide range of views into some main categories. Garvin (1988), as one of the pioneers in categorising many of the definitions and approaches to quality, recognised five main movements towards quality. These categories encompass transcendent (the perfectionist approach to quality), standards-orientated (the conformance approach to quality), customer-orientated (the user needs approach to quality), product-orientated (the process approach to quality) and value-orientated (the value-added approach to quality). Although the categories provided by Garvin (1988) are mainly applicable to manufacturing- and industry-based organisations, they are widely used in educational institutions due to the absence of a specialist approach to quality in education.

The author has developed a new taxonomy for quality. The Taxonomy of Quality is based on the nature and function of the entities that require quality. The taxonomy initially classifies the notion and functions of quality into three groups: 'Hard (Product)', 'Soft (Service)', and 'Hard and Soft'. Hard Quality is about the quality of 'Products', Soft Quality concentrates on the quality of 'services'. Some of the aspects of quality are common to products and services. In addition, there are some entities that are not completely products or services but something in between, such as 'Maintenance' and 'Brands'; furthermore, due to the necessity of differentiating products and services from the 'Processes' and 'Systems' that create and deliver these products and services, the author has decided to create a separate category for this type of entity called 'Soft and Hard Quality'.

The critics of many current higher education quality systems realise that the socioeconomic changes in higher education around the world, in the past two decades, had to bring with them changes to traditional perspectives on quality; however, one of these changes, it can be argued, was perceived as rather negative. In particular, this was a change in focus to the predominantly quantitative, objective and measurable aspects of higher education quality. The aspects of quality that really matter to academics on a more individual, personal level have increasingly been judged as unimportant.

2.1. Introduction

Although the notion of quality has been discussed for decades, it still attracts the attention of many scholars and researchers worldwide from different fields due to its importance and critical impact on so many issues, not least higher education. Likewise, education in general and higher education in particular has been the focus of attention of many researchers, governments and educational institutions. In this chapter, an attempt is made to establish a logical connection between these two topics, quality and higher education, and provide a theoretical background for this study.

To discuss and conceptualise rigorously the issue of quality in higher education, the chapter organises the relevant debates under ten headings. The Introduction (a brief entry to the whole chapter); the Taxonomy of Quality (classification and grouping of the current literature reviews about quality); the Concept of Quality (the role of quality ‘gurus’ Deming, Juran, Feigenbaum, Crosby and Ishikawa in the early development of quality); the Importance of Quality (quality is now the marker for what the market produces, such as educational qualifications, as well as the marker of the employee’s contribution to the economy, such as customer service); the Notion and Origin of Quality Development (the chronological illustration of the development of the concept and functions of quality from the 1900s to the present); the Origins of Quality Development in Higher Education (the beginnings of quality, particularly for education and higher education, as a form of quality assurance, which in the case of higher education in the US dates back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries); Quality and Higher Education (some general ideas and discussions regarding the position of quality in the context of higher education); the Conceptualising of Quality in Education (focusing the arguments and providing some classifications to group general and individual perspectives into five main categories of quality, namely: *exceptional*, *perfect*, *fit for purpose*, as *perceived value* and as *change agent*); the Critique of Current Higher Education Quality (critically analysing the main difficulties of current theories and models of quality in higher education and the need to provide an alternative perspective which is the aim of this PhD research); and finally, a brief summary and conclusion of the current chapter.

As a research that heavily depends on primary data collected by the researcher, this research is NOT an entirely literature-based study that relies solely on other scholars' findings. Due to the non-literature-based nature of this study, the researcher has intentionally avoided too much emphasis on the literature. Relevant literature is discussed and analysed critically to shed light on potential 'education quality drivers'. In this research there is no intention of re-analysing existing findings by using either a meta-analysis technique or a 'literature survey'.

The researcher has been selective in his choice of literature to ensure high level of quality discussions by pioneering scholars, published in top journals or books. The utilised resources are chosen based on the degree of their relevance to the goal, scope and research questions of this study as well as their relevance to the structure of the literature review. An effort has been made to draw on highly reliable academic resources by known scholars in the selected theme. As is mentioned in the References, almost all of the utilised materials are published books or papers from top-ranking academic journals.

The Literature Review is structured based on Systems Perspective/Theory, starting from a big and general concept (the notion of quality) and then gradually narrowing down the scope to Quality in Higher Education and the Existing Difficulties of Current Perspectives. In addition to the Systems Perspective/Theory, the demonstrated context and scope of research (see Figure 2-1) as well as the taxonomy (see Figure 2-2) in the next sections help to better understand the relationships between the different headings.

There are not too many citations in the section regarding the Taxonomy of Quality because there are few studies in this area. In this section, in addition to the limited existing literature, the research has relied on an '*Inductive*' approach to research to develop a new taxonomy of quality.

In this chapter, the author has tried to build a clear and full picture of all existing discussions developed by top researchers in field of quality and quality of education by taking their perspectives as pieces of a puzzle and arranged them in a meaningful way to complete the puzzle of the quality of education. Differences and even contradictions among these perspectives are demonstrated very clearly.

2.2. Conceptualising Quality

In this section efforts by quality pioneers to define and classify quality in general terms will be discussed. Although this research is about the quality of education, in this section the researcher has tried intentionally to first assess quality in general from the 'big picture' to gain a better understanding of this concept. This provides an opportunity of seeing the big picture first and then narrowing down the research on the quality of education later on in other sections. Thus, the literature review chapter is organised in a way to start the discussion from general and then focus on the specific, which is the quality of education.

2.2.1. The Notion of Quality

According to Harman (1996), there are noticeable difficulties and disagreements about the definition of some of the main notions regarding quality and quality assurance in general. Harman (1996) believes that the existence of these ambiguities is normal in view of the fact that the concept of quality is complex and multidimensional so everybody can look at this notion from several varied perspectives, which leads to some disagreements. In this regard, Harman states that *“many see quality as a relative concept, meaningful only from the perspective of particular people at a particular point in time, measured against some either explicit or implicit standard or purpose”* (Harman, 1996, p. 4).

In agreement, Aspin and Chapman (1994) comment that the conceptualising, defining and understanding of quality are relative and depend on the ways different scholars and organisations approach this notion. Hager highlights that *“there is no one universally applicable answer to the question ‘what is quality’ since quality is a function of many factors which vary with the nature of the organisation, its particular purpose, its overall philosophy, the nature of its client...”* (Hager, 1997, p. 6). Heywood (1998), by focusing on the systemic aspect of quality, states that quality is a perspective and framework to understand the required actions in order to promote organisations, processes, products and functions to achieve better results.

The notion and function of quality is context-dependent. Harvey (2005) states that the definition and importance of quality in education can be understood quite differently depending on the differences in cultural, political, technological and educational

contexts in which the quality is being assessed. Likewise, Van den Berghe (1997) mentions that quality in education cannot be fully described and understood if we do not try to approach this issue from the pedagogical, managerial, and student points of view. While in the vast majority of sectors, which have tangible outputs and products, and where quality can be defined and measured precisely and easily, in the education sector with no tangible outputs, quality is hard to define and assess.

Among many proposed definitions by numerous scholars, the definition provided by Harman and Meek (2000), which exclusively focuses on quality in educational institutions, particularly in higher education, has frequently been used by researchers in the education field.

That is to say, although there are several views and theories about quality and quality in education and the number of these perspectives has increased considerably in a short time, it is possible to classify and group this wide range of views into some main categories.

2.2.2. Towards a Taxonomy for Quality

Garvin (1988), as one of the pioneers in categorising many of the definitions and approaches to quality, recognised five main movements toward quality. These categories encompass transcendent (the perfectionist approach to quality), standards-orientated (the conformance approach to quality), customer-orientated (the user needs approach to quality), product-orientated (the process approach to quality) and value-orientated (the value-added approach to quality). Although the categories provided by Garvin (1988) are mainly applicable to manufacturing- and industry-based organisations, they are widely used in educational institutions due to the absence of a specialist approach to quality in education.

Based on comparing and contrasting the perspectives of Baker (1997), Brown (2004), Harvey (2004), Harvey and Green (1993) and Harvey and Knight (1996) regarding the ways in which quality in education can be understood, five groups of conceptualisation have emerged, including quality as *exceptional*, as *perfection*, as *fit for purpose*, as *perceived value* and as *change agent*. The following are explanations of these five perspectives.

2.2.3. Quality as *Exceptional*

This approach to quality considers it as a characteristic and/or feature that makes a product or service superior (Green, 1994; Harvey and Green, 1993), novel (Baker, 1997) or higher ranked (Green, 1994) than others, which lack quality. According to Garvin (1998), quality can be understood and defined as “*both absolute and universally recognisable, a mark of uncompromising standards and high achievement... often quality cannot be defined precisely*” (Garvin, 1998, p. 41). In a similar tone, Yong and Wilkinson (2002) describe quality as something uncommon and exclusive, that not every product or service can be characterised by this feature, and consequently not everybody has access to quality products and services.

According to Baker (1997), quality goes beyond the commonly accepted standards by investing to a very high level and offering superior inputs. In the context of education, educational organisations are required to admit only highly talented students, hire only top academics, utilise the best resources, develop the best curriculums and programmes, and these educational institutions should be the most reputable ones. From Baker’s point of view, the standards, which should be exceeded, are those that are determined through benchmarking and comparison with other organisations in the same field. The standards in this perspective are assumed to be completely objective and measurable, which means they are not very flexible, so any attempt to enhance the level of current standards can lead to a possible improvement in quality.

The exceptional approach to quality has some characteristics and difficulties, which make it inappropriate for the educational context. From this perspective, quality is almost unachievable for the vast majority of universities and schools because it is assumed that 'quality' is due to rare characteristics that not every university deserves and/or can afford to acquire. To put it simply, according to this perspective, a university or college has to be privileged and have a high level of novelty to deserve to be considered a quality institution, so this approach cannot accommodate the fact that all universities and colleges should and can (if they really want it and do their best) have quality.

2.2.4. Quality as *Perfection*

From this point of view, quality can be claimed only when all the activities, decisions, processes and attempts to produce a product or provide a service can be done perfectly (Van Berkel and Wolfhagen, 2002). In other words, any error, difficulty, waste of resources or accident during the production of a product or the provision of a service make that product or service unacceptable and lacking in quality (Harvey, 1998). This view is close to, but not the same as, the ‘excellence’ movement, which emphasises becoming an excellent organisation by doing the best possible things. The perfectionist approach is not organisation-wide like the excellence perspective. In the ‘quality as perfection’ view, the emphasis is on defining objective requirements, which should be fulfilled perfectly and completely with no error (Cosby, 1984; Van Berkel and Wolfhagen, 2002). Doing the right thing at all times (Baker, 1997; Harvey, 1998) and avoiding any possible error and fault (Green, 1994) is the core definition of quality in this approach. Any deviation from the planned design and master plan are not allowed and considered to demonstrate a lack of quality (Green, 1994).

Although the two perspectives of ‘quality as exceptional’ and ‘quality as perfection’ may seem similar, their focus is different. While in the exceptional approach to quality, the criteria for quality are based on an external comparison of the features of products and services in one organisation with others, the perfectionist approach to quality seeks excellence inside an organisation – it has an internal focus.

As mentioned by Yong and Wilkinson (2002), and the author agrees with them, this approach to quality is mainly production-based, so it is suitable to an industrial context. In the context of education, although there are some defined features, these requirements are mainly subjective not objective. Consequently, the precise description, measurement and implementation of these academic requirements are not feasible.

2.2.5. Quality as *Fit for purpose*

Ball (1985) was the first known scholar who defined quality as the degree to which a product or service matches the desired objective from the customer perspective. In other words, if a particular good or service fulfils the customer's/client's expectations and needs, that product or service has quality. So quality will be relative to a particular customer in view of the fact that, due to the different expectations of different customers, having consensus about quality goods or quality services would literally be impossible (Baker, 1997). A particular product or service that completely meets the expectations of one particular customer would probably differ from what another customer wanted.

It is claimed by Yong and Wilkinson (2002) as well as by Guaspari (1985) that this definition of quality is the most common approach to understanding and conceptualising the notion of quality in recent years. This approach to quality is a highly customer-orientated view, which gives the full right to the customer (not to the producer of the product or the provider of the services or anyone else) to define quality.

In agreement, Juran (1988) states that decisions about the quality of a product or a service rely on the degree to which that product or service fulfils the user's purpose in a satisfactory way. Gradually, some scholars, such as Yong and Wilkinson (2002), have tried to widen the concept of quality by providing a platform for other parties, rather than just customers. While these scholars stay loyal to the main definition of quality, which is suitability for purpose, they make room for the 'market' as another main player in this field. Focusing on customers and the market at the same time shows the importance of relying on external influential factors such as educational institutions in defining quality (Yong and Wilkinson, 2002).

In this approach that puts the emphasis on purpose, one main question needs to be answered properly: who defines the purpose? In an attempt to answer this question, Baker (1997) suggests two separate responses. First, it is the customer who determines his/her needs as the purpose, which should be considered. In an educational context this approach has not had enough supporters on the grounds that students as clients are not generally fully aware of what they really and precisely need. The second view, which has plenty of supporters among scholars such as Van Berkel and Wolfhagen (2002) as well as Harvey (1999), highlights the importance of

realising the mission and goals of an organisation as the main criteria by which to define and measure quality.

This quality can be defined at different levels in an educational institution (Baker, 1997). For instance, at the highest level, a university has quality if it achieves its goals and, at a more specific level, a PhD programme is a quality programme if it reaches its targets and, at a very local level, a particular course or module can be considered to have quality if it can realise its defined goals. This viewpoint has been accepted as an appropriate one in conceptualising and assessing quality in educational institutions (Yong and Wilkinson, 2002).

It is believed that universities and other educational institutions are more capable of setting missions with reliable and well-defined requirements compared to students who receive educational services from these educational organisations (Harvey, 1999). This approach considerably underestimates the ability of students to define their needs. Although some students, particularly at primary or high school levels, may not be fully aware of their expectations and needs, the vast majority of undergraduate and postgraduate level students understand enough to clearly define the purpose of their studies (Harvey and Green, 1993).

2.2.6. Quality as *Value*

Value-focused conceptualising of quality defines this concept based on its relevant expense and price. From this perspective, according to Yong and Wilkinson (2002) a product or service can be considered to have quality if the cost and price of acquiring this good or service match the actual performance, function and usefulness of this product or service. So, based on this definition, even if a product or service has a satisfactory function but is overpriced, it is not a quality product or service. This approach is noticeably associated with another approach, which is that the customer defines his/her expectations about a particular product or service as the main criterion of quality (Green, 1994).

This approach is value-oriented, thus the key questions are: who defines the value? Is a one-sided definition of value worthwhile? What other concepts should be defined and clarified alongside 'value' to give a reliable conceptualisation of quality? Baker (1997) proposes that, in addition to customers, or students in an educational context, consideration should be given to the points of view of society in general and

local/professional communities, namely the scientific and educational communities, regarding education and, in particular, in defining value. Furthermore, Baker (1997) recommends engaging other related and supportive notions, such as accountability, to foster trust among customers and communities. In a similar vein Green (1994), by switching the direction of attention from outsiders (students, communities and governments) to insiders (Deans, Lecturers and Managers) focuses on the importance of resources and resource management in defining quality by highlighting notions of efficiency and effectiveness in educational institutions.

2.2.7. Quality as a *Change Agent*

Another approach to quality is to consider it as a ‘change agent’. This view covers all the possible change-related aspects of quality. From this perspective, quality should lead to a positive change in the current situation of an organisation in general and in a particular product or service in particular. This approach to quality, according to Baker (1997), seems to be “*very apt for education... as education is not a service where something is done for the consumer, but where something is to do to and with the student*” (Baker, 1997, p. 244).

In this view, and in the educational context, quality can be defined and assessed regarding the degree to which education, in providing a service to students, can promote the knowledge, skills and intellectual ability of students. According to Baker (1997), this approach to quality encompasses some student and education related issues such as a student-orientated curriculum and student-centred learning. Harvey (1998), as one of the supporters of this approach, by emphasising the role of quality in transforming education and educational institutions, mentions that:

“Transformative education is about ‘adding value’ to the students by enhancing their attributes, but it is also about empowering them as critical, reflective, lifelong learning... Education is not a service for a customer – but an ongoing transformation of the participant... Education is a participative process. Students are not customers or consumers, they are participants” (Harvey, 1998, p. 244).

One of the important concepts which is closely related to quality is ‘standards’. Standards can be defined and understood in many ways, but all of them have some association with quality and particularly with the assessment and assurance of quality. Different approaches to quality, as discussed above, rely on standards in different

ways. Harvey (1999), as one of the most influential authors in developing and clarifying the position on standards and quality in education, believes that the perspective that considers quality as an exception highlights academic standards by assessing the knowledge produced in order to preserve high quality in education. This viewpoint encourages us to define standards for learning and research. According to Harvey (1999), while the perfectionist view of quality relies on standards for continuous external assessment of the quality of academic services, the fit for purpose perspective of quality utilises objective-centred standards to determine criteria for assessing students and academics. Harvey (1999) states that the value-based approach to quality recommends the promoting of academic standards, students capabilities and the research capacity of education without any need for employing more resources to provide quality services to students. The 'change agent' perspective of quality, according to Harvey (1999), deploys academic standards to ensure the occurrence of positive change in the knowledge, innovation, skills and analytical capability of students. In addition, in this approach academic standards are used to measure the change in the educational institution, faculties, modules and programmes.

Harvey and Green (1993) conclude that, due to the complex and multidimensional nature of quality, it is far from realistic to expect a consensus about this notion and a unique definition of quality. Harvey and Green (1993) suggest that a set of interrelated definitions for quality should be developed to cover the perspectives and expectations of all parties inside and outside an educational institution. Furthermore, the practical implementation and assessment of quality can be done through the development of relevant criteria and standards based on related approaches to quality. These suggestions seem reasonable and practicable. As discussed, not all the approaches to quality are suitable for educational organisations, so efforts to define and develop standards should focus only on the relevant approaches.

2.3. Quality Pedagogy for Quality Higher Education

2.3.1. Importance of quality in Higher Education

Higher education is important for many reasons due to its positive impact on different aspects of people's lives around the world. One of the crucial effects of quality higher education is on the world economy in general and the economy of each country in particular (Jones, 2003). The economies of countries and their bases have changed markedly in the last century. In the nineteenth century, almost all economies were based on producing and trading agricultural products, though after the 'industrial revolution' in Europe some countries gradually moved toward industrialisation, which was based on mass production. Today, countries are moving toward a 'knowledge economy' (Harman and Meek, 2000) and 'knowledge management' (Mathias, 2004), which means that knowledge and scientific research have become the main sources of income and economic prosperity (Lomas, 2007a and 2007b).

It is a generally accepted fact that 'if something is worth doing, it's worth doing well'. According to UNESCO (The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), having higher education in any country is considered one of the most important signs of a high standard of living and quality of life in that country. The future of nations depends considerably on educated people who can perform at a high level, make their economy flourish and govern their countries properly (Blom and Meyers, 2003). The major key to having educated people is having quality tertiary institutions (Aspin and Chapman, 1994; Baker, 1997). The quality of higher education institutions cannot be taken for granted without having a well-designed and customised quality system for these universities and research centres (Stoddart, 2004; Van Berkel and Wolfhagen, 2002).

That is to say, in addition to the economic impact, quality higher education positively contributes to a more universal and tolerant culture (Watson, 1995), the development of knowledge and technology (Largrosen *et al.*, 2004), the personal and mental well-being of people (Craft, 1994), perhaps a more intellectual society (Stoddart, 2004) and many other things. These advantages of higher education can be achieved successfully only if higher education is of the required quality. One of the required qualities in higher education is the quality of pedagogy.

Higher education and its related quality have many dimensions, one of which is the quality of teaching methods in these academic institutions. Poor quality, ineffective and inadequate teaching methods sharply reduce the quality of higher education (Roelofs and Terwel, 2009) and consequently undermine the expected results and advantages of higher education.

2.3.2. Relationship between Quality and Pedagogy

The research into quality in higher education covers many aspects, one of which is the quality of pedagogy or the study of teaching methods. It is a commonly accepted issue among scholars that the quality of pedagogy is built on three interrelated notions: ‘intellectual quality’ (Amosa and Cooper, 2006; Gore, 2001; Ladwig *et al.*, 2007), a proper ‘learning environment’ (King, 2002; Louis and Marks, 2008; Newmann, 2001) and ‘authentic teaching methods’ (Ladwig, 2007; Lee and Smith, 2001; Roelofs and Terwel, 2009; Smith *et al.*, 2001).

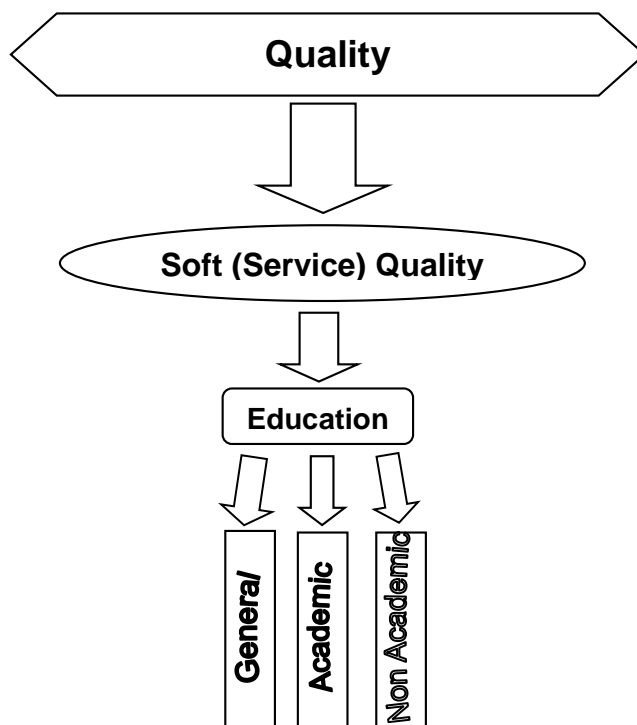
The ‘intellectual quality’ of pedagogy is about the importance of serious, logical thinking in the process of goal setting and designing a robust process of teaching and learning (Gore, 2001). The common mistake is taking for granted that all academics and postgraduate students are intellectual, so whatever objectives are being set or processes that are designed by them will automatically be intellectually-based and of a high quality (Amosa and Cooper, 2006). However, the fact is that many teachers, who are not highly educated, can be much more intellectual than some highly educated academics and universities’ pedagogical team members (Ladwig *et al.*, 2007). So the intellectual quality of pedagogy can best be achieved by setting some standards (Amosa and Cooper, 2006; Gore, 2001; Ladwig *et al.*, 2007) to check precisely the suggested pedagogy (Ladwig *et al.*, 2007) and having an open, participatory management that can involve experienced and intellectual teachers (Amosa and Cooper, 2006; Gore, 2001).

In the above discussions that present the main pedagogy scholars’ points of view, one very important perspective is completely disregarded: this is the students’ view. There are some new teaching methods such as ‘Enquiry Based Learning’ (EBL) that are highly recommended by pedagogy scholars (Ladwig *et al.*, 2007); however, in practice, students do not prefer them (Gore, 2001). Thus after a few years of introducing EBS, due to rejection by students, this method is not being used any more.

2.4. Existing Schools of Thought about Quality in Education

The issue of quality in education has been discussed by many scholars (Green, 1994; Gore, 2001; Harvey and Green, 1993), some of whom have more or less similar ideas, while the others have noticeably different points of view from each other. Some schools of thought have emerged by forming academic experts on the quality of education into groups based on the degree to which their ideas are similar or different from each other. As was stated in '*The Taxonomy of Quality*' (see section 2.3) to avoid any unnecessary complexity and by relying on the systems perspective as the first step, all these scholars can be simply accommodated into three very general schools of thought including: General Education (Amosa and Cooper, 2006; Baker, 1997), Academic Education (Mathias, 2004; Westerheijden *et al.*, 1994) and Non-Academic Education (Lomas, 2007a, 2007b). In the second and third cases, these general schools of thought have been divided into more specific schools of thought, such as 'student-centred quality at undergraduate level' (Largrosen *et al.*, 2004), 'academic-centred quality at postgraduate level' (Harvey, 2004; Ladwig *et al.*, 2007), and 'Non-Academic Training' (Lomas, 2004) (see Figures 2-3 and 2-4).

Figure 2-1: Education Quality in the Taxonomy of Quality

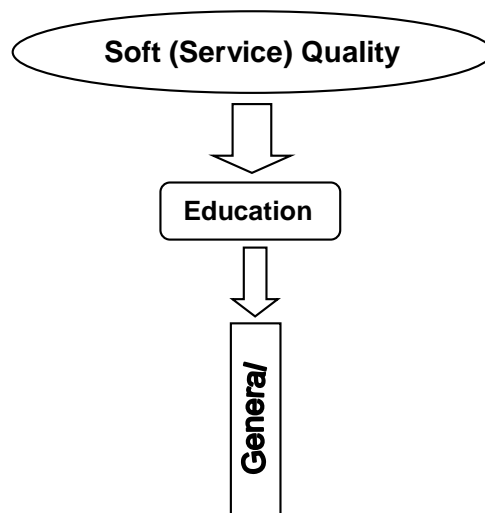


Source: developed for this study

2.4.1. The General Education School of Thought

This school of thought discusses the matter of quality in education in ‘general’ regardless of the level of education (Lomas, 2000 and 2004; Mathias, 2004), type of education (Newton, 2001 and 2002; Scott, 1994; Scott, 2002), or the purposes of education (Stoddart, 2004; Van Berkel and Wolfhagen, 2002). The scholars in this school believe that there is a need for standards (Watson, 1995; Woodhouse, 2004) to guarantee at least a basic quality in any form of education (Blom, 2001; Brown, 2004; Craft, 1994; Gibb, 2003; Green, 1994; Harman and Meek, 2000). These standards can be varied according to the expected level of quality to be achieved and the nature of the education provided (Aspin and Chapman, 1994; Baker, 1997; Blom and Meyers, 2003; Harvey, 2004; Jones, 2003). Although this perspective encourages having quality in all forms of education from a one-day training course to six years PhD research, it is too broad and unclear, which makes it impractical and difficult to achieve (Lomas, 2007a, 2007b). There is not any clear guidance as to who is responsible for governing quality systems and whose interests should be the basis upon which to design and develop the quality system in educational institutions (Kogan and Hanney, 2000).

Figure 2-2: General Education Quality in the Taxonomy of Quality

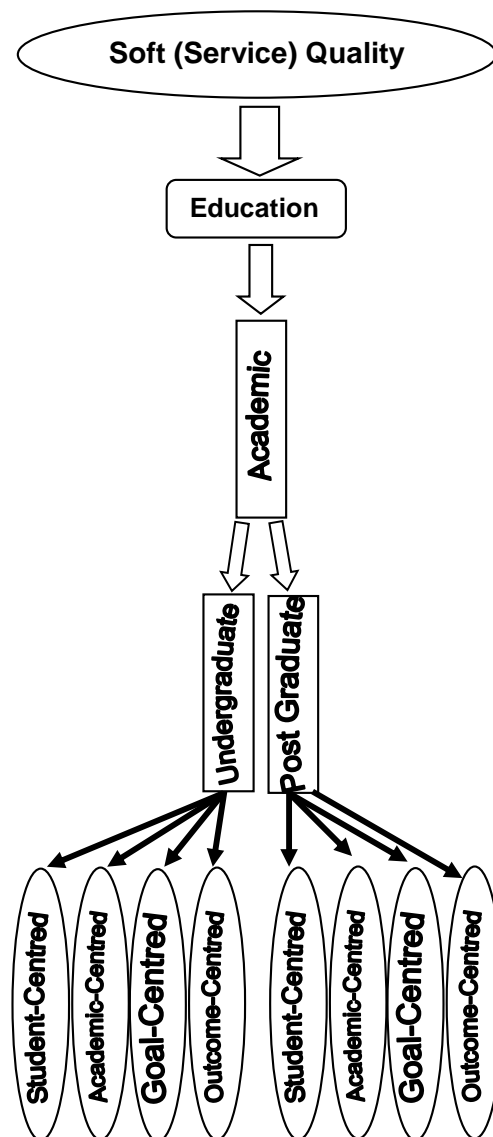


Source: developed for this study

2.4.2. The Academic Education School of Thought

By considering the discussed ‘The Taxonomy of Quality’, it was mentioned that in a very general perspective, quality can be grouped into three main groups: ‘Hard Quality’ that was about physical product, ‘Soft Quality’, which focuses on service quality and the third main group was ‘Hard & Soft Quality’ that is about quality of those issues that cannot be discussed under either Soft or Hard quality. Quality of education is sub-category of ‘Soft Quality’. Academic education is a sub-sub category of the education sub-category (see Figure 2-3).

Figure 2-3: Full Academic Education Quality in the Taxonomy of Quality



Source: developed for this study

Student-Centred Quality at Undergraduate Level

The Student-Centred Quality at Undergraduate Level school of thought is based on the perspective that students should be considered as customers (Amosa and Cooper, 2006; Baker, 1997; Blom, 2001; Green, 1994; Gore, 2001); however, undergraduate students are not mature enough (Largrosen *et al.*, 2004); Mathias (2004); Westerheijden *et al.* (1994) to be consulted in the designing quality systems at universities (Lomas, 2004; Lomas, 2007a, 2007b). Furthermore, the Student-Centred Quality at Undergraduate Level school of thought puts its main emphasis on the quality of pedagogy (King, 2002; Louis and Marks, 2008; Newmann, 2001) because all undergraduate courses are taught courses, so the quality of teaching methods is highly influential (Harvey and Green, 1993; Harvey, 2004; Ladwig *et al.*, 2007). The positive aspect of this perspective is its attention to students, but its negative side is treating undergraduate students as immature, who do not know what they need in terms of the quality of education (Kruger 2001; Largrosen *et al.*, 2004).

Academic-Centred Quality at Undergraduate Level

Those quality experts who are in favour of the Academic-Centred Quality at Undergraduate Level perspective believe that academics are central for any reliable quality development in higher education (Kogan and Hanney, 2000; Largrosen *et al.*, 2004; Lomas, 2000). They assume that a university which lacks quality lecturers but who take responsibility for quality cannot claim to have quality (Baker, 1997; Craft, 1994; Green, 1994; Harvey and Knight, 1996; Harvey, 2004), even if those universities have state-of-art teaching and research facilities (King, 2002; Louis and Marks, 2008; Newmann, 2001). The strength of this school of thought is in highlighting the crucial importance of having high-quality lecturers and selecting the best academics who are familiar with the notion of quality in teaching (Newton, 2001, 2002; Watty, 2003; Westerheijden *et al.* 1994). The weakness of this approach is that it can give too much responsibility to academics who are not really willing to do anything more than regular lecturing (Blom and Meyers, 2003).

Goal-Centred Quality at Undergraduate Level

The word ‘goal’ in Goal-Centred Quality refers to the mission and strategic target of a higher education organisation (Westerheijden *et al.*, 1994; Woodhouse, 2004). The Goal-Centred Quality at Undergraduate Level reflects the perspectives of those academic quality experts who believe universities should not be considered as money-making machines like businesses (Birnbaum, 2000; Brown, 2004; Green, 1994; Harman and Meek, 2000). These commentators (e.g. Baker, 1997; Harvey, 2004; Kogan *et al.*, 2000) believe that the goal of providing education at undergraduate level is fostering the required knowledge and skills among people (Kruger, 2001; Ladwig, 2007; Largrosen *et al.*, 2004; Lee and Smith, 2001). So the quality system in universities should be designed in a way that focuses solely on achieving this purely educational goal (Lomas, 2004; Lomas, 2007a, 2007b). While this school of thought highlights social and educational values, the expectations of students and academics are disregarded in this perspective (Voehl, 1994). In addition, it is not clear who should define goals for universities and this has consequences for the quality systems of these universities (Birnbaum, 2000).

Output-Centred Quality at Undergraduate Level

Focusing on ‘results’ (Voehl, 1994; Watson, 1995; Westerheijden *et al.*, 1994) instead of the ‘processes’ of education at undergraduate level is the main point that differentiates this school of thought from the others (Baker, 1997; Birnbaum, 2000; Brennan *et al.*, 1992; Green, 1994; Harman, 1996; Harvey, 1998). In other words, the Output-centred quality at undergraduate level is results-oriented (Kogan and Hanney, 2000; Largrosen *et al.*, 2004; Ladwig, 2007; Lee and Smith, 2001). For instance, the number of students who successfully graduate from a university is important (Roelofs and Terwel, 2009; Smith *et al.*, 2001; Lomas, 2007a, 2007b), not the way these students were taught or the pedagogy employed (Harvey, 2004; Harvey, 2005; Jones, 2003). The process of education might be considered if it has a very direct and remarkable impact on the output or results (Gibb, 2003). Disregarding the process of education and the crucial roles of students and academics in developing a quality system for a university are the main weaknesses of this perspective (Mathias, 2004).

Student-Centred Quality at Postgraduate Level

Many management scholars - including Baker (1997); Amosa and Cooper (2006); Ladwig *et al.*, (2007) - have discussed the remarkable impact of Student-centred quality on the perceived quality of postgraduate level academic education. Like the Student-Centred Quality at Graduate Level school of thought, the core of the Student-Centred Quality at Postgraduate Level school of thought is being student-oriented in designing and developing a quality system (Largrosen *et al.*, 2004; Lomas, 2007b; Mathias, 2004). However, unlike the perspective of Student-Centred Quality at Undergraduate Level, the Student-Centred Quality at Postgraduate Level view does not consider students as immature customers who do not know what they want (Blom, 2001; Harvey, 2004). Another difference between this school of thought and the Student-Centred Quality at Undergraduate Level is much less emphasis on the quality of pedagogy (Lomas, 2007a) on the grounds that postgraduate level education is based less on taught courses and much more research-oriented, so the quality of pedagogy is not as important (Baker, 1997; Amosa and Cooper, 2006). Although this perspective is built on a more positive tendency toward postgraduate students, it has some difficulties. This school of thought does not provide clear and practical guidance and recommendations regarding how to design, implement and maintain the requisite quality system in higher education (Birnbaum, 2000).

Academic-Centred Quality at Postgraduate Level

There are considerable similarities between the Academic-Centred Quality at Postgraduate Level school of thought and the Academic-Centred Quality at Undergraduate Level school of thought (Green, 1994; Harvey, 1998; Harvey, 1999; Harvey, 2004). Both of these perspectives highlight the crucial role of academics in quality development in higher education, though the Academic-Centred Quality at Postgraduate Level puts more emphasis on the necessity of academic-oriented quality design (Lomas, 2007a, 2007b; Newton, 2001, 2002; Watty, 2003) due to the research-based nature of postgraduate education (Baker, 1997; Kogan and Hanney, 2000; Largrosen *et al.*, 2004; Lomas, 2000). The main difficulty of this perspective is disregarding the noticeable impact of postgraduate students in shaping a proper quality system at postgraduate level (Newton, 2001, 2002; Scott, 1994).

Goal-Centred Quality at Postgraduate Level

The main difference between Goal-Centred Quality at Postgraduate Level and Goal-Centred Quality at Undergraduate Level is a slight change in the goals of a postgraduate-focused higher education institution (Brown, 2004; Green, 1994; Harman and Meek, 2000; Harvey and Knight, 1996; Harvey, 2004). While supporters of Goal-Centred Quality at Undergraduate Level state that the goal of providing education at 'undergraduate level' is fostering the required knowledge and skills among students (Jones, 2003; Kogan *et al.*, 2000; Kogan and Hanney, 2000), the academic quality experts (Scott, 1994; Voehl, 1994; Watson, 1995; Westerheijden *et al.*, 1994) who are in favour of Goal-Centred Quality at Postgraduate Level believe the goal of universities at postgraduate level is creating knowledge through conducting original research (Baker, 1997; Ball, 1985; Birnbaum, 2000; Harvey, 2005; Harvey, Green and Burrows, 1993). Consequently, the quality system in universities should be designed in such a way as to focus on achieving this purely educational goal (Largrosen *et al.*, 2004; Lomas, 2000; Lomas, 2007a, 2007b; Newton, 2001, 2002). The main weakness of this school of thought is its overly idealistic approach towards the goals of postgraduate education and the required quality system. For this reason there is a question mark over the feasibility of the described quality system as the ideal system (Aspin and Chapman, 1994; Gibb, 2003).

Output-Centred Quality at Postgraduate Level

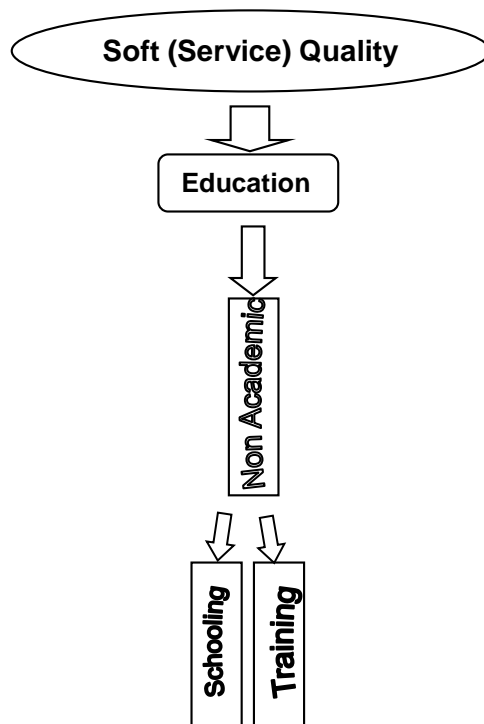
The issue of output-centred quality in postgraduate level academic education is highlighted mainly by Baker (1997), Birnbaum (2000) and Brennan *et al.* (1992). The same as the Output-centred quality at Undergraduate level school of thought, the Output-centred quality at postgraduate level school is results-oriented (Birnbaum, 2000); however, the forms of output at postgraduate level are different in Output-centred quality at postgraduate level (Harvey, 2004; Largrosen *et al.*, 2004; Lomas, 2007a, 2007b); for instance, the number and quality of published papers (Stoddart, 2004), the amount of grants received (Woodhouse, 2004) and the number of research projects (Birnbaum, 2000) are key outputs. This perspective does not consider the process of research and its requirement to create quality research; the only important

issue is the result or output (Newton, 2001, 2002). In the UK, The Research Excellence Framework (REF) is the new system for assessing the quality of research in UK higher education institutions (HEIs). The exercise will be managed by the REF team based at HEFCE and overseen by the REF Steering Group, consisting of representatives of the four funding bodies. The primary purpose of the REF is to produce assessment outcomes for each submission made by institutions (REF, 2013).

2.4.3. Non-Academic Education School of Thought

Education is not limited to universities. ‘Schooling’ is a crucial foundation for academic education (Mathias, 2004). Some people may not have the opportunity or desire to study university programmes, though, they go to school by law or (in some countries) based on personal choice (Van Berkel and Wolfhagen, 2002). In real workplaces, having some ‘Training’ is important for more efficient work (Blom and Meyers, 2003) for almost everybody with any level of education (Largrosen *et al.*, 2004). Although the main focus of this research is on higher education, any education can benefit from having a customised model for education quality (Lomas, 2007a, 2007b). The Non-Academic Education school of thought has two sub-groups, of which one focuses on Schooling and the other on Training (see Figure 2.4).

Figure 2-4: Academic Education Quality in the Taxonomy of Quality



Source: developed for this study

Schooling Quality

Quality experts such as Aspin & Chapman (1994); Gibb (2003); Mathias (2004); and Watson (1995) have emphasised the role of Schooling quality as one of the aspects of non-academic education. They believe that the quality of education in schools is a key success factor for sustainable quality in higher education (Gibb, 2003; Mathias, 2004). They claim priority should be given to having quality and a quality system in schools because, due to compulsory education for children, all young people go to school, but only a small proportion of these people continue to higher education (Aspin & Chapman, 1994). For this reason, the main effort and government budgets should first be to increase the quality of schooling in schools, then they can concentrate on higher education as a secondary issue (Watson, 1995). If a quality system works at the school level, this system can later be used to develop the quality of higher education. Although the importance of quality in schools cannot be denied, higher education should not be marginalised (Harman and Meek, 2000). A quality system that is viable and successful for schools may not be suitable for higher education due to their very different natures (Van Berkel and Wolfhagen, 2002).

Training Quality

Unlike the issues in higher education and schooling that focus on long-term state education, some scholars including Blom and Meyers (2003); Feigenbaum (1994); Gibb (2003); Kruger (2001); Mathias (2004) and Van den Berghe (1997) highlight the necessity of having a quality system for short-term Training. It is common for almost all organisations to have training departments and/or to provide training for their employees. While schooling is limited to schools and higher education is run at universities and colleges, training is done in all organisations (including schools and universities) so it can be more important (Mathias, 2004). If employees have quality training, they can be quality development ambassadors in their organisations (Gibb, 2003). In addition, those who are in favour of Training Quality claim that training is a form of education, so the quality model utilised for training can be used to develop the quality of schooling and higher education (Blom and Meyers, 2003; Harvey and Green, 1993). Conversely, other quality experts maintain that a successful quality model in training may not function for schooling and higher education in view of the fact that training mainly focuses on skills development not knowledge creation, which is at the core of higher education (Largrosen *et al.*, 2004).

2.5. Public versus Private Education

There are some similarities and differences between public and private universities. Each of these two systems of higher education has their own advantages and disadvantages. In this section, these similarities/differences as well as advantages and disadvantages will be discussed very briefly to shed light on the potentially different quality systems in these two different types of higher education institutions.

2.5.1. Similarities and differences

Both private and public higher education institutions provide academic education and research support to those who are willing to continue their studies at higher levels (United States General Accounting Office, 1996). It can be said that both private and public higher education institutions facilitate getting better jobs (Garcia, 2005) and making better progress in the careers and working lives of their graduates (Bettinger, 2005). It is believed that tertiary education, either private or public, boosts self-confidence (Gallegos, 2004), intellectual capability (Sapelli and Vial, 2002), career prospects (Hoxby and Rockoff, 2004) and a better future (United States General Accounting Office, 2003) for their talented graduates.

Regarding governance, private universities are far more independent of governments than public ones (Carnoy and McEwan, 2000). Even the selection of the governing body of the public (state) universities is heavily influenced by governments (United States General Accounting Office, 2002). At public universities the members of the governing bodies are selected mainly because of their political persuasion (McEwan, 2001) and direct or indirect connections to the ruling party. So, unlike private higher education institutions, managerial and academic capabilities are secondary issues for governing bodies at state universities (Carnoy and McEwan, 2000).

Public universities are completely or mainly funded by government, while private institutions are expected to be totally independent financially (Machin and Wilson, 2005). Sometimes the government provides limited grants to private universities (FAPE, 2004); however, this can be considered largely as a symbolic gesture because the amount of grant given to private universities is very low (United States General Accounting Office, 2003).

Although there are a few common regulations that both public and private higher education organisations should follow (United States General Accounting Office, 2002), public universities come under the jurisdiction of many (sometimes too many) regulations, policies, guidelines and standards set by the government about almost anything and everything (Mora, 2005), so public universities are considered to be much more bureaucratic and inflexible than private ones (Machin and Wilson, 2005).

2.5.2. Advantages and Disadvantages

Generally, private universities place an emphasis on efficiency (McEwan, 2001) and the quality of performance is higher than in public ones (Garcia, 2005). Cost management and waste-avoidance are considered to be the responsibility of all academics and administrators at private higher education institutions (Machin and Wilson, 2005). The systems and processes at private universities are expected to be more efficient and more effective than at their public counterparts (Sapelli and Vial, 2002). Even the number of existing systems and processes at private higher education institutions are believed to be less than at state (public) universities (Mora, 2005).

In private education, it is expected that almost all the staff and the governing body, in particular, are selected, evaluated and rewarded based on their performance and professional abilities (McEwan, 2001), so these universities hire professional managers (Bettinger, 2005) with the ability to make the best use of existing resources, including human resources and financial assets, to create value for the students as customers (Carnoy and McEwan, 2000) and for the shareholders as owners (Gallegos, 2004).

The biggest challenge and disadvantage of private universities is that they only provide educational opportunities for people from wealthy families (Sapelli and Vial, 2002). In other words, private universities are accused of disregarding poor but talented applicants in favour of wealthy and perhaps less talented prospects (Garcia, 2005). It is argued that the main criterion to get admission into private universities is money and not the talent, aptitude or intelligence of applicants (Hoxby and Rockoff, 2004). Some private universities provide limited scholarships to poor but talented applicants (Machin and Wilson, 2005), but the number of scholarships provided is negligible, so it does not have any noticeable impact in attracting poor but talented applicants (Hoxby and Rockoff, 2004).

2.5.3. Fees and Value for Money

“Money doesn’t grow on trees” so either government or parents expect value for the money they invest for education of students (Eagle and Brennan, 2007). Unlike the USA and Canada where private universities with high tuition fees are a common and acceptable phenomenon, the British use state-supported universities with relatively low tuition fees (Brown, 2004). Recently, tuition fees have increased almost threefold in the UK and at the same time the UK government’s budget for higher education has reduced.

In private institutions or in state-supported universities with raised tuition fees (e.g UK universities), students are being charged higher fees so they want higher value for their money (Machin and Wilson, 2005). One of the aspects of value for money is perceived education quality (Mora, 2005). In other words, it is common sense that expectations regarding quality of education by people in general and students in particular, are much higher in private educational institutions (Garcia, 2005). However, in reality, this may not be true (Gallegos, 2004). Results of existing research are inconclusive so it is not clear to what extent there is a direct and meaningful relationship between the amount of tuition fees paid and level of quality in educational institutions (Brown, 2004).

Although, heavy reliance on financial support by the state is risky, sometimes, some higher education institutions are in danger of going too far in emphasising the financial issue (FAPE, 2004) to the extent that they miss the main point of higher education (Machin and Wilson, 2005). So 'money making' becomes the dominant purpose of some of private universities (Bettinger, 2005), which is considered to be one of the disadvantages of private universities (Sapelli and Vial, 2002).

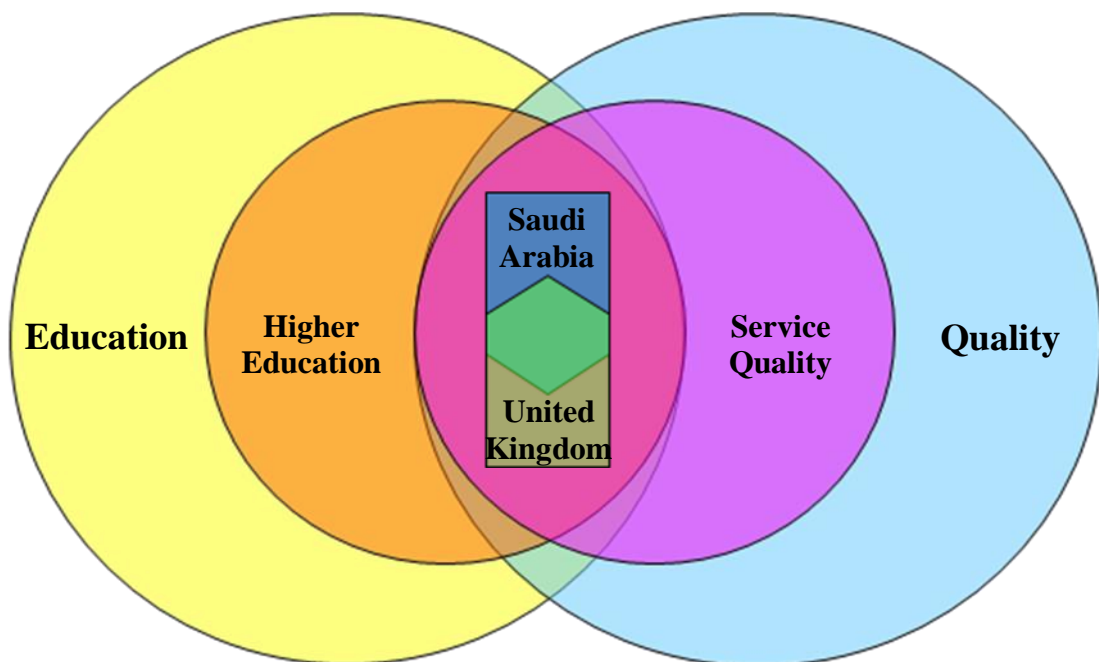
As regards possible differences in influential factors on the quality of education either in private universities or in state-supported universities with raised tuition fees, while the affluence factor on the quality of education remains the same, parents, students and sponsors expect better quality by having more strenuous factors (Eagle and Brennan, 2007). In other words, in public or private institutions with high or low tuition fees, quality drivers in education are the same though the emphasis on the strength of these factors would increase in private education or state-supported education with high tuition fees (Sadler, 2007). So there is no need for different models of quality in education for public or private universities (Brown, 2004).

2.6. Taxonomy of Quality

2.6.1. Main Grouping of the Taxonomy

Developing a taxonomy of quality is a useful way to classify existing schools of thought and perspectives in this area. Since quality is a much debated notion, however, with a wide range of usages in all industries, the creation of a taxonomy for quality is a complicated and subjective activity. The author has developed a 'Taxonomy for Quality' built on a critical literature review and an unbiased discussion of the perspectives of the main scholars in quality. That is to say, an important consideration in developing the Taxonomy of Quality was the context and scope of this research as illustrated in Figure 2-5.

Figure 2.5: The focus and scope of the research



Source: developed for this research

Although developing a taxonomy of quality is a useful action to understand the nature of quality that is important to achieve this research's aim (developing a model of quality in education), taxonomy development is NOT the main aim or objective of this research. It is just a missing step in the current literature to clarify scope of this research. The focus of this research is only on the quality of education so locating the position of the quality of education within the wider picture of the taxonomy of quality is unavoidable.

Among scholars, there are different approaches to developing taxonomies. While some researchers tend to limit their classifications to just two or three groups with no further details, others go too far and develop an over-detailed taxonomy which is both complicated and impractical. The author has decided to adapt a balanced and moderated approach to the creation of this taxonomy, which is not too simple or too complex, but a classification with a reasonable amount of detail.

The question is 'how much detail can be considered as a reasonable amount?' Answers by different researchers would be different because this is a mainly subjective issue. There is no clear standard to define amount of detail in taxonomies; however, researchers can at least recognise and follow a commonly used number of elements in a taxonomy or typology by benchmarking from existing taxonomies in the field of business.

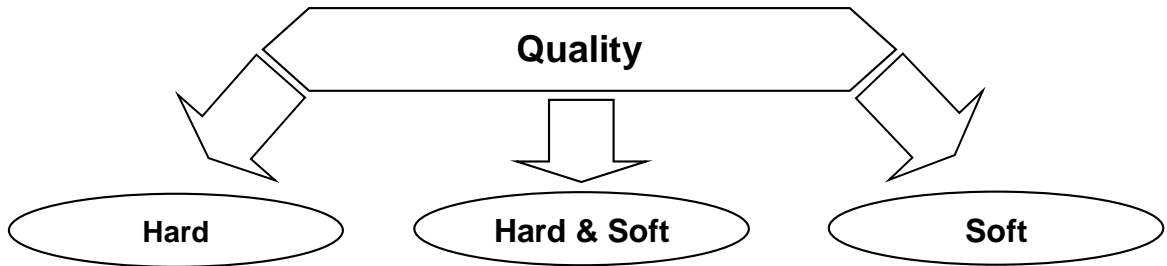
Some of the well-known taxonomies/typologies are Porter's Typology of strategy with three elements, the Ansoff Matrix with four components, Marketing Mix with 4-7 dimensions, and Deming's 14-point for TQM. It seems reasonable to have between 3-14 components in taxonomies or models. A reasonable amount of detail is important in this research because a PhD research can focus on a limited number of elements for discussion, developing a taxonomy or preparing a model. This is a PhD research with its own requirements, scope and limitations. By considering the commonly used range of number of elements in a typology in business, it seems, developing a taxonomy or model with less than three components is uncommon and possibly too simple for a PhD research

The Taxonomy of Quality is based on the nature and function of the entities that require quality (Gaither and Frazier, 1999; Guaspari, 1985; Hager, 1997). The basic taxonomy as well as the developed taxonomy are demonstrated in Figure 2-6 and Figure 2-11, respectively.

The taxonomy initially classifies the notion and functions of quality into three groups: 'Hard (Product)', 'Soft (Service)', and 'Hard and Soft'. Hard Quality is about the quality of 'Products' (Crosby, 1979, 1981, 1984; Feigenbaum, 1986; Gaither and Frazier, 1999; Ishikawa, 1985; Juran, 1988), Soft Quality concentrates on the quality of 'services' (Blom, 2001; Green, 1994; Gore, 2001; Harvey and Green, 1993; Harvey, 2004; Ladwig *et al.*, 2007). Some of the aspects of quality are common to products and services. In addition, there are some entities that are not completely products or services but something in between, such as 'Maintenance' and 'Brands';

furthermore, due to the necessity of differentiating products and services from the 'Processes' and 'Systems' that create and deliver these products and services, the author has decided to create a separate category for this type of entity called 'Soft and Hard Quality' (Brennan *et al.*, 1992; Gaither and Frazier, 1999; Hager, 1997; Kruger, 2001; Yong and Wilkinson, 2002).

Figure 2-6: Basic Taxonomy of Quality



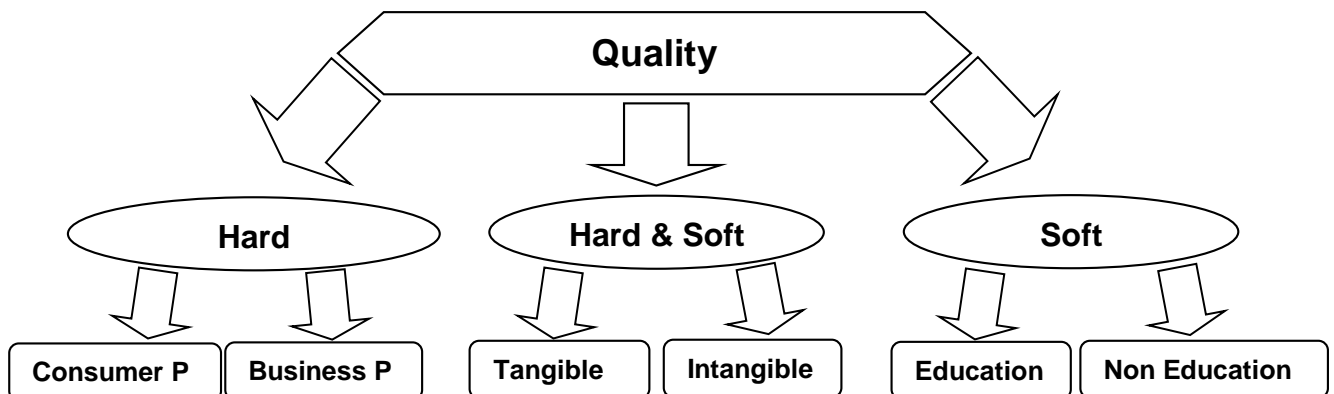
Source: developed for this study

Each of these three main groups has its own sub-categories (sub-groups) and each of their sub-categories (sub-groups) has their own sub-sub-categories (sub-sub-groups), which together shape the Taxonomy of Quality. A detailed presentation of the Taxonomy of Quality is provided in the next section.

2.6.2. Detailed Anatomy of the Taxonomy

The *Hard (Product) quality* includes two main sub-groups of ‘consumer products’ and ‘business products’. Likewise, the *Hard and Soft quality* has two sub-groups which embody ‘tangible’ and ‘intangible’ ones. Finally, the *Soft (Service) quality* has its own ‘education’ and ‘non-education’ sub-sections (see Figure 2-7).

Figure 2-7: Basic Taxonomy of Quality (with three layers)



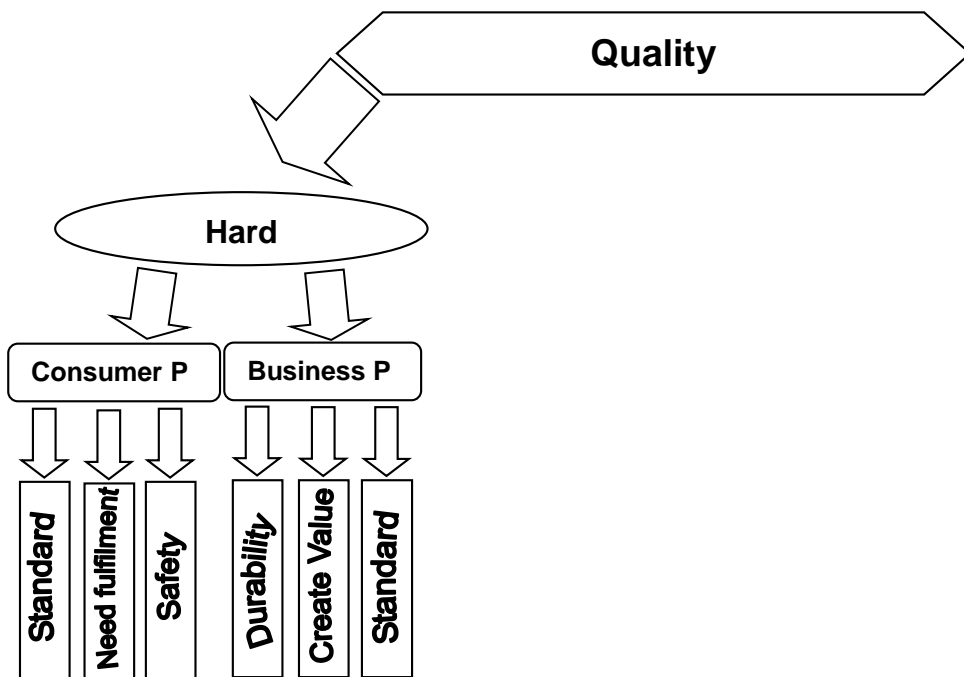
Source: developed for this study

In brief, the Taxonomy of Quality is as follows:

❖ **Hard (Product)**

- Consumer Products: the products (like mobiles, TVs, pizzas) that are consumed by end-users for personal use
 - *Standards*
 - *Need Fulfilment*
 - *Safety*
- Business Products: the products (like machinery, equipment) that are used by organisations for business purposes
 - *Durability*
 - *Create Value*
 - *Standard*

Figure 2-8: Hard (Product) Quality in the Taxonomy of Quality

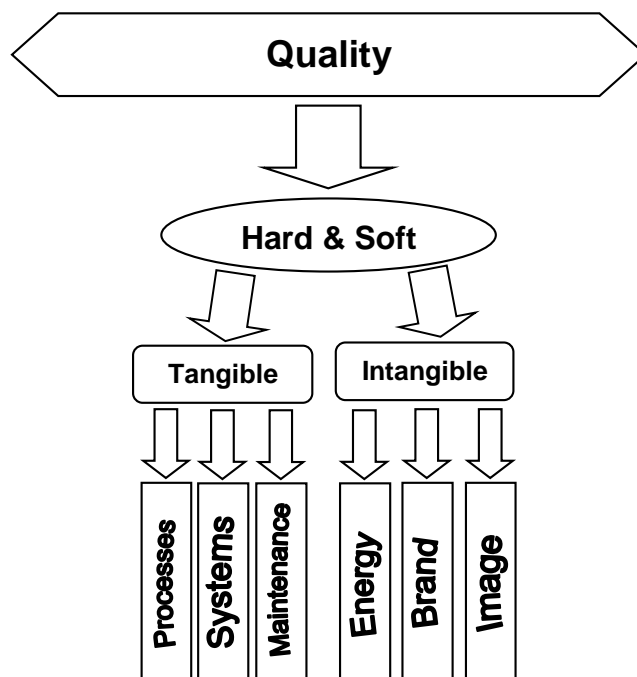


Source: developed for this study

❖ **Hard and Soft**

- Tangible: entities that can easily be seen, touched and perceived
 - *Processes*
 - *Systems*
 - *Maintenance*
- Intangible: entities that cannot be touched and perceived
 - *Energy*
 - *Brand*
 - *Image*

Figure 2-9: Hard & Soft Quality in the Taxonomy of Quality



Source: developed for this study

❖ Soft (Service)

- Education: any services regarding education at any level and of any type
 - *General*: This school of thought discusses the matter of quality in education in ‘general’ regardless of the level of education (Lomas, 2000 and 2004; Mathias, 2004), type of education (Newton, 2001 and 2002; Scott, 1994; Scott, 2002), or the purposes of education (Stoddart, 2004; Van Berkel and Wolfhagen, 2002).
 - *Academic*: Quality of education is a sub-category of ‘Soft Quality’. Academic education is a sub-sub category of education’s sub-category. The focus is on the education at university level.
 - Undergraduate
 - Student-centred: The Student-Centred Quality at Undergraduate Level school of thought is based on the perspective that students should be considered as customers (Amosa and Cooper, 2006; Baker, 1997; Blom, 2001; Green, 1994; Gore, 2001); however, undergraduate students are not mature enough (Largrosen *et al.*, 2004)
 - Academic-centred: Those quality experts who are in favour of the Academic-Centred Quality at Undergraduate Level perspective believe that academics are central to any reliable quality development in higher education (Kogan and Hanney, 2000; Largrosen *et al.*, 2004; Lomas, 2000).
 - Goal-centred: The word ‘goal’ in Goal-Centred Quality refers to the mission and strategic target of a higher education organisation (Westerheijden *et al.*, 1994; Woodhouse, 2004). The Goal-Centred Quality at Undergraduate Level reflects the perspectives of those academic quality experts who believe universities should not be considered as money-making machines like businesses (Birnbaum, 2000; Brown, 2004).
 - Output-centred: Focusing on ‘results’ (Voehl, 1994; Watson, 1995; Westerheijden *et al.*, 1994) instead of the ‘processes’ of education at undergraduate level is the main point that

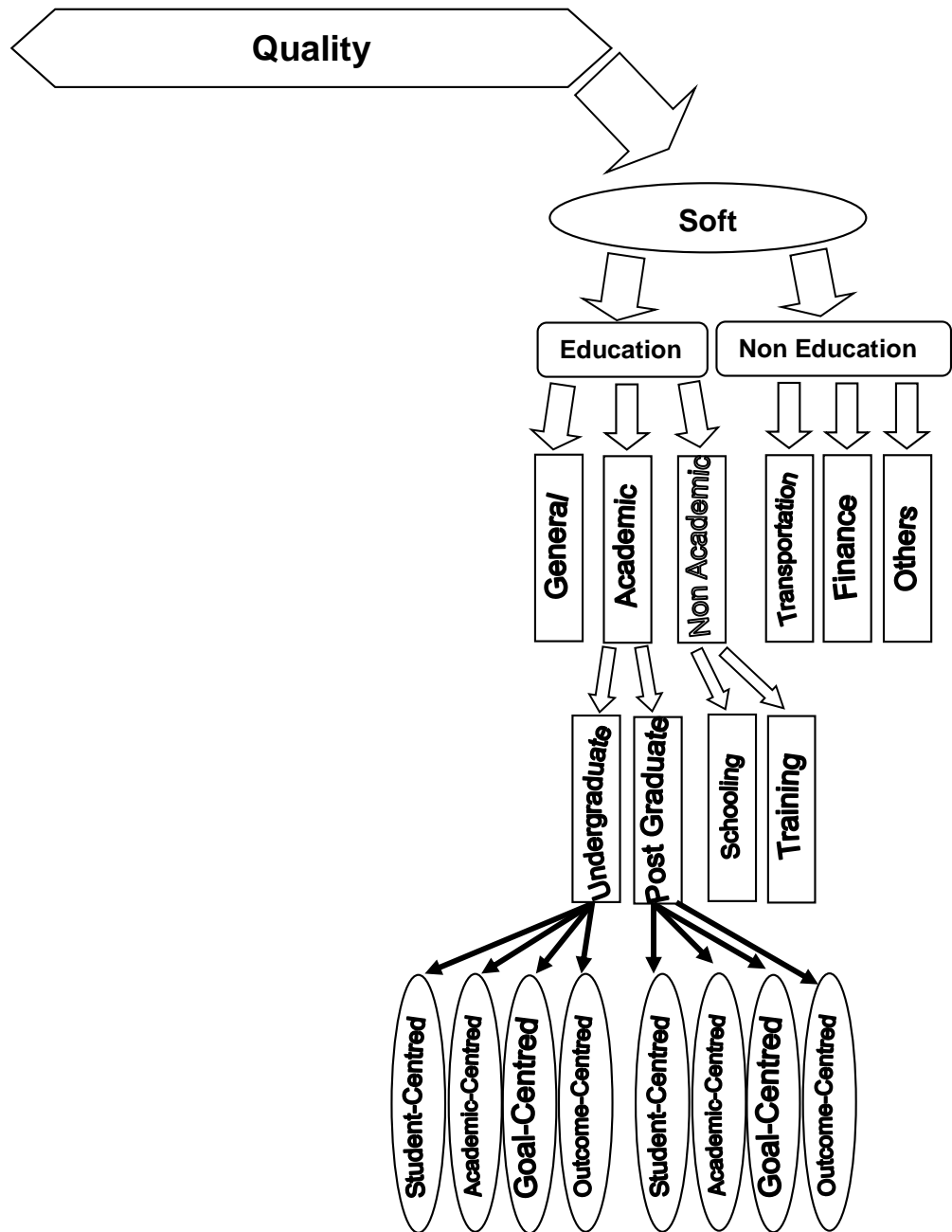
differentiates this school of thought from the others (Baker, 1997; Birnbaum, 2000).

- Postgraduate
 - Student-centred: The core of the Student-Centred Quality at Postgraduate Level school of thought is being student-orientated in designing and developing a quality system (Largrosen *et al.*, 2004; Lomas, 2007a, 2007b; Mathias, 2004). However, unlike the perspective of Student-Centred Quality at Undergraduate Level, the Student-Centred Quality at Postgraduate Level view does not consider students as immature customers who do not know what they want (Blom, 2001; Green, 1994).
 - Academic-centred: This perspective highlights the crucial roles of academics in quality development in higher education, though the Academic-Centred Quality at Postgraduate Level puts more emphasis on the necessity of academic-orientated quality design (Lomas, 2007a, 2007b; Newton, 2001, 2002; Watty, 2003; Westerheijden *et al.*, 1994) due to the research-based nature of postgraduate education (Baker, 1997; Kogan and Hanney, 2000).
 - Goal-centred: While supporters of Goal-Centred Quality at Undergraduate Level state that the goal of providing education at ‘undergraduate level’ is fostering the required knowledge and skills among students (Jones, 2003; Kogan *et al.*, 2000; Kogan and Hanney, 2000), the academic quality experts (Scott, 1994; Voehl, 1994; Watson, 1995; Westerheijden *et al.*, 1994) who are in favour of Goal-Centred Quality at Postgraduate Level believe the goal of universities at postgraduate level is creating knowledge through conducting original research (Baker, 1997; Ball, 1985).
 - Output-centred: The Output-centred quality at postgraduate level school is results-orientated (Birnbaum, 2000; Brennan *et al.*, 1992; Green, 1994; Harman, 1996; Harvey, 1999);

however, unlike Output-centred quality at undergraduate level, forms of output at postgraduate level are different in Output-centred quality at postgraduate level (Baker, 1997; Harvey, 2004).

- Non-academic: The Non-Academic Education school of thought has two sub-groups, of which one focuses on Schooling and the other on Training.
 - Schooling: The quality of education in schools is a key success factor for sustainable quality in higher education (Gibb, 2003; Mathias, 2004). They claim priority should be given to having quality and a quality system in schools because, due to compulsory education for children, all young people go to school but only a small proportion of these people continue to higher education (Aspin and Chapman, 1994).
 - Training: This highlights the necessity of having a quality system for short-term Training. It is very common for almost all organisations, particularly medium and big ones, to have training departments and/or to provide training for their employees (Kruger, 2001; Mathias, 2004).
- Non-education: other non-educational services in any industry, provided by any service provider
 - *Transportation*: One of the common forms of non-educational services is transportation. It covers transportation of people and goods.
 - *Finance*: Financial services are building block of any modern and civilised society. All banks, insurance companies, short-term loan companies and financial advisors are parts of this industry.
 - *Others*: services can have other forms too such IT services, medical services, cleaning, catering and hospitality industries.

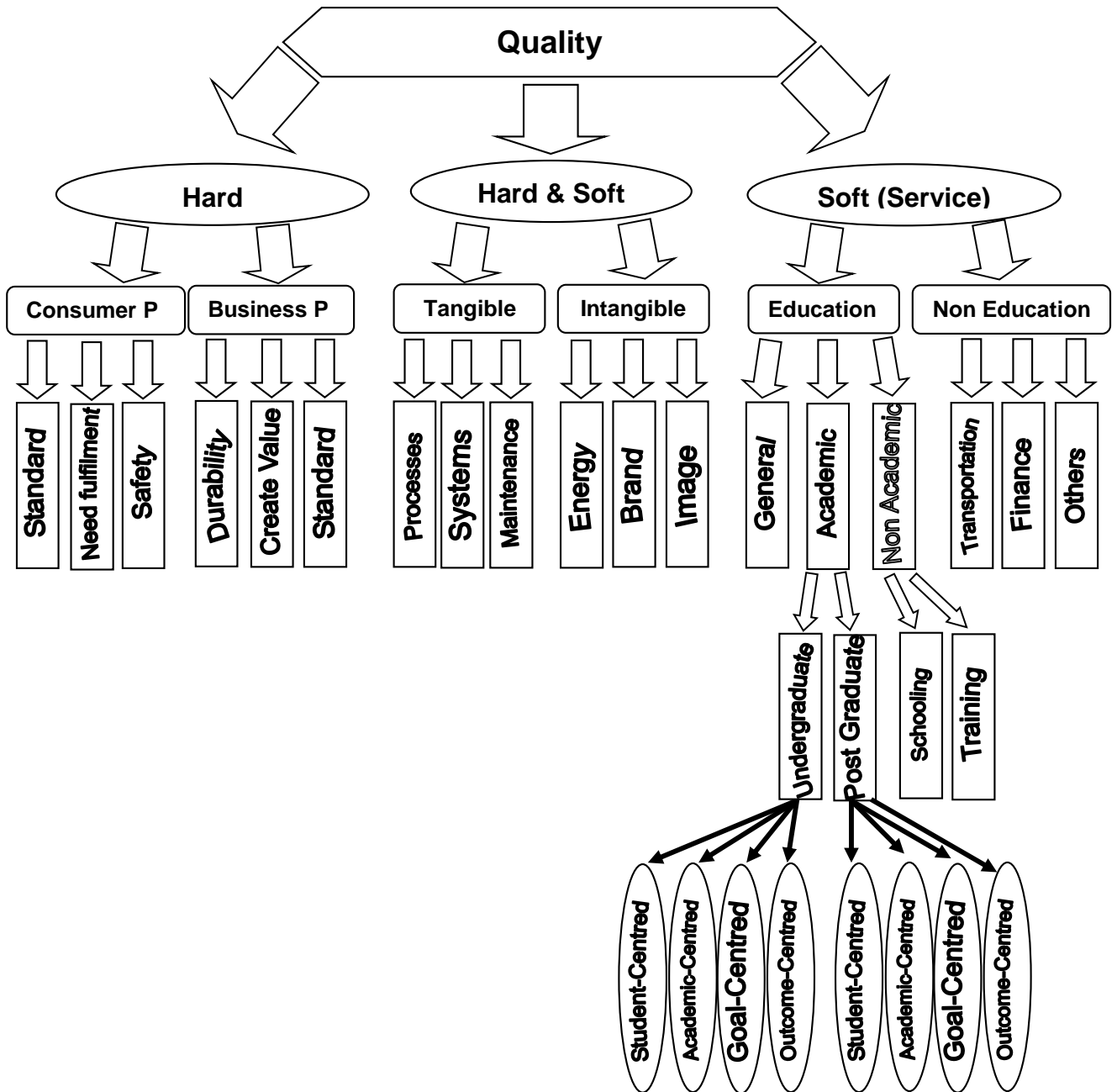
Figure 2-10: Soft (Service) Quality in the Taxonomy of Quality



Source: developed for this study

By putting these three interrelated dimensions of quality ('Hard', 'Hard & Soft' and 'Soft') together, *The Taxonomy of Quality* in its full version has been formed for the first time in this research.

Figure 2-11: The Taxonomy of Quality (Comprehensive version)



Source: developed for this study

Each main sub-group in the taxonomy has been given a number, which represents the authors who contribute to that particular concept in the quality literature.

- 1) Regarding 'Standards' in Consumer Products as one of sub-groups of Hard (Product) quality, these authors have had an important impact: Crosby (1979, 1981, 1984); Feigenbaum (1986); Gaither and Frazier (1999); Guaspari (1985); Hager (1997); Ishikawa (1985); Juran (1988)
- 2) Among the scholars who have contributed to the issue of the importance of 'Need Fulfilment' in Hard (Product) quality, particularly for Consumer Products, these names can be mentioned: Deming (1982; 1990); Feigenbaum (1994); Garvin (1988); Kruger (2001); Yong and Wilkinson (2002)
- 3) 'Safety' and its crucial effect on Hard (Product) in general and on Consumer Products in particular has been highlighted by these commentators: Crosby (1979, 1981, 1984); Gaither and Frazier (1999); Guaspari (1985); Ishikawa (1985); Juran (1988)
- 4) Another notable group related to Hard (Product) quality is 'business products'. The role of 'Durability' of these products has been discussed by Crosby (1979, 1981, 1984); Deming (1982; 1990); Feigenbaum (1986); Guaspari (1985); Ishikawa (1985); Juran (1988)
- 5) The issue of 'Create Value' for business products as one of the topics of Hard (Product) quality has attracted the attention of these business experts: Deming (1982; 1990); Feigenbaum (1994); Kruger (2001); Yong and Wilkinson (2002)
- 6) Many management scholars - including Crosby (1979, 1981, 1984); Feigenbaum (1986); Gaither and Frazier (1999); Guaspari (1985); Ishikawa (1985); Juran (1988) - have discussed the remarkable impact of 'Standard' on the perceived quality of business products.
- 7) In the 'Hard and Soft' aspect of quality, especially in 'tangible' ones, 'Processes' have been the focus of attention of many quality-orientated researchers, such as Bauer, Reiner and Schamschule (2000); Brown (2004); Brennan *et al.* (1992); Hager (1997); Kruger (2001)
- 8) The importance of 'Systems' in having reliable Hard & Soft quality in terms of tangible entities has been agreed by Bauer, Reiner and Schamschule

- (2000); Brown (2004); Brennan *et al.* (1992); Harman (1996); Ishikawa (1985); Juran (1988); Kruger (2001)
- 9) The concept of 'Maintenance' is believed to be at the core of the tangible form of Hard and Soft quality by Feigenbaum (1986); Gaither and Frazier (1999); Guaspari (1985); Ishikawa (1985); Juran (1988)
 - 10) Quality experts - such as Gaither and Frazier (1999); Yong and Wilkinson (2002); Hager (1997) - have emphasised the role of 'Energy' as one of the mainly intangible aspects of Hard and Soft quality.
 - 11) Another influential issue regarding Hard and Soft quality, particularly in the intangible sub-group, is Brand, which has been highlighted by Deming (1982; 1990); Feigenbaum (1994); Garvin (1988); Kruger (2001)
 - 12) Quality of 'Image' in its relation to the intangible side of Hard and Soft quality has been explored by many, including Deming (1982; 1990); Feigenbaum (1994); Garvin (1988); Kruger (2001)
 - 13) Regarding the 'General' notion of 'Education' as one of the sub-groups of Soft (Service) quality, these authors have had an important impact: Aspin and Chapman (1994); Baker (1997); Blom and Meyers (2003); Blom (2001); Brown (2004); Craft (1994); Gibb (2003); Green (1994); Harman and Meek (2000); Harvey (2004); Jones (2003); Lomas (2000, 2004); Mathias (2004); Newton (2001, 2002); Scott (1994); Scott (2002); Stoddart (2004); Van Berkel and Wolfhagen (2002); Watson (1995); Woodhouse (2004)
 - 14) Among the scholars who have contributed to the issue of the importance of 'Student-centred' quality in Soft (Service) quality, particularly for the 'undergraduate' level of 'academic' education, these names can be mentioned: Amosa and Cooper, 2006; Baker (1997); Blom (2001); Green (1994); Gore, 2001; Harvey and Green (1993); Harvey (2004); Ladwig *et al.*, 2007; Largrosen *et al.* (2004); Lomas (2004); Lomas (2007a, 2007b); Mathias (2004); Westerheijden *et al.* (1994)
 - 15) 'Academic-centred' quality and its crucial effects on Soft (Service) in general and on academic (undergraduate level) education in particular has been highlighted by these commentators: Baker (1997); Craft (1994); Green (1994); Harvey and Knight (1996); Harvey (2004); King, 2002; Kogan and Hanney (2000); Largrosen *et al.* (2004); Lomas (2000); Louis and Marks,

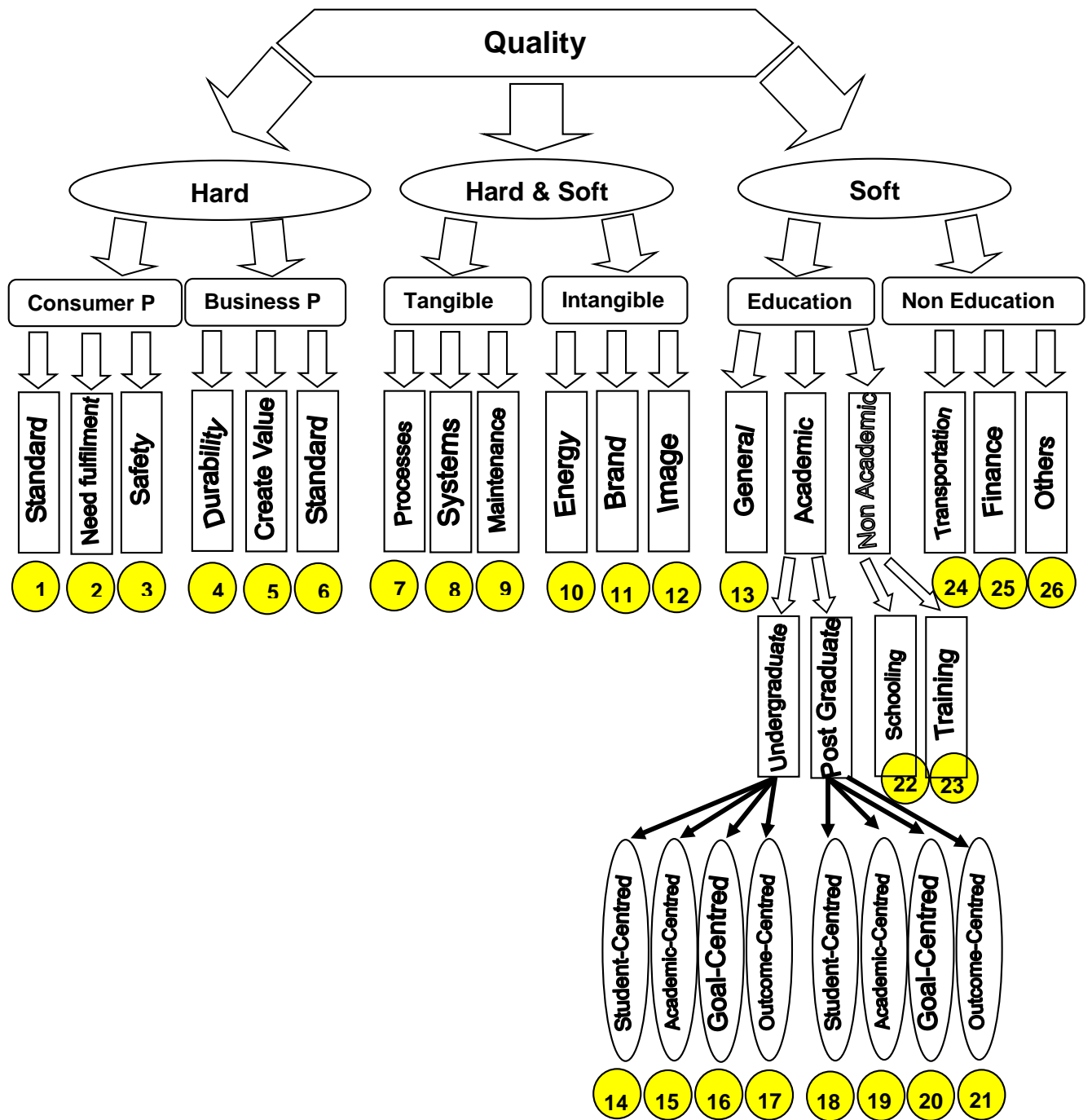
2008; Newmann, 2001; Newton (2001, 2002); Watty (2003); Westerheijden *et al.* (1994)

- 16) Another notable group related to Soft (Service) quality is undergraduate level academic education. The role of 'Goal-centred' quality in this education has been discussed by Baker (1997); Ball (1985); Birnbaum (2000); Brown (2004); Green (1994); Harman and Meek (2000); Harvey and Green (1993); Harvey (1998); Harvey (2004); Kogan *et al.* (2000); Kruger (2001); Ladwig, 2007; Largrosen *et al.* (2004); Lee and Smith, 2001; Lomas (2000); Lomas (2004); Lomas (2007a, 2007b); Scott (2002); Stoddart (2004); Van Berkel and Wolfhagen (2002); Voehl (1994); Westerheijden *et al.* (1994); Woodhouse (2004)
- 17) The issue of 'Output-centred' quality for academic education at undergraduate level as one of the topics of Soft (Service) quality has attracted the attention of the following experts: Baker (1997); Birnbaum (2000); Brennan *et al.* (1992); Green (1994); Harman (1996); Harvey (1998); Harvey (2004); Harvey (2005); Harvey, Green and Burrows (1993); Jones (2003); Kogan and Hanney (2000); Largrosen *et al.* (2004); Ladwig, 2007; Lee and Smith, 2001; Roelofs and Terwel, 2009; Smith *et al.*, 2001; Lomas (2007a, 2007b); Scott (1994); Scott (2002); Voehl (1994); Watson (1995); Westerheijden *et al.* (1994)
- 18) Many management scholars - including Baker (1997); Amosa and Cooper, 2006; Blom (2001); Green (1994); Gore, 2001; Harvey and Green (1993); Harvey (2004); Ladwig *et al.*, 2007; Largrosen *et al.* (2004); Lomas (2007a, 2007b); Mathias (2004); Westerheijden *et al.* (1994) - have discussed the remarkable impact of 'Student-centred' quality on the perceived quality of 'postgraduate' level academic education.
- 19) In the Soft (Service) aspect of quality, especially at postgraduate level academic education, 'Academic-centred' quality, has been the focus of attention of many quality-orientated researchers, such as Baker (1997); Craft (1994); Green (1994); Harvey (1998); Harvey (1999); Harvey (2004); Kogan and Hanney (2000); Largrosen *et al.* (2004); Lomas (2000); Lomas (2007a, 2007b); Newton (2001, 2002); Watty (2003); Westerheijden *et al.* (1994)
- 20) The importance of 'Goal-centred' quality in having a reliable Soft (Service) quality in terms of postgraduate level academic education, has been agreed by Baker (1997); Ball (1985); Birnbaum (2000); Brown (2004); Green (1994);

Harman and Meek (2000); Harvey and Knight (1996); Harvey (2004); Harvey (2005); Harvey, Green and Burrows (1993); Jones (2003); Kogan *et al.* (2000); Kogan and Hanney (2000); Largrosen *et al.* (2004); Lomas (2000); Lomas (2007a, 2007b); Newton (2001, 2002); Scott (1994); Voehl (1994); Watson (1995); Westerheijden *et al.* (1994)

- 21) The concept of 'Output-centred' quality is believed to be at the core of the postgraduate level academic education form of Soft (Service) quality by Baker (1997); Birnbaum (2000); Brennan *et al.* (1992); Green (1994); Harman (1996); Harvey (1999); Harvey (2004); Kruger (2001); Largrosen *et al.* (2004); Lomas (2007a, 2007b); Scott (1994); Scott (2002); Stoddart (2004); Van Berkel and Wolfhagen (2002); Voehl (1994); Westerheijden *et al.* (1994); Woodhouse (2004)
- 22) Quality experts - such as Aspin and Chapman (1994); Gibb (2003); Mathias (2004); Van den Berghe (1997); Watson (1995) - have emphasised the role of 'Schooling' quality as one of the 'non-academic' education aspects of Soft (Service) quality.
- 23) Another influential issue with regard to Soft (Service) quality, particularly in the non-academic education sub-group, is quality of 'Training', which has been highlighted by Blom and Meyers (2003); Feigenbaum (1994); Gibb (2003); Kruger (2001); Mathias (2004); Van den Berghe (1997)
- 24) Quality of 'Transportation' in its relation to the non-education side of Soft (Service) quality has been explored by many, including Gaither and Frazier (1999); Juran (1988)
- 25) Regarding the quality of 'Finance' in the non-education sector as one of the sub-groups of Soft (Service) quality, these authors have had an important impact: Feigenbaum (1994); Kruger (2001)
- 26) Among the scholars who have contributed to the issue of the importance of 'Other' forms of Soft (Service) quality, particularly for non-education activities, these names can be mentioned: Garvin (1988); Guaspari (1985); Scott (1994); Yong and Wilkinson (2002)

Figure 2-12: Literature Sources of Taxonomy of Quality



2.7. Quality and Higher Education

2.7.1. Students as Customers

The idea of students as 'customers' at institutions of higher learning evokes intense controversy, but it is usually understood simplistically. The word customer is derived from the Latin 'consuescere' meaning 'to become acquainted with'. In marketplaces of the Renaissance it suggested a bond founded on familiarity and trust. Early universities were located near marketplaces, and shared some of their vibrant atmosphere. Today, as well, there is no reason why the relationship between a customer and provider need be either temporary or superficial. New technologies may help to render the relationship between an institution and its students more lasting and more personal. The exchange of money for goods and services makes a student a customer (Sadler, 2007).

It is noticeable in the United Kingdom that, as students in higher education are expected to pay an increasing share of the costs of their tuition, so there is an increasing tendency to refer to students as customers. Responses to this terminology tend to be polarised. Either it is self-evident that people who pay for a service are customers and should be treated as such, or it is self-evident that education is intrinsically 'different' and that the use of marketplace metaphors can do nothing but harm to the educational process (Eagle and Brennan, 2007).

The idea that students might be treated as customers triggers academics' antipathy, which in turn can lead to managerial irritation and political frustration. There are different discourses which barely overlap as their protagonists speak past one another (Brown, 2004). These differences can be reconciled by re-conceiving the relationship between the university and the student. Brown (2004) analyses the problems inherent in thinking of students as customers, suggests a multidimensional approach to understanding student roles, and considers what part markets can play in governing and managing higher education systems.

In the most literal sense, the student may or may not be a customer. Perhaps the student is paying for an education, but often the parent, the state or a foundation may be footing the bill. In the latter cases, perhaps the parent, state or foundation is really the customer (Sadler, 2007). If one individual student is not the customer, do you treat him/her differently from the students that are? Sadler (2007) claims that we need

not trouble ourselves too much about such questions, because the designation of students as customers is generally used more as a metaphor than as a literal description.

The debate is polarised, with advocates regarding it as self-evident that students are customers and should be treated as such, while critics regard it as self-evident that the incursion of the customer concept into higher education degrades educational standards and damages educator/student relationships. Researchers should investigate whether the adoption of the terminology, systems and processes of the 'student-as-customer' leads to a degradation or improvement of the quality of education and level of service delivered to higher education students (Eagle and Brennan, 2007).

2.7.2. Five Concepts of Quality

Scott (1994) further developed the argument of Westerheijden *et al.* (1994) concerning the multiplicity of factors which impact on quality, pointing out that the very factors that made quality a key political concern in higher education have also made it almost impossible to agree on a common definition. Scott outlined the following five concepts of quality:

Quality as *Excellence*

This is a perspective of quality through a relatively fixed hierarchy of academic merits. According to Scott, this perspective is the most common in higher education. Scott highlighted a number of drawbacks inherent in this definition. First, it regards the definition of quality as unproblematic, and this “*assumption [is] difficult to sustain in a mass system*” (Scott, 1994, p. 64). Second, “*its delivery mechanism, peer review, assumes a professional collegiality as well as shared intellectual values, [however] neither of [them]...can be taken for granted in an increasingly competitive and market-oriented system*” (Scott, 1994, p. 64).

Quality as *Audit*

This approach to quality focuses on “*the procedures used by universities to safeguard and maintain quality*” (Scott, 1994, p. 64). But the approach is modelled on the “*closed*” analytical style employed in the corporate world, and it “*has proved to be*

difficult to reconcile with the open interpretative ethos of universities” (Scott, 1994, p. 65).

Quality as Outcomes

Scott pointed out that this approach fails to relate outputs to inputs, and thus it *“neglects issues of ‘value added’, [which are] an important measure of higher education’s effectiveness”* (Scott, 1994, p. 65). According to Scott, what is also important to consider is that some outcomes, particularly in the case of higher education, *“only become clear long after undergraduates have left higher education, which undermines the usefulness of this approach in policy and managerial terms”* (Scott, 1994, p. 65).

Quality as Mission

This interpretation of quality emphasises the need to judge quality in the context of mission. For example, *“A small college should not be judged by the same standards as a large comprehensive university or a research university”* (Scott, 1994, p. 65). This approach to quality has been referred to as *“fitness for purpose”*, and it was first employed around the mid-1980s, to discourage *“policy makers from judging the former polytechnics by inappropriate criteria designed with traditional universities in mind”* (Scott, 1994, pp. 65-66).

Quality as Culture

Another approach to quality emphasises *“the need to build a ‘quality culture’ that permeates the whole institution rather than devising discrete standards to judge the quality of each individual operation”* (Scott, 1994, p. 66).

Scott further suggests that there are a number of other different models of quality, and that these other concepts of quality can be described in terms of a series of spectra – between *“...informal and formal modes...professionally-oriented (top-down) and those that are market driven (bottom-up), between systems designed to monitor process and those that measure substantial outcomes”* (Scott, 1994, p. 67). He also highlights the fact that these various models are not *“mutually exclusive”* and that they can be *“mixed-and-matched”*.

2.7.3. Saudi & British Position regarding Quality

Although Saudi Arabia has one of the fastest growing education systems in the Middle East, there has been very little or no research done regarding the quality of education in this country. Increasingly, the rationale for quality development has been driven by funding mechanisms, accreditation tests, keeping pace with international practice, and national audits (Harvey, 2005; Lomas, 2007). Saudi Arabia has commenced a number of major developmental projects that seek to fill the gap between its higher education system and other more advanced systems around the world.

The researcher has chosen to investigate the higher education system of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a culturally different educational system, distinct from the English higher education system, and more broadly from the Anglo-Saxon higher education tradition. In brief, two main reasons for choosing Saudi Arabia and Britain as contexts for this research are reasonably good access to potential participants in these countries as well as the unique position of Saudi and the UK in the East and the West, respectively.

In addition to the fact that the author has been involved with higher education both in Saudi and in the UK, it can be argued that it is the unique position of Saudi Arabia in the Middle East between Asia and Africa, and thus its unique political and social history, that have had an impact on the specific development of the Saudi higher education system and the Saudi educational system overall. The researcher is Saudi, and has been working in the education sector, so it is reasonable to contribute to the education system in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in this research. It is an acceptable fact that research cannot be conducted if an investigator does not have access to potential participants or participants do not like to share their opinion with a researcher. Thus, due to access to Saudi academics, this country becomes an ideal choice for research.

Looking at British higher education, Green (1994) also referred to the fact that concern for quality and standards was not new in the British higher education context. The debate has become more "*visible*" since the 1980s, because it became more externalised and has grown in intensity (Green, 1994). Green also highlighted the multi-dimensionality of quality. She suggests that quality is an elusive term, and that: "*We all have an instinctive understanding of what it means but it is difficult to*

articulate” (Green, 1994, p. 12). She also argues that quality is “*a value-laden term: it is subjectively associated with what is good and worthwhile*” (Green, 1994, p. 12). Further, on defining the concept of quality, Harvey, Green and Burrows (1993) have indicated that there are a number of ways of viewing quality. They outline six different notions of quality. The first notion relates to what they call the *traditional* concept of quality. This concept associates quality with an idea of exceptionally high standards. The second notion perceives quality in terms of *consistency*. “*It focuses on process and sets a specification that it aims to meet*” (Harvey *et al.*, 1993, p. 144). It relates to the concept of *zero defects*. Their third approach to quality is that of *fitness for purpose*, where quality is judged “*in terms of the extent to which a product or service meets its stated purpose*” (Harvey *et al.*, 1993, p. 144). The fourth concept of quality is that of *value for money*, and thus concerns accountability. It relates to the increasing pressures in the British public sector, including education, to be accountable to the public, funders and others. They also acknowledge that this trend is spreading all over Europe. The fifth notion of quality perceives it as a *transformative process*, an ongoing transformation of the participants. Another concept of quality is a *pragmatic* approach, where it is defined in terms of a range of qualities. This concept recognises the fact that an institution may be of high quality in relation to one factor but of low quality in relation to another aspect.

Harvey, Green and Burrows (1993) further highlight that quality is “*stakeholder*” relative, and the best that can be achieved in that sense “*is to define, as clearly as possible, the criteria used by each interest group when judging quality...*” (Harvey *et al.*, 1993, p. 144).

To sum up, the number of diverse definitions of quality point to the fact that, particularly in the field of higher education, quality has always been a *contested* concept and issue. This has been largely due to its multi-dimensionality and thus complexity.

2.8. Critique of Current Higher Education Quality

2.8.1. Impact of Changes on Quality in Higher Education

Stoddart (2004) argues that, as in other spheres that demand a significant amount of public funding, in recent decades there has been a shift in emphasis from a focus on the individual, and the traditional form of peer review, “*to the systematic application of external judgements that aim to satisfy the need for accountability*” (in Brown, 2004, p. 144). He explains that the criteria for judgement have changed from internal, tacit and informal to broader ones, to account for wider socio-economic parameters, because “*higher education institutions have grown more complex and managerially more sophisticated*” (in Brown, 2004, p. 146).

The critics of many current higher education quality models realise that the socio-economic changes in higher education around the world, in the past two decades, had to bring with them changes to traditional perspectives on quality; however, one of these changes, it can be argued, was perceived as rather negative. In particular, this was a change in focus to the predominantly quantitative, objective and measurable aspects of higher education quality. The aspects of quality that really matter to academics on a more individual, personal level have increasingly been judged as unimportant. For instance, Jones (2003) points out that:

“In an age in which more attention is being placed on developing objective measurements of quality in educational delivery, it is both surprising and alarming that the very purpose of a university, that of educating students, should be apparently overshadowed by concern about administrative measurement issues... Numerous measures by which to judge the quality of educational delivery are being developed, with a particular focus on objectives measured by central administration, and statistical comparison” (Jones, 2003, pp. 223-224).

Jones also notes that administering student surveys centrally with a focus on quantitative measures has the potential to give a very inaccurate picture, and thus it is important to link the centrally collected quantitative data with the collection of qualitative student and teacher feedback to help to create a more holistic picture.

Concerning the balance in focus on improvement as opposed to accountability, Harvey (1998) emphasises that: “*Despite good intentions, quality monitoring has*

become over-bureaucratic and the potential for significant change has been hampered by a focus on accountability rather than improvement... By focusing on accountability, the transformative potential of quality monitoring is not fulfilled..." (Harvey, 1998, p. 237).

Harvey (1998) further points out that quality has become associated with control and that the term "quality" at present is too often used "as a shorthand for the bureaucratic procedures rather than for the concept of quality itself..." (Harvey, 1998, p. 246). He further explains that this should not come as a surprise, "...as behind nearly all external quality monitoring is a political motive designed to ensure two basic things: that higher education is still delivering despite the cut in resources and increase in student numbers; and that higher education is accountable for public money" (Harvey, 1998, pp. 246-247)

2.8.2. Current Difficulties

Brown (2004) argues that the focus on auditing (advocated through the neoliberal policies of efficiency and accountability in Britain and other countries) is particularly dangerous for higher education, and that, ironically, such an approach, in fact, threatens real quality in the educational process.

Focusing on the British higher education system, Watson (1995) outlined the main arguments against the current approaches to higher education quality. These are as follows: "*excessive demands on institutions; violation of academic autonomy and freedom, linked to the fostering of a 'compliance culture'; creation of 'hard managerialism' and managerial intrusion in academic matters; damage to Britain's hard-won reputation for quality*" (in Brown, 2004, p. 80).

Harvey (2005) is somewhat sceptical about the current quality monitoring processes in UK higher education. He perceives quality monitoring as being "*beset by overlapping and burdensome processes, competing notions of quality, a failure to engage learning and transformation, and a focus on accountability and compliance*" (Harvey, 2005, p. 271). According to him, it is unfortunate that instead of undertaking a more holistic review of quality issues enabling reflection, the process was taken over by the government and its agencies which "*piled one initiative on another to create the 'British quality juggernaut', as it is referred to in parts of Europe*" (Harvey, 2005, p. 271).

Harvey further argues that: “*Quality evaluations involve game playing to cast the evaluated programme or institution in the best possible light*” (Harvey, 2005, p. 272). Thus he believes that quality evaluations are more aimed at compliance, and there is little space for any “*constructive dialogue to aid real improvement*” (Harvey, 2005, p. 272).

He points out that the real quality improvement of the student’s experience happens mostly as a result of internal review and monitoring processes, and that these rely on “*student feedback, examiners reports, and internal improvement audits*” (Harvey, 2005, p. 274) which are far more effective than external reviews, “*which do little more than result in a flurry of centrally-controlled and produced documentation and evoke a performance and game-playing culture*” (Harvey, 2005, pp. 273-274).

Reflecting on the decade or more of external quality assessment (with particular focus on the UK), Harvey (2005) suggests that, despite the fact that academic staff complied with external quality monitoring requirements and learnt to “*play the game*”, most of them did not perceive that these external quality monitoring processes would result in any “*significant and long-lasting changes in the student experience*” (Harvey, 2005, p. 274). He also expressed some more cynical views, which argue that the external quality monitoring mechanisms were devised to hide “*a worsening academic base*” (Harvey, 2005, p. 274).

Harvey takes the view that evaluations which rely on “*fitness for purpose*” generally tend to be reductionist and result in fragmenting the concept of quality rather than assisting in further exploring the complex interrelated aspects of quality. His concern was that the “*bureaucratic and burdensome paraphernalia of quality*” (Harvey, 2005, p. 274) could even increase with the process of internationalisation, and that in such circumstances it is unlikely that the real quality of the student experience would improve.

2.8.3. Misuse or Misunderstanding

Further to the concerns expressed by Harvey, Mathias (2004) points out that quality assurance favours formal, bureaucratic procedures, which are totally disconnected from real teaching issues. According to him, quality enhancement (QE) has become “*a missing ‘E’ in the quality movement*” (Mathias, 2004, p. 1). He also underlines the fact that quality assurance (QA) seemed to have brought on “*worrying trends towards teaching staff disengagement*” (Mathias, 2004, p. 1). Mathias (2004) explains that the reasons for this are related to the fact that there is hardly any recognition or reward for quality enhancement, and that personal engagement and satisfaction are overshadowed by the excessive demands of quality assurance.

Mathias emphasises that there were, for instance, departmental or institutional rewards (in the form of favourable ratings in league tables) connected to compliance with quality assurance; however, to him, the rewards or drivers towards quality enhancement were “*difficult to locate*” (Mathias, 2004, p. 1). Mathias believes that that there were some personal gains of professional satisfaction related to QE. Nevertheless, there were “*few career and status rewards*” (Mathias, 2004, p. 1) connected to it. This, to Mathias, reflected the reality that institutional learning and teaching policies were increasingly prepared by professional administrators without consulting academic practitioners.

Mathias further argues that: “*In the politicised environment in which universities now operate, the rhetoric of goals, targets and strategies often gives way to the quick fix*” (Mathias, 2004, p. 2). He went on to say that this was understandable, given changing external demands; however, this, according to him, significantly undermined reflection, which is essential in the educational process.

2.8.4. Movement for Improvement

Brown (2004) summarises the key assumptions for an effective quality assurance system as the following:

“The underlying purpose must be improvement, not accountability; the regime must focus on what is necessary for quality improvement; the regime must bolster, not undermine, self-regulation; the arrangements must be meaningful to, and engage, all those involved; the arrangements must promote diversity and innovation; there must be adequate quality control (of the regime); there must be clear accountability (of the agency); there must be proper coordination with other regulators or would be regulators” (Brown, 2004, p. 162).

Considering the UK’s higher education example, Brown (2004) argues that, despite an enormous amount of effort invested in UK higher education quality assurance, particularly after 1992, the procedures told very little about the actual quality of UK higher education. According to Brown, this is because the efforts had *“been focused on the wrong targets (comparative judgements of performance) when...[they should have been targeted] at what it is that assists quality improvement”* (Brown, 2004, p. 163).

Brown expressed a concern that there was a *“danger that institutions will come to see periodic external regulation as all the regulation that is needed, and/or that their internal procedures will simply mimic those of the external agency”* (Brown, 2004, p. 163). He emphasises that, rather than inventing new quality systems, there is a need to map quality systems onto the existing academic structures and that activities ought to be better coordinated to prevent duplication. Brown also expressed a concern that quality assurance might actually be detrimental to quality!

2.8.5. Assessing Quality in Education

Quality in education cannot be managed or improved if it cannot be measured. In support of this perspective, many different techniques, models and tools have been developed to assess quality in education. All these quality assessment techniques can be categorised into three main groups: qualitative methods, quantitative methods, and mixed techniques.

The qualitative methods include curriculum analysis (Bereiter, 2007), pedagogy analysis (Shavelson, and Baxter, 2002), surveys into the instructional conditions for learning (Brown, Collins and Duguid, 2009), achievement tests analysis (Bereiter, 2007), student satisfaction surveys (Rissom, 2002), checklists of available teaching facilities (Husrn, 2009), and academic assessment surveys (Resnick, 2007).

The quantitative methods include the percentage of employed graduates (Lundgren, 2003), the average rate of failed or passed students (Raven, 2008), student/academic ratio (Magendzo, 2008), the frequency of assessment per semester (Plomp and Loxley, 2002), the percentage of students who give up their studies (Broadfoot, 2002), the number of newly launched degrees (Purves, 2000), the number of updated/modified degrees (Raven, 2001), the number of newly launched modules (Bereiter, 2007), and the number of updated/modified modules (Schiefelbein, 2000).

The main mixed techniques are benchmarking with other universities (Bereiter, 2007), the amount of diversity of students and academics (Brown, Collins and Duguid, 2009), the variety of assessment techniques (Purves, 2000) and the number of problems experienced by students (Plomp and Loxley, 2002).

That is to say, each of the four main schools of thought regarding quality in higher education (student-centred quality, academic-centred quality, goal-centred quality and output-centred quality) put a different emphasis on the use of these quality assessment techniques.

Table 2-1 illustrates a summary of the main quality assessment techniques and their usage in different schools of thought regarding quality in higher education.

Table 2.1. Tools and Techniques of Assessing Quality in Education

Category of evaluation models/ methods	Type of assessment technique	Approaches to quality in higher education			
		Student-centred	Academic-centred	Goal-centred	Output-centred
Qualitative methods	Curriculum analysis		√	√	
	Pedagogy analysis	√	√	√	
	Survey into the instructional conditions for learning	√			√
	Achievement tests analysis	√	√	√	√
	Student satisfaction survey	√			
	Checklist of available teaching facilities		√		√
	Academics assessment survey		√	√	
Quantitative techniques	Percentage of employed graduates	√		√	√
	Average rate of failed or passed students	√			√
	Student/academic ratio	√	√		
	Frequency of assessments per semester		√		
	Rate of students who give up their studies	√			√
	Number of newly launched degrees				√
	Number of updated/modified degrees				√
	Number of newly launched modules				√
	Number of updated/modified modules				√
Mixed models	Benchmarking with other universities			√	√
	Amount of diversity of students and academics	√	√		
	Variety of assessment techniques		√	√	√
	Number of problems experienced by students	√		√	

Source: Developed for this research

2.9. Conclusion

The notion and function of quality is context-dependent. Harvey (2005) states that the definition and importance of quality in education can be understood quite differently depending on the differences in cultural, political, technological and educational contexts in which the quality is being assessed. Likewise, Van den Berghe (1997) mentions that quality in education cannot be fully described and understood if we do not try to approach this issue from the pedagogical, managerial, and student points of view. While in the vast majority of sectors, which have tangible outputs and products, and where quality can be defined and measured precisely and easily, in the education sector with no tangible outputs, quality is hard to define and assess.

That is to say, although there are several views and theories about quality and quality in education and the number of these perspectives has increased considerably in a short time, it is possible to classify and group this wide range of views into some main categories. Garvin (1988), as one of the pioneers in categorising many of the definitions and approaches to quality, recognised five main movements toward quality. These categories encompass transcendent (the perfectionist approach to quality), standards-orientated (the conformance approach to quality), customer-orientated (the user needs approach to quality), product-orientated (the process approach to quality) and value-orientated (the value-added approach to quality). Although the categories provided by Garvin (1988) are mainly applicable to manufacturing- and industry-based organisations, they are widely used in educational institutions due to the absence of a specialist approach to quality in education.

Scott (1994) further developed the argument of Westerheijden *et al.* concerning the multiplicity of factors which impact on quality, pointing out that the very factors that made quality a key political concern in higher education have also made it almost impossible to agree on a common definition. Scott outlined the following five concepts of quality: “*Quality as excellence, quality as audit, quality as outcomes, quality as mission, and quality as culture*”.

The author has developed a new taxonomy for quality. The Taxonomy of Quality is based on the nature and function of the entities that require quality. The taxonomy initially classifies the notion and functions of quality into three groups: 'Hard (Product)', 'Soft (Service)', and 'Hard and Soft'. Hard Quality is about the quality of 'Products', Soft Quality concentrates on the quality of 'services'. Some of the aspects

of quality are common to products and services. In addition, there are some entities that are not completely products or services but something in between, such as 'Maintenance' and 'Brands'; furthermore, due to the necessity of differentiating products and services from the 'Processes' and 'Systems' that create and deliver these products and services, the author has decided to create a separate category for this type of entity called 'Soft and Hard Quality'.

The critics of many current higher education quality models realise that the socio-economic changes in higher education around the world, in the past two decades, had to bring with them changes to traditional perspectives on quality; however, one of these changes, it can be argued, was perceived as rather negative. In particular, this was a change in focus to the predominantly quantitative, objective and measurable aspects of higher education quality. The aspects of quality that really matter to academics on a more individual, personal level have increasingly been judged as unimportant.

Chapter 3

Focal Theory: The Education Quality Model

The Third Chapter's Abstract

The author has adopted an inductive approach to research in order to build a new theory/model for quality of education. The intention is not to select one of the existing theories or models to test or to modify. So, in brief, this research does not have a pre-determined and rigid theoretical framework borrowed from other researchers. This study primarily tries to build a new model of quality for education by considering other models and other authors' perspectives in general and other quality models such as the EFQM model in particular. So the EFQM model is not the theoretical framework of this research. It is just a model that is being benchmarked to help develop a new and customised model for quality of education. The Education Quality Model is, in fact, the theoretical framework of this research. The rest of this thesis is dedicated to primary data collection, data analysis and discussions to examine the validity of this model.

While there are many parameters that can directly or indirectly contribute to the quality of education in general and the quality of higher education in particular, only a limited number of these elements can have an important impact on quality development in education. Mainly built on the Literature Review discussed in the second chapter, as well as the discussions in section 3.3 (in chapter 3), 11 critical success factors were identified that shape the pillars of a quality education system. Each of these issues has an effect on the quality of education; however, a synergistic combination of them can possibly lead to better quality in education. In this research there is an attempt to arrange these influential factors in a meaningful and logical order to build a customised model for quality in education, which the author has termed **The Education Quality Model**. The principles of the Education Quality Model are: Leadership and Strategic Management (Cartwright, 2007; Husrn, 2009); Students, Academics and Staff Recruitment (Taylor *et al.*, 2012); Syllabus/Curriculum (Harvey, 2005); Research/Teaching (Bloxham and Boyd, 2007; Kennedy, 2009); Pedagogy (Roelofs and Terwel, 2009); Learning and research support (Spradlin, 2009); Knowledge management (Kaiserswerth, 2009); Academics' achievements (Bereiter, 2007); Student progress, success and satisfaction (Jessop *et al.*, 2012); University/School achievements (Cousin, 2008; Resnick, 2007); and Innovation and Change Management (Amosa and Cooper, 2006; Dvir, 2009).

3.1. Introduction

The issue of the importance of quality is nothing new; however, not all sectors have received the same amount of attention (Jessop *et al.*, 2012). The desire for a single quality model/theory that can universally cover all aspects of all types of sectors and organisations has led to the development of over-generalised models that ignore the essential characteristics of different sectors like education (Erdem, 2009). There are a number of theories/models in quality management such as TQM, TQC, Quality Management System (ISO 9000), and MBNQA (Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award) which have been used by different organisations around the world. One of the best known models in quality management is the EFQM Excellence Model. The EFQM Excellence Model has been used just as a benchmark in this study due to its advantages over other models in terms of scope, practicality, measurability, reliability and flexibility (Kruger, 2001; Taylor *et al.*, 2012).

After the Introduction, the rest of this chapter is arranged as follows: 3.2 the EFQM Excellence Model as a benchmark; 3.3 influential factors on quality of education; 3.4 the focal theory/model; 3.5 logic in arranging components of the model; 3.6 rationale and importance of the model; 3.7 the research propositions; 3.8 connections between EFQM and the Education Quality Model; 3.9 conclusion.

There are so many macro-environmental and micro-environmental elements that might have some effect on research, the researcher, or participants (Cadden *et al.*, 2010). Macro-environmental issues are very widespread and general factors that might affect everything and anything. Effects of macro-environmental factors are generally (but not always) indirect and limited (Agranoff and Radin, 1991). Macro-environmental factors are generally grouped into six main domains including political, economical, socio-cultural, technological, environmental, and legal domains that are known as PESTEL (Agranoff and Radin, 1991).

There are also many ‘*cultural*’ factors that might have some effect on research, the researcher, or research participants (Schultz and Hinings, 2012). Some of these cultural factors are religion, language, values, norms, perceptions, learning styles, attitudes, etiquettes, expectations, rules, gender roles, approaches to problem-solving, patterns of handling emotions, social interactions, decision-making patterns, notions of beauty, literature and even the types of the food participants eat or types and colours of dress participants wear are part of their culture (Hofstede *et al.*, 2010;

Van-den-Berg and Wilderom, 2004). As has been mentioned, consideration of the possible effects of participants' culture on the variety of answers given to interview questions has never been one of the research objectives and it is beyond the scope of this research. Even if assessing the impact of participants' culture on their given answers was one of the research objectives or was within the scope of this research, conducting such an assessment is too complicated because culture has too many aspects (Hattie, 2009). Even if a researcher decides to select a limited number of aspects of culture to examine, this research would be non-defensible because such research can only assess culture in a very limited way due to ignoring vast majority of aspects of culture (Hofstede *et al.*, 2010). Another problem is the way in which culture would be assessed. While some valuable efforts made by few scholars such as Hofstede (1984) or Trompenaars (1995) to quantify culture, it cannot be denied that culture is a subjective issue so it is not possible to measure the exact effect of any aspect of culture on participants' answers (Schultz and Hinings, 2012).

This research has adopted an inductive approach to the study of quality in order to develop a new model for the quality of education. In this chapter this model and its components are introduced. So the main part of the discussion in this chapter will focus on the 11 pillars of 'the Education Quality Model' which are Leadership and Strategic Management; Students, Academics and Staff Recruitment; Syllabus/Curriculum; Research/Teaching; Pedagogy; Learning and research support; Knowledge management; Academics' achievements; Student progress, success & satisfaction; Universities'/Schools' achievements; and finally, Innovation and Change Management.

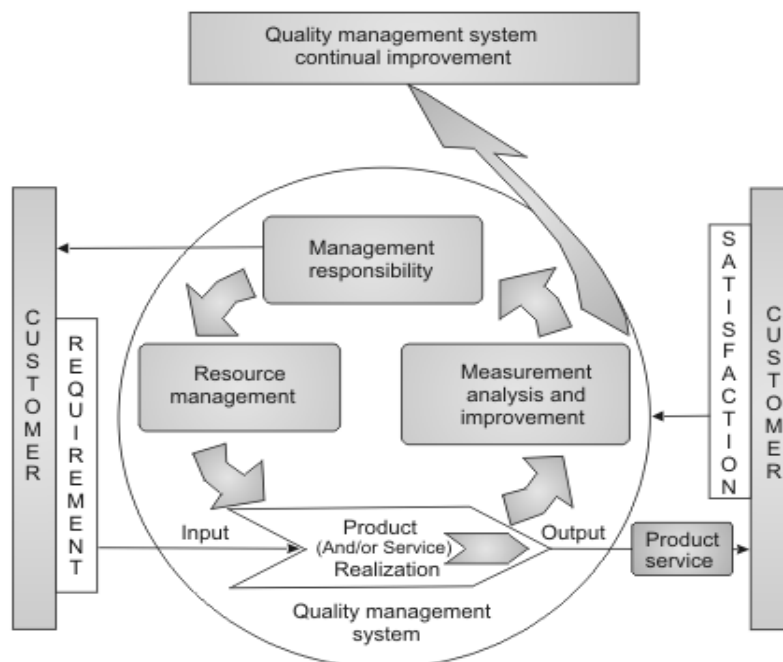
3.2. The EFQM Excellence Model as a Benchmark

This research is a theory/model building study so it does not use a model/theory as its theoretical framework; however, for the sake of benchmarking, a model will be used. Among the wide range of quality models, four of them are used very widely. These quality models/systems are the EFQM Excellence Model, TQM, Quality Management System (ISO 9000), and MBNQA (Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award).

3.2.1. ISO 9000

The ISO 9000 family of standards represents an international consensus on good quality management practices. It consists of standards and guidelines relating to quality management systems and related supporting standards.

Figure 3.1: The Model of Quality Management System



Source: International Organization for Standardization, 2008

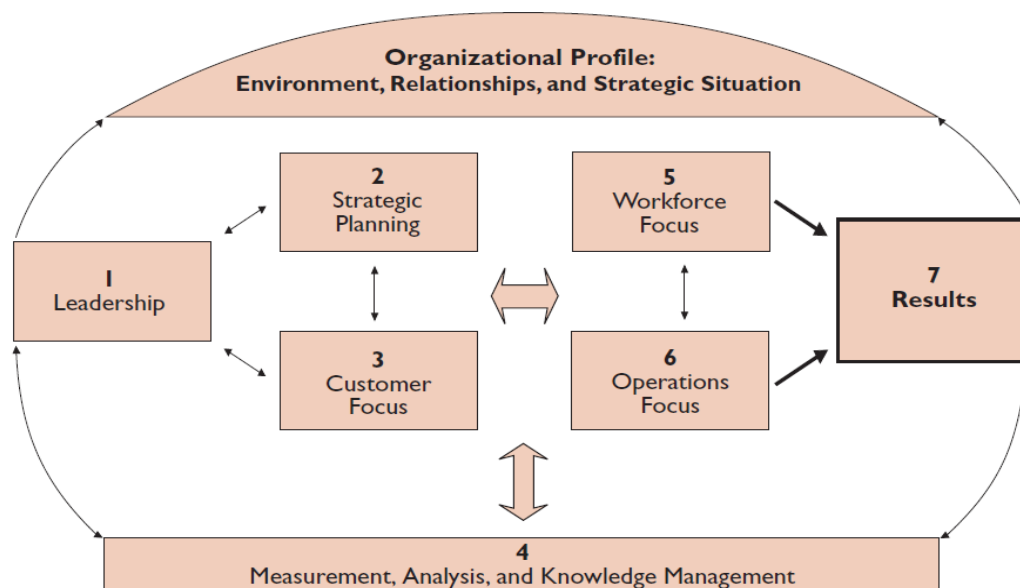
ISO 9001:2008 is the standard that provides a set of standardised requirements for a quality management system, regardless of what the user organization does, its size, or whether it is in the private, or public sector. The other standards in the family cover specific aspects such as fundamentals and vocabulary, performance improvements,

documentation, training, and financial and economic aspects. The eight quality management principles are customer focus, leadership, involvement of people, process approach, system approach to management, continual improvement, factual approach to decision making, and mutually beneficial supplier relationships, respectively (ISO, 2008).

3.2.2. The Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award

The Baldrige Program is the nation's public-private partnership dedicated to performance excellence. The *Education Criteria for Performance Excellence* (referred to as the Education Criteria) is used by organisations that provide educational services in the United States and its territories. The Education Criteria are developed based on the valuable experience of a team of experts (USA NIST, 2011). The requirements of the Education Criteria for Performance Excellence are embodied in seven categories including: leadership; strategic planning; customer focus; measurement, analysis, and knowledge management; workforce focus; operations focus; and results (USA NIST, 2011). The major weakness of the Baldrige education model is the fact that it is not a research-based model. It was developed based on Baldrige's Model with minor differences by the Baldrige Foundation.

Figure 3.2: Baldrige Education Criteria for Performance Excellence Framework



Source: USA National Institute of Standards and Technology, 2011, p. iv

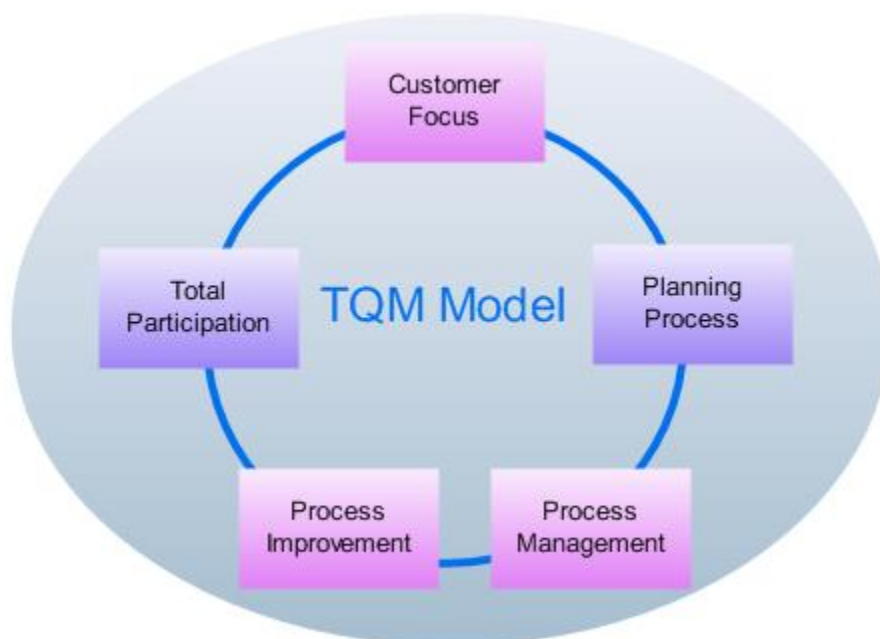
3.2.3. Total Quality Management (TQM)

TQM can be summed up in six words, "DO IT RIGHT THE FIRST TIME" (Juran, 1988). TQM is perceived differently by different scholars. Some authors consider TQM as a philosophy and mind-set (Feigenbaum, 1986), while others of a more practical turn see TQM as a model (Lomas, 2007), guideline (Jessop *et al.*, 2012), or a system in the form of a model (Ishikawa, 1985). While TQM can be applied universally across many industries, it is required to tailor it to a specific business.

The idea of continuous improvement of the quality of goods and services has always been a big point of TQM (Ishikawa, 1985). It awards multiple companies each year for showing specific attributes that apply to TQM. The Baldrige award does not address many key elements of management such as innovative R&D, market innovativeness and sound financial planning. You could possibly win the Baldrige award which identifies you as the leading company for TQM that year, but it also can have major financial implications.

Like the other models, TQM is too general with no attention to the fundamental differences between education and all other industries (Spradlin, 2009). Disregarding nature of education and educational institutions has made TQM inappropriate for this industry.

Figure 3.3: TQM System



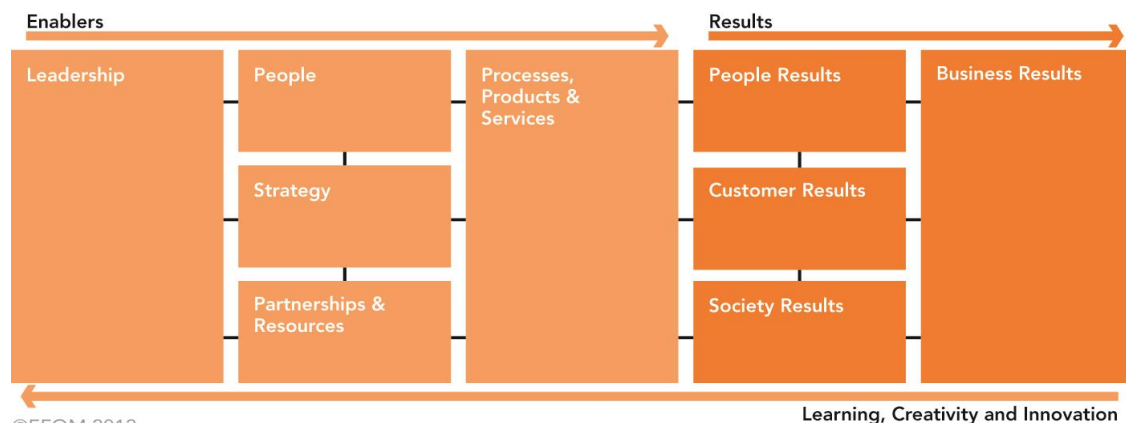
Source: TQM Model (Feigenbaum, 1986)

3.2.4. The EFQM Excellence Model

One of the best known theories/models in quality management is *The EFQM Excellence Model*. The EFQM Excellence Model has been used only as a benchmark in this study due to its partial advantages over other models in terms of scope, practicality, measurability, reliability and flexibility (Kruger, 2001). Furthermore, the other rationale for considering the EFQM Excellence Model as a benchmark is due to its usefulness (Jessop *et al.*, 2012). It has specific usefulness for leaders, managers and customers (Taylor *et al.*, 2012). These are some of benefits to utilising the EFQM Excellence Model: satisfied and loyal customers; successful leaders; a common sense of purpose throughout the organisation; constant, well-managed change; engaged and motivated people and other stakeholders; an upward flow of ideas (Spradlin, 2009). A key feature of the model is its use as a diagnostic tool for self-assessment, where organisations grade themselves against a set of detailed criteria under each of nine headings (EFQM, 2013).

The underlying principles of the EFQM Excellence Model are based on nine 'fundamental concepts of excellence' (Jessop *et al.*, 2012). These concepts, which are the foundation for achieving sustainable excellence in any organisation, are as follows: Achieving Balanced Results; Adding Value for Customers; Leading with Vision, Inspiration and Integrity; Managing by Processes; Succeeding through People; Nurturing Creativity and Innovation; Building Partnerships; and Taking Responsibility for a Sustainable Future (EFQM, 2013). They allow an organisation to assess its strengths and areas for improvement in detail across nine key areas. There is an overarching view of continuous improvement that is applicable to all sectors.

Figure 3.4: The EFQM Excellence Model



Source: The EFQM Excellence Model (2013)

According to official website of the European Foundation for Quality Management that developed the EFQM Excellence Model, there is no such thing as an ‘EFQM for Higher Education’ (EFQM, 2013). There is only one EFQM model for all sectors including education (McGrath-Champ, 2010). Unfortunately, some researchers notably from Sheffield Hallam University used exactly the same model (the EFQM Excellence Model) but with a new name, ‘EFQM for Higher Education’ (Sheffield Hallam University, 2003) instead of developing a customised model for quality of education. The ‘EFQM for Higher Education’ is nothing but exactly the EFQM Excellence Model (Sadler, 2007) has one or two education-related examples regarding each of the nine pillars of the EFQM Excellence Model (see Sheffield Hallam University, 2003).

The European Foundation for Quality Management claims that more than 30,000 organisations worldwide across almost all industries have successfully used the EFQM Excellence Model to improve their quality and general performance (EFQM, 2013). According to independent studies the EFQM Excellence Model has been used mainly in the industrial and production sectors (McGrath-Champ, 2010; Rissom, 2012). There are reports of the positive impact of the EFQM Excellence Model on quality promotion in some service sectors such as information technology, banks and health care too (Sadler, 2007; Tippin, 2012).

The researcher could not find any papers or news regarding successful implementation of the EFQM Excellence Model in any universities. There are some small-scale studies that show that the rate of failure of full implementation of EFQM in the service sector is much higher than production sectors (Rissom, 2012; Scutter, 2010). Even if the EFQM Excellence Model has been utilised successfully in some service sectors such as IT or finance, it does not mean that the EFQM Excellence Model can be used in the education sector too (Woodhouse, 2004) because the nature of education is fundamentally different from IT, finance or other forms of services (Taylor, 2012). In the worst case scenario, even if one or two universities could manage to implement EFQM, it does not mean that EFQM is a suitable model for the education sector and there is no need for a customised model of quality for education. So even the number of organisations in other sectors that implement EFQM jumps to 10 times more than the current figure of 30,000, this number not only cannot justify usage of EFQM in the education sector, but also it cannot rule out the usefulness of having a customised model of quality for the education sector.

Although the EFQM Excellence Model is a viable and reliable model/theory for implementing quality in various organisations, it is very general and disregards the particular requirements of different sectors (Taylor *et al.*, 2012). While universities/schools and research centres are one type of organisation, they are very different to other organisations in terms of the services they provide, the service providers, the recipients of services, and the nature of education and its unique requirements (Mathias, 2004). So, relying on a general theory/model like the EFQM Excellence Model can be useful, but it may sabotage the unique characteristics and requirements of higher education institutions. EFQM does not have any version for education (Spradlin, 2009).

The basic assumption is that the factors that influence the quality of higher education institutions differ to an extent from those mentioned in the EFQM Excellence Model (Lomas, 2004). This difference can be in terms of the number of influential factors, the nature of critical factors, and/or the categorisation of these factors.

Consequently, the only reliable solution for the creation and advancement of the quality of education/research and the quality of educational/research organisations is to develop a customised model of quality for education and research, which acknowledges all the required and specialised aspects of education and research.

3.3. Influential Factors on Quality of Education

As discussed in the literature review chapter, chapter two, there is a very wide range of perspectives about the classification of quality and, more importantly, regarding the influential issues on the quality of education. After a systematic review of the relevant literature and by benchmarking from EFQM, a prime and general, but not customised quality model, the following 11 factors are identified to be highly influential on the quality of education. These 11 factors that play a crucial role in creating, maintaining and developing the quality of education are as follows:

- **Leadership and Strategic Management** (Cartwright, 2007; Husrn, 2009)
- **Student, Academic and Staff Recruitment** (Hattie, 2009; Taylor *et al.*, 2012)
- **Syllabus/Curriculum** (Harvey, 2005; King *et al.*, 2003)
- **Research/Teaching** (Bloxham and Boyd, 2007; Kennedy, 2009)
- **Pedagogy** (Roelofs and Terwel, 2009; Stoddart, 2004)
- **Learning and research support** (Largrosen *et al.*, 2004; Spradlin, 2009)
- **Knowledge management** (Billig and Waterman, 2003; Kaiserswerth, 2009)
- **Academics' achievements** (Bereiter, 2007; Knight and Yorke, 2003)
- **Student progress, success and satisfaction** (Erdem, 2009; Jessop *et al.*, 2012)
- **University/School achievements** (Cousin, 2008; Resnick, 2007);
- **Innovation and Change Management** (Amosa and Cooper, 2006; Dvir, 2009)

In the rest of this section, the meaning and functions of each of these elements and their impact on the quality of education are discussed separately and comprehensively.

3.3.1. Leadership and Strategic Management

Kogan and Hanney (2000) claim that, seemingly, industrial and business organisations in general create and maintain higher quality and customer value than educational institutions. In a similar tone, Cartwright (2007) states that possibly one of the reasons for lower quality at universities compared to for-profit organisations is having less professional leaders to manage their organisations strategically. Strong and visionary leadership, which can think and plan strategically is essential for quality education in the higher education sector (Louis and Marks, 2008). Schools and universities, like other organisations, need qualified leaders (Husrn, 2009).

A recent study by Tippin and his colleagues (2012) shows that possibly a range of less effective long-term strategies and strategic management can be considered as one of the roots of low quality or unstable quality at universities and schools. Day-to-day planning and management, instead of long-term and strategic management, may hurt the quality and performance of those educational institutions (Raven, 2008). Strategic management is not just about planning; it is about, at the very least, environmental analysis, strategy development, strategy implementation, and strategic review and improvement (Largrosen *et al.*, 2004). The solution to this problem is not about using the professional services of management consultancy companies to develop a strategic plan for them (Bloxham and Boyd, 2007). These consultancies may prepare good strategies and strategic plans, but the problems of implementing these strategies for non-professional staff remain unsolved (Green, 1994).

Taras (2008) claims that one issue that may intensify the need for more professional leadership at universities and colleges is having multi-jobs vice chancellors in higher education institutions. Some vice chancellors continue with their teaching, research and publication alongside their leadership role. Kennedy (2009) realised that the amount of time and effort expended by some vice-chancellors on their non-leadership jobs is sometimes more than their official job as leaders.

The above discussions can be summarised in the form of the first proposition:

Proposition 1: *Having professional and appropriate Leadership and Strategic Management can lead to higher quality in the education sector.*

Objective 1: *To examine the impact of Leadership and Strategic Management in educational institutions on the quality of education*

3.3.2. Student, Academic and Staff Recruitment

The quality of education may be influenced not only by various systems, processes and plans but also by the people who provide the educational services as well as those who receive these services (Taylor *et al.*, 2012). So, if educational institutions care about the quality of education in their institutions, they should demonstrate their aspiration for quality by recruiting quality students, academics and non-academic staff (Hattie, 2009).

The difficulty with people-related quality is that it can have at least three related roots (Largrosen *et al.*, 2004). Sometimes less desired quality education is due to recruiting students of limited ability who cannot learn and benefit from the existing quality academics/teachers and staff (Lomas, 2007b). Setting no entry requirements, or very easily fulfilled entry requirements, for prospective students/ researchers could result in attracting inappropriate students/researchers (Brown, 2004).

Another people-related issue for the quality of education is related to the main educational service providers, lecturers and teachers (Ractham and Zhang, 2006). Quality academics/teachers are those who not only are expert in their own fields, but are capable of conveying their knowledge and skills to their students fully and in ways that are understandable to students. Some academics are excellent researchers, but they may lack the ability to teach their research skills to their students and train prospective researchers (Kogan *et al.*, 2000).

Last but not least, people-centred difficulties include non-academic staff members who work as administrators, IT technicians, librarians and so on at educational institutions (Largrosen *et al.*, 2004). Education does not merely happen inside classrooms through academics/teachers (Nicol and McFarlane-Dick, 2006); it also relies on staff who have roles in recruiting, supporting and motivating students and who maintain the university/school teaching facilities for the use of students (Kogan and Hanney, 2000). So it is essential to recruit and train quality administrative and support staff in order to have quality education (Louis and Marks, 2008).

The quality of education can be damaged if a school or university recruits unqualified students, academics and even staff, it is not reasonable to expect high quality performance (Green, 1994). Quality people create quality results, so the Students, Academics and Staff Recruitment factor has major consequences for the quality of education (McGrath-Champ *et al.*, 2010).

The second proposition of this research has developed based on the above mentioned consensus among scholars regarding the importance of quality recruitment.

Proposition 2: *Quality people create quality results so the Student, Academic and Staff Recruitment factor has major consequences for the quality of education.*

Objective 2: *To assess the contribution of appropriate Student, Academic and Staff Recruitment to the quality of education*

3.3.3. Syllabus/ Curriculum

One of the main purposes of establishing and running a university/school is educating students/researchers and preparing them for a better career/future. This aim can be achieved if the university/school develops and follows an appropriate syllabus/curriculum (King *et al.*, 2003). It would be pointless to have high-quality students, academics/teachers, facilities, strategies, and leaders while not having an appropriate quality syllabus/curriculum (Largrosen *et al.*, 2004). All of these issues may only be worthwhile if they support the delivery of quality education based on a quality syllabus/curriculum (Broadfoot, 2002).

It is recommended to review, modify and adjust syllabuses/curriculums based on the requirements of the changing environment and expectations of students, their parents, society, employers and governments (Harvey, 2005). It would be unreasonable to teach topics to students that were obsolete, unnecessary or mismatched to what students really need to learn (Lundgren, 2003).

Although having a well-developed syllabus/curriculum is a must, it is not enough (Taras, 2008). Sometimes the problem is not the lack of a suitable syllabus/curriculum; it is carelessness in following the syllabus/curriculum (Orrell, 2006). Any syllabus/ curriculum would be useless if the university/school or the academic/teacher did not implement the syllabus/curriculum correctly and completely (Bloxham and Boyd, 2007; Raven, 2008).

So another issue that noticeably affects the quality of education is developing, reviewing, updating, adjusting and fully implementing a quality syllabus/curriculum, which supports the general aim of providing education to students/researchers (Tippin

et al., 2012). The quality of education depends on what is being taught at schools and universities (Louis and Marks, 2008).

The third proposition of this study has emerged from what has been discussed in this section.

Proposition 3: *What is supposed to be taught to the student in terms of Syllabus/Curriculum is another determinant of the quality of education.*

Objective 3: To evaluate the degree to which a quality *Syllabus/Curriculum* is important for quality education

3.3.4. Research/Teaching

As was argued above, having an appropriate syllabus/curriculum that highlights what topics are supposed to be discussed is necessary for quality education; however, there is an issue that is equally or possibly more important than the syllabus/curriculum, which is the quality of the actual teaching and/or research activities. Quality education relies on the availability of quality services for teaching by academics and research by academics and students (Bloxham and Boyd, 2007).

Although education is not limited to teaching or research and people can learn by self-study, observation or discussion with friends and family (Green, 1994), the main justification for the existence of educational institutions is providing more systematic and effective education to people through 'teaching' and/or 'research' (Largrosen *et al.*, 2004).

The degree to which universities and schools should place emphasis either on research or on teaching depends on the level of study, the nature of the education provided, the actual capabilities of students, the syllabus/curriculum and the study requirements (Stoddart, 2004). Any mismatch or weakness in the provision of teaching or research can adversely affect the quality of education (Kennedy, 2009).

The quality of teaching or research can be assessed based on different criteria by using different methods (Lomas, 2007a). The quantity of each of these two interrelated issues is one of the criteria (Nicol and McFarlane-Dick, 2006). The amount of research being conducted in relation to the number of students/researchers and academics is one indicator of quality research (Lomas, 2007b). The size and level

of research are other measures of quality research (Brown, 2004). Publications based on the research conducted is also widely accepted as evidence of quality research (Kogan *et al.*, 2000). The quality of teaching can be measured by assessing the output of teaching in terms of the degree to which students have learned the concepts, obtained the skills and achieved acceptable grades/marks in the designated time by a normal level of effort (Ractham and Zhang, 2006).

Therefore, in brief, the provision of teaching (taught aspect) of a good quality and having more and better quality research (research aspect) are two other success factors involved in quality education (Hattie, 2009; Largrosen *et al.*, 2004). So the fourth proposition is shaped as a result of these arguments.

Proposition 4: *The quality of education depends on the quality of Research/Teaching, which are the main activities at educational institutions.*

Objective 4: To explore how the quality of education is influenced by *Research/Teaching*

3.3.5. Pedagogy

Quality education and higher education have many advantages, though creating and maintaining such quality relies on fulfilling certain requirements. One of the requirements of quality education is having quality pedagogy. In other words, education/higher education and its quality have many dimensions, one of which is the quality of teaching methods in these academic institutions. Ineffective and inadequate teaching methods sharply reduce the quality of higher education (Roelofs and Terwel, 2009) and consequently undermine the expected results and advantages of education/higher education.

Pedagogy, or the way in which a subject is taught, is another key factor. Traditional teaching methods are no longer considered to be effective. The quality of education/higher education institutions cannot be guaranteed without having a customised and effective pedagogy, which matches other important issues such as the level of students and study, syllabus/curriculum, and appropriate learning and research facilities at schools/universities and research centres (Stoddart, 2004).

Research into the quality of higher education covers many aspects, one of which is the quality of pedagogy or the study of teaching methods. It is commonly accepted among scholars that ‘quality of pedagogy’ is built on three interrelated notions: ‘intellectual quality’ (Ladwig *et al.*, 2007), a proper ‘learning environment’ (King, 2002) and ‘authentic teaching methods’ (Roelofs and Terwel, 2009).

The intellectual quality of pedagogy is about the importance of serious, logical thinking in the process of goal setting and the design process of teaching and learning in order to gain high achievement (Gore, 2001). A common mistake is taking for granted that all academics and postgraduate students are intellectual, so whatever objectives are set by them or processes designed by them are automatically intellectually-based and of high quality (Amosa and Cooper, 2006). The fact is, many teachers who are not highly educated can be rather more intellectual than some highly educated academics and university pedagogical team members (Ladwig *et al.*, 2007). So the intellectual quality of pedagogy can be achieved by setting standards to check precisely the suggested pedagogy and having an open, participative management that involves experienced and intellectual teachers (Amosa and Cooper, 2006).

By considering all of these opinions, the researcher has found another critical factor, pedagogy, which is highly influential on the quality of education. This view is reflected in the fifth proposition.

***Proposition 5:** Pedagogy or the suitability of the way in which the syllabus is taught to students can contribute to the quality of education.*

***Objective 5:** To identify the effects of Pedagogy on the quality of education*

3.3.6. Learning and Research Support

Schools, colleges, universities and other educational organisations are established to provide opportunities for learning and/or conducting research for students/researchers/ learners (Blom and Meyers, 2003). Fulfilment of such a mission depends on various factors like the availability and quality of the support provided to students/researchers in studying and/or doing their research (Largrosen *et al.*, 2004).

Having a classroom with adequate teaching facilities, a comprehensive library and online library, and trained and helpful staff and processes that facilitate learning and

research, are all necessary for quality education (Keeves, 2007). Having access to good learning and teaching facilities is no longer a privilege; rather, it is the right of students and researchers (Spradlin, 2009).

The quality of education would inevitably drop when universities/schools push 70-80 students into a classroom that was originally designed for 40 students (Lomas, 2004). Holding a class with 150-200 students can reduce the quality of education remarkably, because students are unable to ask questions and participate in the class or to receive the required help and supervision (Gibbs and Dunbar-Goddet, 2009). An inappropriate temperature, lighting, ventilation and even wall colour in classrooms can negatively affect learning and consequently the quality of education (Newton, 2002).

Researchers need support to do their research effectively in the given time (Hattie, 2009). Access (sometimes 24 hours) to laboratories, testing centres, printing, materials, buildings, cutting, measuring, pressing and mixing tools, ... machinery, wind tunnels, ... is crucial for researchers (Taylor *et al.*, 2012). While access to these facilities is indispensable, researchers also need good quality and reliable facilities to be available because the validity of the findings of researchers depends to a considerable extent on the reliability and quality of research facilities (Lomas, 2004).

One of the important forms of support required for learning and research is the existence and effectiveness of well-trained, friendly, knowledgeable and dedicated staff who are employed to help and support students/researchers to progress in their study/research (Ractham and Zhang, 2006). Staff should fully understand that the existence of the educational organisation and their jobs is mainly for the purpose of teaching and supporting students (Kogan *et al.*, 2000). Staff should never assume that helping students and researchers is not part of their job and responsibilities (Brown, 2004).

Summing up the above discussions, the perceived necessity of having proper support for learning and research is demonstrated in the sixth proposition.

Proposition 6: Effective and quality Learning and research support can lead to higher quality education.

Objective 6: To investigate the correlation between good *Learning and research support* and an increase in the quality of education

3.3.7. Knowledge Management

Information overload can be as damaging as a lack of information, so there is a need for a system to manage collection, creation, storage and distribution of knowledge and information (Billig and Waterman, 2003). The quality of education and research are connected to the capability of a university, college, school or research centre to manage the knowledge required by their students and researchers properly (Largrosen *et al.*, 2004).

Without the necessary knowledge/information and without the required systematic process and system for the creation, updating and distribution of this knowledge, research and educational institutions would face a crisis and a reduction in the quality of the education provided and/or research support (Kaiserswerth, 2009). The availability of a technology platform for the effective organising of knowledge management is indispensable (Gallegos, 2004). As Holbeche states (1999, p. 32): “*KM [Knowledge Management] involves blending a company’s internal and external information and turning it into actionable knowledge via a technology platform*”.

Universities and schools are centres for creating and transferring knowledge by and among their students (Lane, 2008). Some authors (Holbeche, 1999) have found that the importance and impact of knowledge today has reached a very high level, so knowledge itself can be considered a source of power, core competency and quality for any advanced organisation. In fact, the existence and growth of many organisations, including research and educational ones, are closely tied to the existence and efficient management of knowledge and information (Scutter *et al.*, 2010).

There are many reasons for the development of knowledge management in organisations in general and in universities, colleges, schools or research centres in particular (McGrath-Champ *et al.*, 2010). In this regard, Walton (1999, p. 54) believes “*Knowledge is the key sustainable source of value added in an organisation and is central to the development of strategic advantage; individuals are the primary agents of knowledge acquisition, and, in the case of tacit knowledge, are its principal repositories; organisations need to tap into tacit knowledge, to identify ways in which it can be made public and transferable and to capture it so that it becomes part of the ‘structural capital’ of the organisation and available to others*”. To put it simply, knowledge is power and it can contribute to the enhancement of the quality of

research and education if it is managed properly (Bloxham and Boyd, 2007). The seventh proposition is the output of the discussion in this section.

***Proposition 7:** Reliable and effective Knowledge management can help educational institutions to enhance the quality of their education.*

***Objective Z:** To determine the relationship between suitable Knowledge management in educational institutions and the quality of education*

3.3.8. Academics' Achievements

The quality of education depends partly on the quality of educators (Knight and Yorke, 2003). In short, the quality of education is related to the main educational service providers, lecturers and teachers (Bereiter, 2007). It is unlikely that an unsuccessful academic/teacher can provide a high quality educational service to students and nurture successful students (Largrosen *et al.*, 2004). From the students' perspective, quality academics/ teachers are those who are not only expert in their own fields, but capable of conveying their knowledge and skills to their students fully and in ways that are understandable (Sadler, 2007); however, this is only one side of the coin.

The success of an academic or a teacher can be assessed based on the degree to which this educator has progressed in his/her career, non-academic roles/responsibilities in academia/schools/government advisory posts, the number of publications and ranking of the journals/conferences, amount of research conducted, amount of grants received, frequency of grants received; recognition received in the form of prizes, certificates and publicity (Evans, 2008).

Although a student is unlikely to receive a high quality educational service from a mediocre and/or unsuccessful academic/teacher, it not impossible (Ladwig *et al.*, 2007); however, the difficulty is that in order to be successful, students need more than quality educational services, they need motivation too (Mathias, 2004). Academics/teachers should be inspirational in order to encourage their own students to overcome any difficulties and progress toward a brighter future (Blom and Meyers, 2003). Employee training and development is an acceptable method that schools and universities can use to help their lecturers/teachers to accomplish higher things

(Keeves, 2007). In addition, academics at universities/higher education institutions have the opportunity of not teaching for one semester and focus instead on publications and research (Spradlin, 2009).

In summary, a university/school may not be considered a quality institution if its academics/teachers do not have the chance to be successful in terms of publication, research and recognition (Largrosen *et al.*, 2004). The rationale is that successful academics/teachers can contribute in two ways to the quality of education and the success of their own students: first, by delivering high quality education and research support to their students (Gibbs and Dunbar-Goddet, 2009); and second, by intensifying the impact of good services by inspiring students to learn and succeed (Lomas, 2004). The eighth proposition, in fact, is the conclusion of the above debate regarding the impact of quality educators on the quality of education.

***Proposition 8:** The level of Academics' achievements can demonstrate the level of quality of education and the quality of the educational institution.*

***Objective 8:** To test the extent to which the level of Academics' achievements can indicate the quality of education*

3.3.9. Student Progress, Success and Satisfaction

While there are some different quality models/theories and each of them has some differences from the others, there is consensus among almost all on one issue: an emphasis on the measurement of quality based on the perspective of the main customer/stakeholder (Newton, 2002). The only clients and one of the most important stakeholders of any educational institution are the students; therefore, it makes sense to measure the quality of a university/school in terms of the progress, success and satisfaction of its students (Jessop *et al.*, 2012). These are three interrelated issues, but they are not the same as each other.

From the 'Progress' point of view, education and an educational organisation have good quality if the student who receives educational services or support for research achieves reasonable progress in their studies and/or research (Andriessen, 2006). The student's progress can be assessed based on how much and how well the student has

learnt the required topics/skills/knowledge during a specified period of time (Erdem, 2009). Different types of formative evaluation (coursework), and summative evaluation (examinations), can be used to measure the amount of a student's progress, so moving from the first semester to the second semester, or progressing from the first year to the second year, or going from first degree level to Master's level in a designated time with good grades, are all signs of the student's progress and consequently signs of a quality education (Roelofs and Terwel, 2009).

From the 'Success' perspective, quality education should demonstrate itself in the form of the level of a student's success (Ladwig, 2007). While the student's progress focuses on the 'Processes' of a student's development, the student's success mainly (but not solely) emphasises the Outputs/results of quality education (Largrosen *et al.*, 2004). The student's success can be assessed by analysing the percentage of students: who finished their studies in a reasonable time, and/or who gained admission to continue their study/research, and/or who achieved publication/inventions, and/or who got a relevant job shortly after graduation (Magendzo, 2008). Therefore, a higher success rate for students in terms of completed study/research, gaining admission for further study/research, getting relevant jobs and having publications can be considered important indicators of quality in education and in educational institutions (Kogan and Hanney, 2000).

From the 'Satisfaction' aspect, the quality of education and educational/research organisations need to be perceived and understood according to the degree to which the student is satisfied with them (Cartwright, 2007). From this perspective, satisfaction of academics, universities/schools or other stakeholders (e.g. government) regarding the education and the educational/research services provided is important but not enough (Louis and Marks, 2008). The level of satisfaction of the student who receives these educational/research services should be considered too (Husrn, 2009). To put it simply, the education and the provided educational/research services have quality if the student is satisfied with them (Tippin *et al.*, 2012). The degree of the student's satisfaction determines the degree of quality of the education provided and the quality of the educational/research organisation (Raven, 2008).

Although consideration of customer satisfaction in measuring quality is a widely accepted notion in almost all industries, some authors deny this right to students in the education sector (Largrosen *et al.*, 2004). They believe that students, even university students, are not mature or qualified to judge the quality of the education

they receive (Taylor *et al.*, 2012). This patronising perspective does not have the required academic rigour or public support in the twenty-first century (Hattie, 2009).

Educational/research organisations can learn to consider students' needs and wants by understanding that students are 'customers' of universities/ colleges and schools (Largrosen *et al.*, 2004). These educational organisations should try to create and improve the quality of their institutions and the education provided by focusing on the three interrelated issues of student progress, success and satisfaction (Ractham and Zhang, 2006). These views regarding the effects of student progress, success and satisfaction on the quality of education are highlighted in the ninth proposition as follows.

Proposition 9: *Student progress, success and satisfaction is one of the important indicators of quality in education.*

Objective 9: To establish the connectivity between *Student progress, success and satisfaction* and the perceived quality of education

3.3.10. University/School Achievements

It is expected that quality universities/schools would provide quality education. One of the indicators of the quality of education is the degree of superiority of the institution that provides this education compared to other educational/research organisations (Kogan *et al.*, 2000). In other words, university/school success is another sign of having a quality education system (Brown, 2004). By the same logic, the degree of success of educational/research institutions could represent the degree of quality of the education provided (Lomas, 2007b).

The achievements of universities/schools can be measured based on various criteria, such as the ranking, amount of received grant and the rate of growth of these institutions (Resnick, 2007). There are some organisations that rank universities and/or schools, which are not reliable, thus their published rankings should not be considered a sign of quality (Cousin, 2008); however, there are a few independent institutions (e.g the Guardian) that are generally reliable with an acceptable degree of bias (Amosa and Cooper, 2006). Every year universities/schools are ranked based on different criteria. Not only universities/schools, but also the majority of prospective

students/ researchers, consider these ranking levels an important metric of achievement and the quality of education (Machin and Wilson, 2005).

In addition to the rankings, two other determinants of university/school achievements are the amount of grants received and the rate of growth of these institutions (Jones, 2003). Governments, non-governmental organisations, charities, individuals and sometimes companies donate money to 'good' universities/schools, so universities/ schools consider the amount of grant received as an achievement which represents the quality of education in their institutions (Largrosen *et al.*, 2004). Furthermore, it is claimed by Kruger (2001) that a faster rate of growth of universities/schools shows a higher level of achievement and better quality of education.

That is to say, the achievements of universities/schools are closely linked to the achievements of their academics and the success/achievements of their students (Sadler, 2007). Consequently, a higher degree of academic and student success and achievements would almost directly contribute to higher achievements of educational/research institutions, which in turn would lead to a higher quality of education (Evans, 2008). Thereby, the quality of education can be reliable and stable if quality universities/schools recruit and retain quality academics/teachers as well as quality students/researchers (Ladwig *et al.*, 2007). The tenth proposition illustrates this common view among the scholars in this field.

***Proposition 10:** High University/School achievements are one of the signs of having high quality education.*

***Objective 10:** To evaluate any meaningful relationship between the quality of education and University/School achievements*

3.3.11. Innovation and Change Management

Education, directly or indirectly, is about innovation and development in different sciences and fields of study; therefore, higher levels of innovation can represent a higher quality of education (Dvir, 2009). There is consensus among different authors that innovation is the life blood of any organisation (Hissel, 2009; Vanhaverbeke, 2009). Universities and schools should be a source of innovation and prepare students

to be innovative, so it is expected that universities and schools are innovative in almost everything they do (Largrosen *et al.*, 2004). At universities and schools, innovation can be found in the methods of recruiting students/academics/teachers, in preparing syllabuses/curriculums, in developing pedagogy, in the managing and provision of learning and research support, in teaching/research, in knowledge management, in leadership and strategic management, and in the achievements of universities' students and academics (Torrance, 2007).

Although it can be claimed that, due to the innovative nature of human beings, the emergence of innovation goes back to the very beginnings of human history in general and human tool-making in particular, the modern conceptualisation of innovation was begun by Schumpeter (1934). Schumpeter (1934) described innovation as the creation of a new element and/or new arrangement of already existing elements. About 50 years later, Kanter (1983) expanded this definition and emphasised the process-based nature of innovation.

As regards future of innovation, while Vanhaverbeke (2009) and Spradlin (2009) believe that open innovation will be the dominant theory, Dvir (2009) highlights co-creation and Hissel (2009) emphasises the innovation chain as the determinant of the future of innovation. Kaiserswerth (2009), by combining the aforementioned views, claims that cooperation and open innovation will determine the future of innovation.

Innovation is change, but innovation would fail if there were no adequate change management system to support it (Amosa and Cooper, 2006). Change management can help universities and schools benefit from innovation fully (Poot *et al.*, 2009). Although well-managed innovation can be beneficial for any educational institutions and their students, there is almost always some resistance to the changes that innovation creates in an organisation (Roelofs and Terwel, 2009). Change management facilitates the implementation of innovation and consequently contributes to the innovation-based quality of education (Largrosen *et al.*, 2004). The eleventh proposition concludes this discussion regarding the roles of innovation and change management on the quality of education.

Proposition 11: *Continuous, purposeful and well-planned Innovation and Change Management is one of the keys to high quality education.*

Objective 11: To assess the importance of appropriate *Innovation and Change Management* in higher education institutions for the quality of education

3.4. The Focal Theory/Model

3.4.1. The Plan for this Research

As was clearly mentioned in the aim of this research, the author has adopted an inductive approach to research in order to build a new theory/model for the quality of education. The intention is not to select one of the existing theories or models to test or to modify. So, in brief, this research does not have a pre-determined and rigid theoretical framework borrowed from other researchers. This study primarily tries to build a new model of quality for education by considering other models and other authors' perspectives in general and other quality models such as the EFQM model in particular. So EFQM, in fact, is not the theoretical framework of this research, it is just a model that is being benchmarked to help develop a new and customised model for the quality of education. This section answers the question: what is going to be done in this research? This research proposes to develop a customised model/theory of quality for education based on the EFQM Excellence Model by consulting Saudi and British academics and senior managers.

The EFQM Excellence Model encompasses nine factors that are classified into two main groups: enablers (with five factors) and results (with four factors). In this study, these nine factors will not be discussed in detail because EFQM is not the theoretical framework of this research. The main proposition is that the influential factors in the quality of higher education institutions differ in part from those mentioned in the EFQM Excellence Model. These differences may be in terms of the number of influential factors, the nature of the critical factors, and/or the categorisation of these factors.

3.4.2. Customised Quality Model for Education

While there are many parameters that can directly or indirectly contribute to the quality of education in general and the quality of higher education in particular, only a limited number of these elements can have an impact on the long-term quality development of education. Mainly built on the Literature Review discussed in the second chapter, as well as the discussions in section 3.3 (chapter 3), 11 critical success factors were identified that shape the pillars of a quality education system.

Based on the literature discussed, each of these issues has an effect on the quality of education; however, a synergetic combination of them can lead to more sustainable quality in education. In this research there is an attempt to arrange these influential factors in a meaningful and logical order to build a customised model for quality in education, which the author has termed **The Education Quality Model** as demonstrated in Figure 3.7.

Based on the discussions in section 3.3, the principles or critical success factors of the Education Quality Model are as follows:

- Leadership and Strategic Management (Cartwright, 2007; Husrn, 2009)
 - Strong and visionary leadership, which can think and plan strategically is essential for high quality education and higher education. Schools and universities, like other organisations, need qualified leaders.
- Students, Academics and Staff Recruitment (Hattie, 2009; Taylor *et al.*, 2012)
 - There is no guarantee of quality in education if a school or university recruits students, academics and even staff who are of limited ability or unqualified. It is not reasonable to expect good quality academic results from people of limited ability.
- Syllabus/Curriculum (Harvey, 2005; King *et al.*, 2003)
 - The quality of education depends on what is being taught, i.e. the syllabus/ curriculum at schools and universities.
- Research/Teaching (Bloxham and Boyd, 2007; Kennedy, 2009)
 - Provision of teaching (taught aspect) of a good quality and having more and quality research (research aspect) are also factors involved in the success of quality education.
- Pedagogy (Roelofs and Terwel, 2009; Stoddart, 2004)
 - The way in which a subject is taught is another key factor. Traditional teaching methods have lost much of their credibility.
- Learning and research support (Largrosen *et al.*, 2004; Spradlin, 2009)
 - Having appropriate classrooms, with adequate teaching facilities, a comprehensive library, and having trained and helpful staff and processes that facilitate learning and research are all necessary.
- Knowledge management (Billig and Waterman, 2003; Kaiserswerth, 2009)

- Information overload can be as damaging as a lack of information, so there is a need for a system to manage the collection, creation, storage and distribution of knowledge and information.
- Academics' achievements (Bereiter, 2007; Knight and Yorke, 2003)
 - A university/school cannot be considered as a quality institution if its academics/teachers do not have the opportunity of being successful in terms of publications, research and recognition.
- Student progress, success and satisfaction (Erdem, 2009; Jessop *et al.*, 2012)
 - The most important customers of educational institutions are students, therefore it make sense to measure the quality of a university/school in terms of the progress, success and satisfaction of its students.
- University/School achievements (Cousin, 2008; Resnick, 2007)
 - The success of universities/schools is another sign of a quality education system. This can be measured based on the ranking, amount of grants received and the rate of growth of these institutions.
- Innovation and Change Management (Amosa and Cooper, 2006; Dvir, 2009)
 - Innovation is change and it is the lifeblood of any organisation, but innovation will fail if there is no adequate change management system to support it.

Each of these 11 elements is expected to have direct and indirect impacts on the quality of education. To avoid unnecessary complexity, in this research the main, but not the only, focus will be on the direct effects of each of these issues on the quality of education.

Figure 3.5: Influential Factors on Quality of Education



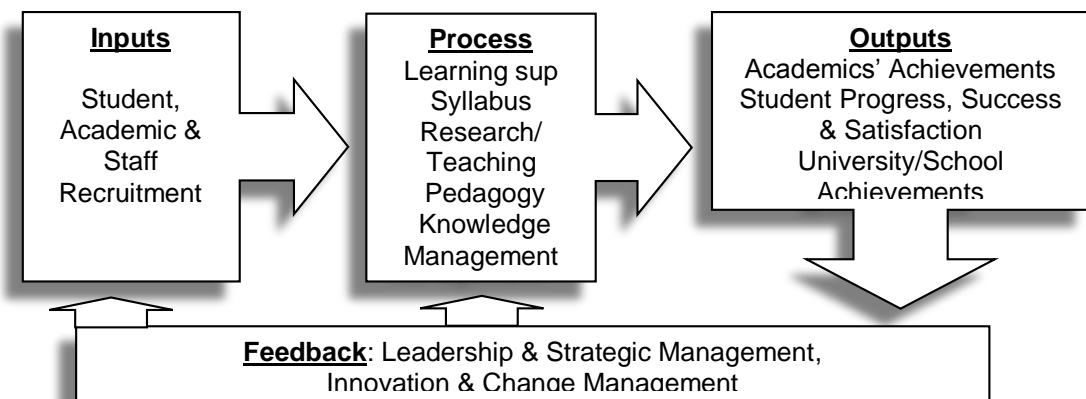
As mentioned before, this study considers EFQM as its own benchmark so in the following table possible correlation among 11 elements of the Education Quality Model with nine components of EFQM model is provided. Some similarities between the two models are detectable.

Table 3.1. Mapping Components of EFQM on to the Education Quality Model

9 Components of EFQM	11 Elements the Education Quality Model
Leadership	Leadership & Strategic Management
People	Student, Academic & Staff Recruitment
Strategy	Leadership & Strategic Management
Partnership & Resources	Innovation & Change Management
Processes, Products & Services	Syllabus/curriculum, research/teaching, pedagogy, knowledge management, and learning support
People results	Academics' Achievements
Customer results	Student Progress, Success & Satisfaction
Society results	-----
Business results	University/School Achievements

These 11 factors have a systemic connection to each other. They are arranged in this form because the components of this model shape a system that changes its inputs (students, academics & staff) into quality outputs (academics' achievements, student progress, success and satisfaction, university/school achievements) through sets of well-managed and quality processes (learning and research support syllabus/curriculum, research/teaching, pedagogy and knowledge management).

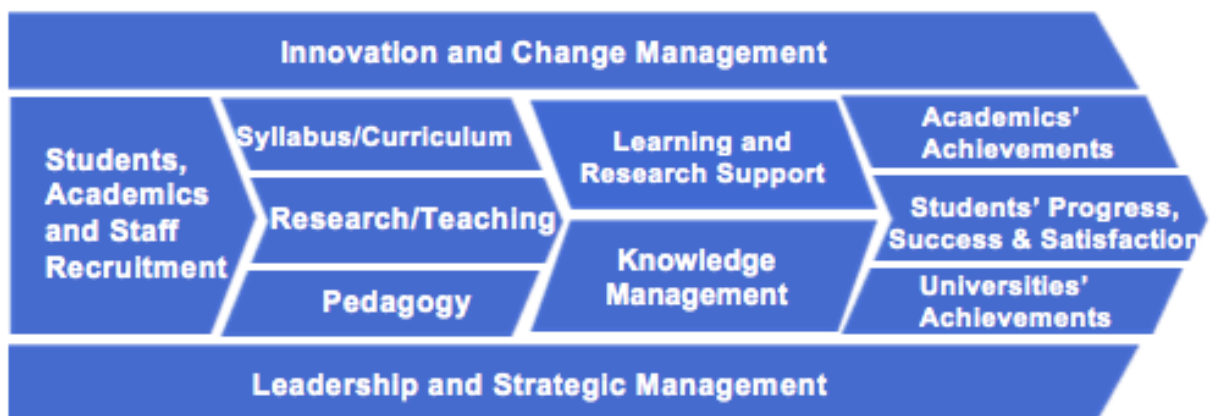
Figure 3.6: Education Quality as a System



Source: developed for this research

The model is expected to create synergy among these 11 components of the Education Quality Model because the model is built from a ‘Systems Perspective’. In other words, this model acts as a ‘System’. Factors in this model are NOT separate or independent of each other. It is expected and it will be tested later based on an analysis of primary data that all elements of the model are connected to each other and have an impact on each other so their effect is synergistic. The synergistic arrangements of the different elements that influence the quality of education to create the Education Quality Model can hopefully contribute to better provision and continuity of quality at any education and higher education institution. These factors are interrelated and each of them affects one another. So, in reality, not only do these factors have a direct effect on the quality of education, but also they have an indirect impact on quality education by the empowering effect that they have on each other.

Figure 3.7: The Education Quality Model



Source: developed for this research

As regards the rationale for developing the Education Quality Model, the tendency towards having a single quality model/theory that can universally apply to all types of sector has led to the development of generalised models that ignore the essential characteristics of different sectors like education. There are some theories/models in quality management such as TQM, TQC, Quality Management System (ISO 9000), and MBNQA (Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award) which have been used by different organisations around the world; however, apart from the Baldrige Education Criteria that is a non-research based model, no other models were developed specifically for education sectors so they never completely match with the unique characteristics and requirements of education and educational institutions. Thus, this

research has aimed to develop a customised model of quality for educational institutions (schools and universities) by collecting primary data from both Saudi and British academics and senior managers.

The validity of each component of the Education Quality Model as well as the model as a whole will be assessed based on the collected primary data. It is expected that hopefully, analysis of the findings will demonstrate the validity of the Education Quality Model; however, for more certainty about the model as a whole, it was decided to question the participants (those who already given interviews) about the model. Consequently, the researcher planned to randomly select 30 academics who had already participated, 15 Saudi and 15 British participants. The researcher intended to email the model to these 30 academic to solicit their opinions. The researcher hopes as a result, more than half of the 30 academics agree that the model is valid and the model demonstrates the influential factors on the quality of education in a logical way.

The reality is that academics' perspectives regarding the quality of education may change with time. Nevertheless, since the study is cross-sectional and not longitudinal, which reduces the validity of findings (Babbie, 2010; Landsheer & Boeije, 2010) as in order to comprehensively study the influential factors on the quality of education, data requires to be collected more than once over a period of time (Cook & Campbell, 1979).

Not only is a good combination of the above-mentioned elements in the form of the Education Quality Model required, but also each and every one of these factors is expected to contribute toward the achievement and maintenance of high quality education at universities and other educational institutions. The Education Quality Model, in fact, is the theoretical framework of this research. The rest of this thesis is dedicated to primary data collection, data analysis and discussions to examine the propositions that form the origins of this model.

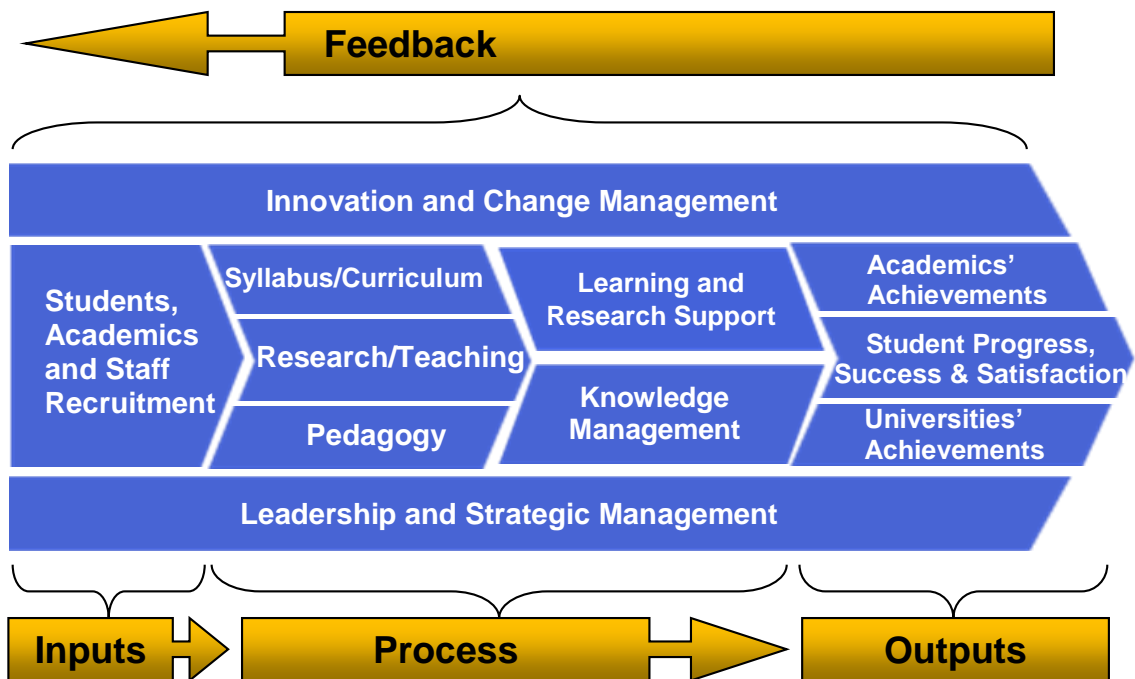
3.5. Logic in Arranging Components of the Model

It can be claimed that any model is more than just sum of its components (Ladwig, 2007; Newmann *et al.*, 2001). Because if the components of a model are separated from each other, these separate and unrelated elements cannot be considered as a model (Ladwig, 2007). Even if the order or connectivity of the components of a model change, the model would change accordingly (Magendzo, 2008). This notion can be understood better by comparing a model to a chair and comparing elements of a model to components of a chair (Hattie, 2009). A basic chair is not just combination of four legs, one seat and one back. A chair, like a model, is more than the sum of its components because if the components of a chair are put next to each other without assembling them, there would be no chair. Even if the components of a chair are being assembled but in an incorrect order, there would still be no chair too. The same logic applies to any models that encompass some elements (Hattie, 2009). Although a model as a whole is more important than its components, no model can exist without having all of its necessary components (Keeves, 2007). Thus, in this research, there is simultaneous emphasis on each of the 11 elements of the Quality Education Model and the model itself as a whole.

Although each element in the Education Quality Model has an important role to play, due to a possible synergistic effect the model as a whole is expected to have more impact on the quality of education, compared to the effect of each of the components separately.

These 11 factors are arranged in this form, due to the fact that the components of this model shape a '**system**' that changes its inputs (students, academics and staff) into appropriate outputs (academics' achievements, student progress, success and satisfaction, and university/school achievements) through sets of well-managed and quality processes, systems and activities (syllabus/curriculum, research/teaching, pedagogy, learning and research support, and knowledge management). Two factors: 'innovation and change management' and 'leadership and strategic management' are necessary to keep all other components together in a synergistic way. Although, these two factors are influential on the 'inputs', 'processes' and 'outputs' of the education system, in this model they are positioned as 'feedback' (see Figure 3.8).

Figure 3.8: The Education Quality Model as a System



Source: developed for this research

This concurrent attention to components of the model and the model as a whole is necessary because the ‘Aim’ of this research is developing a model as a whole and the ‘Objectives’ of the study are identifying and assessing each component of the Quality Education Model. The ‘Research Objectives’ are originate directly from the ‘Research Aim’ and its related literature review. In fact, the research objectives are necessary to fully achieve the ‘Research Aim’.

The aim of this research is building a model of quality for education and this aim can be achieved only by identifying the main ‘education quality drivers’ which are the components of this model. No model can be built without knowing its building blocks. The research objectives are to assess the impact of each of these main ‘education quality drivers’ on the quality of education to make sure the model is built on the genuinely influential components/factors. Conducting a literature review is the only reliable way to determine potential ‘education quality drivers’.

3.6. Rationale and Importance of the Model

3.6.1. Understanding the Value of Education

Education in general and higher education in particular are important for many reasons due to their positive impact on different aspects of people's lives around the world. One of the crucial effects of quality higher education is on the world economy in general and the economy of each country in particular (Jones, 2003). The economies of countries and their bases have changed markedly in the last century. In the nineteenth century, almost all economies were based on producing and trading agricultural products, though after the 'industrial revolution' in Europe some countries gradually moved toward industrialisation, which was based on mass production. Today, economies are moving towards a 'knowledge economy' (Harman and Meek, 2000), and 'knowledge management' (Mathias, 2004) in which produces knowledge and scientific research has become the main sources of income and economic prosperity (Lomas, 2007a & 2007b).

It is a widely accepted fact that 'if something is worth doing, it is worth doing well'. According to UNESCO (The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), having higher education in any country is considered one of the most important signs of a high standard of living and the quality of life in that country. The future of nations depends considerably on educated people who can perform at a high level, help their economy flourish and govern their countries properly (Blom and Meyers, 2003). The key to having educated people is having quality tertiary institutions (Aspin and Chapman, 1994; Baker, 1997); however, the quality of education/ higher education institutions cannot be guaranteed without having a well-designed and customised quality model for these universities and research centres (Stoddart, 2004; Van Berkel and Wolfhagen, 2002).

3.6.2. Rationale for Developing the Education Quality Model

The tendency towards having a single quality model/theory that can universally cover all aspects and all types of sector has led to the development of generalised models that ignore the essential characteristics of different sectors.

Although the EFQM Excellence Model is a viable and reliable model/theory for implementing quality in various organisations, it is very general and disregards the particular requirements of different sectors. While universities/schools and research centres are one type of organisation, they are very different from other organisations in terms of the services they provide, the service providers, the recipients of services, and the nature of education and its unique requirements. So, relying on a general theory/model like the EFQM Excellence Model can be useful, but it may sabotage the unique characteristics and requirements of higher education institutions.

Consequently, one reliable solution for the creation and advancement of the quality of education/research and the quality of educational/research organisations is to develop a customised model of quality for education and research, which acknowledges all the required and specialised aspects of education and research.

3.6.3. Importance of the Education Quality Model

Apart from Baldrige's model that is not a research-based model, seemingly, the Education Quality Model is the model/theory of quality that has been developed solely for research, education and higher education at educational and research institutions. Other existing models are either too general, non-academic, or inappropriate for a highly sensitive and valuable sector such as education.

While some attempts have been made by other researchers and/or organisations to develop a unique model for quality in research and education, apparently the only known model is Baldrige's model that is an experience-based (USA NIST, 2011) not research-based model.

The Education Quality Model is important because it is a research-based model by accommodating perspectives of one Eastern and one Western country. It can partly fill the gap for a customised and viable model for quality in research/education. This model can hopefully contribute to the establishment and promotion of quality of education and research at universities, colleges, schools and research institutions.

3.7. Functions and Usage of the Education Quality Model

The Education Quality Model is a '**guideline**' for quality development in terms of the quality of education, higher education and research at research and/or educational and training organisations. The Education Quality Model can be used by any university, college, school or other research and educational organisations for the purpose of creating, maintaining and improving the quality of education and research at their respective institutions. This model identifies the 11 important factors that possibly have an impact on the quality of education/research. So the model can hopefully assist any educational or research organisations that want to provide quality educational and research services.

Furthermore, like the EFQM, the Education Quality Model can be used as a '**self-assessment tool**' that enables research and education organisations to take the lead in evaluating their current education/research quality situation. These institutions do not need to rely on any external parties to determine the existence of quality in their universities/schools. This model would be a self-explanatory handbook explaining which factors should be assessed and what should be considered in the assessments.

There are some tasks/steps that should be considered in the use of the Education Quality Model. The first task of the dean/headteacher/top management in any university, college, school or other research and educational organisation is to use this model as a guideline to determine which of these components exist in their organisations. If some of these 11 elements do not exist in some universities and schools, the dean/headteacher/top management should create all of these 11 factors as their second task for quality development. The third task would be to focus on each and every one of these 11 components to ensure they are of the expected quality. The fourth task/step is to connect all of these elements to each other in a synergistic and logical way to create a better and more stable quality of education and research. The fifth and last task/step is to review, troubleshoot and upgrade this quality system continually. Quality requires constant attention and nurturing, otherwise it can diminish gradually.

3.8. The Research Propositions

Based on the discussions in the Literature Review chapter, and previous sections in this chapter, it can be claimed that, while many issues directly or indirectly affect the quality of education in general and the quality of higher education in particular, these 11 factors play a role in creating, maintaining and developing the quality of education: Leadership and Strategic Management; Students, Academics and Staff Recruitment; Syllabus/Curriculum; Research/Teaching; Pedagogy; Learning and research support; Knowledge management; Academics' achievements; Student progress, success and satisfaction; University/School achievements; and, finally, Innovation and Change Management.

The basic assumption is that the factors that influence the quality of higher education institutions differ to an extent from those mentioned in the EFQM Excellence Model. This difference can be in terms of the number of influential factors, the nature of critical factors, and/or the categorisation of these factors.

In other words, in this research the following 11 propositions will be tested to find out the validity and reliability of the components of the Education Quality Model. The fundamental assumption is that each and every one of the factors, taken separately, has an influence on the quality of education. The 11 propositions are:

Proposition 1: Having professional and appropriate *Leadership and Strategic Management* can lead to higher quality in the education sector.

Proposition 2: Quality people create quality results so the *Student, Academic and Staff Recruitment* factor has major consequences for the quality of education.

Proposition 3: What is supposed to be taught to the student in terms of *Syllabus/Curriculum* is another determinant of the quality of education.

Proposition 4: The quality of education depends on the quality of *Research/Teaching*, which are the main activities at educational institutions.

Proposition 5: *Pedagogy* or the suitability of the way in which the syllabus is taught to students can contribute to the quality of education.

Proposition 6: Effective and quality *Learning and research support* can lead to higher quality education.

Proposition 7: Reliable and effective *Knowledge management* can help educational institutions to enhance the quality of their education.

Proposition 8: The level of *Academics' achievements* can demonstrate the level of quality of education and the quality of the educational institution.

Proposition 9: *Student progress, success and satisfaction* is one of the important indicators of quality in education.

Proposition 10: High *University/School achievements* is one of the signs of having high quality education.

Proposition 11: Continuous, purposeful and well-planned *Innovation and Change Management* is one of the keys to high quality education.

These propositions will be assessed based on the results of interviews with Saudi and British academics and education managers.

3.9. Connections between EFQM and the Education Quality Model

3.9.1. Similarities between EFQM and “The Education Quality Model”

Both models try to identify the fundamental elements of quality and connect these factors in a meaningful and logical way. Another similarity between these two models is that they rely on a systemic perspective, so they highlight the connectivity and interactive relationship among all components of the models. In addition, in an almost identical way, the EFQM Excellence Model and the Education Quality Model arrange the components of their models in the form of a 'System'. Both of these models can be used as self-assessment tools.

3.9.2. Differences between EFQM and the Education Quality Model

The important consideration is that the elements and influential factors in the quality of research and education in the Education Quality Model are noticeably different from those that are mentioned in the EFQM Excellence Model. These differences are in terms of the number of influential factors, the nature of critical factors, and/or the categorisation of these factors.

While the EFQM Excellence Model is a very general model that might be used in almost any organisation from different sectors, the Education Quality Model is a customised model of quality only for research, education and higher education institutions. The EFQM Excellence Model encompasses nine factors that are classified into two main groups: Enablers (with five factors) and Results (with four factors), which include leadership, people, policy and strategy, partnership and resources, processes, people results, customer results, society results and key performance results. The Education Quality Model embodies 11 elements that are organised into four categories: Inputs (with one element: Students, Academics and Staff Recruitment); Process (with five elements: Syllabus/Curriculum; Research/Teaching; Pedagogy; Learning and research support; Knowledge management); Outputs (with three elements: Academics' achievements; Student progress, success and satisfaction; University/School achievements); and Common (with two elements: Leadership and Strategic Management; and Innovation and Change Management).

3.10. Conclusion

As it was stated in the aim of this research, the author has adopted an inductive approach to research in order to build a new theory/model for quality of education. The intention is not to select one of the existing theories or models to test or to modify. So, in brief, this research does not have a pre-determined and rigid theoretical framework borrowed from other researchers. This study primarily tries to build a new model of quality for education by considering other models and other authors' perspectives in general and other quality models such as EFQM model in particular. So the EFQM, in fact, is not theoretical framework of this research. It is just a model that is being benchmarked to help develop a new and customised model for quality of education. The Education Quality Model, in fact, is the theoretical framework of this research. The rest of this thesis is dedicated to primary data collection, data analysis and discussions to examine the validity of this model.

While there are many parameters that can directly or indirectly contribute to the quality of education in general and the quality of higher education in particular, only a limited number of these elements can have an important impact on quality development in education. Mainly built on the Literature Review discussed in the second chapter, as well as the discussions in section 3.3 (in chapter 3), 11 critical success factors were identified that shape the pillars of a quality education system. Each of these issues has an effect on the quality of education; however, a synergistic combination of them can possibly lead to better quality in education. In this research there is an attempt to arrange these influential factors in a meaningful and logical order to build a customised model for quality in education, which the author has termed **The Education Quality Model**. Based on the discussions in section 3.3, the principles of the Education Quality Model are as follows:

Leadership and Strategic Management (Cartwright, 2007; Husrn, 2009): Strong and visionary leadership, which can think and plan strategically is essential for high quality education and higher education. Schools and universities, like other organisations, need qualified leaders.

Students, Academics and Staff Recruitment (Hattie, 2009; Taylor *et al.*, 2012): There is no guarantee of quality in education if a school or university recruits students, academics and even staff who are of limited ability or unqualified. It is not reasonable to expect good quality academic results from people of limited ability.

Syllabus/Curriculum (Harvey, 2005; King *et al.*, 2003): The quality of education depends on what is being taught, i.e. the syllabus/ curriculum at universities.

Research/Teaching (Bloxham and Boyd, 2007; Kennedy, 2009): Provision of teaching (taught aspect) of a good quality and having more and quality research (research aspect) are also factors involved in the success of quality education.

Pedagogy (Roelofs and Terwel, 2009; Stoddart, 2004): The way in which a subject is taught is another key factor. Traditional teaching methods have lost much of their credibility.

Learning and research support (Largrosen *et al.*, 2004; Spradlin, 2009): Having appropriate classrooms, with adequate teaching facilities, a comprehensive library and online library, and having trained and helpful staff and processes that facilitate learning and research are all necessary.

Knowledge management (Billig and Waterman, 2003; Kaiserswerth, 2009): Information overload can be as damaging as a lack of information, so there is a need for a system to manage the collection, creation, storage and distribution of knowledge and information.

Academics' achievements (Bereiter, 2007; Knight and Yorke, 2003): A university/school cannot be considered as a quality institution if its academics/teachers do not have the opportunity of being successful in terms of publication, research and recognition.

Student progress, success and satisfaction (Erdem, 2009; Jessop *et al.*, 2012): The most important customers of educational institutions are students, therefore it make sense to measure the quality of a university/school in terms of the progress, success and satisfaction of its students.

University/School achievements (Cousin, 2008; Resnick, 2007): The success of universities/schools is another sign of a quality education system. This can be measured based on the ranking, amount of grants received and the rate of growth of these institutions.

Innovation and Change Management (Amosa and Cooper, 2006; Dvir, 2009): Innovation is change and it is the lifeblood of any organisation, but innovation will fail if there is no adequate change management system to support it.

The ways in which this research will be conducted is explained in detail in the next chapter.



Chapter 4

Research Methodology

The Fourth Chapter's Abstract

While research aim and objectives determine 'what is intended to be done' research methodology is about how to do the research. Quality in education is the 'phenomenon' that is discussed. In brief, this research adapted 'Realism' as its philosophy, a mainly 'Qualitative' as its main research design, the 'Multiple-Case Study' (with 15 cases/universities) as its research strategy, and the 'Semi-structured interview' as its data collection research instrument.

After analysing the methodology, which will be applied in this research, it would be suitable to summarise the main conclusions so far.

The *research philosophy* is realism - and more specifically, critical realism - has been the concrete research philosophy chosen. The *research approach* is inductive that is suitable for theory/model building. As regards the *research design*, it has been MAINLY (but NOT totally) qualitative research, with some quantitative elements at the analysis stage. The chosen *research strategy* has been the multiple case-study strategy. In this study 15 cases are discussed including six cases (universities) from Saudi Arabia and nine British cases. Cross-sectional is the preferred *time horizon* for this study.

As for the *research instruments*, which are composed of data collection, sampling and data analysis: a) the data collection instrument of this research was the semi-structured interview trying to test (in an open and free way) the literature-based previous proposition b) it has developed a probability stratified sample which includes 33 participants from six Saudi universities and 30 respondents from nine of Britain's universities c) the data analysis instrument was content analysis.

During the research process certain ethical considerations were followed in order to respect the privacy and confidentiality of the interviewees and their information as well as to avoid bias of behaviour during the interview process. Finally, this research followed the principles of Validity and Reliability in order to obtain the right answers in the right way. However, there were some research limitations around time, scope and budget so on that have been balanced in order to obtain the most suitable research project and conclusions within these limitations.

4.1. Introduction

This research has adopted the Case Study as its Research Strategy. Of the two main types of case study (Single Case Study, and Multiple Case Study), this study relies on the Multiple Case Study because this research encompasses 15 cases that are 15 universities from Saudi Arabia (with six cases/universities) and the UK (with nine cases/ universities). In these 15 cases, 63 academics and education authorities participated (33 Saudi and 30 British participants). These 15 cases and participants from each of them were selected randomly using the Stratified Sampling technique.

In this chapter, the researcher has intentionally discussed different methodologies that are recommended by different scholars to make sure arguments are unbiased and balanced. Then by considering the nature of this research, the most suitable methods are chosen. Thus, sometime, the chosen methods are not always the most commonly used or recommended ones.

Case study research that has been widely publicised by Robert Yin is one of several ways of doing social science research. According to Yin (2009), *“in case studies, the richness of the phenomenon and the extensiveness of the real-life context require case study investigators to cope with a technically distinctive situation: there will be many more variables of interest than data points. In response, an essential tactic is to use multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion. This challenge is but one of the ways that makes case study research hard, although it has classically been considered a soft form of research”*.

Quality in education is the phenomenon that has explored in this study.

The Focal Theory: The Education Quality Model, which was the theme of the previous chapter, described the purpose of this research, but this chapter focuses on the way that this will be achieved, outlining and justifying the selected ‘Research design’ and ‘Research Methodology’.

It cannot be denied that contextual and environmental factors might have an impact on any conducted research; however, it is not necessary to consider these environmental issues in every study (Cadden *et al.*, 2010). Although, it can be claimed that hundreds of issues might have partial effects on the given answer by participants in a research, a researcher is required to consider any of this issues if only research aim, objectives or research question mention these issues (Bloxham and Boyd, 2007).

Any research has its own scope and limitations (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). Surely, there are some important issues out of scope that can have effect on research, researcher or research participants; however, it is not feasible to consider all influential factors on a research in the research because they are not on the research scope (Lancaster, 2007). Every research has some limitations (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). The chosen research scope by itself has been big enough to take more than four years for the researcher to complete the study, so adding any other variable to this research will go much beyond its limited time, budget, and manpower. There is no perfect research because it is impossible to assess possible impact of all factors that might have an effect on a research, a researcher or participants (Bryman and Bell, 2008). Even in a very large-scale research with a broad scope that has a big budget and hundreds of researchers to work on it, it is not possible to consider all the influential issues on this research.

Furthermore, any research has a specific research question to answer, the research aim and some research objectives to achieve (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). Not only is it not necessary to discuss issues that are not mentioned in the research question, aim or objectives, but also, many scholars believe that it is inappropriate to consider any issue that has nothing to do with the research aim, objectives or the research question (Bryman and Bell, 2008; Cadden *et al.*, 2010; Hattie, 2009).

The research question of this study is “*How do the main education quality drivers have an impact on the quality development of education in general and higher education in particular?*”. The research aim is ‘to build a new model of quality for education’. The research objectives are to assess the impact of each of the 11 main ‘education quality drivers’ on the quality of education. As it is very clear from the aim, objectives and question, this study is NOT going to consider why participants gave such answers or what factors (either macro-environmental or micro-environmental) had an impact on their given answers.

There are so many macro-environmental and micro-environmental elements that might have some degrees of effects on research, researcher, or participants (Cadden *et al.*, 2010). Macro-environmental issues are very widespread and general factors that might affect everything and anything. The effects of macro-environmental factors are generally (but not always) indirect and limited (Agranoff and Radin, 1991). Macro-environmental factors are generally grouped into six main domains including political, economical, socio-cultural, technological, environmental, and legal domains that are known as PESTEL (Agranoff and Radin, 1991).

There are many ‘*cultural*’ factors that might have some degrees of affluent influence on a research, a researcher, or research participants (Schultz and Hinings, 2012). Some of these cultural factors are religion, language, values, norms, perceptions, learning styles, attitudes, etiquettes, expectations, rules, gender role, approaches to problem-solving, patterns of handling emotions, social interactions, decision-making patterns, notions of beauty, literature and even types of food participants eat or types and colours of the dress participants wear are part of their culture (Hofstede *et al.*, 2010; Van-den-Berg and Wilderom, 2004). As was mentioned earlier, considering the possible effects of participants’ culture on the variation of the answers given to interview questions has never been one of the research objectives nor has ever been within the scope of this research. Even if assessing the impact of participants’ culture on their given answers was one of the research objectives or was within the scope of this research, conducting this assessment was too complicated because culture has too many aspects (Hattie, 2009). Even if a researcher decides to select limited number of aspects of culture to examine, this research would be non-defensible because this research can assess only very tiny impact of culture due to ignoring vast majority of aspects of culture (Hofstede *et al.*, 2010). Other problem is the way in which culture would be assessed. While some valuable efforts made by few scholars such as Hofstede (1984) or Trompenaars (1995) to quantify culture, it cannot be disregarded that culture is a subjective issue so it is not possible to measure exact effect of any aspect of culture on participants’ answers (Schultz and Hinings, 2012).

Micro-environmental issues are more specific, limited and personal factors with important and direct effects on researchers or participants (Duke and Mallette, 2004). These micro-environmental factors can be divided into some domains such as life style, personality, disposable income, level of education, age group, gender, types of job, marital status, sexual orientation, race, and possessions (Karahanna *et al.*, 2005). These issues might have some effect on research participants and their answers; however, these should be considered if they are asked in either research question, aim, research objectives or scope of research (Bloxham and Boyd, 2007).

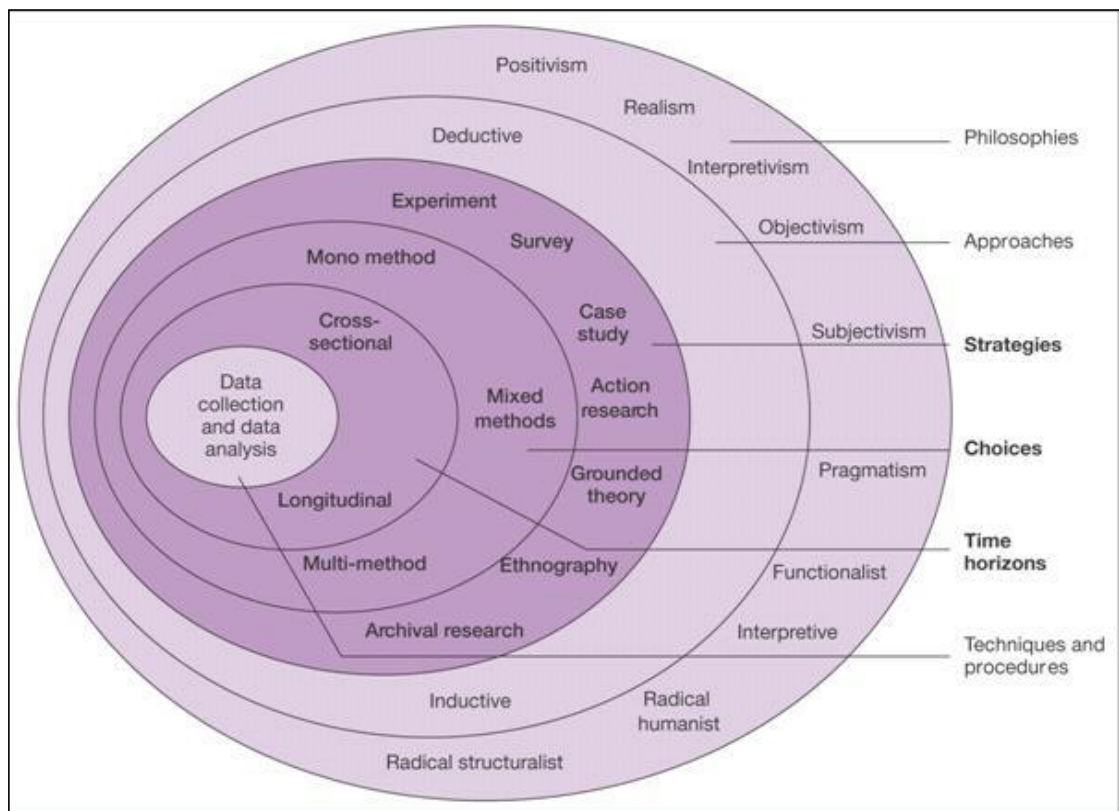
In addition to macro-environmental and micro-environmental factors, research participants even can be influenced by occasional events or the current time situation (Gibbs and Dunbar-Goddet, 2009). Receiving a phone call or email with important bad or good news a few minute before interviews are example of these occasional

events that may influence the answers of participants. The content of the interview even can be affected by some current time situation such as having bad air-conditioning or a noisy room during interview (Duke and Mallette, 2004). Is it possible for a researcher to consider or control all of these issues in his/her research? The answer is ‘no’.

In brief, the outline of this chapter (Research Methodology) will be as follows. After the Introduction, the Epistemology (Philosophical Basis of the Research); Choice of Research Strategy Underpinned); Research Strategies/Designs (Concept of Research Design, Aspects of Case Study Research Designs); Case Study Research Design; Research Methods; The Case Study Protocol; The Pilot Case Study; Data Collection for Case Study Research; Data Analysis of Case Study; Research Instrument; Research Ethics; and Research Limitations and Propositions against Questions are set out. Finally, a summary of the content will conclude this chapter.

The Research Onion that is suggested by Saunders *et al.* (2009) will be used in organising the discussions in this chapter.

Figure 4.1. The Research ‘Onion’ (Saunders *et al.*, 2009)



4.2. Research Philosophy (Epistemology)

4.2.1. Philosophical Basis of the Research

There is a need to explain the data-gathering methods and to analyse the data to answer the research questions or objectives (Saunders *et al.*, 2007; Irani *et al.*, 2008). These authors suggested that business and management research should focus on both theoretical and practical issues. According to Saunders *et al.* (2009, p. 110) “two major ways of thinking about research philosophy are ontology and epistemology”. Due to the nature of this research, which is related to the knowledge that comes from the experience and knowledge of different people who will be interviewed, the most accurate approach is epistemological. This is because epistemology, according to Saunders *et al.* (2009), “concerns what constitutes acceptable knowledge in a field of study”. In contrast, ontology “is concerned with the nature of reality” (Saunders *et al.*, 2009, p. 110). In this topic, the answers will come from the knowledge and understanding of the academics and senior managers who, through their viewpoints and experiences, can give some clear answers in order to reach some conclusions.

That is to say, the research approach comprises two approaches: deduction and induction. The deductive approach, characterised by scientific principles as moving from theory to data, attempts to explain the relationships between variables, gathering quantitative data, and gaining more control over data validity and the feasibility of concepts to ensure clarity of definition. It also attempts to ensure a highly structured approach, the researcher’s independence of what is being researched and the importance of generalising by selecting a sufficient sample size. Induction, however, is characterised by the importance of human aspects that relate to the research issue, an understanding of the research context, gathering qualitative data, flexibility to change the research structure during the research process and less attention to generalisation. There is the possibility of merging the two approaches, depending on the research issue (Saunders *et al.*, 2007). So, deciding the research approach is vital to the design of the research process (Walsham *et al.*, 1994; Miles and Huberman, 1994; Irani *et al.*, 2006).

4.2.2. Choice of Research Strategy Underpinned

Saunders *et al.*, (2007) distinguish between basic research, which is a more scientific approach, and applied research, which is a more practical approach. According to Saunders *et al.* (2007), there are four layers in the research 'onion', before the choice of data collection method is made. Within epistemology there are three main approaches which are Positivism, Realism and Interpretivism. Realism is the philosophical position that is more suited to this topic because, according to Saunders *et al.*, "*Realism's essence is that what the senses show us is reality, is the truth: that objects have an existence independent of the human mind*" (Saunders *et al.*, 2009, p. 114).

Within Positivism, "*only observable phenomena can provide credible data, facts.*" With respect to Interpretivism, "*it is necessary for the researcher to understand differences between humans in our role as social actors*" (Saunders *et al.*, 2009, p. 116).

However, within this philosophical position, Critical Realism is a more specific approach for this topic. This point of view states, according to Saunders *et al.* (2009), that what we see are sensations and not the real world, in contrast to Direct Realism, which states that "*what you see is what you get*" (Saunders *et al.*, 2009, p. 114). Critical Realism is necessary in order to understand the different points of view of the different people interviewed. Due to their different experiences and knowledge, it will be possible to get different answers, which will enrich the interview results.

4.3. Research Design

4.3.1. Concept of Research Design

According to Yin (2009), “a research design is the logic that links the data to be collected (and the conclusions to be drawn) to the initial questions of study. Every empirical study has an implicit, if not explicit, research design. Articulating ‘theory’ about what is being studied and what is to be learned helps to operationalise case study designs and make them more explicit. Case study strategies need to maximise their quality through four critical conditions related to design quality: construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability”.

Another way of thinking about a research design is as a ‘blueprint’ for the research, dealing with at least four problems: what questions to study, what data are relevant, what data to collect and how to analyse the results (Philliber, Schwab, and Samsloss, 1980). The research design for this study is mainly qualitative.

4.3.2. Justification for selecting a Mainly Qualitative Research Design

It is commonly accepted that Research Designs can be qualitative, quantitative, or mixed (Cooper and Schindler, 2008) and that each of these has its own functions, advantages and disadvantages. For this kind of study it is appropriate to use MAINLY qualitative research with some elements of quantitative approach to further analysis. The main reasons for this are:

- First of all, the aim is a profound understanding of quality in education and the factors influencing it. According to Cooper and Schindler (2008, p. 162), the answers to these questions are what “*qualitative research is designed to tell the researcher*”.
- Second, again according to Cooper and Schindler (2008, p. 162), “*qualitative research is ideal if you want to extract [...] motivations, perceptions*” from the participants.
- Third, this study has 11 propositions. Using a form of quantitative technique, in addition to main technique that is qualitative, will permit much more robust testing of each proposition and even comparing propositions to each other.

The main focus of the qualitative method is a much deeper understanding of notion of quality makes this more suitable than other forms. However, the research can be richer if, in addition to qualitative data collection via interviews, in the analysis stage, a form of basic quantitative analysis technique is used too. In this study further to qualitative data analysis, Frequency based on a Likert scale (Cooper and Schindler, 2008) is employed to enrich the findings of this investigation. Also important is that the primary distinction of the qualitative method is related to “*understanding and interpreting*” while the quantitative method has its primary focus “*describing, explaining and predicting*” (Cooper and Schindler, 2008, p. 164).

In other words, the quantitative method has also been used just partly only in the analysis step of the research. This is necessary mainly in order to measure what percentage of answers agree or disagree with any Proposition or in order to draw conclusions about the unanimity or otherwise of the answers.

According to Saunders and his colleagues (2009) one of the main indicators of ‘Qualitative’ research design is having ‘how’ or ‘why’ as the research question. The main research question in this study starts with ‘How’ (*How do the main education quality drivers have an impact on the quality development of education in general and higher education in particular?*), so this investigation is mainly a qualitative research study. A research would be quantitative if it required a very wide number of participants, advanced and noticeable statistical analysis, theory-testing approach (Saunders *et al.*, 2009); however, this study looking for different and even, it can be said, opposite requirements. This research is a theory-building study that relies on data collection from a relatively small number of participants and employs only a very basic form of statistics for part of analysis.

Although, this study in addition to its main qualitative design uses a form of quantitative data analysis too, this research does not have a ‘Mixed Research Design’. According to Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003a & 2003b) who are pioneers in mixed research design, a research design can be considered as “Mixed” if only almost equal amount of qualitative and quantitative techniques are being used both in data collection and in data analysis stages. If in a qualitative investigation, a bit of statistics is used just in data analysis step, it will not make the research a mixed design research (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2003; Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2006; Todd 2008).

The Research Design of this study is MAINLY (but not totally) qualitative. In analysing the findings, statistical techniques (Frequency formula) are used too. The interviews are analysed by using *content analysis* technique that quantify the given qualitative answers. Thus while the main body of the research is qualitative, it has some small but very important quantitative components too. If a research is totally qualitative, it is expected to use only qualitative terminology. On the other hand, if the design of a research is quantitative, its terminology should be quantitative too. This research has a combination of both qualitative, as the major design, and quantitative, as a minor design, elements; so there is no limitation in the use of both quantitative and qualitative terminologies in this thesis.

4.3.3. Aspects of Case Study Research Strategies

“Study questions. This first component, which emphasises the form of the question – in terms of ‘who’, ‘what’, ‘where’, ‘how’, and ‘why’ - provides an important clue regarding the most relevant research method to be used” (Yin, 2009). The case study method is most likely to be appropriate for ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions, so the initial task is to clarify precisely the nature of the study questions in this regard.

“Study propositions. As for the second component, each proposition directs attention to something that should be examined within the scope of the study”. For instance, assume that your research, on the topic of quality in higher education or inter-organisational partnerships, began with the following question: how and why do organisations collaborate with one another to provide joint services (for example, a manufacturer and retail outlet collaborating to sell certain computer products)? These ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions, capturing what you are really interested in answering, lead you to the case study as the appropriate method in the first place. Nevertheless, these ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions do not point to what you should study.

“Unit of analysis. This third component is related to the fundamental problem of defining what the ‘case’ is – a problem that has plagued many investigators at the outset of case studies (Ragin and Becker, 1992). For instance, in the classic case study, a ‘case’ may be an individual. Platt (1992) has noted how the early case studies in the Chicago School of Sociology were life histories of such persons as juvenile delinquents or derelict men. “You also can imagine case studies of clinical patients, of exemplary students, or of certain types of leaders. In each situation, an individual

person is the case studied, and the individual is the primary unit of analysis. Information about the relevant individual would be collected, and several such individuals or 'cases' might be included in a multiple-case study.

"Linking data to propositions and criteria for interpreting the findings. The fourth and fifth components have been increasingly better developed in doing case studies. These components foreshadow the data analysis steps in case study research. Because the analytic techniques and choices should be covered, the main concern during the design phase is to be aware of the main choices and how they might suit your case study. In this way, your research design can create a more solid foundation for the later analysis.

"Criteria for interpreting a study's findings. Statistical analyses offer some explicit criteria for such interpretations. For instance, by convention, social science considers a p level of less than .05 to demonstrate that observed differences were 'statistically significant'. However, much case study analysis will not rely on the use of statistics and therefore calls attention to other ways of thinking about such criteria" (Yin, 2009). Elements of Case Study Research strategy are 1. a study's questions; 2. its propositions, if any; 3. its unit(s) of analysis; 4. the logic linking the data to the propositions; 5. the criteria for interpreting the findings."

4.4. Case Study Research Strategy

This research employs the case study in general and multiple case studies in particular as its research design. Different types of case study and their usefulness are discussed in this section. The rationale for selecting the case study as the research design is discussed in sections 4.5.3 and 4.5.4.

4.4.1. Single-Case Strategy

Yin (2009), in his book *'Case Study Research: Design and Methods'*, states that “these general characteristics of research strategies serve as a background for considering the specific designs for case studies. Four types of strategies will be discussed. Every type of design will include the desire to analyse contextual conditions in relation to the ‘case’ with the dotted lines between the two signalling that the boundaries between the case and the context are not likely to be sharp.

"Single cases are a common strategy for doing case studies, and two variants have been described: those using holistic designs and those using embedded units of analysis. Overall, the single-case strategy is eminently justifiable under certain conditions – where the case represents three major issues. Main usability of single-case strategies: a critical test of existing theory, a rare or unique circumstance, and a longitudinal purpose.

“A major step in designing and conducting a single case is defining the unit of analysis (or the case itself). An operational definition is needed, and some caution must be exercised - before a total commitment to the whole case study is made - to ensure that the case in fact is relevant to the issues and questions of interest. Within the single case may still be incorporated subunits of analysis, so that a more complex - or embedded - design is developed. The subunits can often add significant opportunities for extensive analysis, enhancing the insights into the single case. However, if too much attention is given to these subunits, and if the larger, holistic aspects of the case begin to be ignored, the case study itself will have shifted its orientation and changed its nature. If the shift is justifiable, you need to address it explicitly and indicate its relationship to the original inquiry” (Yin, 2009).

4.4.2. Multiple-Case Strategies

Due to the fact that this research will focus on 63 academics and authorities from 15 different universities, and each of these universities is considered as a related case study, from the two different countries of Saudi Arabia and the UK, a single case study is NOT suitable for this study. The appropriate case study strategy for this research is the multiple-case study as is argued below.

As Yin (2009) highlights, “the same study may contain more than a single case. When this occurs, the study has used a multiple-case study design, and such designs have increased in frequency in recent years”. A common example is a study of school innovations (such as the use of new curricula, rearranged school schedules, or a new educational technology), in which individual schools adopt some innovation. Each school might be the subject of an individual case study, but the study as a whole covers several schools and in this way uses a multiple-case design.

Multiple-versus single-case strategies: In some fields, multiple-case studies have been considered a different ‘methodology’ from single-case studies. For example, both anthropology and political science have developed one set of rationales for doing single-case studies and a second set for doing what have been considered ‘comparative’ (or multiple-case) studies (Eckstein, 1975; Lijphart, 1975). However, Yin considers single- and multiple-case designs to be variants within the same methodological framework and no broad distinction is made between the so-called classic (that is single) case study and multiple-case studies. The choice is considered one of research design, with both being included under the case study method.

Multiple-case strategies have distinct advantages in comparison to single-case designs. The evidence from multiple cases is often considered more compelling, and the overall study is therefore regarded as being more robust (Herriott and Firestone, 1983). At the same time, the rationale for single-case designs cannot usually be satisfied by multiple cases. By definition, the unusual or rare case, the critical case, and the revelatory case are all likely to involve only single cases. Moreover, the conduct of a multiple-case study can require extensive resources and time beyond the means of a single student or independent research investigator. Therefore, the decision to undertake multiple-case studies cannot be taken lightly.

"Selecting the multiple cases also raises a new set of questions. Here, a major insight is to consider multiple cases as one would consider multiple experiments -

that is, to follow a ‘replication’ design. This is very different from a mistaken analogy in the past, which incorrectly considered multiple cases to be similar to the multiple respondents in a survey (or to the multiple subjects within an experiment) – that is, to follow a ‘sampling’ design" (Yin, 2009).

4.4.3. Holistic or Embedded Multiple-Case Strategies

By paying attention to “the fact that a design calls for multiple-case studies does not eliminate the variation identified earlier with single cases: each individual case may still be holistic or embedded. In other words, a multiple-case study may consist of multiple holistic cases.

" The difference between these two variants depends upon the type of phenomenon being studied and your research questions. In an embedded design, a study may even call for the conduct of a survey at each case study site. For instance, suppose a study is concerned with the impact of the same type of curriculum adopted by different schools. Each school may be the topic of a case study, with the theoretical framework dictating that nine such schools be included as case studies, three to replicate a direct result (literal replication) and six others to deal with contrasting conditions (theoretical replications). For all nine schools, an embedded design is used because surveys of the students (or, alternatively, examination of students’ archival records) are needed to address research questions about the performance of the schools. However, the results of each survey will not be pooled across schools. Rather, the survey data will be part of the findings for each individual school, or case. These data may be highly quantitative, focusing on the attitudes and behaviour of individual students, and the data will be used along with archival information to interpret the success and operations at the given school” (Yin, 2009).

4.5. Research Methods

4.5.1. An Introduction to Case Study Research

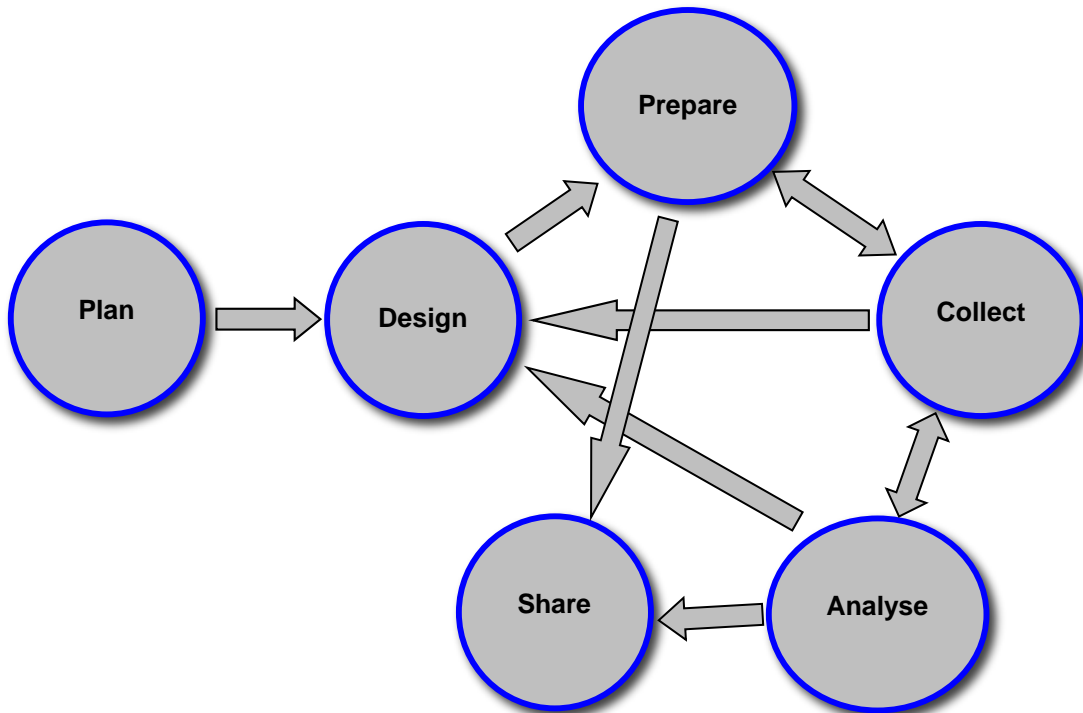
Regarding the scope of the case study, Yin (1981) states “a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-time context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.” “In other words, you would use the case study method because you wanted to understand a real-life phenomenon in depth, but such understanding encompassed important contextual conditions - because they were highly pertinent to your phenomenon of study” (Yin and Davis, 2007). This first part of the logic of design therefore helps to distinguish case studies from the other research methods.

Take an experiment, for instance, which “deliberately divorces a phenomenon from its context, attending to only a few variables (typically, the context is ‘controlled’ by the laboratory environment). A history, by comparison, does deal with the entangled situation between phenomenon and context, but usually with non-contemporary events. Finally surveys can try to deal with phenomenon and context, but their ability to investigate the context is extremely limited” (Yin, 2009).

“The case study inquiry copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and as another result benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis” (Yin, 2009).

Yin believes that case study research is an interactive and linear process, as is demonstrated in the following graph.

Figure 4.2. Process of Doing Case Study Research



Source: Yin (2009, p. 1)

4.5.2. Limitations of Case Study Research

There is no perfect research methodology. According to Yin (2009), “as a research endeavour, case studies have been viewed as a less desirable form of inquiry than either experiments or surveys. Perhaps the greatest concern has been over the lack of rigour of case study research. Too many times, the case study investigator has been sloppy, has not followed systematic procedure, or has allowed equivocal evidence or biased views to influence the direction of the findings and conclusions. Such lack of rigour is less likely to be present when using the other methods - possibly because of the existence of numerous methodological texts providing investigators with specific procedures to be followed”.

The next common concern about case studies is that “they provide little basis for scientific generalisation. ‘How can you generalise from a single case?’ is a frequently heard question. The answer is not simple (Kennedy, 1976). However, consider for the moment that the same question had been asked about an experiment: ‘How can you generalise from a single experiment?’ In fact, scientific facts are rarely based on single experiments; they are usually based on a multiple set of experiments that have

replicated the same phenomenon under different conditions. The same approach can be used with multiple-case studies but requires a different concept of the appropriate research designs. The short answer is that case studies, like experiments, are generalisable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or the universe. In this sense, the case study, like the experiment, does not represent a ‘sample’, and doing a case study, like an experiment, does not represent a ‘sample’, and in doing a case study, your goal will be to expand and generalise theories (analytic generalisation) and not to enumerate frequencies (statistical generalisation)” (Yin, 2009).

Yin (2009) explains that “A third frequent complaint about case studies is that they take too long, and they result in massive, unreadable documents. This complaint may be appropriate, given the way case studies have been done in the past (Feagin, Orum and Sjoberg, 1991), but this is not necessarily the way case studies - yours included - must be done in the future.

“A fourth possible objection to case studies has seemingly emerged with the renewed emphasis, especially in education and related research, on randomised field trials or true experiments. Such studies aim to establish causal relationships – that is, whether a particular ‘treatment’ has been efficacious in producing a particular ‘effect’ (Jadad, 1998). In the eyes of many, the emphasis has led to a downgrading of case study research because case studies (and other types of non-experimental methods) cannot directly address this issue” (Yin, 2009).

4.5.3. Justification for selecting the Case Study as the Research Method

As a research method, the case study is used in many situations to contribute to our knowledge of individual, group, organisational, social, political, and related phenomena. Not surprisingly, the case study has been a common research method in psychology, sociology, political science, anthropology, social work, business, education, nursing and community planning. Case studies are even found in economics, in which the structure of a given industry or the economy of a city or a region may be investigated. In all of these situations, the distinctive need for case studies arises out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena. In brief, “the case study method allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events - such as individual life cycles, small group behaviour, organisational and managerial processes, neighbourhood change, school performance, international relations, and the maturation of industries” (Yin, 2009).

This research has adopted case study research as its research methodology because, as Yin (2009) mentions, “the more that your questions seek to explain some present circumstance (e.g. ‘how’ or ‘why’ some social phenomenon works), the more that the case study method will be relevant. The method is also relevant the more that your questions require an extensive and ‘in-depth’ description of some social phenomenon”.

The main research question in this research starts with “how”, thus this research is NOT based on ‘Survey Strategy’. A research would be considered having Survey as its research strategy if its research question starts with ‘what’ and it requires very wide number of participants, advanced and noticeable statistical analysis, theory-testing approach (Saunders *et al.*, 2009); however, this study is looking for different and even, it can be argued, opposite requirements. This research is a theory-building study that relies on data collection from a relatively small number of participants and employs only a very basic form of statistics for part of analysis.

4.5.4. Rationale for Selecting Multiple-Case Strategies

This research has chosen 'Multiple-case' as its research strategy because of working on 15 cases/universities. Regarding the reasoning behind the selection of multiple-case strategies, Yin (2009) believes that "The rationale for multiple-case designs derives directly from your understanding of literal and theoretical replications. The simplest multiple-case design would be the selection of two or more cases that are believed to be literal replications, such as a set of cases with exemplary outcomes in relation to some evaluation questions, such as 'how and why a particular intervention has been implemented smoothly?' Selecting such cases requires prior knowledge of the outcomes, with the multiple-case inquiry focusing on how and why the exemplary outcomes might have occurred and hoping for literal (or direct) replications of these conditions from case to case.

" More complicated multiple-case strategies would likely result from the number and type of theoretical replications you might want to cover. For example, investigators have used a 'two-tail' design in which cases from both extremes (of some important theoretical condition, such as good and bad outcomes) have been deliberately chosen. Multiple-case rationales also can drive from the prior propositioning of different types of conditions and the desire to have sub-groups of cases covering each type. These and other similar designs are more complicated because the study should still have two individual cases for each of the sub-groups, so that the theoretical replications across sub-groups are complemented by literal replications within each subgroup" (Yin, 2003).

As already mentioned before, by considering all the advantages and relatedness of multiple-case strategies as well as the fact that this study includes 15 cases from two different countries (Saudi Arabia and the UK), the single case study is not suitable for this study. The focus of this research is on the perspectives of 63 academics and authorities from 15 different universities, and each of these universities is considered as a case in connection to other cases from the same country. Consequently, the appropriate case study strategy for this research is the multiple-case study.

According to Yin (2009) and all other scholars in research methodology (Bryman and Bell, 2008; Lancaster, 2008; Saunders *et al.*, 2009), if a research is about more than one case study (more than one university, or one system, ...) that research is considered as a "Multiple Case Study". This research is NOT about 15 irrelevant cases

that are discussed separately. This research is a 'Comparative Study' of cases of a number of universities from two countries that are compared and contrasted with each other. Thus, this thesis's research design is a Multiple Case study.

Due to matters of confidentiality, the researcher cannot mention the names of these 15 universities that kindly accepted to be the research sites for this study. Nine out of 15 cases are British universities and six of these cases are Saudi universities. Although the researcher tried to select these 15 cases in such a way as to be partly representative of these two nations, the number of cases and their geographical locations are not completely balanced. These 15 universities are chosen non-randomly based on their positive replies to the researcher's requests that were sent to 24 universities. The following table summarises some information about these 15 cases.

Table 4.1. Introducing the 15 Case Studies

Code of Case	Nationality	Location	Number of Academics	Number of Participants
B1	British	England	1840	3
B2	British	England	2010	3
B3	British	England	1760	4
B4	British	England	2300	4
B5	British	Scotland	1330	3
B6	British	Scotland	1755	3
B7	British	Wales	1940	3
B8	British	Wales	850	4
B9	British	Northern Ireland	1565	3
S1	Saudi	West	320	5
S2	Saudi	East	545	5
S3	Saudi	East	610	7
S4	Saudi	North	280	4
S5	Saudi	Centre	485	6
S6	Saudi	South	450	6

Overall, 63 academics, 33 from six Saudi universities and 30 from nine British universities were interviewed. No more details can be given because they may lead to identification of these cases that conflicts with confidentiality.

4.5.5. Avoiding Research Bias

According to Saunders *et al.* (2009), Validity and Reliability are two ways of “*reducing the possibility of getting the answer wrong*”. Reliability ensures that chosen data collection techniques or analysis procedures will produce the proper results. Validity is related to “*whether the findings are really about what they appear to be about*” (Saunders *et al.*, 2009 p. 157).

In order to achieve a high level of validity and reliability in interviews, some steps were prepared and followed to guarantee the absence of bias in the primary research. According to Saunders *et al.* (2009, p. 328), “*the 5Ps is a useful mantra: Prior Planning Prevents Poor Performance*”. He adds that this planning is critical when “*you are going to demonstrate your credibility and obtain the confidence of the interviewees*”. Hence, in following the criteria of Saunders *et al.* (2009) and adapting them to primary research we will follow certain steps in order to guarantee validity and reliability:

- a) The required general and quality-related information about the targeted universities and interviewees will be collected through universities’ websites prior to approaching academics and authorities in these universities.
- b) Providing the interviewee with accurate information prior to the interview in order to gain his/her trust and to demonstrate that everything is clear and transparent without uncomfortable questions or topics.
- c) The interviews will hopefully take place in the interviewee’s office or similar facility. If this is not the case, they will be carried out in another place which is trusted by the interviewee.
- d) The researcher will wear the appropriate clothes suitable for a formal and professional interview.
- e) An introduction will take the form of an informal conversation, which will include the researcher’s presentation as well as general comments about the interviewee, the university, background, etc.
- f) No bias will be allowed to enter the way that the questions are presented.
- g) Finally, the interview will be followed with maximum attention, taking notes and recording everything. In addition, the interviewees’ responses will be checked in order to make sure that everything has been understood correctly.

4.6. The Case Study Protocol

The case study protocol is a guideline to highlight the most important issues in doing a quality piece of case study research. "A case study protocol has only one thing in common with a survey questionnaire: both are directed at a single data point - either a single case (even if the case is part of a larger, multiple-case study) or a single respondent. Beyond this similarity are major differences. The protocol is more than a questionnaire or instrument. First, the protocol contains the instrument, but it also contains the procedures and general rules to be followed in using the protocol. Second, the protocol is directed at an entirely different party than that of a survey questionnaire, explained below. Third, having a case study protocol is desirable under all circumstances, but it is essential if you are doing a multiple-case study.

"The protocol is a major way of increasing the reliability of case study research and is intended to guide the investigator in carrying out the data collection from a single case (again, even if the single case is one of several in a multiple-case study)" (Yin, 2009). "As a general principle, a case study protocol should have the following sections: (a) An overview of the case study project [project objectives and auspices, case study issues, and relevant readings about the topic being investigated]; (b) Field procedures [presentation of credentials, access to the case study 'sites', language pertaining to the protection of human subjects, sources of data, and procedural reminders]; (c) Case study questions [the specific questions that the case study investigator must keep in mind in collecting data, 'table shells' for specific arrays of data, and the potential sources of information for answering each question]; (d) A guide for the case study report [outline, format for the data, use and presentation of other documentation, and bibliographical information]."

Yin (2009) states "A quick glance at these topics will indicate why the protocol is so important. First, it keeps you targeted on the topic of the case study. Second, preparing the protocol forces you to anticipate several problems, including the way that the case study reports are to be completed. This means, for instance, that you will have to identify the audience for your case study report even before you have conducted your case study. Such forethought will help to avoid mismatches.

(a) Overview of the Case Study Project: the overview should cover the background information about the project, the substantive issues being investigated, and the relevant readings about the issues. A good overview will communicate to the

informed reader (that is, someone familiar with the general topic of inquiry) the case study's purpose and setting. Some of the materials (such as a summary describing the project) may be needed for other purposes anyway, so that writing the overview should be seen as a doubly worthwhile activity. In the same vein, a well-conceived overview even may later form the basis for the background and introduction to the final case study report.

(b) Field Procedures: this contrasting process of doing data collection leads to the need to have explicit and well-planned field procedures encompassing guidelines for 'coping' behaviours. Imagine, for instance, sending a youngster to camp; because you do not know what to expect, the best preparation is to have the resources to be prepared. Case study field procedures should be the same way. With the preceding orientation in mind, the field procedures of the protocol need to emphasise the major tasks in collecting data, including: (i) Gaining access to key organisations or interviewees; (ii) Having sufficient resources while in the field - including a personal computer, writing instruments, paper, paper clips, and a pre-established, quiet place to write notes privately; (iii) Developing a procedure for calling for assistance and guidance, if needed, from other case study investigators or colleagues; (iv) Making a clear schedule of the data collection activities that are expected to be completed within specified periods of time; (v) Providing for unanticipated events, including changes in the availability of interviewees as well as changes in the mood and motivation of the case study investigator.

(c) Case Study Questions: "the heart of the protocol is a set of substantive questions reflecting your actual line of inquiry. Each question should be accompanied by a list of likely sources of evidence. Such sources may include the names of individual interviewees, documents, or observations. This crosswalk between the questions of interest and the likely sources of evidence is extremely helpful in collecting case study data. Before arriving on the case study scene, for instance, a case study investigator can quickly review the major questions that the data collection should cover.

" The common confusion begins because the data collection sources may be individual people (e.g. interviews with individuals), whereas the unit of analysis of your case study may be a collective (e.g. the organisation to which the individual belongs) - a frequent design when the case study is about an organisation, community, or social group. Even though your data collection may have to rely

heavily on information from individual interviewees, your conclusions cannot be based entirely on interviews as a source of information (you would then have collected information about individuals' reports about the organisation, not necessarily about organisational events as they actually had occurred)" (Yin, 2009).

(d) Guide for the Case Study Report: "this element is generally missing in most case study plans. Investigators neglect to think about the outline, format, or audience for the case study report until after the data have been collected. Yet, some planning at this preparatory stage - admittedly out of sequence in the typical conduct of most research - means that a tentative outline can (and should) appear in the case study protocol.

"To the greatest extent possible, the basic outline of the case study report should be part of the protocol. This will facilitate the collection of relevant data, in the appropriate format, and will reduce the possibility that a return visit to the case study site will be necessary. At the same time, the existence of such an outline should not imply rigid adherence to a pre-designed protocol. In fact, case study plans can change as a result of the initial data collection, and you are encouraged to consider these flexibilities - if used properly and without bias - to be an advantage of the case study method" (Yin, 2009).

4.7. The Pilot Interviews

One of the most highly recommended methods to enhance the quality of research in general and the quality of case study research in particular is to carry out a 'pilot case study' in advance. "Pilot cases may be conducted for several reasons unrelated to the criteria for selecting the final cases in the case study design. For example, the informants at a pilot site may be unusually congenial and accessible, or the site may be geographically convenient or may have an unusual amount of documentation and data. One other possibility is that a pilot case represents the most complicated case, compared to likely real cases, so that nearly all relevant data collection issues will be encountered in the pilot case.

" A pilot case study will help to refine your data collection plans with respect to both the content of the data and the procedures to be followed. In this regard, it is important to note that a pilot study is not a pre-test. The pilot case is more formative, assisting you to develop relevant lines of questions - possibly even providing some conceptual clarification for the research design as well. In contrast, the pre-test is the occasion for a formal 'dress rehearsal', in which the data collection plan is used as the final plan as faithfully as possible" (Yin, 2009).

In the pilot interviews, the researcher tried to be impartial and unbiased so he avoided any anticipations. That is to say the study has 11 propositions; however, these propositions were developed based on a literature review, not based on personal experience or anticipation.

That is to say, "the pilot case study can be so important that more resources may be devoted to this phase of the research than to the collection of data from any of the actual cases. For this reason, several subtopics are worth further discussion: the selection of pilot cases, the nature of the inquiry for the pilot cases, and the nature of the reports from the pilot cases" (Yin, 2009).

(a) Selection of Pilot Cases: "in general, convenience, access, and geographic proximity can be the main criteria for selecting a pilot case or cases. This will allow for a less structured and more prolonged relationship between yourself and the case than might occur in the real cases. The pilot case can then assume the role of a 'laboratory' in detailing your protocol, allowing you to observe different phenomena from many different angles or to try different approaches on a trial basis.

(b) Scope of the Pilot Inquiry: Nevertheless, the scope of the inquiry for the pilot case can be much broader and less focused than the ultimate data collection plan. Moreover, the inquiry can cover both substantive and methodological issues.

(c) Reports from the Pilot Cases: the pilot case reports are mainly of value to the investigators and need to be written clearly, even if in the form of memoranda. One difference between the pilot reports and the actual case study reports is that the pilot reports should be explicit about the lesson learned for both research design and field procedures. The pilot reports might even contain subsections on those topics. If more than a single pilot case is planned, the report from one pilot case also can indicate the modifications to be attempted in the next pilot case. In other words, the report can contain the agenda for ensuring pilot case. If enough pilot cases are done in this manner, the final agenda may actually become a good prototype for the final case study protocol” (Yin, 2009).

The author conducted a pilot study for many of the reasons noted above, not least to get to know the sample population (Saudi and British higher education academics and senior managers), to test the research instrument (interview questions), and to modify the propositions (if required). This pilot was designed in a such a way as to find an initial answer to the research question (*How do the main education quality drivers have an impact on quality development in education in general and higher education in particular?*).

Research Participants

For the pilot interviews, Six Saudi academics agreed to participate in the research by answering the interview questions. These six respondents were identified and located through the author's professional network. Because the author is resident in the UK and these academics work in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, it was not easy to reach to these participants. Thus, a three-stage process was planned to collect data from them. First, contact was initiated with them through email and sending them an interview guide and requesting an appointment. This was followed by a meeting with those academics and senior managers who accepted the request for interview; finally, interviews were recorded with them with their permission. For ethical reasons, the identity of the participants will not be divulged.

Findings of and Learning from the Pilot Interviews

In the third chapter (Focal Theory: The Education Quality Model), the theoretical framework of this research was developed in the form of a model with 11 elements. Similarly, in the pilot study these 11 propositions were tested to assess the validity and reliability of the components of the Education Quality Model though obviously on a smaller scale.

The fundamental assumption was that each and every one of the factors (even separately) has an influence on the quality of education. This assumption was originally based on the literature review. While reviewing the literature, the researcher realised that while there is no research that assesses all of the 11 identified factors in this study together, there are many studies that examine the possible impact of each of these 11 factors separately. As discussed extensively in literature review chapter, there are enough research papers to show that each of these 11 elements separately has an important effect on the quality of education. So built on the findings of other researchers, the researcher assumed that possibly each of these 11 factors to some degree would have an effect on the quality of education.

The researcher tried hard to identify all main influential factors on the quality of education, by focusing on those factors where there is substantial support from the literature. So after crosschecking all of these different academic resources and painstaking critical discussion of the literature, the researcher hoped the identified factors would be supported as genuinely influential factors by participants. Fortunately, all six participants in the pilot interviews supported all 11 propositions, though with different degrees of support. The collected data was analysed thoroughly and quickly because the scale was small. As a result of analysing the collected data there appeared to be good support for all 11 propositions in general.

One of the key things learnt during the pilot study was that some of the issues raised were directly relevant to the propositions and interview questions while others were indirect. As regards relevant issues, it became clear that although these six participants were from different universities, had different expertise and were of different gender and age, all of them had some common perspectives on the importance of quality in education and on the factors influencing quality. This indicated that regardless of differences among academics, they all care about quality and had similar views on the ways in which the quality of higher education can be

improved. In addition, as a by-product, the researcher began to realise that conducting proper academic research at PhD level is very demanding and sophisticated.

Analysis Technique

The collected data from the pilot study was analysed completely, though, analysing pilot case study evidence is particularly difficult because the techniques have not yet been well defined. To overcome this problem, every case study analysis should follow a general analytic strategy, defining priorities for what needs to be analysed and why. Four strategies are relying on theoretical propositions, developing case descriptions, using both quantitative and qualitative data, and examining alternative explanations. Using various computer aids to manipulate data is no substitute for the absence of a general analytic strategy

For the qualitative data collected through semi-structured interviews (used in the pilot study) as research instruments, the Content Analysis technique proved the most relevant and common one. After the interviews it was necessary to obtain systematic and quantitative conclusions from the information, which was collected from the interviewees. According with Krippendorff (2004), this includes the following steps: Identify the main themes; Assign codes to the main themes; Classify responses under the main themes; and Integrate the themes and the responses in the report.

Brief Summary of the Findings of Pilot Study

After thematic analysis of the conducted interviews with Saudi higher education authorities and academics by coding the content of each interview, classifying similar codes into a separate theme, and quantifying the repetition and degree of each code and each theme in each interview and all interviews, some interesting quantitative findings emerged from the qualitative interviews.

After interview and in the process of data analysis five Likert scale options (totally agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and totally disagree) were hypothetically considered as possible answers to each question/proposition in order to quantify the results of interviews. By considering the words or statements that were used by each interviewee to explain their opinions regarding each question/proposition, the closest among the five options (totally agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and totally disagree) was selected to represent each answer of each respondent. For example if an interviewee said “I do believe suitable leadership and strategic management has a

positive impact on the quality of education”, because using “do believe” is a strong endorsement, “totally agree” was selected as equivalent to “do believe”.

The following table summarises briefly the contents of interviews with Saudi lecturers and education managers in a quantitative format. Numbers inside each cell show the number of people (academics) that are in favour of each option. For instance, among the six Saudi academics who participated in interviews, five of them ‘totally agree’ with the assumption of the first proposition and one academic ‘agrees’ with this proposition.

Table 4.2. Brief Summary of the Interview Study

<i>The Research Propositions</i>	Quantification of the Given Answers				
	Totally agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Totally disagree
P1: Having professional and appropriate “Leadership and Strategic Management” could lead to higher quality in education sector	5	1	-	-	-
P2: Quality people create quality results so the “Students, Academics and Staff Recruitment” has major consequences on quality of education	6	-	-	-	-
P3: What is supposed to be taught to the student in terms of “Syllabus/ Curriculum” is another determinant of quality of education	5	1	-	-	-
P4: Quality of education is dependent on the quality of “Research/Teaching”, which are the main activities at educational institutions	4	2	-	-	-
P5: “Pedagogy” or suitability of the way in which syllabus is being taught to students can contribute to quality of education	4	2	-	-	-
P6: Effective and quality “Learning and research support” can lead to higher quality of education	5	1	-	-	-
P7: Reliable and effective “Knowledge management” can help educational institutes to promote quality of their education	5	1	-	-	-
P8: The level of “Academics’ achievements” can demonstrate level of quality of education and quality of the educational institution	4	2	-	-	-
P9: “Student progress, success & satisfaction” is one of the important indicators of quality of education	6	-	-	-	-
P10: High “Universities/Schools’ achievements” are one of the signs of having high quality education	4	2	-	-	-
P11: Continues, purposeful and well-planned “Innovation and Change Management” is one of the key to high quality education	3	2	1	-	-

Source: Developed by the author

Difficulties during Pilot Study

Conducting the pilot study was not an easy task. It was obviously necessary to fly to Saudi Arabia to conduct the face-to-face interviews instead of phone or Skype interviews because Saudi academics prefer face-to-face interview. In addition, some problems were encountered in interviewing female academics due to cultural issues. In Saudi Arabia, it is not considered appropriate to be alone with a strange woman in her office so interviews were arranged in a public place, which was not convenient for discussion. Interviews were conducted with academics from different universities located in different cities, which involved flying from one place to another. A few times some academics cancelled or postponed the interview at the last minute.

Some of the participants had difficulty in understanding some of the words utilised in the interview guide (e.g. EFQM, knowledge management, and change management). A majority of the interviewees also had difficulty in fully understanding the questions which were in English as well responding to questions in English, so interviews were conducted in Arabic. Translating the interviews from Arabic to English presented another difficulty. It was considerably more time-consuming than anticipated. The initial rate of response, in comparison to the number of sent requests for interview was really low, at less than 15%, but fortunately the rate of response gradually improved to about 35%-40% because it became clear that instead of just contacting academics who spoke English, it was better to contact non-English speakers too.

Changes implemented as a result of the Pilot Study

As a result of the pilot study, some changes and modifications were made in the approach to locating and contacting potential participants. It was clear that it was necessary to be more organised and resilient in contacting academics and senior managers. Thus, requests to potential participants would have to be increased to five times more than the number needed to participate in the research due to the low response rate in the pilot study.

Furthermore, improvements were made to the structure of the questions and the interview guide. In addition, an Arabic version of the interview guide was prepared, and a small glossary was added to the interview guide explaining unfamiliar words such as EFQM. During the pilot study, although some additional elements were discussed, after thorough consideration, no new elements that influence the quality of education were added to the existing 11 factors.

4.8. Data Collection for Case Study Research

4.8.1. Sources of Data

Data collection is a critical stage in any academic research. As Yin (2009) states, “case study evidence may come from six sources: documents, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant-observation, and physical artefacts. Using these six sources calls for mastering different data collection procedures. Throughout, a major objective is to collect data about actual human events and behaviour. This objective differs from (but complements) the typical survey objective of capturing perceptions, attitude, and verbal reports about events and behaviour (rather than direct evidence about the events and behaviour)”. Main sources of data collection are documents, archival records, interviews, direct observation, and physical artefacts.

This is to say that there are two main ways to obtain data: secondary and primary data. Secondary data come from “*data that have already been collected for some other purpose*” (Saunders *et al.*, 2009 p. 256). On the other hand, primary data is collected specifically for the defined purpose.

In the first step of the research, secondary data was collected for the literature review and for the main research. Sources of secondary data were a combination of academic books and journals as well as government and research reports and the websites of the targeted universities. Due to the fact that all Saudi universities and the vast majority of British universities are government funded, it makes sense to collect some information from government bodies regarding plans, policies and procedures for quality enhancement at Saudi and British universities. According to Saunders *et al.* (2009), this information will be within the type of ‘Documentary’ secondary data, which includes written (and sometimes non-written) materials and documents about the organisations.

With primary data there are a variety of methods. The method that was used in this study was the semi-structured interview. The interviewees were two interrelated groups of academics and senior managers from both Saudi Arabia and the UK. Given that this research has 11 propositions, 11 questions were developed to cover each of these propositions separately. According to Saunders *et al.* (2009), “*the use of interviews can help to gather valid and reliable data that are relevant to your*

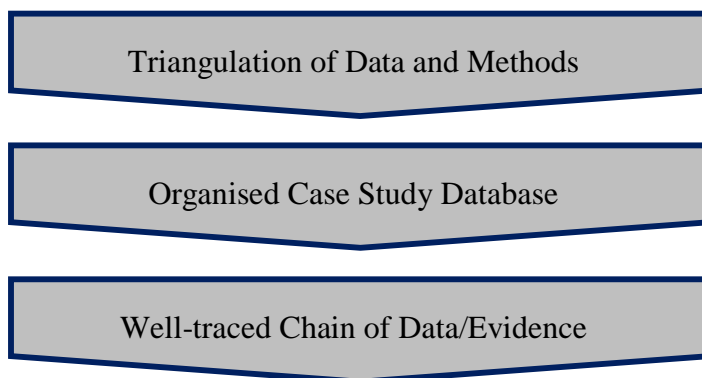
research question(s) and objectives.” So, in this kind of research question, interviews were the most suitable way to obtain the information required.

The purpose of these interviews was to examine the validity and accuracy of the 11 developed propositions based on the literature review, so the points of view of academics and senior managers would be sought in these interviews regarding the most influential elements that contribute to the establishment and development of quality in education in general and in higher education in particular. Their expressed ideas would be used to test, one by one, the developed propositions.

An interview guide was developed to accommodate the required information about the author, the research aims, confidentiality and, more importantly, 11 questions that were categorised into four groups. The interview guide would help potential interviewees to become familiar with the research and decide whether or not to participate in the interview. Furthermore, the interview guide would increase the possibility of getting completely relevant and accurate information from the interviewees because they would have a chance to read the questions a few days before the interview and prepare their answers.

The benefits of these six sources of evidence can be maximised if three principles are followed for all six sources and, when used properly, can help to deal with the problems of establishing the construct validity and reliability of the case study evidence. All three are demonstrated in the following graph.

Figure 4.3. Pillars of Data Collection



Source: developed by the author based on Yin (2009)

4.8.2. Organised Case Study Database

The second pillar Yin (2009) highlights has to do with “the way of organising and documenting the data collected for case studies. Here, case studies have much to borrow from the practices followed by the other research methods. The lack of a formal database for most case studies is a major shortcoming of case study research and needs to be corrected. There are numerous ways of accomplishing the task, as long as you and other investigators are aware of the need and are willing to commit the additional effort required to build the database. At the same time, the existence of an adequate database does not preclude the need to present sufficient evidence within the case study report itself. Every report should still contain enough data so that the reader of the report can draw independent conclusions about the case study”.

4.8.3. Well-traced Chain of Data/Evidence

The other pillar “to increase the reliability of the information in a case study is to maintain a chain of evidence. Such a principle is based on a notion similar to that used in forensic investigations. The principle is to allow an external observer - in this situation, the reader of the case study - to follow the derivation of any evidence from initial research questions to ultimate case study conclusions. Moreover, this external observer should be able to trace the steps in either direction (from conclusions back to initial research questions or from questions to conclusions). As with criminological evidence, the process should be tight enough that evidence presented in ‘court’ - the case study report - is assuredly the same evidence that was collected at the scene of the ‘crime’ during the data collection process.

Conversely, no original evidence should have been lost, through carelessness or bias, and therefore fail to receive appropriate attention in considering the ‘facts’ of a case. If these objectives are achieved, a case study also will have addressed the methodological problem of determining construct validity, thereby increasing the overall quality of the case study” (Yin, 2009).

4.8.4. Process of Data Collection

Data would be collected through the following process:

- I. Selecting a suitable research philosophy, research design, and research methodology;
- II. Deciding on a relevant research population and participants;
- III. Choosing an appropriate research instrument by considering research design, and research methodology;
- IV. Applying for 'ethical approval' of the research before starting data collection;
- V. Emailing the interview guide to all targeted participants in this research and arranging the date, time and place of interview prior to interview;
- VI. Conducting interviews: start by clarifying the aim and objectives of the research and highlighting the fact that participation in interviews is voluntary, so interviewees can withdraw from the interview at any stage and any time;
- VII. Tape-recording all interviews or note-taking if any of the interviewees are unhappy to be tape-recorded;
- VIII. Giving a unique code to each recorded interview in such a way that these interviewees can be recognisable only by the researcher to respect the anonymity of the participants;
- IX. Transcribing the recordings into written text;
- X. Emailing the written text of interviews separately to each relevant interviewee to have their final permission to use the collected data;
- XI. Starting data analysis.

4.9. Sampling and Rationale for Selecting Stratified Method

Although nowadays sampling is part and parcel of almost all research (Bryman and Bell, 2012), some experienced researchers who have not used this useful technique before seemingly feel uncomfortable and even puzzled by the reasons for the increased popularity and usage of this technique in both quantitative and qualitative research design. While valuable attempts have been made by some methodologists such as Yin (2009), Bryman and Bell (2007 & 2012) and Saunders and his colleagues (2009 & 2012) to reintroduce sampling and its functions in both quantitative and qualitative research, some very experienced but partly traditional academics are not as eager as younger researchers in accepting this technique and its wide functions that go much beyond its traditional boundaries (Lancaster, 2005).

One common misunderstanding is assuming that sampling is just for quantitative research (Patton, 1990). This problem arises from the historical fact that sampling techniques are initially developed by quantitative researchers to deal with difficulty of conducting research in a sizable research population (Krausz and Miller, 1974). Gradually sampling has been used in qualitative studies too (Lancaster, 2005). Sampling becomes much more popular in any forms of research due to adding new types (e.g. non probability) and techniques (e.g. quota sampling or snowball sampling) to it (Ragin, 1991).

Another common mistake among some researchers is this mentality that probability sampling is suitable for quantitative research and non-probability sampling is good for qualitative research design (Lancaster, 2005). Fortunately this assumption is seriously challenged by some pioneer methodologists such as Denzin (1978), Jick (1979) and Sieber (1973) with real life experience of conducting many small or large scale studies. These pioneers have shown that segregating research to just two or three domains (e.g. quantitative, qualitative) does not match to actual nature of practical research in real life that there is no a research that is 100% quantitative or 100% qualitative (Denzin, 1978; Jick, 1979; Sieber, 1973). In any quantitative research there are some qualitative elements (e.g. networking to get access to participants, interpreting the statistical data) and in any qualitative research there are some quantitative aspects too (e.g. number of interview questions, number of participants, number of case studies) (Jick, 1979; Lancaster, 2005; Ragin, 1991). Consequently, when in real life research, qualitative and quantitative phenomena are

inseparable (Patton, 1990; Tashakkori and Tedli, 2008); sharing some sampling, data collection and data analysis techniques between different types of research not only acceptable but also it is highly recommended (Jick, 1979; Van Maanen *et al.*, 2007).

This research in contrast to unsubstantiated assumption of some other researchers that believe non-probability sampling methods are more appropriate for Case Studies, this research uses Stratified sampling, that is a probability method, intentionally in order to increase the 'Generalisability' of the findings of this study and promote the 'Verification' of the 11 propositions in this research. This research is a MAINLY qualitative research but with some quantitative elements especially in the data analysis stage based on Jick's (1979) and Van Maanen's (2007) recommendation, so a probability sampling method (stratified) with some basic statistical analysis have been used in this study to strengthen the findings and discussions.

Concept and Importance of Sampling

Sampling is a process or technique for selecting a suitable sample, representative of the population with the objective of collecting characteristics from a whole population. For the sake of a conclusion based on the population of the samples, inferential statistics should be used to help find out results or conclusions from the overall population. Sampling helps researchers to save time instead of going to the whole population, which is time-consuming and expensive (Webster, 1985).

There are advantages to sampling, but it also has disadvantages as the sampling is supposed to be considered representative but there is no assurance that the sample will exactly represent the population because everyone has different opinions. It is commonly observed that, during interviews, no two interviewees are alike and they give different answers to the same questions. It is also sometimes observed that respondents give incorrect answers to the interviewers merely to impress them and this type of error can seriously affect the quality and reliability of research (Webster, 1985).

Three types of sampling are most often used in research, i.e. convenience sampling, judgment sampling and random sampling. Convenience sampling from a population is, as implied, when the most convenient representatives are selected. Judgment sampling is used when representatives are very familiar with the question concerned and the area of research. Random sampling is the most important type in

the process of sampling, which allows known probability from the representatives chosen and is referred to as a probability sample. There are a few other types of sampling: the simple random sample, systematic random sample, stratified sample and cluster sample.

A simple random sample is where, during the selection of the sample population, everyone has an equal chance of being selected. This type of sampling is not biased because it is based on randomisation.

A systematic random sample selects one unit as the random basis and additional units at intervals until the desired number of units is obtained.

A stratified random sample is where, after selecting a separate, simple random sample out of a population as a group, the population is then divided into different groups.

A cluster sample is where the researcher selects groups or clusters (e.g. geographically), and then selects individual subjects either by simple random or systematic random sampling.

Rationale for Choosing Stratified Sampling Method

The method followed in order to choose the right academics and senior managers for this research was probability sampling or, to be more specific, a stratified sample. Some of the reasons this method was chosen can be found in Cooper and Schindler (2008, p. 169), in order to gain efficiency and “*to provide adequate data for analysing the various subpopulations or strata*” (Cooper and Schindler, 2008, p. 169). There are many academics and authorities in different universities in Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom, thus there are two main strata (Saudi and British) and within these there are two other strata (academics and authorities). Therefore, the only sampling method that can give a fair and reliable representation of these varied strata would be ‘Stratified Sampling’. Inside each stratum, a simple random sampling was conducted.

This research relies on a Case Study strategy in which one of its main difficulties is limitation of findings to only the relevant cases. The common concern about case studies is that “they provide little basis for scientific generalisation” (Yin, 2009). Although, in case studies, it is more common to employ non-probability sampling methods such as convenient sampling or snowball sampling methods, there are no methodological limitations in the use of probability sampling methods such as simple

random sampling or stratified sampling methods (Bryman and Bell, 2007). Use of Stratified sampling, a probability method, is intentional to increase the 'Generalisability' of the findings of this study. Stratified sampling can be utilised in order to partly overcome the problem of lack of 'Generalisability' of findings that is one of the main weaknesses of the Case Study strategy (Cooper and Schindler, 2008).

Sampling Process and Sample Size

This is a mainly qualitative research. In qualitative research that generally relies on interviews for primary data collection, there is no specified and standard for sample size. Sample size can be as little as one or as big as 100 participants, depending on the nature of the research and access to participants. In this study, due to the exploratory nature of the research and reasonably good access to participants, the sample size consists of 63 participants (43 academics and 20 authorities).

The process of sampling was as follows: within the two main strata (Saudi and British) and for each stratum (each country) 5-9 universities were selected randomly by using simple random sampling. In other words, six universities were chosen from Saudi Arabia and nine universities were selected from Britain, which altogether totalled 15 universities from these two countries. Inside each university, either in Saudi or in the UK, there are two other strata (academics and authorities). So, randomly 2-3 academics and 1-2 authorities were selected for the interview from each university.

To put it simply, in the first step of sampling, 15 universities were chosen (six universities from Saudi Arabia and nine universities from Britain); and, in the second step of the sampling process, 3-6 participants (2-4 academics and 1-2 authorities) from each university were selected randomly. Thus, in general, 3-6 participants from 15 universities gives a total of 63 interviewees which shapes the sample size.

4.10. Triangulation, Validation, and Verification

4.10.1. Triangulation of Data and Methods

The triangulation approach to research puts an emphasis on increasing the quality and reliability of the research by using more than one source of data or employing more than one methodology. Yin (2009) believes that “any of the preceding sources of evidence can and have been the sole basis for entire studies. For example, some studies have relied only on participant-observation but have not examined a single document; similarly, numerous studies have relied on archival records but have not involved a single interview. This isolated use of sources may be a function of the independent way that sources have typically been conceived - as if an investigator should choose the single most appropriate source or the one with which she or he is most familiar. Thus, on many an occasion, investigators have announced the design of a new study by identifying both the problem to be studied and the prior selection of a single source of evidence - such as ‘interviews’ as the focus of the data collection effort”.

Regarding the rationale for employing data triangulation, Yin (2009) mentions “the approach to individual source of evidence as just described, however, is not recommended for conducting case studies. On the contrary, a major strength of case study data collection is the opportunity to use many different sources of evidence. Furthermore, the need to use multiple sources of evidence far exceeds that in other research methods, such as experiments, surveys, or histories. Experiments, for instance, are largely limited to the measurement and recording of actual behaviour in a laboratory and generally do not include the systematic use of survey or verbal information. Surveys tend to be the opposite, emphasising verbal information but not the measurement or recording of individual behaviour. Finally, histories are limited to events in the ‘dead’ past and therefore seldom have any contemporary sources of evidence, such as direct observations of a phenomenon or interviews with key actors.

“Each of these strategies can be modified, creating hybrid strategies in which multiple sources of evidence are more likely to be relevant. An example of this is the evolution of ‘oral history’ studies in the past several decades. Such studies involve extensive interviews with key leaders who have retired, on the stipulation that the interview information will not be reported until after the leader’s death. Later, the

historian will join the interview data with the more conventional array of historical evidence. Nevertheless, such a modification of the traditional methods does not alter the fact that the case study inherently deals with a wide variety of evidence, whereas the other methods do not.

"The use of multiple sources of evidence in case studies allows an investigator to address a broader range of historical and behavioural issues. However, the most important advantages presented by using multiple sources of evidence is the development of converging lines of inquiry, a process of triangulation and corroboration emphasised repeatedly in the previous section of this chapter. Thus, any case study finding or conclusion is likely to be more convincing and accurate if it is based on several different sources of information, following a corroboratory mode" (Yin, 2009).

Patton (2002) discusses four types of triangulation in doing evaluations. The types of triangulation are as follows: Data triangulation (of data sources), Investigator triangulation (among different evaluators), Theory triangulation (of perspectives in the same data set), and Methodological triangulation (of methods).

4.10.2. Validity and Reliability

Validity relates to whether the research instrument assesses what the researcher envisioned to study and measure (Kirk & Miller, 1986). Five types of validity exist, namely: content, predictive, concurrent, construct and face validity (Burns, 2000). This research does involve some measurements (calculating Frequency of 'agree' or 'disagree' views with each proposition) by using a Likert scale (five-scale form). Therefore, the validity of the study is relatively high in all types of validity.

Reliability relates to the dependability and the consistency of the research findings. This means, that if the research was repeated, would the findings be the same (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). In addition to very comprehensive *Research Methodology* chapter, this research has developed its own 'Research Protocol', which illustrates details of every step in the 'Research Process'. So the research can be repeated.

The reliability and validity of this research is high, as reliability of primary data collected have been increased via face-to-face interviews to reduce vague and missing responses and increase the rate of response. Furthermore, the stratified random sampling has ensured that all Saudi and British academics have an equal chance of

being selected and there is no bias in selection. Thus, reliability and validity of data collected will be ensured.

Academics' perspectives regarding quality of education may change with time. Nevertheless, since the study has been cross-sectional and not longitudinal, this reduces validity of findings (Babbie, 2010; Landsheer & Boeije, 2010) as in order to comprehensively study the influential factors on quality of education, data requires to be collected more than once over a period of time (Cook & Campbell, 1979).

Analysis of the findings show strong proof of the validity of the Education Quality Model; however, for more certainty about the model it was decided to ask participants (those who already given interviews) views about the model. Consequently, the researcher randomly selected 30 academics who had already participated, 15 Saudi and 15 British. The researcher emailed the model to these 30 academics to ask their opinions. Twenty-six academics replied. As a result, all of them agreed that the model is valid (100% validation) and the model demonstrates the influential factors on the quality of education in a very logical way.

4.10.3. Verification

Data collection, data analysis and the development and verification of propositions are very much an interrelated and interactive set of processes (Kvale 1996). According to Saunders and his colleagues (2009), verification is a form of triangulation. *Verification* is the process of checking, confirming, making sure, and being certain. In qualitative research, verification refers to the mechanisms used during the process of research to incrementally contribute to ensuring reliability and validity and, thus, the rigour of a study (Morse *et al.*, 2002).

It is highly recommended to try triangulating the findings with other independent data sources. This is sometimes referred to as a *cross-check verification* (Patzer 1996). Where data from two or more independent sources suggest similar conclusions, researchers can have more confidence that the data on which they are based are not distorted. Conversely, where data suggest different conclusions researchers need to be more wary of the results (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

One type of verification is 'informant verification'. In 'informant verification', a researcher conducts an informal discussion with participants, then writes these up, including her/his own conclusions as to the meanings of the discussions in the light of

her/his research hypothesis. The researcher then presents the written text to the informants (research participants) for them to verify the content. Not only is this a form of triangulation, but it can be a source of new interpretations that have not occurred to the researcher. This method of triangulation is also one that can be used with more formal interview results (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

Although Guba and Lincoln (1981) described member checks as a continuous process during data analysis (for example, by asking participants about hypothetical situations), this has largely been interpreted and used by researchers as verification of the overall results with participants. While it is an attractive idea to return the results to the original participants for verification, it is actually not a verification strategy. In fact, several methodologists (Hammersley, 1992; Morse, 1998), including Guba and Lincoln (1981), have warned against the tendency to define verification in terms of whether readers, participants, or potential users of the research judge the analysis to be correct, stating that it is actually more often a threat to validity (Morse *et al.*, 2002).

Verification strategies that ensure both reliability and validity of data are activities such as ensuring methodological coherence, sampling sufficiency, developing a dynamic relationship between sampling, data collection and analysis, thinking theoretically, and theory development (Morse *et al.*, 2002). In this research, an attempt was made to use all of these verification strategies by relying on a mainly qualitative research design instead fully qualitative one, using a probability sampling techniques (stratified sampling), having a relatively good sample size (63 participants), findings are analysed based not only on 15 cases, but are also country-based (Saudi and Britain), developing the Education Quality Model instead of testing one existing non-customised model, and finally, the Education Quality Model was sent to participants and had their approval.

4.11. Data Analysis of Case Study

Although data collection is crucial, the collected data makes no sense before being analysed. According to Yin (2009), “data analysis consists of examining, categorising, tabulating, testing, or otherwise recombining evidence, to draw empirically based conclusions. Analysing case study evidence is especially difficult because the techniques still have not been well defined. To overcome this circumstance, every case study analysis should follow a general analytic strategy, defining the priorities for what to analyse and why. The four strategies are relying on theoretical propositions, developing case descriptions, using both quantitative and qualitative data, and examining rival explanations. Using various computer aids to manipulate your data will not substitute for the absence of a general analytic strategy”.

4.11.1. Justification of Selecting Content Analysis Technique

This research uses Content Analysis, which is considered as a MAINLY Qualitative technique for analysing 'Qualitative' data. It helps, in part, to quantify the qualitative data (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). For qualitative data that is collected through semi-structured interviews as the research instrument, the ‘*Content Analysis*’ technique is the most relevant and commonly used (Bryman and Bell, 2007). According to Cooper and Schindler (2008, p. 449), it is defined as “*a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of a communication*”. That definition includes the reason why this technique was chosen for the present study. After the interviews it would be necessary to obtain systematic and quantitative conclusions on the information collected from the interviewees.

To understand the justification behind the selection of Content Analysis for this research, it is necessary to remember that this study employs the ‘Case Study’ as its main strategy. While the Case Study strategy has many advantages that are discussed in the research strategy section, it has two main disadvantages, which hinder those studies that utilise this strategy. Content Analysis is believed to be a reliable analysis tool to deal with these weaknesses at a reasonable level (Cooper and Schindler, 2008). According to Yin (2009), “as a research endeavour, case studies have been viewed as a less desirable form of inquiry than either experiments or surveys. Perhaps

the greatest concern has been over the lack of rigour of case study research and its validity”. The next common concern about case studies is that “they provide little basis for scientific generalisation” (Yin, 2009).

This technique would have to use some 'Quantitative' results too in order to partly overcome the problem of lack of 'rigour' of the case study and 'validity' of findings that is one of the main weaknesses of the Case Study strategy. Content Analysis can partly address poor 'rigour' due to systemic and well-defined steps in conducting analysis. Similarly, use of Content Analysis techniques contributes some 'Quantitative' results too that can increase possibility of 'Generalisability'. As Yin (2009) emphasises, use of analytical techniques (e.g. Content Analysis) that quantify in part the collected qualitative data can lead to 'statistical generalisation' by enumerating frequencies. That is to say, use of Stratified sampling which is a probability method is an intentional attempt by the researcher to increase both Generalisability and Validity of the findings.

Regarding the steps in the process of Content Analysis, Krippendorff (2004) states that the analysis process should include the following steps:

1. Identify the main themes.
2. Assign codes to the main themes.
3. Classify responses under the main themes.
4. Integrate the themes and the responses in the report.

The collected data from Saudi and British academics and education managers would be analysed by using the Content analysis technique assisted by a Likert scale. In the process of Content analysis of the interviews that would be conducted with both Saudi as well as British education managers and academics, the content of each interview would be coded, then similar codes would be classified into a separate themes, and the repetition and degree of each code and each theme in each interview and all interviews would be quantified. As a result, it was expected to have some interesting quantitative findings emerging from the qualitative analysis of the interviews.

4.11.2. Likert Scale as Quantifier in Content Analysis

Although a Likert scale is widely used for *collecting quantitative data*, its function and potential for *analysing qualitative data* has not been explored enough by some researchers (Cooper and Schindler, 2008). While a Likert scale can be used independently as the only technique, generally, a Likert scale shows its full potential if it is used as a quantifier tool that is part of a more rigorous analysis system such as Content Analysis (Husrn, 2009). For this reason, it was decided to use a Likert scale as a quantifier element of Content Analysis techniques in this research. To avoid unnecessary complexity, a five-point Likert scale (totally agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and totally disagree) was used.

In short, this research employs *Semi-structured Interviews*, not *Structured* ones, so there is no Likert scale in the interview questions. The Likert scale was used for analysing data, not for collecting data. Then the researcher has chosen this tool, not the interviewees.

A Likert scale was used as a quantifier of *Content Analysis* of the conducted interviews with Saudi and British higher education authorities and academics. This analysis was done by coding the content of each interview, classifying similar codes into a separate theme, and quantifying the repetition and degree of each code and each theme in each interview and all interviews, which resulted in some interesting quantitative findings emerging from the qualitative interviews.

At the post-interview stage (process of data analysis), five Likert scale options (totally agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and totally disagree) were hypothetically considered as possible answers to each question/proposition in order to quantify the results of the interviews. By considering the words or statements used by each interviewee to explain their opinions regarding each question/proposition, the closest option among the five options (totally agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and totally disagree) was selected to represent each answer of each respondent. For example if an interviewee said “I do believe suitable leadership and strategic management has a positive impact on the quality of education”, because of using “do believe” that is strong support, “totally agree” was selected as equivalent to it.

One of the outputs of Content Analysis is a table of findings. The table summarises briefly the contents of interviews with Saudi and British lecturers and education managers in a quantitative format. Numbers inside each cell of this table

show the number of people (academics) that are in favour of each option. For instance, among six Saudi academics who participated in interviews, five of them ‘totally agree’ with the assumption of the first proposition and one academic ‘agrees’ with this proposition.

That is to say, the use of a Likert scale in Content Analysis may be particularly difficult for inexperienced researchers because the techniques have not yet been well defined. To overcome this problem, every case study analysis should follow a general analytic strategy, defining priorities for what needs to be analysed and why. Four strategies are: relying on theoretical propositions, developing case descriptions, using both quantitative and qualitative data, and examining alternative explanations. Using various computer aids to manipulate data is no substitute for the absence of a general analytic strategy

4.11.3. Statistical Analysis of Case Study Data

As was mentioned, “with appropriately fine-grained data, the analyses can incorporate statistical models, such as regression or structural equation models. Throughout, a persistent challenge is to produce high quality analysis, which requires attending to all the evidence collected, displaying and presenting the evidence separate from any interpretation, and considering alternative interpretations” (Yin, 2009).

Time-series analysis can follow many intricate patterns, which have been the subject of several major discussions with single subjects (Kratochwill, 1978). Compared to the more general pattern-matching analysis, a time-series design can be much simpler in one sense: in time series, there may only be a single dependent or independent variable. In these circumstances, when a large number of data points are relevant and available, statistical tests can even be used to analyse the data (Kratochwill, 1978).

Given that all the collected data for this thesis are qualitative (no numbers or figures have been collected), none of the highly quantitative statistical analyses (e.g. regressions, correlations, and time-series) are suitable to analyse the data. Therefore, this study employs a ‘comparison of frequencies’ in the given answers to each question by different participants as the only statistical analysis technique completely suitable for this research.

4.12. Research Instruments

4.12.1. Semi-structured Interview

Interviews are the most suitable instrument when the research topic requires a qualitative approach (Cooper and Schindler 2008). However, according to Saunders *et al.* (2009), there are three types of interview: structured, semi-structured and unstructured. The semi-structured interview was the most suitable method to use to develop this research. However, this kind of research requires semi-structured interviews that are closer to an unstructured interview than a structured one. This is mainly for the following reasons:

According to Saunders *et al.* (2009), semi-structured and unstructured interviews are useful when you need “*to understand the reasons for the decisions that your research participants have taken or to understand the reasons for their attitudes and opinions*”. Also “*when you need to probe answers, where you want your interviewees to explain, or build on, their responses*”. And finally “*when they may also lead the discussion into areas that you had not previously considered but which are significant for your understanding, and which help you to address your research question and objectives.*” Finally, as overall conclusion “*you are able to collect a rich and detailed set of data*” (Saunders *et al.*, 2009 p. 324).

In contrast, a “*structured interview is composed for a predetermined and standardised set of questions and usually with pre-coded answers. This is more suitable for quantifiable data and in consequence for quantitative research interviews*” (Saunders *et al.*, 2009, p. 320).

Participants were asked as the last question (informally after asking the 11 questions) as may be found in the recorded interviews. However, apart from one British academic who mentioned one or two issues ('giving free bus passes to students' or 'having single-gender classes') that she said MIGHT have an effect on the quality of education, nobody else added any other factors. The extra issues mentioned by this lecturer were disregarded because none of other participants and none of scholars in this field considered 'giving free bus passes to students' or 'having single-gender classes' as key factors that would increase the quality of education, and even this lecturer was not sure of them.

4.12.2. Content of the Interview

The questions were based on the previous literature review conclusions. From there, the whole interview was constructed, with normally open questions and with the focus on getting the opinions of the interviewees as well as any contribution that could enrich the answers and in consequence the conclusions of this research.

The interviews comprised 12 questions that covered the 11 propositions, plus one last informal question regarding possible other factors. These 12 questions were classified into four groups, which shape the system-like education quality model. The first section was 'Inputs of the Education System' and had one question (To what extent does the quality of education depend on the quality of *Students, Academics and Staff* recruited?). The second section was the 'Process of the Education System' with five questions (What are the impacts of a quality *Syllabus/ Curriculum* on the quality of education?; Do you think it is possible to have a quality education if the quality of *Research/Teaching* is low?; How does *Pedagogy* or the suitability of the way in which the syllabus is taught to students contribute to the quality of education?; Can effective *Learning and research support* contribute to the quality of education?; and: To what extent can a well-developed *Knowledge management* system help educational institutions to promote the quality of their education?). The third section focused on 'Outputs of the Education System' with three questions (Is there any relationship between the level of *Academics achievements* in an educational institution and the level of quality of its education?; Would you please highlight your opinion regarding the assumption that *Student progress, success and satisfaction* is the most, or at least one of the most, important indicators of the quality of education?; and Can *University/Schools achievements* be considered one of the signs of having high quality education?). The last part of the interview questions was about 'Feedback and Common Elements of the Education System and has two questions (To what extent does suitable *Leadership and Strategic Management* enhance quality in education?; and Can you see any meaningful relationship between well-planned *Innovation and Change Management* and the quality of education?).

After asking these 11 questions, all the participants from the 15 cases/ universities would be asked to mention any other factors in addition to these 11 factors that they think can have critical impact on the quality of education.

4.13. Research Ethics

The primary data in this research relies on interviewing academics and senior managers who were willing to participate voluntarily in the study. Nobody was forced to participate and give an interview. First, informed consent was sought by sending information about the purpose and functions of the research to potential interviewees. The confidentiality of the collected data and anonymity of the participants would always be a priority.

The secondary data in this research was collected from the official published data of governments and other regulatory bodies, educational institutions as well as information from books and journals. Plagiarism was avoided and the sources of all data were acknowledged. In case of copyright materials, permission of the copyright holder was sought before use.

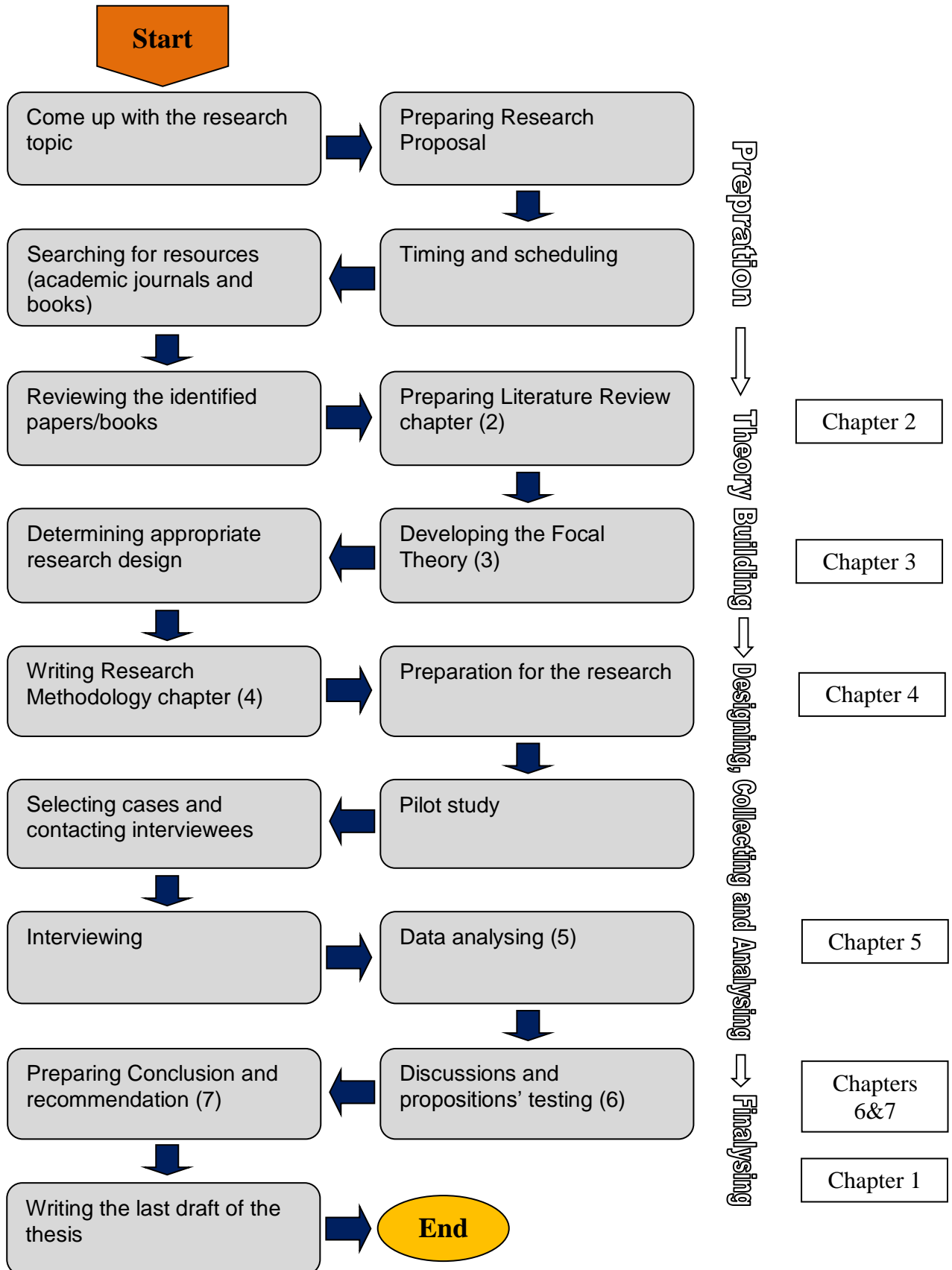
Nobody was harmed and the researcher was completely impartial in doing the research and interpreting the findings.

In other words, this study involved some ethical considerations in order to avoid any damage to the subjects participating in it. The main ethical considerations to be concerned about during the research process were the privacy of the participants, voluntary participation, the consent of the participants, confidentiality of data, participants' reactions and researcher behaviour (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). In order to avoid any ethical damage the following points were respected with regard to ethical considerations:

- The interviews with the interviewees would be conducted in a sensitive way. There would not be any pressure or any other form of coercion in order to get their participation.
- The language and questions would be sensitive and careful at all times.
- The information obtained would be considered in a fair way, without including personal opinions or bias.
- Anonymity was guaranteed unless the participants allowed the publication of their names.
- The collected data would be kept and used solely for academic purposes.
- And, the interviewees would not be deceived about the research objectives.

4.14. Research Process

Figure 4.4: Process of Research in this Study



The research process in this study started by coming up with a research topic that is appropriate for a PhD level investigation. In order to apply for a position as a PhD student at the university, it was necessary to prepare a research proposal that briefly explained the intended research. After gaining admission to the university, the researcher planned the stages of his research and allocated time to each step by developing an initial schedule. Meetings were arranged between the student and his supervisor to discuss the chosen topic in detail. As a result of these meetings, the researcher received some advice regarding good academic sources that could be used in conducting this research. Consequently, the researcher started searching for relevant resources (academic journals and books).

Reviewing critically the identified papers and books was the next step which was very time-consuming. Built on the reviewed sources, the researcher began writing his first chapter, the Literature Review chapter which would ultimately form chapter two. Following the recommendation of the supervisor, it was decided to write the introduction chapter (chapter 1) as the last chapter to ensure that all the required information for this chapter would be obtained by that time.

This research is intended to develop a new model for education quality. So it was necessary to prepare a tentative model based on the literature review in the third chapter (Focal Theory: The Education Quality Model). In the third chapter, 11 propositions that represent the 11 components of the model were developed.

Before conducting any field research, the researcher was required to determine an appropriate research design for this study. Thus, meetings were arranged with the supervisor to make sure an appropriate research design was chosen. It was decided to adopt 'Realism' as the research philosophy, a 'Mainly Qualitative' research design, the 'Multiple-Case Study' (with 15 cases/universities) as the research strategy, and the Semi-structured interview as data collection research instrument. As a result of the outcomes of these meetings, the researcher started writing the Research Methodology chapter (chapter 4).

Preparation for the field research was the next step. Writing and submitting application for ethical approval, securing enough time and money for empirical data collection and preparing an interview guide would be considered in this step. It is strongly recommended assessing the interview questions in the interview guide by conducting a pilot study. Six academics were requested to participate in the pilot study.

After making required amendments in the interview guide as a result of the pilot study, the researcher then needed to select enough universities as cases in Saudi and Britain. The required number of academics and higher education authorities from these cases/universities were contacted to request them to participate as interviewees in this research. Built on the experiences of other researchers, it was expected only to gain the agreement of a small proportion of those who were contacted; however, the aim was to have about 60 participants.

The researcher needed to arrange interviews in such a way that the venue and time were convenient for interviewees. It was expected that the interviews would be conducted in offices of these participants. The interview guide was sent well in advance of conducting the interviews to make sure the participants had enough time to prepare for interviews. The interviews would be tape-recorded.

Interview transcriptions would be prepared based on the recorded interviews to be used for data analysing. The interviews would be analysed using the 'content analysis' technique that employs a 'Likert scale' for quantifying the findings. The fifth chapter (Findings) was written based on the analysed interviews. The 11 propositions were assessed based on the collected data.

In chapter 6 (discussions) the findings from the interviews would be compared to the literature to determine possible similarities or differences between the findings of this research and the findings of other researchers. If there were any discrepancies between these two sets of findings, an explanation would need to be provided to clarify these differences.

Preparing conclusions and providing recommendations based on the findings and discussions shaped the seventh chapter. As the last chapter written, chapter 1 (Introduction) was written to give an introduction to the thesis.

The first draft of the thesis was prepared by adding necessary sections such as an abstract, table of contents, list of tables and figures, declaration, reference list and appendices. The final draft of the thesis would be submitted after making required modifications based on feedback received from the supervisor, and internal and external examiners.

4.15. Conclusion

Research methodology is about how to do the research. In brief, this research adopted 'Realism' as its philosophy, a 'Mainly Qualitative' main research design, the 'Multiple-Case Study' (with 15 cases/universities) as its research strategy, and the Semi-structured interview as its data collection research instrument.

After analysing the methodology, which was applied in this research, it is appropriate to summarise the main conclusions so far.

- First, the **research philosophy** is realism - and more specifically, critical realism - is the concrete research philosophy chosen.
- The **research approach** is inductive that is suitable for theory/model building.
- Related to the **research design**, it has been MAINLY (but NOT totally) qualitative research, with some quantitative elements at the analysis stage.
- The chosen **research strategy** was the multiple case-study strategy.
- Cross-sectional is the preferred **time horizon** for this study.
- As for the **research instruments**, which are composed of data collection, sampling and data analysis: a) the data collection instrument of this research was the semi-structured interview trying to test (in an open and free way) the literature-based propositions b) it has developed a probability stratified sample which included 33 participants from six Saudi universities and 30 respondents from nine of Britain's universities c) the data analysis instrument was content analysis.
- During the research process certain ethical considerations were followed in order to respect the privacy and confidentiality of the interviewees and their information as well as to avoid bias of behaviour during the interview process.
- Finally, this research has followed the principles of Validity and Reliability in order to obtain the right answers in the right way.
- However, there are some research limitations around time, scope and budget so on that have been balanced in order to obtain the most suitable research project and conclusions within these limitations.

The next chapter will rely on the data collected through interviews; these data will be analysed and then a discussion is provided based on the analysed data to test the propositions.



Chapter 5

Findings: Saudi and British Perspectives regarding Quality Education

The Fifth Chapter's Abstract

The Saudi academics and senior managers were chosen by using the Stratified Sampling method, which is one type of Probability Sampling. From a randomly 120 potential participants, a total of 33 Saudi academics and senior staff agreed to participate in the interviews, a response rate of 27.5%.

Consideration of the analysed data collected through semi-structured interviews with 30 British academics and senior managers from nine different universities/cases in the UK, suggests that all the propositions of this study received substantial support. As will be evident from the discussion, there was consensus among British academics who gave average to strong support for all 11 propositions of this research.

The Education Quality Model has 11 main elements each of which are supposed to have an impact on the quality of education. For each of these 11 factors one proposition has been developed to be tested based on the collected primary data. Answers of these participants regarding each of the 11 propositions have been analysed and discussed.

It is normal to have some opposing or neutral points of views so not the all propositions were backed as strongly as each other. Although some British academics *disagreed* with a few of the propositions, none of them *totally disagreed* with any of the propositions. To put it simply, these 11 propositions can be categorised into three interrelated groups based on the degree of support they received from the British participants: A) Propositions with 'Very Strong Support', B) Propositions with 'Strong Support', C) Propositions with 'Average Support'. The criteria for defining these three categories are *Agreement*, *Disagreement* or *neutral* responses.

As will become evident from the discussion in this chapter, there was consensus among Saudi and British academics and senior managers with strong support for all 11 propositions of this research. While nobody *totally disagreed* with the propositions, a few of the interviewees *disagreed* with 5-6 of the propositions. While the degree of agreement with each of these propositions varied, all the British participants believed that the 11 pillars/criteria of quality education are: Leadership and Strategic Management; Students, Academics and Staff Recruitment; Syllabus/ Curriculum; Research/Teaching; Pedagogy; Learning and research support; Knowledge management; Academics' achievements; Student progress, success and satisfaction; University/School achievements; and Innovation and Change Management.

5.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the aim is to evaluate the 11 propositions based on the given answers by both Saudi and British academics during interviews. Although some short narratives and explanations about the overall perspective of the participants (degree of agreement or disagreement about each proposition) are provided, the author has tried not to explain the participants' answers one by one. Many methodologists believe that 'researcher bias' would occur when researchers try to interpret respondents' answers from their own personal perspectives (Bryman and Bell, 2008; Lancaster, 2008; Saunders *et al.*, 2009). Researchers' attempts to interpret or explain 'what' respondents mean by their answers or 'why' participants gave such answers will contaminate the original answers by respondents (Bryman and Bell, 2008). Thus 'researcher bias' is avoided by minimising the given explanations by the researcher. Thus, the researcher has intentionally avoided too much judging of the given responses ('what' respondents mean by their answers or 'why' participants gave such answers) because each of the propositions is supposed to be tested based on the respondents' point of view, not the researcher's opinion.

Background

As described in the previous chapter (Research Methodology), by using the Multiple Case Study (15 cases/universities) as a research strategy, the Semi-Structured Interview was used as the research instrument to collect data from Saudi and British academics and senior managers. Due to the volume of the collected data and results of their analysis from each of these two countries, it was decided to present the findings from each country next to each other but with separate headings.

The Saudi academics and senior managers were chosen by using the Stratified Sampling method, which is one type of Probability Sampling. First, each of main Saudi universities was considered as one separate stratum (group), then randomly 120 potential participants were selected from these universities. These people were contacted via email to invite them to participate in interviews. A total of 33 Saudi academics and senior staff agreed to participate in the interviews. A total of 33 out of 120 represent a response rate of 27.5%, which is a good rate.

The same sampling method (Stratified Sampling) was employed to collect data from British interviewees. A total of 120 potential participants were chosen and

contacted from nine universities in the UK. Of these 120, 30 people agreed to take part in this research by giving an interview. So the response rate was 25% which is considered average to good.

Remarks on the data collection from British participants

Meetings took place in different locations such as university offices, coffee shops and restaurants or by phone (one only by phone). A total of 26 of the participants agreed to record the interview and only four preferred not to do so. The researcher had to travel to many cities to meet with participants from different universities (nine universities). Participants had diverse backgrounds in their academic functions (Lecturers, senior lecturers, readers, or professors), their gender (male and female), their administrative roles (member of staff, top management, and vice-chancellor:quality control). Although the British participants were very helpful, they asked to reschedule appointments on numerous occasions. Participants were given the freedom to choose the location, time, meeting and language. The research idea was explained to the participants twice, once via email and once before each meeting to ensure full understanding and to get the maximum benefit from them.

Content Analysis and Likert Scale

After Content analysis of the interviews conducted with Saudi academics and senior managers by coding the content of each interview, classifying similar codes into a separate theme, and quantifying the degree of repetition of each code and each theme in each interview and all interviews, some interesting quantitative findings emerged from the qualitative interviews.

After the interviews, and in the process of data analysis, five Likert scale options (*totally agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and totally disagree*) were hypothetically considered as possible answers to each question/proposition in order to quantify the results of the interviews. By considering the words or statements used by each interviewee to explain their opinions regarding each question/proposition, the closest of the five options (*totally agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and totally disagree*) was selected to represent each respondent's answer. For example, if an interviewee said “I do believe suitable leadership and strategic management has a positive impact on the quality of education”, because “do believe” is a strong endorsement, *totally agree* was selected as equivalent to “do believe”.

The table given in the conclusion section briefly summarises the contents of the interviews with Saudi lecturers and education managers in a quantitative format. Numbers inside each cell show the number of people (academics) in favour of each option. For instance, among the 33 Saudi academics who participated in the interviews, 23 them *Totally Agreed* and nine of them *Agreed* with the assumption of the first proposition and one academic was *Neutral* regarding this proposition.

Scope of Research and Analysis

Although, it can be claimed that hundreds of issues might have partial effects on the given answer by participants in a research, a researcher is required to consider such issues if only research aim, objectives or research question mention these issues (Bloxham and Boyd, 2007; Cadden *et al.*, 2010).

Every research has its own scope and limitations (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). There are some issues out of scope that can have effect on research, researcher or research participants; however, it is not feasible to consider all influential factors on a research in the research because they are not on the research scope (Lancaster, 2007). Every research has some limitations (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). The chosen scope of the research was substantial enough to take more than four years for the researcher to complete, so adding any other variable to this research would go beyond its limited time, budget, and manpower. It is impossible to assess the impact of all the factors that might have an effect on a research study or its participants (Bryman and Bell, 2008). Even in a large-scale research study with a broad scope, a big budget and hundreds of researchers, it is not possible to consider all the effects on this research.

Furthermore, any research has its specified research question to answer, the research aim and some research objectives to achieve (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). Not only is it not necessary to discuss the issues that are not mentioned in the research question or research aim or objectives, but also, many scholars believe that it is inappropriate to consider any issue that has nothing to do with the research aim, objectives or the research question (Bryman and Bell, 2008; Cadden *et al.*, 2010; Hattie, 2009). As is clear from this research's aim, objectives and question, this study is NOT going to consider why participants gave such answers or what factors might have affected their given answers.

There are many macro-environmental and micro-environmental elements that might have some effect on the research, researcher, or participants (Cadden *et al.*, 2010). Micro-environmental issues are more specific, limited and personal factors with important and direct effects on researchers or participants (Duke and Mallette, 2004). Macro-environmental issues are very widespread and general factors that might affect everything and anything. The effects of macro-environmental factors are generally (but not always) indirect and limited (Agranoff and Radin, 1991). Macro-environmental factors are generally grouped into six main domains including political, economical, socio-cultural, technological, environmental, and legal domains that are known as PESTEL (Agranoff and Radin, 1991).

There are numerous ‘*cultural*’ factors that might have had some effect on the research, researcher, or research participants (Schultz and Hinings, 2012). Some of these cultural factors are religion, language, values, norms, perceptions, learning styles, attitudes, etiquettes, expectations, rules, gender role, approaches to problem-solving, patterns of handling emotions, social interactions, decision-making patterns, notions of beauty, literature and even the types of the food participants eat or types and colours of the dress participants wear are part of their culture (Hofstede *et al.*, 2010; Van-den-Berg and Wilderom, 2004).

Consideration of the possible effects of participants’ culture on the given answers to interview questions has never been one of the research objectives nor it has ever been within the scope of this research. Even if assessing the impact of participants’ culture on their given answer was one of the research objectives or was within the scope of the research, conducting such an assessment was too complicated because culture has so many different aspects (Hattie, 2009). Even if a researcher decides to select a limited number of aspects of culture to examine, this research would be non-defensible precisely because the research can assess only a minute impact of culture due to ignoring the vast majority of cultural aspects (Hofstede *et al.*, 2010). Another problem is the way in which culture would be assessed. While some valuable efforts have been made by few scholars such as Hofstede (1984) or Trompenaars (1995) to quantify culture, it cannot be disregarded that culture is a highly subjective issue so it is not possible to measure the exact effect of any aspect of culture on participants’ answers (Schultz and Hinings, 2012).

5.2. Findings and Analysis of the First Proposition- Saudi

The first Proposition is 'Having professional and appropriate *Leadership and Strategic Management* can lead to higher quality in the education sector'. This Proposition focuses on the importance of proper leadership and strategic management. Strong and visionary leadership includes thinking and planning strategically which is necessary for high quality education and higher education. Schools and universities like other organisations need qualified leaders, thus it is unlikely that, for instance, a professor of microbiology, as a dean, could lead a university toward higher quality. Participants were asked: *To what extent does suitable Leadership and Strategic Management enhance quality in the education sector?*

These are some of the answers given:

(a)"These two parameters have a strong correlation ... the better the leadership and strategic management, the higher the quality of education to the extent that they may reach excellence. For instance, a good leader can manage to motivate his colleagues or employees to provide their maximum effort to allow any given task to achieve great success".

(b)"From the reality of practical experience, this dimension is of great significance in influencing the quality of education, Strategic planning sets the direction for the institution over the long term and how to direct the financial and human resources to serve this plan, since most of the problems facing our universities are improvised in the decision-making and the absence of the strategic dimension of leadership and management of educational institutions. This is an integral, which affects the overall development of the quality of education".

(c)"I think it's very important, and this is what we miss, which is leadership in higher education with a strategic project that gives a strong sense of orientation and, also linked to achieving specific targets, but let me give you something important, and this is something central to the quality issue in particular with regard to Saudi universities, the issue of the role of the university, up to now has not been decided nor put to debate at the university level, not even within the community in an orderly way , it's what is the role of the university? Does the university aim to produce, organise and transfer knowledge? Or does it service the market and development needs together? Now even if you read the policy of higher education in the Kingdom will

not find clarity particularly with regard to the role, and in any organisation, where its role is unclear, it is difficult to talk about a sense of quality".

(d) "No doubt, to direct or move any vehicle towards the goals set for itself depends on the leaders and cadres who are in charge. There is no doubt that the presence of leadership which has all the attributes of leadership and has the educational attributes will have a reflection and positive impact to move the organisation forward".

(e) "It can highly enhance education, and King Saud University, who created the movement, was one man. And I believe that mobility at the university and opening the door to transparency is a good thing. For example, when the university published a controversial article from a science journal and translated it, this was a good step, and creates a good environment for leadership in the future., but to make changes in only one of the areas of concern is a waste of time. No doubt the existence of strategic leadership leads to the development and improvement

(f) "I think that, unless the management is wise, strong, honest, transparent, efficient and enthusiastic, it is impossible for any system to be created, and you can deceive people for some time, but cannot deceive all the people all the time. Our problem at the university, is that those who are leading the reform and change are limited, and that there must be a group of reformers in each college of at least 15-20 people, and at this university only five people are running the show and the rest do not know anything , although, some others have a limited role".

(g) "Leadership has a big impact. And it is an important factor, which can have either a negative or positive impact. A leader might come and change everything from good to worse and vice versa, and we need a management, which has an impact but not a strong impact. It is a source-based foundation providing a source of inspiration. The institution that lacks appropriate leadership and management will stumble in their plans and will abort their efforts and there will not be a good environment for excellence".

(h) "The best you may hire is the strong and trustworthy, thus, it is obviously essential by their expert knowledge who runs and knows how to strategically manage that institution. Otherwise, education quality will be at risk. There is a strong relationship and we went through a period where we spend the time chatting, but now we do not have the time, and we have business and this is good, and all of this is because of the administration".

(i) "I believe that the most significant point is that the top management person looks for quality and persists in getting quality, and continues to observe the changes that occur in members of the faculty and in their quality and the quality of the student, etc. I think it will play a main role".

Figure 5.1. Saudi Perspectives regarding Proposition 1



Source: Findings of this study

It is an unfortunate fact that with few exceptions, industrial and business organisations in general create and maintain higher quality and offer better customer value than educational institutions. It is believed that one of the reasons for lower quality at universities/ colleges compared to for-profit organisations is a lack of professional and trained leaders to manage their organisations strategically (Amosa and Cooper, 2006).

Strong and visionary leadership with the ability to think and plan strategically is necessary in order to have high quality in higher education. Schools and universities, like other organisations, need qualified leaders.

5.3. Findings and Analysis of the First Proposition- British

“Having professional and appropriate *Leadership and Strategic Management* can lead to higher quality in the education sector” is the first Proposition of the study, which highlights the importance of proper leadership and strategic management. Strong and visionary leadership that includes thinking and planning strategically is necessary for high quality education and higher education. Although schools and universities like other organisations need qualified leaders with a strategic perspective, traditionally, the vast majority of school/university heads are just one of their teachers/academics with no managerial education. Participants were asked: *To what extent does suitable Leadership and Strategic Management enhance quality in education?*

A total of 80 per cent of participants *Totally Agreed* and the rest *Agreed* with the Proposition. These are some of the answers given:

(a) "This is important from the point of view developing an educational sector that is open, flexible and appropriate for meeting future marketplaces for students. Without question a good education structure does provide many more opportunities for young people and also for career changes for mature students. In other words, if we have a leadership programme which can identify strengths, weaknesses and opportunities then clearly we are going to enhance the quality of the sector".

(b) "It depends on the management style. Sometimes in the higher education system you get a laissez-faire approach when you need a more aggressive management style to push things forward and this is what we have had for the last five to six years in this School. The number of PhD students has increased, the ranking of the School itself has jumped in every respect, there is more research output, more satisfied students so it makes a difference, the leader makes a difference in this case and management style was really important, I'm not just speaking hypothetically, I've been through this where the business school was low in the rankings, but now among the middle and pushing every year two or three places up, so it makes a difference. Yes, I totally agree".

(c) "Leadership is very important, because within the organisation there needs to be someone who is giving direction, of course, in consultation with the management team and depending on what their vision is and management's vision is of the future

of the university will have an impact on how they wish education to be taught in the university. So, yes, it can definitely affect the university".

(d) "In my opinion, to a very, very great extent, you need to know where you are going and what you are trying to achieve, you need to have a common mission, a common vision, and common goals. There is no point in the strategic management going one way and the academics going a different way, so I think strong leadership and strategic management is essential in the current climate, you have to ensure the success of your institution otherwise you will not have the funding to be able to undertake research and if you can't undertake and resource your research, you can't inform the teaching, you can't be a research-led teaching institution and so on, so it is essential".

(e) "Leadership and Strategic Management have a great impact on the quality in education because they set the direction and level of quality in their institutions. You can have good students, you can have good staff but if the management is not good the process is missing the leadership element here. Therefore to get the best quality education this triangle should exist, I mean strong students, reliable students, responsible students and research-active staff or updated staff (for those who are those not research active) and excellent leadership management".

(f) "I think these days that the person at the top of the institution has an increasingly bigger impact on the way an institution goes and we have experienced this directly. And so even though there are support structures leadership seems to be important and strategy is also important. I think leadership and strategic management need to think about the direction of development"

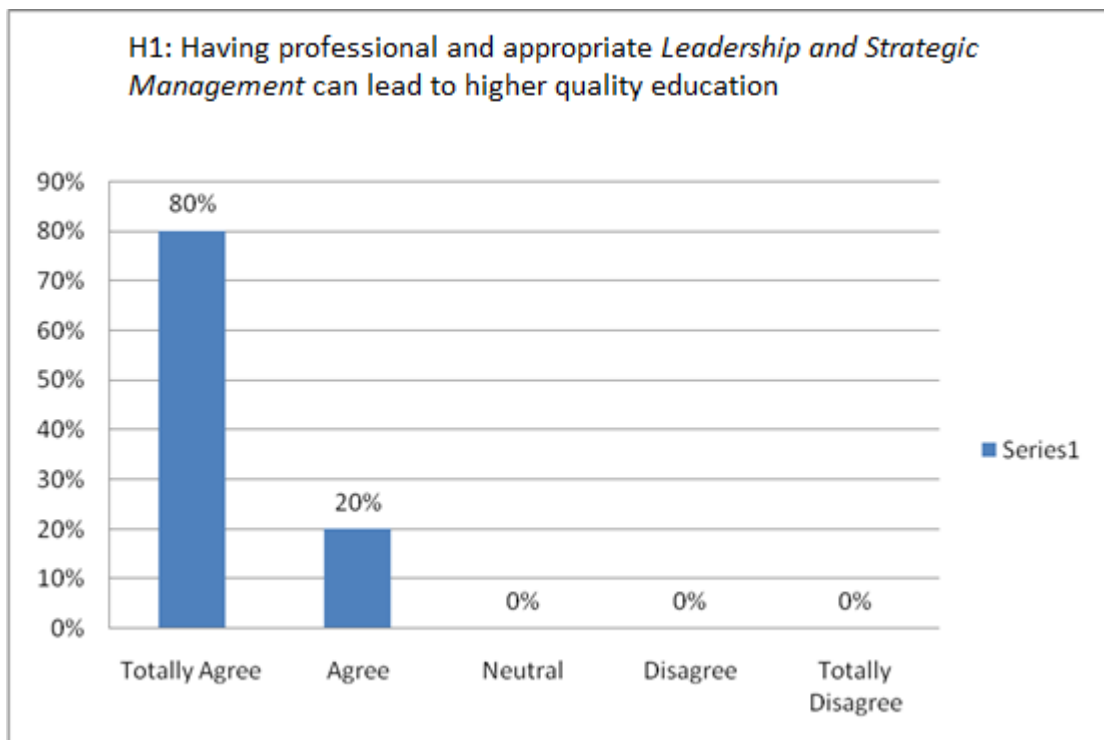
(g) "Leadership and a strategic vision that puts teaching and education at the heart of university strategy is important. For example, if academics are performance reviewed primarily on their research outputs or grant monies, and if their promotion is based on these factors, that is in direct conflict with their desire and ability to teach".

(h)"Having the vision is important, if you don't have a good leader you don't have good process and there are so many problems a School will face , so the leadership is important, having visionary leadership, a person or a group of people who know how they want to improve or what needs to be done to improve the quality of teaching and the quality of research is quite vital. A leader will look at it from the point of view that I want to improve my School or my institution in order to compete with others but unfortunately not many people have this sort of quality in terms of

leadership. It is crucial, because if you have a good leader you have the inspiration to improve and make things better both for yourself and the people you are working with, so it is very important" .

(i)"I think this is to a very great extent, If you do not have the right leadership, the right strategic management then the university loses its direction, it loses its confidence and then people outside the university lose confidence in the university and you can see cases where there have been significant problems in the senior leadership of universities and it leads to a drop at least in perceived quality if not in actual quality. This is not necessarily general across a whole university, but nevertheless the quality suffers unless there is a clear framework in which people like ourselves can actually operate and deliver the teaching and we need to have confidence that the framework of the curriculum is correctly structured, that there are sufficient opportunities to deliver that teaching, that the resources are there and all those other responsibilities of management".

Figure 5.2. British Perspectives regarding Proposition 1



Source: Findings of this study

Not having long-term strategies and strategic management can be considered as one of the roots of low quality or unstable quality at universities and schools. Ad hoc planning and management instead of long-term and strategic management can

damage the quality and performance of those educational institutions that disregard strategic management. Strategic management is not just about planning; it is also about environmental analysis, strategy development, strategy implementation, and strategic review and improvement. So the solution to this problem is not using the services of management consultancy companies to develop a strategic plan for them. These consultancy companies prepare good strategies and strategic plans but the problem of implementing these strategies by non-professional staff remains unsolved.

5.4. Findings and Analysis of the Second Proposition- Saudi

The second Proposition is "Quality people create quality results so *Students, Academics and Staff Recruitment* have a major impact on the quality of education ". There is no guarantee of quality in education, if a school or university recruits unqualified students, academics and staff. It is not reasonable to expect high quality from under-qualified people. Regarding this Proposition, interviewees were asked: *To what extent does the quality of education depend on the quality of "Students, Academics and Staff recruited"?*

Saudi academics and senior managers answered this question as follows:

(a) "The quality of recruited "Students, Academics and Staff" has a huge impact on the quality of education. From my point of view, I can say that there is a strong positive correlation between both aspects. This is because the smarter the students, the more ambition the students and the more challenging the academics will be. Therefore, if any academic institution has reached a high level of scientific attitude and professionalism, the contributing staff would be of a high calibre of creativity and administrative management in order to work altogether in perfect synchronisation. These elements among others (needs detailed discussion) will help in improving the quality of education".

(b) "Undoubtedly, There is a close relationship between the quality of education and level of students admitted, as well as the level of the members of the faculty, and that needs to be integrated with the level of efficiency and training of the university staff in the different support units, so, for the sake of raising the level of quality of education the universities are keen to set rules to control the admission of students as well as providing academic support units to reduce the level of students defaulting, also to attract the best academics from the faculty members who have to contribute effectively in raising the quality of the educational process, and employing qualified staff and developing their abilities and skills continuously through courses and workshops".

(c) "Quality of education is directly linked to quality of recruited academics and staff then comes the issue of students where the two previous factors lead to elevating the quality of students to a certain minimum level to be recruited initially".

(d) "This is something you take for granted, if the quality in the input of students admitted and faculty members is good, and the output quality will be high, but the

problem is what is known as 'black-box', which is the 'Process' which I have mentioned, if the environment is good, even if students are at a high level of quality and professors also, the learning environment and the university environment itself, may occasionally produce a negative output, and to give you an example of higher education in the Kingdom, sometimes this can happen even when we have a number of excellent students admitted to the university and a number of excellent members of the faculty who graduated from well-known universities".

(e) "What I am sure of is that the system of quality in its comprehensive composition depends - by all standards- on all the elements stated in your question and that there should be a minimum level for admission for students and for the quality of the academics, in addition to the minimum acceptable level of people in charge of the educational process in terms of administration and organising things. And I think, certainly, it is important that, the university should have specific and clearly defined conditions and makes all of the above mentioned reasonable".

(f) "I imagine that the quality of education depends not only on the students or staff, but depends on the whole educational system, as they say "Garbage in -Garbage out", and whenever inputs are bad, outputs would be bad and vice versa. Good choice in the selection of students, members of faculty, activities and good management including the delivery system, and the methods of education, and everything small or large in the educational system plays a big role in influencing the quality of graduates, and most important is the vision, which is part of inputs, what is our vision? What kind of graduates do we want?".

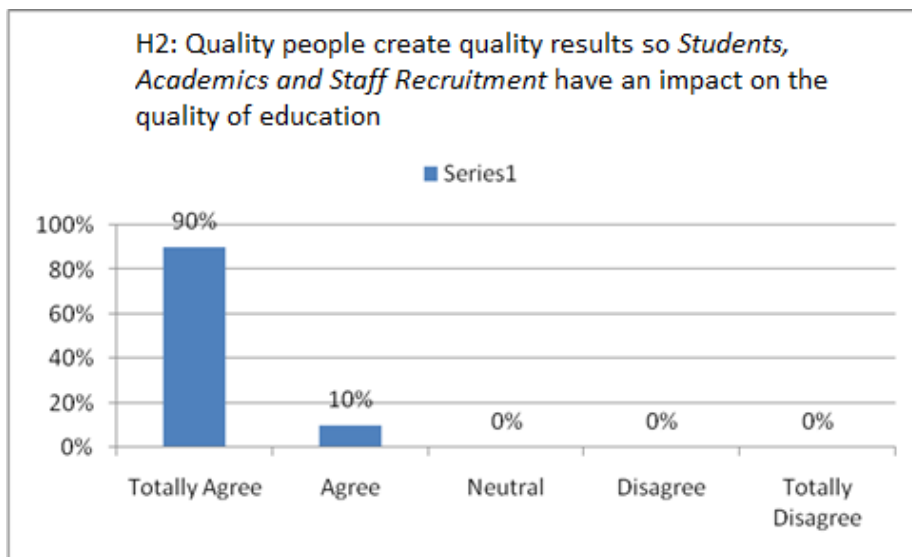
(g)"Of course, this is the foundation, students, faculty members and the administrative assistants are the staff who move the educational process and are the basis of quality, IF the faculty member is well prepared and the students coming from public education have the basic skills and the administration has quality skills and the management skills needed in dealing with others, then I would say quality depends on these elements".

(h)" We believe that the quality of manpower in an institution has a great impact on education quality. Even the quality of recruited students is influential to a great extent in this regard. I can see it clearly, having worked for one of the best Saudi universities and also as director of student supervision in the UK".

(i) "Our problem comes from the students who come to us from the high schools and the high schools claim that the problem comes from the middle schools and middle

schools claims that the problem comes from primary schools and in the end, we do not know who is responsible. I think we are all responsible and that is our system and I think that there is a problem in the general education system, and I think that we can produce better, but I think that the academics are not doing their job properly, and you see how busy I am. We have a problem in our culture that if you are there, the job is transmitted to you and if you are absent for any reason. you are not given occupancy and therefore you have failed".

Figure 5.3. Saudi Perspectives regarding Proposition 2



Source: Findings of this study

As is demonstrated in the Education Quality Model, the quality of education is influenced not only by varied systems, processes and plans but also by the people who provides the educational services as well as those who receive these services. So if educational institutions really care about the quality of education in their institutions, they should illustrate their intention by recruiting only high calibre students, academics and non-academic staff.

People-related quality difficulties can have at least three interrelated causes. Sometimes low-quality education is due to recruiting under-qualified students who cannot benefit from academics/ teachers and staff. The setting of no entry or low entry requirements by the universities/ schools for prospective students/ researchers could result in attracting untalented students/ researchers.

5.5. Findings and Analysis of the Second Proposition- British

By considering the fact that it is not reasonable to expect high quality from unqualified people, the second Proposition was formulated as “Quality people create quality results so *Students, Academics and Staff Recruitment* have a major impact on the quality of education”. There is no guarantee of quality in education, if a school or university recruits unqualified students, academics and even staff. Regarding this Proposition, interviewees were asked: *To what extent does the quality of education depend the quality of Students, Academics and Staff recruited?*

Just one of the participants *disagreed* with the Proposition. This academic believed:

(a) "One of the problems we face is the diversity of student abilities, and having a wide range of students from very good to weaker ones means it's difficult to keep everyone happy. So that's one of the problems we face; clearly the academics have to be very interested in their subjects and the ability to teach doesn't necessary relate to their ability in their subject. I don't think there is a necessary link between how good somebody is as an academic in the sense of what they can do in an academic field and the ability to deliver that as part of an education. I think that there isn't necessarily a strong link between them and support staff are important for things to move smoothly throughout the students education to help that process; academics can't do everything. When you're talking about postgraduates, there, clearly, the level is important and you would expect the link between what's taught to be more academic and research focused".

The rest of British academics and authorities who *totally agreed* or *agreed* with the proposition answered this question as follows:

(b)"For anything to be quality is really important so we try to recruit students who are able to achieve and also to provide wide opportunities, but what is very important is that we measure the extent to which they can achieve, which is obviously very important. How we measure quality is something that can be debated and I would say it is absolutely essential that we have academics who are able to deliver the curriculum to the types students that we have. Support staff are also critical; they are the glue that holds everything together".

(c) "The quality of education is to an extent dependent on the knowledge, skills and attributes of the staff (both academics and professional service staff) employed within the university. It is important not only to select the highest calibre staff but also to maintain and enhance the knowledge, skills and attributes of existing staff, through the identification of development needs in annual appraisal and through peer observation. I do not see the quality of education related to the 'quality' of the student. This is a value-laden descriptor, which implies discrimination of students by certain characteristics. Given that all students meet the entry criteria for the courses they study, I do not see this as relevant to the quality of the education provided".

(d) "There are no doubt good students who are engaging more; and not all academic staff engage in the process of education. It is very important that we get the right academics and the right support staff to support students, so I would say that students are crucial to quality education. But while I think you need to have intelligent students, they don't necessarily have to have three A-levels at a certain level. It may be that they have other experiences which you can work with to make students achieve and benefit from quality education",

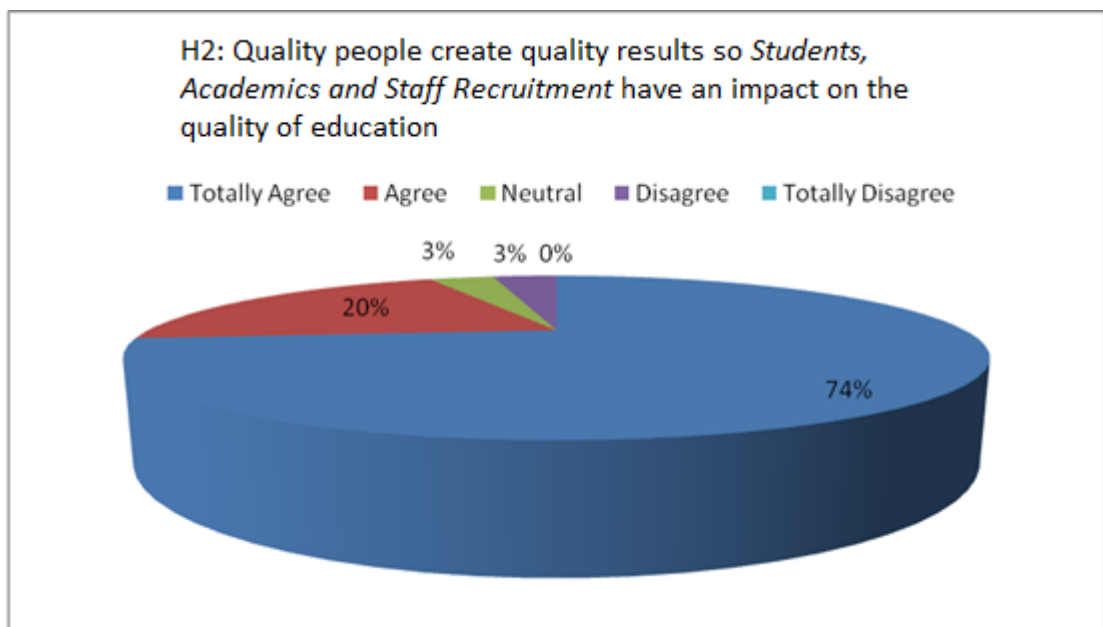
(e) "I would say that the fundamental element here for the quality of education would be the academics and in many ways, depending on the quality of academics, the students and the support staff can enhance the quality of the education. But if you start off with academics who lack quality, then even if you are contracted with very good students, you will not give them a quality education. There is a belief that universities should have structures that are only for the best students, but I think we have passed that stage in society. I think we need to provide education for everybody irrespective of the quality of the student and the key aspect that has to come out of universities is a quality education. So, good students are easy to teach, they can also be more challenging, but we need to be able to care for all students, and I think to do that effectively you need quality academics".

(f) "Obviously it's nice to recruit the top students, but also I think it's very important in higher education to give students 'value added'. We are used to taking students with a wide spectrum of academic ability and of different racial origins, so while I think it's good to have high quality students but we are used to dealing with a very broad spectrum from the very best to students who struggle a little bit, but I think value added is the important thing. For some people, if they come out with a third class degree that's still a good achievement so I think a good quality of education

reflects being able to add value to the academic learning of different types of people. It is important that academics are at the forefront of their disciplines, that they are good academic scholars. Support staff is incredibly important in order to take away from the academics the sort of administration things they should be better at and let the academics develop as academics and teach and support their students".

(g)" So if I start with students; the quality of students is of great importance, but I think we need to be clear what we mean by quality. It is not only the capability but also the life experience and what skills they have already, so often some of the best students we have are those that have a knowledge of the world before going to university and therefore they have some understanding what it mean to be a student, so such things meeting deadlines, getting on well with people and being proactive are very important, it is a combination of both. Staff: again you need to define quality. The sort of qualities looked for in a tutor, are good personal skills and also a sound academic background, but you can have someone with a sound academic background and no appropriate personal qualities and they can be very poor lecturers. Increasingly, the quality of support staff is becoming important to the student experience, making students feel comfortable and helping students in various ways".

Figure 5.4. British Perspectives regarding Proposition 2



Source: Findings of this study

People-related quality difficulties can have at least three interrelated causes. Sometimes poor quality education is due to recruiting under-qualified students who

cannot benefit from existing quality academics/ teachers and staff. Setting low entry or very easily fulfilled entry requirements for prospective students/ researchers could result in attracting untalented students/ researchers.

Another people-related difficulty for the quality of education is related to the main educational service providers, lecturers and teachers. Quality academics/ teachers are those who not only are expert in their own fields but they are capable of conveying their knowledge and skills to their students fully and in ways that are understandable. Some academics are excellent researchers but they may not be able to teach their research skills to their students and train prospective researchers, so these academics can harm the quality of education.

Last but not least, another people-centred difficulty relates to non-academic staffs who work as administrators, IT technicians, or librarians at educational institutions. Education does not just happen inside the classroom, it also relies on staff who have roles on recruiting, supporting and motivating students and maintaining the universities/ schools teaching facilities for use by students. So it is essential to recruit and train quality support staff to have quality education.

There is no guarantee of quality in education; if a school or university recruits unqualified students, academics and staff. It is not reasonable to expect high quality performance from unqualified people. Quality people create quality results so *Students, Academics and Staff Recruitment* have major consequences for the quality of education.

5.6. Findings and Analysis of the Third Proposition- Saudi

The third Proposition is “Syllabus/ Curriculum is another determinant of quality in education”. Quality of education depends on what are being taught, syllabus/ curriculum, at the schools and universities. To test this Proposition the researcher asked this question: *What is the impact of a good quality Syllabus/ Curriculum on the quality of education?*

Consensus among the Saudi academics and senior managers can be found in the following answers:

(a) "The quality of the curriculum has also an important role in improving and increasing the quality of education. I strongly believe that the role of this element cannot be separated from that of the previous elements referred in Q1. The high quality curriculum should fulfil the criteria of effective teaching and learning and that would cover the general learning outcomes of a given subject, and the competencies that we expect the graduates should acquire. Also it would increase the cognitive and communication skills of the students".

(b)"The quality of the curriculum and syllabus reflects the level of a student's achievement (learning outcome). The more the curriculum is well-constructed, the more it reflects positively on the quality of education. A combination of good educators and good curricula results in a good quality of education. The questions that were posed are all logical questions, but on the other hand, it may be that the curriculum is good, but we get into the factors that include the inputs of the teaching staff and students, even if the quality of the curriculum is high, that is not necessarily that it is reflected in the education due to other contributory factors affecting. So logically, yes, I think it's very important and there is a significant relationship between the curriculum and syllabus and the quality of education if you look at them in isolation".

(c) "There is no doubt, that every syllabus should be built around a set of pillars, and it depends on them to achieve the goals set. And one of the pillars or components of this is the Curriculum, to be selected carefully, planned and achieve the aspirations desired. I think that this element is important".

(d) "Whether it is the general framework, which is placed on institutions or through the departments and the graduate school, in the process of developing programmes and putting the curriculum in place, and developing a methodology for it, as well as

teaching of practices and performance and work with students, all this is of great importance. The process could be narrative and chatting, and could be didactic. And the vocabulary in this curriculum should at least be dealt with and not allow the expansion of curriculum, the students should be aware of this operation and that it is just as exciting to have a lot of important topics affecting the subject, and it is supposed to be his mission to search" .

(e) "Curriculum must be strong and of a high quality, so it can produce a strong quality output. The curriculum is the thing given to the student, and this will show us whether or not the students are good quality or not. The curriculum or programme, which the student learns at the university is an essential element. But, if there is a good curriculum, taught by an unprepared member of faculty, he would not be able to deliver this curriculum to the students".

(f)"If we have an excellent curriculum, but students are not interested or careless or do not study or learn the curriculum in the right way, the curriculum will not be beneficial. Again, if there is a crack or defect in these elements, I would imagine that the entire system would be affected. The curriculum and syllabus are the basic core, if the curriculum is of a high quality and delivered according to specific criteria and standards then it is the basic core or foundation of the educational process".

(g)"The effects of the quality of education appear in the product which is the graduate, and the curriculum and syllabus are prepared for the purpose of preparing graduates, and consequently the quality of education is directly and significantly affected by the quality of the curriculum and syllabus. It is one of the four pillars of education. It has to be subject to constant review, if it is incomplete or ignores basic information then the objectives will be hindered and the quality of education will be weakened".

(h)"A curriculum has to be designed carefully taking into consideration the student's field. Two modules could be designed with the same content, one is more theoretical and the other is more practical depending on the students. I was on a visit to one of the Canadian universities and while checking the curriculum of maths courses designed for computer science students, I was surprised not to find some basic content related to Boolean Algebra, a subject that is very important to computer scientists and engineers. This is a typical defect in the quality of education. Another point, the curriculum has to be subject to constant development. We live in a fast developing world, especially when it comes to technology and science".

(i)"The curriculum and content have a significant impact but this must include teaching delivery and curriculum activities and it can have a significant effect on quality and if all efforts are combined it will come up with a better result. Both play an important role".

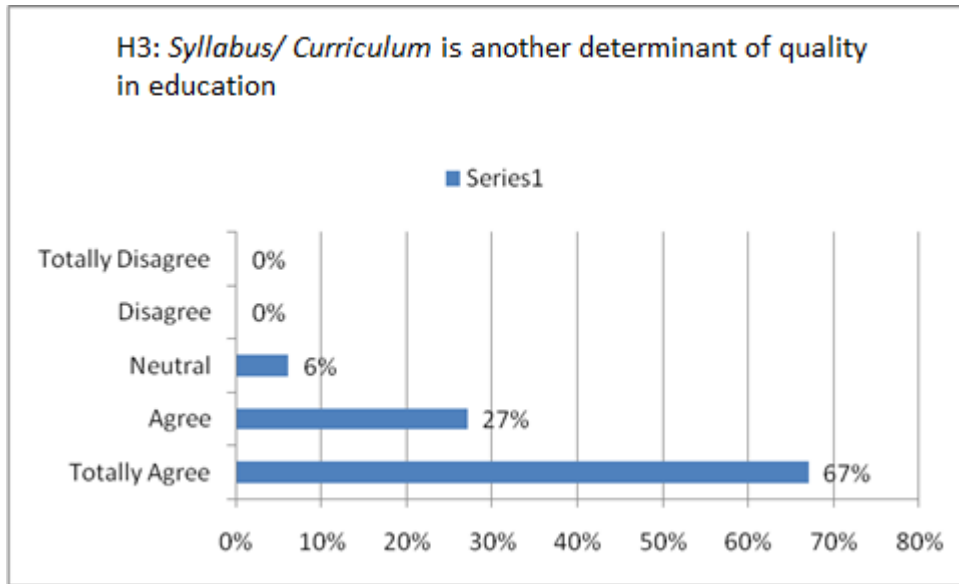
(j)" It is essential that each syllabus should include the following questions; What are the inputs? What are the outputs, and how will the student benefit from the Syllabus? I think it's very, very important and it can represent a key factor in the success of quality in higher education. In particular ,there should be a clear syllabus/ curriculum and not a vague one, and it is important that the syllabus/ curriculum covers everything especially if you have a syllabus that is related to applied aspects such as the scientific colleges .The real implementation of the educational process is not just theoretical lectures, and it is very important to train the student to benefit from educational inputs and train them to think creatively and not just receive".

(k)"They are very important, if we take the concept of the syllabus in its comprehensive sense, which includes the issue of the student and how he learns and how he deals with the curriculum and how he deals with the faculty member. I think that this is at the core of quality, The main core of quality in the education quality, that we go up a little with the Concept to become clear to the student, that any Curriculum studied by the student has a major role, and not the curriculum or content that is distributed to the student , and I think that, this influential dramatically , and its huge impact not in the description, the descriptions that we have is large and impressive, but remain in the circle of the application. If we assume that we have made a real quality in the dealing mechanism with this Curriculum, so the role becomes clear to every person, we are talking about two basic elements, which are the student and faculty member, I think it's what makes real quality in education".

(l) "These are two important elements that determine outputs, but the problem is that some educational institutions focus on them, and do not focus on education, but now the university has made a great effort in improving the curriculum and the quality of the syllabus, and the most important thing is how to implement the curriculum".

(m) "This is one of key elements, and we now, in higher education in Saudi Arabia are heading towards this direction under the leadership of the National Commission for evaluation and academic accreditation. This means that learning quality is the most important criteria that the commission uses to assess the programmes and institutions in the pursuit of academic accreditation".

Figure 5.5. Saudi Perspectives regarding Proposition 3



Source: Findings of this study

The main purpose of establishing and running a university/ school is educating students/ researchers and preparing them for better careers/ future. This aim can be achieved if the university/school develops and follows appropriate and quality syllabus/ curriculums. It would be pointless to have high quality students, academics/ teachers, facilities, strategies, and leaders without the necessary quality syllabus/ curriculum. All of these issues would be worthwhile if they support delivery of quality education based on quality syllabus/ curriculum.

Clearly, the syllabus/ curriculum should be reviewed, modified and adjusted to the requirements of the changing environment and expectations of students, their parents, society, employers and governments. It would be unreasonable to teach topics that are obsolete, unnecessary or mismatched to what the student needs to learn.

5.7. Findings and Analysis of the Third Proposition- British

Built on this assumption that quality of education partly depends on what are being taught, syllabus/ curriculum, at the schools and universities, the third Proposition is “What is supposed to be taught to the student in terms of *Syllabus/ Curriculum* is another determinant of the quality of education”. To test this Proposition the researcher asked this question: *What is the impact of a good quality Syllabus/ Curriculum on the quality of education?*

As with the second Proposition, only one of the interviewees *disagreed* with the third proposition. According to this participant "most of the curriculum is actually the same if you look at any university and compare them they are very similar and this can be downloaded from the Internet. But because it's very good quality it doesn't mean it's going to give quality education".

The remaining 29 of the 30 participants supported this proposition. Consensus among the British academic and education authorities can be found in the following answers:

(a)" A curriculum that is relevant to the learning needs and wants of students impacts significantly on the quality of their education. This is the real deal, to be honest, when you are talking about the curriculum and the content delivered, it reflects the quality of the lecturer and the quality of the institution, so it is like a translation of what the lecturer is in reality. So if you are looking at low quality content, low quality engagement, low quality provision of services, it reflects how good or bad the lecturer is and how good or bad the institution is in recruiting their staff, and it is a very important factor".

(b)"The syllabus and curriculum are the guidelines as to how education is taught in schools and at universities so it provides in a sense the direction which the universities have to follow. So it's at the top and therefore it will have a big impact on the quality of the education. Understanding knowledge, developing skill bases, which are in line with current developments in that particular discipline, for example, there are molecular biology techniques, which weren't around 20 years ago in the biological sciences. That is crucial apart from giving a rounded high quality knowledge of the curriculum. In my view, the curriculum should also be focused towards career opportunities in the future".

(c) "One thing that immediately springs into mind with the syllabus and the curriculum is the relevance of that particularly with postgraduate education since the

students aren't really signing up to get a qualification but are engaging with something that will develop them and clearly that's all about the syllabus and the curriculum".

(d) "Well, in the simplest terms, the quality of your syllabus is extremely important because the syllabus is what tells everybody what they are doing. The syllabus tells students what they are going to learn. It needs to be clear and it needs to be transparent, they need to know what they are going to learn and what is expected of them. If there are a number of people teaching on the course, the syllabus is also tells them what they are covering and how it is to be done, so if you had five tutors, ten tutors or fifteen tutors teaching on the course, the syllabus brings them together, it is clear, it is not open to interpretation and it ensures that students get a similar experience whether in this seminar group or that seminar group and with different professors, so the quality of the syllabus and how clear it is really does impact very greatly on the quality of education, I would say".

(e)"Well that's one of the biggest factors that affects the quality of education but perhaps I need to add that the syllabus or curriculum does not necessarily lead to better quality education, this is part of the improvement of quality of education. Whether we like it or not, the syllabus or curriculum are there, but in practice, it is very much down to the individual lecturers or academics to how actually interpret those syllabuses or how they actually present those syllabuses to the students, you could have the same syllabus delivered by two different lecturers of totally different quality, so I would say it is important, but very much depends on who actually uses those syllabuses in the teaching".

(f) "The effect of the quality of syllabus/curriculum on the quality of education is extremely important because it offers guidance and also it helps both academics, staff and students to understand the expectations we make of them. In our university we have study guides, and study guides work like a contract between students and the university, so everything is set down there, we know what to follow , the learning outcomes are there and also there is a detailed plan there. And a detailed plan means what we are covering each week, so it provides clear guidance for both students and staff and this, without doubt, will enhance the quality of education".

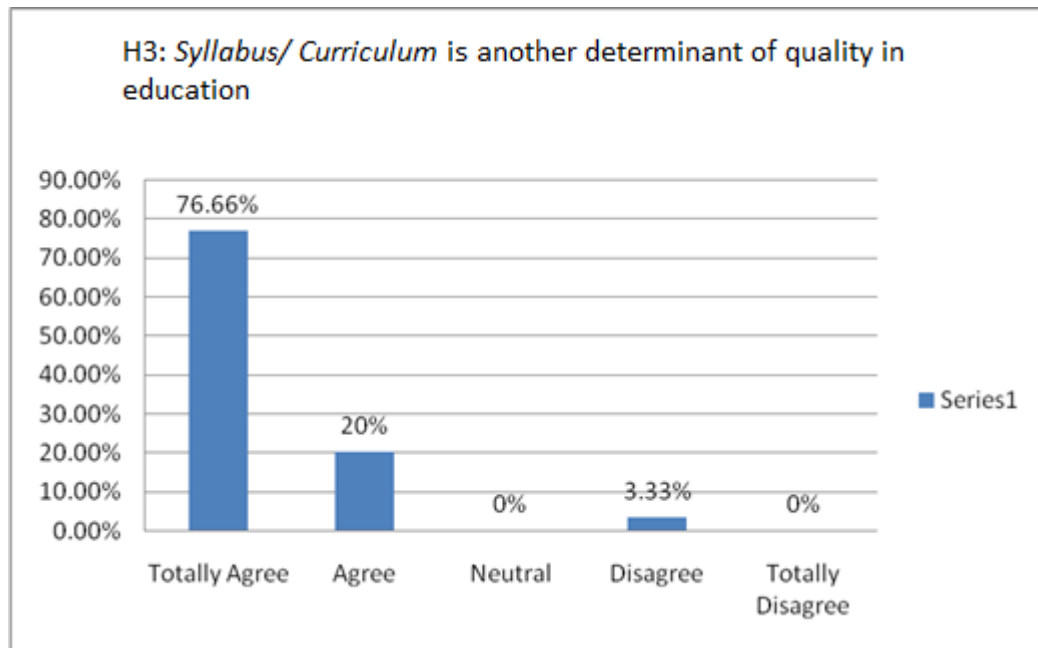
(g) " The higher the quality of syllabus, the higher the quality of education and that is what we have seen in different universities and that is via their students' feedback and questionnaire when they comment on the quality of education based on the

curriculum and the content and indicative syllabus of modules. I think that a relevant and sophisticated curriculum and syllabus is of vital importance for having good quality education, you might have everything in place but with the wrong direction, or an irrelevant syllabus the quality will go wrong".

(h) "I think there is a very important relationship between curriculum and education because education is hopefully what resides as a result of experiencing that curriculum and so there is a very close relationship between the quality of the curriculum and the end result, which is the quality of education. With regard to the quality of the syllabus or the curriculum; there are a considerable number of variables that contribute to the way you design the curriculum, obviously if you have a very challenging class we are talking very demanding students, that means you have to ensure you utilise the resources as much as you can for the benefit of the class".

(i) "If you don't have very diverse students you need to ensure that the syllabus covers a wide range of subjects and materials that can help students to understand the subject area as well as learn something that is quite useful for them to take on to the next level or to other module or to later in their career. It depends also sometimes on the actual resources that are available, sometimes you face a challenge in terms of the resources that are or are not available to you in terms of materials, books, journals, articles and this can have an impact. At some point you get in touch with a certain publisher to ask him or her about the availability of certain text books or a certain subject area and they get back to you with some samples or inspection copies, and based on what you have in terms of text books and resources that are available or associated with these text books, you design your curriculum. Another thing is the lecturer himself, because some might not be very experienced in a particular subject area so this can have an impact on the way that s/he delivers the curriculum, because s/he might be bit biased and drive the focus or the attention towards his/her own subject area so it can be a bit tricky. Curriculum must be contemporary, it must reflect the science or other areas outside the academic institution, which must be part of that real world of employment, careers and so on".

Figure 5.6. British Perspectives regarding Proposition 3



Source: Findings of this study

It would be pointless to have high quality students, academics/ teachers, facilities, strategies, and leaders without appropriate quality syllabus/ curriculum. All these issues are only worthwhile if they support delivery of quality education based on a quality syllabus/ curriculum. It would be unreasonable to teach topics to students that are obsolete, unnecessary or mismatched to what the student really needs to learn.

Although having a quality and well-developed syllabus/ curriculum is a must, it is not enough. Sometimes the problem is not lack of a suitable syllabus/ curriculum; it is carelessness in following the syllabus/ curriculum. Any syllabus/ curriculum would be useless if the university/school or the academic/ teacher does not implement the syllabus/ curriculum correctly and completely.

So another issue that noticeably affects the quality of education is developing, reviewing, updating, adjusting and fully implementing a quality syllabus/ curriculum, which supports the general aim of providing an education to students/ researchers. Quality of education depends on what is being taught in terms of the syllabus/curriculum at schools and universities.

5.8. Findings and Analysis of the Fourth Proposition-Saudi

The fourth proposition is “Quality of education depends on the quality of *Research/ Teaching*, which are the main activities at educational institutions”. Provision of good quality teaching (taught aspect) and having more and quality research (research aspect) are other success factors necessary for quality education. The accuracy of this proposition was assessed by asking this question from Saudi counter parts: *Do you think it is possible to have a quality education if the quality of Research/ Teaching is low?*

A high level of agreement regarding answering this question is reflected in these responses:

(a) "Research and teaching are the two basic pillars of higher education, if the research is weak or the ability of faculty members is weak in the research that is a problem. Research skills at the university level are fundamental skills. If the faculty member has a defect in this aspect, and if the university itself is not interested in the issue of research, then the university has a defect, and the main tasks of the university are education, research and community service, and therefore, there is a failure in the main tasks of the university, and if the university does not care about these two elements, there is no quality, and the university will left with nothing worthwhile".

(b) " If the majority are bad in quality of research and quality of teaching, and this is often occurs in the private colleges, although that they may have wonderful quality curriculums, but because they are private colleges and do not have research, they recruit members of faculty who are less efficient. In my opinion the quality of teaching is more important than the quality of research because I have a principle, which is that the quality of teaching is directly related to the quality of education. In other words, not every good researcher is a good teacher, so the quality of teaching has more effect on the quality of education, but the quality of research is not a requirement of all educational institutions. Maybe they are good in research, and vice versa".

(c) "There can be no quality education in the light of a deficiency of these two aspects. Scientific research affects the curriculum and affects the quality of teaching without a doubt, I do not think that the quality education will be achieved in without these two things".

(d) "If members of the faculty do not have experience in teaching and in the syllabus they do teach, therefore the quality of teaching will be deficient and the student will be a victim, and also another point is that the members of the faculty must be well-versed in research and they must be up-to-date with new knowledge in their field, so their students are not surprised when they go to the marketplace and find out that what they studied is out dated".

(e) "If there is not a high level in the quality of research, teaching will be difficult. The world has become advanced and developed, and countries such as America do not depend on the written word and all their work is computerised, and the environment has become a research environment, and not a paper environment. There can be no quality education if there is a decrease in these two aspects. Scientific research affects the curriculum and affects the quality of teaching without a doubt, and I do not think that the quality of education will be achieved in without these two things".

(f) "There can be no quality education if the quality of "Research/Teaching" is low, but I'll add that practical experience is needed as well . We should transfer practical experience to the students, because the university teaches students how to think but does not teach them how to solve problems. Students will go to the outside world without knowing how to solve problems".

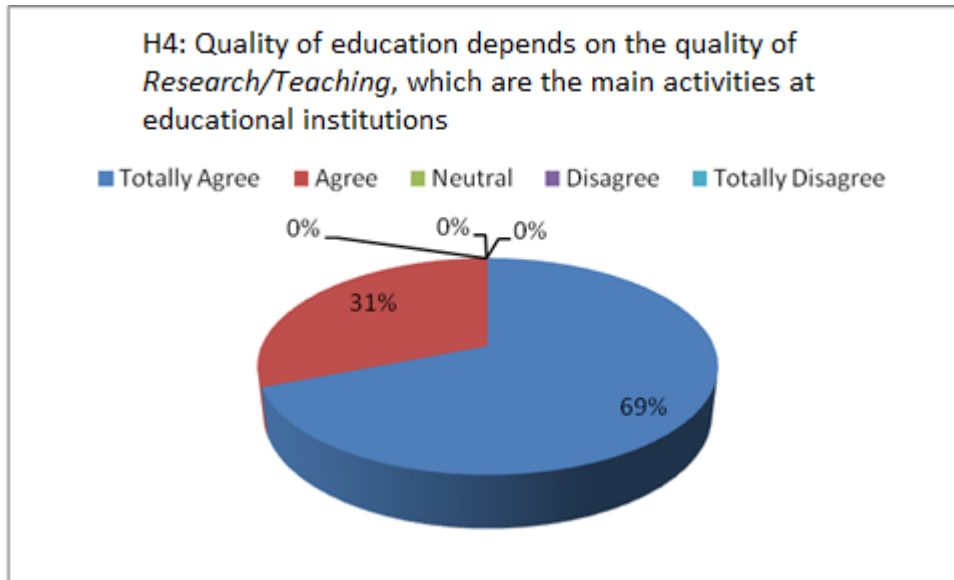
(g)"Scientific research which is based on sound science will help developing the teaching skills of academics and thus help to develop a mechanism of teaching, and then move out of the traditional style to an innovative approach .I am confident that we cannot have quality of education if we have low quality of research and low quality of teaching".

(h)"Low quality of teaching and training of faculty members and anything related to the process of teaching quality will negatively affect the quality of education. but for research this is subject of much debate and, in my view , yes, the quality of research contributes positively and has a strong relationship with the quality of teaching and this is what I have noticed, when evaluating the status of the international universities in the world you find that the distinguished researchers often enrich the teaching process.",

(i) "In my opinion these two indicators cannot be broken apart, because conducting research helps to solve many queries or resolve previously hidden information, which are very essential for teachers to enrich and increase the back- ground information of

various subjects and update them, resulting in improving the quality of teaching methods and materials that are delivered to the students. On the other hand, if academics keep on teaching without improving their own knowledge, they would be unable to provide effective teaching to the students".

Figure 5.7. Saudi Perspectives regarding Proposition 4



Source: Findings of this study

As argued before, having appropriate and quality syllabus/ curriculums that highlight what topics are supposed to be discussed are necessary for quality education; however, there is an issue that is equally or even more important than syllabus/ curriculum which is the quality of the actual teaching or/and research activities. Quality education relies on the availability of quality teaching and research.

Although education is not limited to teaching or research and people can learn by self study, observation or discussion with friends and family, the main justification for the existence of educational institutions is providing more systematic, effective education to people through teaching or/ and research..

5.9. Findings and Analysis of the Fourth Proposition-British

Proposition number four is “Quality of education depends on the quality of *Research/Teaching*, which are the main activities at educational institutions”. Two other critical elements for having quality education can be the provision of good quality teaching (taught aspect) and having more and quality research (research aspect). The accuracy of this proposition was assessed by asking this question from British counterparts: *Do you think is it possible to have a quality education if the quality of Research/Teaching is low?*

Although nobody *disagreed* with this proposition and altogether 86.66% *totally agreed* or *agreed* with it, the percentage of people who *totally agreed* was considerably lower than in the three previous propositions. This result is reflected in these responses:

(a) "No, it is not possible to have low teaching quality and expect high quality education. The quality of teaching and learning is essential to the success of the students. There are of course many factors, which contribute to learning and teaching, not just the academics, which include the learning environment. It is also essential that academics are engaged in scholarly activity and research to ensure that their teaching reflects the latest research findings in the discipline and is delivered using a range of innovative pedagogical approaches".

(b) "I think, in today's world, you need to teach people as much about the process of research as about facts, because facts change and if you recruit research students you essentially teach them that facts may change. It is a big debate in higher education, of course, the balance between research input into teaching; but I think for undergraduate students, the quality of teaching is much more important than the quality of research, but research is meant to inform teaching, but research does not always give you the quality of teacher that you need".

(c) "I think, to some extent, that if you want to be 'leading edge' such that students value tutors engaged in research and publication and writing books, then it is a different experience, I have known people who can deliver somebody's else work in a fantastic way, so just because someone is a very good researcher does not mean they are a very good teacher, thus as long as the curriculum has the right things in it, you can still have quality education. I can give examples of both cases where you can have a curriculum which is based on strong research but if you don't have the right

teacher in post, it wouldn't necessarily work and vice versa. So, I don't think one is a prerequisite for the other, but if you can get a synthesis of research and the quality of teaching together then you have an amazing programme and amazing quality".

(d) " I think that you can't have quality education if the teaching quality isn't good. I also think you can be a very good researcher but not a good teacher, but if you can combine the two, it would be great, but you can be a good teacher without being a good researcher as long as you use up-to-date research to inform the teaching, I think for postgraduate levels, particularly PhD level, then research obviously important, you need to be talking about your own research as well as others research".

(e)"Teaching must be informed by research. I think that in order to have a quality education it does not mean that an academic needs to be research active and participating in their own research but they do need to be aware of current research and development in their area in order to offer quality education but that could be through scholarly activity rather than pure research. People must know how to teach and at our institution, everybody has to do a teaching qualification and I think membership of the HA academy and everything for teaching should be mandatory".

(f)"Poor quality teaching inevitably leads to low quality education. A strong research environment is beneficial to education but not essential, except for PhD students. I think you can still have a quality education. The research side is separate from that certainly at under-graduate level. For teaching at undergraduate level it is important to have good teachers to deliver quality education".

(g) "We now have something called teaching led by research or 'blended learning' but some institutions still hire tutors only who are just good teachers but who are not doing any research. Thus, to some extent you can distinguish between good teaching experience without having a research background. When we say research, I mean that the person is not an active researcher in his field but he will have to do some research like reading articles, preparing for lectures, getting the right material, so to some extent I would say if you talk about teaching, yes so the quality of teaching makes a difference within an institution makes a difference to the quality of education, research is an added bonus. However, research is essential if you're talking about post-graduate research, so I'd say with PHDs and supervision of MSc students then research comes into play, you don't need the teaching bit. So, to some extent, this is a very generic question but I would say that teaching is more important and it is a

bonus to get blended learning which is applying research and including up-to-date examples in your teaching".

(h) "The only way that progress can be made in terms of education is if research is involved with the teaching because that's where the expertise lies. Without that then the students will learn but will not really learn the in-depth knowledge that they need to progress. This can create problems especially for at Master's level projects, where skills and new technologies need to be developed, and if staff are not leading edge in their field it can result in students getting a raw deal. I think research is fundamental to the development of teaching".

(i) "I think generally I would expect both research and teaching quality to be of a high order to have quality education. However, in some courses the onus might be on the student to do most of the work rather than being 'spoon-fed' and in this case it may be possible to still have a good quality education. Really education should be about equipping students with the skills that they need to be able to critically examine/investigate issues for themselves rather than just 'pouring in knowledge' which they are then expected to remember".

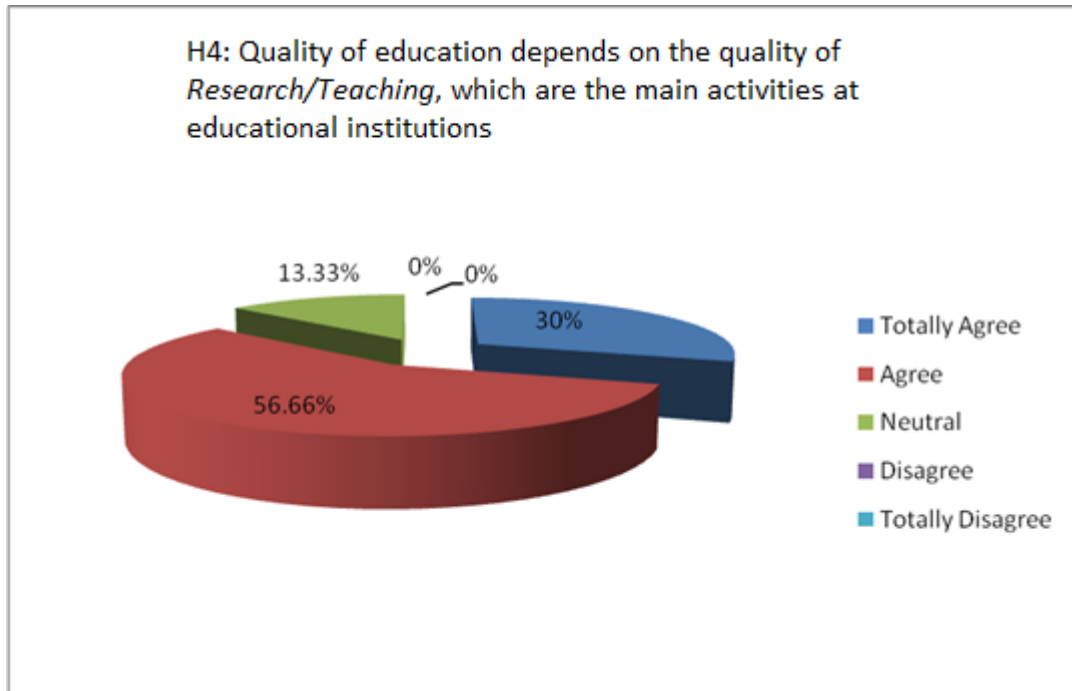
(j) "It is possible, but not likely, that students may well sign up for a course and get the qualification purely by their own effort, almost in spite of the institution, but clearly it's suggesting that there is a relationship between research and teaching. I think can be examined a little bit but there is no real alternative - they are linked. Research should inform our teaching particularly in our education and I think that that is the bedrock of a meaningful higher education. I think it's logically possible to separate them but it is unlikely to happen".

(k) "Research and teaching are very different. In an institution like ours we would say that our teaching is research led, so if we are doing research and we are at the forefront of something which we receive back into our teaching, we would argue that it that it makes our teaching better., So if the quality of research was low we would feel that it has an impact on our teaching, but not necessarily on teaching technique, the methodology, or how we deliver a lecture. The quality of research isn't going to impact on these aspects of teaching, but it would impact on the knowledge aspect of teaching, so if the quality of research and teaching is low, I wouldn't think it is possible to have quality of education".

(l) "I believe that is very much down to the level of education, the lower level perhaps it is not as important as at the higher level of education, especially when it comes to

Master's and PhD programmes. It is very important to have research input in order to update the teaching. I am not saying it is not important in undergraduate studies but it is more important in postgraduate studies".

Figure 5.8. British Perspectives regarding Proposition 4



Source: Findings of this study

Quality education relies on availability of quality teaching and research services. Although education is not limited to teaching or research and people can learn by self study, observation or discussion with friends and family, the main justification for the existence of educational institutions is providing more systematic and effective education to people through 'teaching' or/ and 'research'. It would be unacceptable for an educational institution to claim having quality, if this institution did not provide any appropriate teaching/ tutoring services and no research was conducted at the institution.

The degree to which universities and schools should put emphasis on either research or teaching depends on the level of study, the nature of the education, student capabilities, the syllabus/ curriculum, and the study requirements. Any mismatch or weakness in the provision of teaching or research would adversely affect the quality of education.

The quality of teaching or research can be assessed based on different criteria by using different methods. The quantity of each of these two interrelated issues is one

of the criteria. The number of research projects that are being conducted by considering the number of students/ researchers and academics is one indicator of quality research. The scope and levels of research are other measures of having quality research. Other widely accepted evidence of quality research is the number of publications based on the research. Quality of teaching can be measured by assessing the output of teaching in terms of the degree to which students learned the relevant concepts, obtained the skills and achieved acceptable grades/marks in the designated time.

Thus, in brief, provision of good quality teaching (taught aspect) and having more and quality research (research aspect) are other indicators of quality education.

5.10. Findings and Analysis of the Fifth Proposition- Saudi

The fifth proposition is “*Pedagogy* or suitability of the way in which the syllabus is taught to students can contribute to quality of education”. Saudi participants were asked: *Does Pedagogy or the suitability of the way in which the syllabus is taught to students contribute to the quality of education?*

The following answers illustrate a good level of agreement about importance of quality pedagogy on the quality of education:

(a) "The styles and methods of professional teaching make a great contribution in achieving a high quality of education. These methods should take into consideration the different levels and performances of students and, accordingly, well-structured objectives and learning outcomes, and techniques of teaching are designed to impart knowledge or skills".

(b) "In the light of the rapid changes in the means and tools of communication and modern technologies available, there is a close relationship between what is properly applied and the quality education. This is an issue of the utmost important to achieve better education. Experience of the teacher or the teacher and his knowledge of modern teaching methods that will contribute to the quality of learning, especially to effective and deep learning and not to surface learning, which depends only on memorising".

(c) "The problem is, that I am teaching in the same way for 15 years, which is the high standard way, and once again the issue of the students' level arises. Do we raise the level?, or adapt to the students, and our problem is that if we adapt, the students begin to lower standards and our level lowers with them, and if we apply on them the criteria that we believe are the proper standards a gap will appear and they begin to complain, that they are not learning, and I'm thinking, that if a small unique group will benefit from my criteria and get the maximum benefit, it is better even if it does not benefit others, the important thing is to gain an outstanding education with my standards, even if others are sacrificed , because if I lower my standards the excellent group will not benefit".

(d) "There is no doubt that teaching methods, ways and styles vary and multiply because of the nature of the curriculum and the nature of the syllabus and the nature of the learner. Thus, every professor or teacher should depend on a methodology and respond in an appropriate way depending on the nature of the situation, and no one

should teach unless he has studied, reviewed and knows the multiple and different teaching methods".

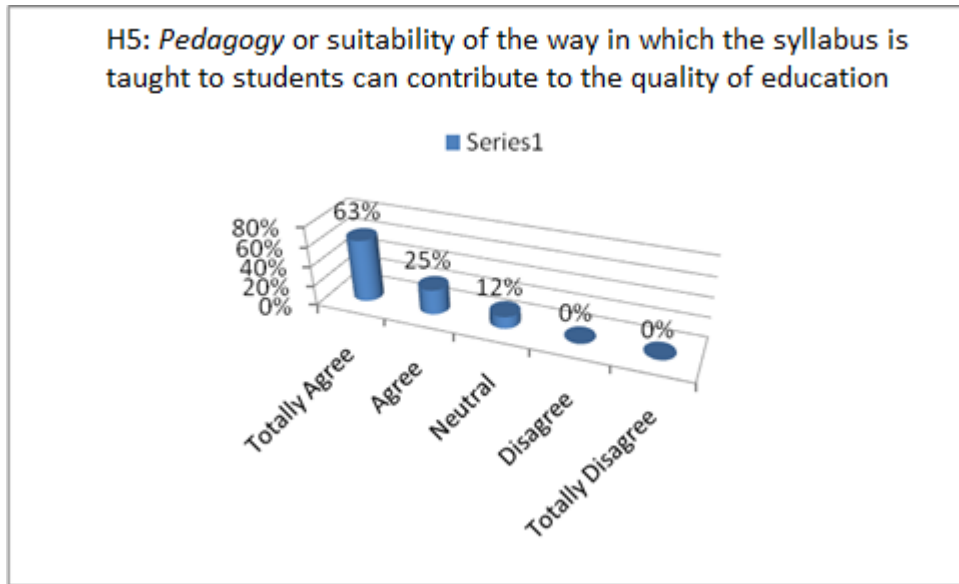
(e) "If the professor has a vision or philosophy about the education process, and knows what it is, what its components are, and what its basis is, it would be much better. As opposed to this being a closed subject. If you ask faculty member about Pedagogy or about the philosophy of teaching and the components that they starting from, and their interaction between the subjects and the students, they will find it difficult to answer this question".

(f) "The method of teaching by modern techniques leads to quality, and hence to the quality of the output of education, and new technologies help in research and in its quality, because methods of dictation used in universities do not help in quality or in anything, the student will memorise and then complete the exam paper and when he graduates he does not remember anything. Also, a student needs to demonstrate skills such as leadership, communication with third parties and responsibility and he cannot show these qualities in the manner now being pursued in teaching, which is a method of indoctrination".

(g) "The science of Education, is important, yet some faculty members refuse to participate in training courses on the pretext that the education teachers know less than them, and cannot develop them. We do not say, that we know what others don't know, but we think we have theories and ideas, which may help members of staff to implement their work in a way that leads to renewal of their work. Lecturers must change and must cope with the latest developments, they cannot use the old ways of teaching students, because they are now familiar with Facebook etc. , and the old ways will not succeed when teaching the current students. Pedagogy or appropriateness of the way they contribute to improving academic performance and improving the teaching environment therefore will contribute significantly to the issue".

(h) "Good education quality requires a good teaching quality that relies on engagement in effective discussions. The practical part is parallel to the theoretical one. And promoting the research spirit among learners and assigning to them related research. New learning equipment including audio and video means should be present. Exploratory visits, which motivate learners and feed their spirit of enquiry should be there too. The quality of all of this will help in shaping a quality education".

Figure 5.9. Saudi Perspectives regarding Proposition 5



Source: Findings of this study

Quality education and higher education have many advantages, though creating and maintaining such quality relies on fulfilling some requirements. One of the requirements of quality education is having quality pedagogy. In other words, education/ higher education and its related quality has many dimensions one of which is quality of teaching methods in these academic institutions. Ineffective and inadequate teaching methods sharply reduce the quality of higher education (Roelofs & Terwel, 2009) and consequently it will undermine the expected results and advantages of education/ higher education.

Pedagogy as the way in which a subject is taught is another key factor. Traditional teaching methods or learning by rote are no longer adequate. The quality of education/ higher education institutions cannot be guaranteed without a customised and effective pedagogy, which matches other important issues such as level of students and study, syllabus/ curriculum, and available learning and research facilities at schools/ universities and research centres (Stoddart, 2004).

5.11. Findings and Analysis of the Fifth Proposition-British

The fifth proposition is “*Pedagogy or suitability of the way in which the syllabus is taught to students can contribute to the quality of education*”. Traditional teaching methods are no longer considered acceptable. British participants were asked: *How does Pedagogy or the suitability of the way in which the syllabus is taught to students contribute to the quality of education?*

The number of British academics that *Totally Agreed* with this proposition was the highest among all 11 propositions. The following answers illustrate the high level of agreement about the importance of quality Pedagogy on the quality of education:

(a)" The process of delivery is based the ability of the human brain . In this sense, the ability to deliver knowledge in a pedagogical way is like an amplifier with an equalizer you can tune through pedagogic tricks. The amplifier can deliver music, but if you don't have the pedagogic tricks, you can hear something but it is unpleasant. Therefore it is required, but I still believe that the subject is the most important thing and then a way to deliver it pedagogically is secondary and tuned to the subject".

(b)"An effective learning/teaching approach would have a very positive impact on the quality of education , and without doubt the effective use of advanced technology and the blended learning approach have had a significant impact on the quality of education. We, in higher education, are not spoon-feeding, we are facilitating learning and learning now is supported dramatically by advanced technology".

(c) " It is an important contributor to the quality of education in our university. There is a strong movement around a pedagogical approach and enhancing blended learning and moving towards new technology. Nowadays technology supports education, for example: now we follow the students; we 'tweet' and use Facebook, and have moved to new types of presentation. In short, we have moved away from the old board and writing in class".

(d) "The suitability and coherence of the way the syllabus has been put together informs the learning process for students and enhances their quality of education. Pedagogy is very important but some students don't know how to learn the skills they need as other students may do in an institution higher up the league tables. I think it can be extremely important especially in an institution where there is a broad range of students".

(e)" Having a good pedagogy and a suitable and relevant syllabus for students is definitely a very important good factor because the thing is you might have some very good students, but if you don't have any educational planning and the right pedagogy for them, everything can go wrong. I think they are very closely allied and related because pedagogy, as I understand it, is about the process of learning and enabling that learning to take place. It's more a process rather than a product, so I think the process of our teaching directly translates into the process of education or the state of being an educated person".

(f) "It is well recognised now that Freire's philosophy of teachers being facilitators, guiding experiential learning promotes deeper levels of learning by engaging with students. Teaching pedagogy does therefore impact on the quality of education. Another example is the move towards greater e-learning/distance learning- these are underpinned by a different pedagogy and if the pedagogical principles are ignored, then teaching will not be effective".

(g) "Sometimes choosing the right material does not guarantee successful delivery, here we are talking about a pedagogical approach; how you deliver the content of your lecture to students, it is an art. Now the issue here is more the use of technology, it helps to have the use of social media. You can post some videos that can help to explain certain concepts, and there is the use of ICT like PowerPoint, although it can have a negative impact on actual delivery, because sometimes academics end up reading from the slides. In terms of engagement with the students or in terms of pedagogical approach towards the class, it would will have some sort of impact on the attention of the students because some students will say; everything is on the PowerPoint slides so why should we have to attend".

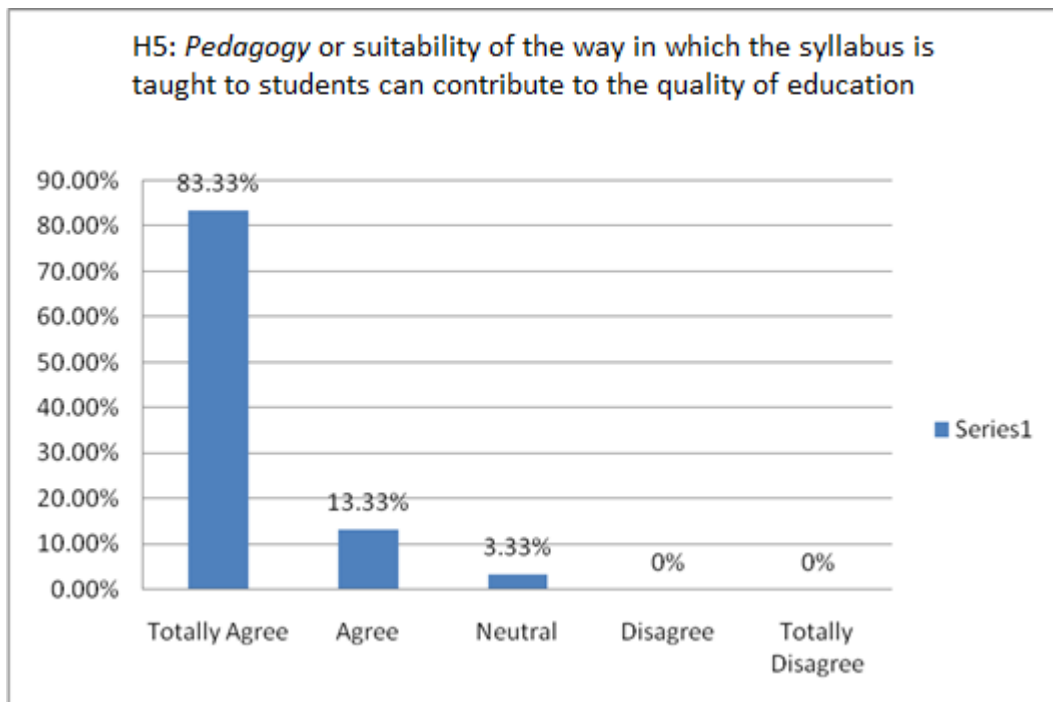
(h) "Academics need to sustain a good approach in terms of the way that they engage with students. I am not saying that we have to be like clowns and entertain our students but the at the same time we need to be more or less up-to-date in terms of the material and ensuring that the right syllabus is being developed and utilised for a specific course and is reviewed constantly and continually to ensure that everything is in place".

(i)"Obviously the school/faculty has some sort of role in this process in that, for example, here every academic is paired with another academic who will act as a reviewer for his module. We do this process every year and every year the reviewer will ensure and will have the opportunity to go through the study guide material to

check if there are any changes needed to improve class performance. They look at some of the reflections done by the module leader and they try to provide some positive feedback and some ideas that can help the module leader to enhance his or her teaching and learning process in the class for the next academic year".

(j)"You have to design your pedagogy in order to suite the type of students that you have. You change your approach according to the general student body but also on the individual student, so you build up a relationship with students and you learn how they are learning and then you may change your approach. It may be that you can do lectures and they are fine for some people, but for other people they are not going to be appropriate".

Figure 5.10. British Perspectives regarding Proposition 5



Source: Findings of this study

Pedagogy as the way in which a subject is taught is another key factor. Traditional teaching methods have lost much of their credibility. The quality of education/ higher education institutions cannot be guaranteed without having a customised and effective pedagogy, matched to other important issues such as the level of students and study, syllabus/ curriculum, and available learning and research facilities at schools/ universities and research centres (Stoddart, 2004).

Research about quality in higher education covers many aspects one of which is the quality of pedagogy or study of teaching methods. It is a commonly accepted issue

among scholars that 'Quality of pedagogy' is built on three interrelated notions: 'intellectual quality' (Ladwig *et al.*, 2007) a proper 'learning environment' (King, 2002) and 'authentic teaching methods' (Roelofs & Terwel, 2009).

The 'intellectual quality' of pedagogy is about the importance of logical thinking in the process of goal setting and designing the process of teaching and learning in order to have high achievement (Gore, 2001). The common mistake is taking for granted that all academics and postgraduate students are intellectual so whatever objectives are being set by them or any processes designed by them would be automatically intellectually based and of high quality (Amosa & Cooper, 2006). But the fact is that many teachers, who are not particularly highly educated, can be more intellectual than a number of highly educated academics and universities' pedagogy team members (Ladwig *et al.*, 2007). The 'intellectual quality' of pedagogy can best be achieved by setting standards that check precisely the suggested pedagogy together with an open, participative management that involves experienced and intellectual teachers (Amosa & Cooper, 2006).

5.12. Findings and Analysis of the Sixth Proposition- Saudi

The sixth proposition is “Effective and quality *Learning and research support* can lead to higher quality education”. Having a proper classroom, with adequate teaching facilities, having a comprehensive library and online library, and having trained and helpful staff and processes that facilitate learning and research are necessary. Saudi academics and senior managers were questioned: *Can effective “Learning and research support” contribute to the quality of education?*

Strong support for this proposition is illustrated in the answers given:

(a) "In many cases, we think we are moving in the right direction, but when looking into it, we find either the method of teaching that we are practising is not right or students have changed or that the environment has changed or the material requires some modifications of adjustments in the way of teaching. We should do some research to ensure whether we need to make adjustments in the way of teaching commensurate with these changes that have occurred. To reach teaching and research of good quality, we must support both sides physically and technically".

(b) " One of the most important points when supporting people to learn how to study and how they contribute to raising the quality of education will play a very significant role. I do not expect there to be effective research that does not involve the student, it must involve the student. If we think that research is only for faculty members, we will not find any quality or any improvement, but if there was a type of research which involves the student, who becomes the main member in this research, this is what we mainly seek".

(c) "Research Support will contribute, but it is not a priority right now, because we still have not achieved 'real' learning, so that we can achieve really effective learning support. Learning and research support will improve in quality, but is not a priority now. I see that this is an essential and important element even if it not as important as other elements, but in the light of the trend of using technology widely and learning management systems and software which contribute to education, in addition to learning techniques in the classroom and in labs. This is a part of the thrill of study, it is no longer the time of the blackboard and indoctrination, now there is interaction and evaluation in different ways, which form part of the learning management system".

(d) " As well the support of research to study and assess the educational process itself, we significantly need to discuss the education process in the educational institutions and in the higher education sector in the Kingdom. . For example, we find in the preparatory years that the dropout rate is too high, of 100 students joining maybe only 40 of them pass the preparatory year, and we must consider the reasons and the outcomes of public education and style of performance at the same university and students' abilities and the capacities of teachers and study these elements to enable us to make continuous improvement".

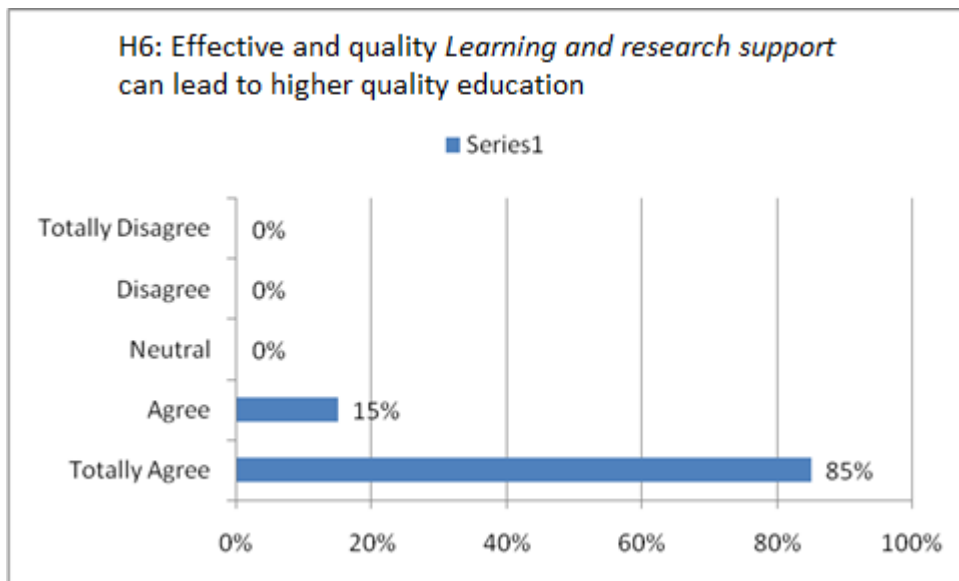
(e) " Research Support is an important aspect in supporting the educational process, and good universities have different ways to support students, such as research centres in colleges, which support the research of good students, and the research chairs attract outstanding students and employ their potential to serve the university and community. As for the learning, this is partly to do with the student and partly the university and partly the teacher, but I do think that integration of the three elements with each other, is an essential part in improving the quality of education".

(f) "It strongly contributes, and all universities and higher education institutions are supposed to encourage faculty members to support research and provide the infrastructure for research. This is an active contributor. It is certain that research has a role, but it has no impact on the quality of education because most faculty members do research for the sake of promotion, research does not have benefits for students, or even the community. I do not see that when research are good, it will have a relationship with quality in education, as it is probably directly related to promotion and sometimes provides a community service".

(g) "A member of staff must be knowledgeable about all that is new in his field, and if we do not support his research how will the faculty member do research? For learning there must be courses for faculty members in new ways of learning and teaching. It contributes indirectly it will it contribute directly; it will give us the information and statistics about students and their quantity and their quality and their problems. I have no doubt that the two components are related to the quality of education".

(h) "It will contribute to the quality of education, because it is now agreed that without scientific research based on sound science, we cannot develop any area of life, especially education at all levels".

Figure 5.11. Saudi Perspectives regarding Proposition 6



Source: Findings of this study

Schools, colleges, universities and other educational organisations are established to provide the opportunity of learning or/ and conducting research for students/ researchers/ learners. Fulfilment of such a mission depends on various factors and one of them is availability and quality of the appropriate support to students/ researchers in studying or/ and doing their research.

Having a classroom with adequate teaching facilities, a comprehensive library and online library, and having trained and helpful staff and processes that facilitate learning and research are necessary for quality education. Having access to proper learning and teaching facilities is not any more a privilege, but it is a right for students and researchers.

5.13. Findings and Analysis of the Sixth Proposition-British

Having a proper classroom, with adequate teaching facilities, a comprehensive library and online library, and having trained and helpful staff and processes that facilitate learning and research are necessary. The sixth proposition is “Effective and quality *Learning and research support* can lead to higher quality education”. British academics and education authorities were questioned: *Can effective Learning and research support contribute to the quality of education?*

Strong support for this proposition is shown in the answers given:

(a) "In reality that is the case. I can see it from my experience of being an academic for 12 years. Sometimes you have a good lecturer and students are very satisfied but then they go to the library, they can't really find the right materials, it's not available on the shelf, or there are only a few limited copies that they can borrow and this will affect the overall quality of the education because it's like a chain and whenever there is a broken link it affects the overall quality, so if I'm doing my job and you're doing your job but someone within the chain fails to provide the same level of quality it breaks the chain and affects overall quality and satisfaction. Research support is key especially when you're talking about postgraduate researchers and I'm saying this because it is often one person who is supporting students (they don't like to have more than one). It takes time to gain experience so any change in terms of recruitment or staff turnover makes a huge difference. So yes, it is essential because this institution is effectively encapsulated within just one person, which is the support member and/or the supervisor. To give an example; I usually tell prospective students or researchers look for the supervisor not the institution, because the supervisor is, in effect, the institution and you can be in a middle-ranking university but you can get a very good supervisor who is supportive and support is sometimes as important as the academic, in terms of experience and knowledge".

(b) "In some universities in the UK, in addition to the lectures and tutorials, they have separate, independent tutorials, private tutorials given by PhD students, or by other academic staff to help them further in their studies. I think it can contribute to a great extent to the quality of education".

(c) "You know what you are supposed to do and you have the chance to talk to someone, clarify an assessment, you do the assessment and get feedback on it formatively before you do any kind of final exam, I think it is important whether it is

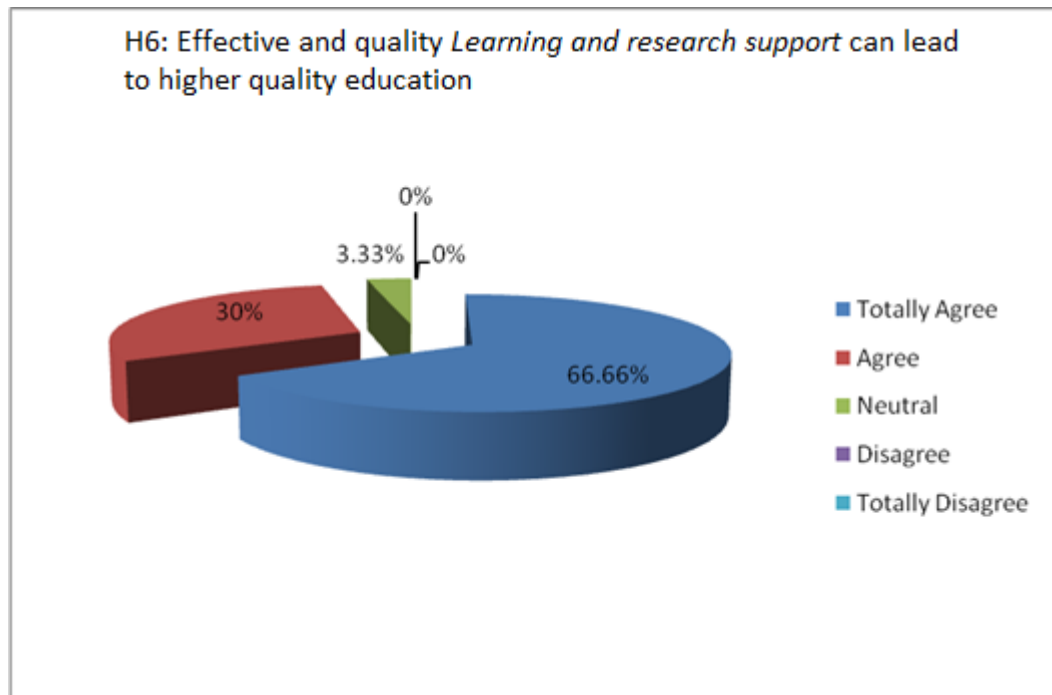
the tutorial system or just the module leader or research supervisor, they are in a field where they should actively encourage people to come with questions. I guess I am thinking of research rather than undergraduate. I am a believer in research methodology, and clarity is important before the research goes too far, so I would say it is essential. It could make a great contribution to the quality of experience".

(d) "Whatever support you get, especially the kind of training you get during your career in order to improve the learning techniques or learning and teaching techniques would improve the quality of education. I think there are developments in both learning and research that staff need to be kept apprised of and so, yes, that support is important especially, I suppose, with the Internet and e-learning becoming more and more prominent, it is an issue that needs to be looked at more and more".

(e) "One's first instinct is to say, yes. But unfortunately, in reality this is not the case. The thing is where is research or science has advanced quite a lot, it is so difficult to find time at some point to reflect on your research or in terms of how the research feeds into undergraduate level or sometimes postgraduate level. Because research is often very focused and very narrow, it can be a bit of a challenge for academics to try to link it with some sort of generic idea. If you are quite lucky, you are a very well-known researcher in a certain subject area and it happens that your university provide a very specialised Master's course then you will be able to reflect on your research and try to share your knowledge with your students. The problem is that not many universities and not many academics are fortunate with that and academics are under pressure to deliver certain material for a certain class and often we struggle to finish this content, and if you struggle to deliver the basic content, will you ever think of delivering some of the content of your research and try to present it to your students . So it does contribute but it is not happening in a way, and it all depends on what sort of resources the university makes available".

(f) "I think this is a very important area because you need to have a developmental environment for your learning and teaching so that you can change or develop your methods according to our understanding of how learning accrues. If you wind back 100 years the sort of teaching would have been just a simple didactic lecture but now we are much more interactive and we have changed the way we teach and we can only do that because we have the support behind us in order to help us develop".

Figure 5.12. British Perspectives regarding Proposition 6



Source: Findings of this study

Having a proper classroom, with adequate teaching facilities, a comprehensive library and online library, and having trained and helpful staff and processes that facilitate learning and research are necessary for quality education. Having access to proper learning and teaching facilities is not any more a privilege, but it is a right for students and researchers.

The quality of education would almost certainly be low when universities/ schools push 70- 80 students into a classroom that is originally designed for 40 students. Holding a class with 150- 200 students can reduce the quality of education remarkably, because students would not have an opportunity of asking questions and participating in the class or receiving help and supervision. Inappropriate temperature, lighting, ventilation and so on colour in classrooms can negatively affect the learning of students and consequently the quality of education.

Researchers need support to do their research properly and effectively in the given time. Access (sometime 24 hours) to laboratories, testing centres, printing, materials, tools, buildings, cutting, measuring, pressing and mixing tools, ... machinery, wind tunnels, ... are crucial for researchers. While access to these facilities is indispensable, the researcher also needs quality and reliable facilities to be available; because validity of findings of researchers rely massively on the reliability and quality of research facilities.

One of the most important form of support required for learning and research is the existence and effectiveness of well-trained, friendly, knowledgeable and dedicated staff who are hired to help and support students/ researchers to progress in their own study/ research. Staff should fully understand that the existence of the educational organisation and their jobs is mainly for the purpose of teaching and supporting students.

5.14. Findings and Analysis of the Seventh Proposition- Saudi

The seventh proposition is “Reliable and effective *Knowledge Management* can help educational institutions to enhance the quality of their education”. Information overload can be as damaging as lack of information, so there is a need for systems to manage the collection, creation, storage and distribution of knowledge and information. There was noticeable consensus in answering this question: *To what extent does a well-developed Knowledge Management system help educational institutions to enhance the quality of their education?*

Although many of the participants were not completely familiar with concept of 'Knowledge Management' at first, they supported this proposition as can be seen in these answers:

(a) "I am not quite sure what you mean precisely by 'Knowledge management system'. If this refers to acquiring different techniques in teaching and learning such as virtual learning, simulations, or e-learning, of course they would have a great influence on improving the quality of teaching and thus education".

(b) " A knowledge management system is also one of the means which, if employed the right way, will contribute significantly to raising the quality of the educational process. This is linked to the level of qualification of faculty members and administrative staff to understand these concepts and apply appropriately. A good knowledge management system leads to accomplishing the purpose of promoting good education".

(c) "This is very essential, and a problem that we face in the higher education and at this university, there is a lack of 'knowledge management' systems. The fact that students do not have access to information and when they write short papers they cannot share knowledge, this process is expensive and cumbersome and impossible for me, when I give the students assignments or problem solving; I want them to learn from the experiences of each other".,

(d)"It is worth mentioning that the modern systems are a cumulative outcome on which a human can build strategic stocks of knowledge and through which exchange of knowledge can be passed on for use at all levels. We insist on the development of the application of technology, especially in graduate studies and focus on the English language, as the sources in the Arabic language are not like those available in English".

(e) "I imagine that the world today talks about the 'new approaches' in the process of education and about 'smart teaching' and about 'smart learning' and 'smart classrooms' and 'smart schools', and all these methodologies and techniques are supported by research, and the result of research and recommendations from research and people who have insight into the process of teaching and learning and management. Therefore, unless people become familiar with these techniques and how to employ them, the teaching will be classical, and the classical approach means blackboard and students and chalk".

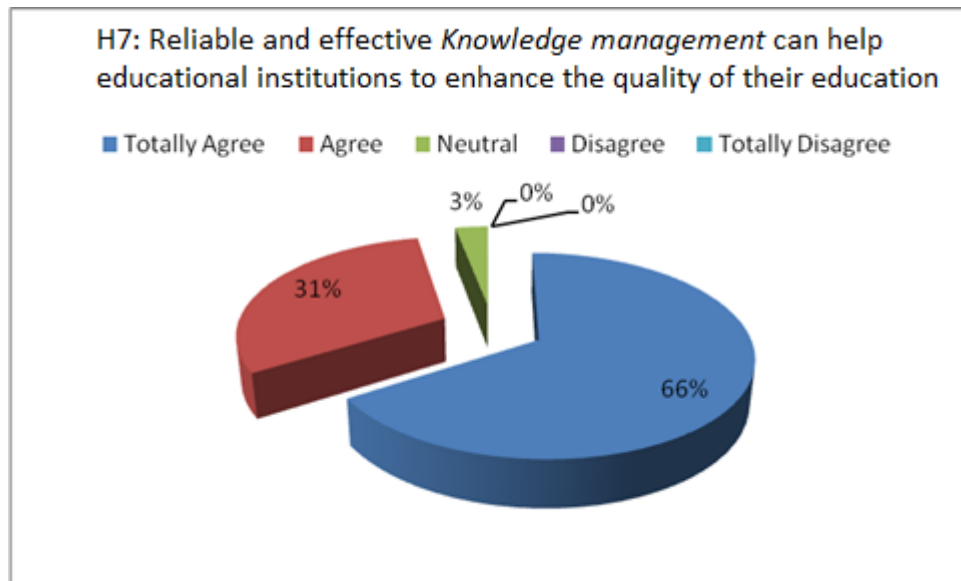
(f) "That will help the university a lot in terms of organising and setting the future agenda and it gives us some statistical results and also transforms information and give the university an idea about its current status. Despite differences in the definition of a system of 'knowledge management', I understand that the institution is keen to reach the desired objectives of their role in education and learning and should adopt such an approach in the administration as it will contribute to performance improvement and development"

(g) "Education quality in an institution stands on its management of knowledge. A good education quality might be there, but, when a less-experienced team takes over which cannot deal with knowledge management systems, then education quality will be undermined. For example, a head of department who doesn't care about contemporary educational life or staff development, then how can he deal with a well-developed comprehensive system of knowledge management".

(h) " I think that there was a time when we did not have sufficient resources and a lack of recent books and even then the most important point was how to manage this information. The most important thing is how to transfer the concept of 'knowledge systems' to those responsible for education. Manipulation of knowledge systems is very important and raises the level of the faculty member".

(i) " The fundamental aspect in the case of knowledge, is what we are doing in our practice, at least in the Middle East. There was an issue about finding the right type of cabinets so people can refer to information whenever they want, and we have created a kind of database, which is not bad, but there is no real knowledge management. For example, when we talk about the existence of e-learning or distance learning, in many places, they interpreted this as converting a book into a PDF and putting it on CD, and certainly there is no quality if we deal with this concept".

Figure 5.13. Saudi Perspectives regarding Proposition 7



Source: Findings of this study

Information overload can be as damaging as lack of information, so there is a need for a system to manage the collection, creation, storage and distribution of knowledge and information. Quality of education and research are directly connected to the capability of a university, college, school, or research centre to manage the knowledge required by their students and researchers properly. As Holbeche states: (1999)“KM [Knowledge Management] involves blending a company’s internal and external information and turning it into actionable knowledge via a technology platform.”

Without necessary knowledge/ information and without the required systematic processes and systems for the creation, updating and distribution of this knowledge, research and educational institutions would be faced with a crisis and a reduction in the quality of the education provided and/ or research support. Availability of technology that should be used as a platform for effective organising of knowledge management is indispensable.

5.15. Findings and Analysis of the Seventh Proposition-British

“Reliable and effective *Knowledge Management* can help educational institutions to enhance the quality of their education” is the seventh proposition. Information Overload can be as damaging as a lack of information, so there is a need for systems to manage collection, creation, storage and distribution of knowledge and information. There was noticeable consensus in answering this question: *To what extent can a well-developed Knowledge management help educational institutions to enhance the quality of their education?*

While some of the participants were not completely familiar with the concept of 'Knowledge Management' at first, they supported this proposition as can be seen in these answers:

(a) " For many years I was actually living in a developing country, and because I came from a knowledge management system background that was very advanced, I came London and was surprised to find that this was not the case here. It was not because they didn't want to use an advanced system, but because there were some people who believed that their form of knowledge management was the best so they didn't want to change it. They resisted change for six years. A new system was installed this year and in September we will start using it. I can already see the results, because it's a different world".

(b)"Most universities do not have these systems, because academia tends to be quite individual and sharing is not viewed as necessary, but sharing is good practice, it is something that universities are moving much more towards, so I would say it is a good way of promoting the quality of education. It is extremely helpful and allows teaching staff to be more objective and students to be reflective".

(c)"I don't think we have such a system to be honest, we have elements of it, so in academic terms it would be expected to contain, for example, certain materials that they give for the courses or it may be research that they expect to put in the repository, but the elements are not joined up yet. However, if they were joined up, I think it would be an excellent resource for the students".

(d) "I think it is very important to have a management system and it is practically important that we communicate information effectively and that's both to the students and between students and the staff".

(e)"A virtual learning environment is important to support students learning and it is good if we get someone monitoring students' use of the virtual learning system and the environment and I think communication between staff is something helps back up effective management in universities. We have just invested in a sort of hub system now, which means we can share a lot of documentation both within the School and across the whole university, so I think this hub system where a lot of material is going to be accessible to everybody and easily accessed is going to be very important".

(f)"I can just concentrate on academic staff as an example of that. They often complain that they don't feel well managed with respect to the information they are getting about the aspirations of the university and it is a very important thing to increase staff satisfaction. So I think knowledge or information management should be a much more important influence in many institutions because everybody says the satisfied member of staff is a productive member of staff, so how you make them satisfied or how you engage them by giving them the appropriate information will always be important, but typically big institutions are not good at that".

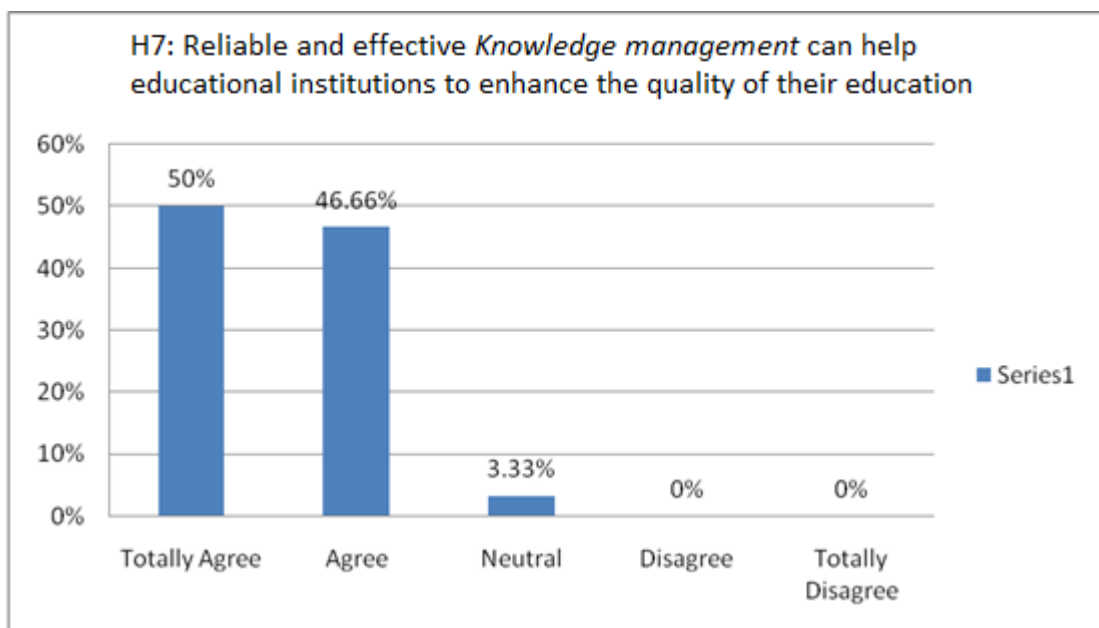
(g)" It can be a good resource for teachers. A well-developed system needs to be user friendly and easy to implement. I have to be a bit theoretical here, to a great extent, but how well can this be developed and realised is a big challenge but if you can capture the knowledge, I mean the tacit knowledge of those working within the institution so nothing would be lost if there is staff turnover or if you can even share good practice across different cohorts or different pathways or even across schools then this is what we are struggling to do and we have panels and meetings to do this to share experiences but yet again these are confined to individuals and we don't have current management systems per se. I'm not sure whether such a thing is, in reality, applicable in universities especially because everything is mostly tacit knowledge and from my experience most staff are probably too overworked to be able to contribute to any great extent to this knowledge management system".

(h)"If we had such a system it would make a great difference towards maintaining the level of quality and probably enhance it in areas that need support. The problem that we have is information overload; we are really quite stressed in terms of what we already do, including receiving long emails that sometimes we don't have the time to read. Plus you believe you have your own way of teaching, but on a higher level it makes a difference if you are talking about the strategic level of managing a course,

designing a course, yes it makes a difference, logistically speaking, and also if you go down to the level of disseminating knowledge and interacting with students".

(i) "To give you an example: new staff members sit down together and these sessions are led by an experienced academic and to that end we all share experiences in terms of teaching large classes, small classes, thinking about assignment development, marking, giving feedback, all the issues that are always challenging. If you could get let's say 20% of this into your system it would be good, because 70% is just you how you like to operate and how you like to deal with students".

Figure 5.14. British Perspectives regarding Proposition 7



Source: Findings of this study

As Holbeche states: (1999)“KM [Knowledge Management] involves blending a company’s internal and external information and turning it into actionable knowledge via a technology platform”. Without the necessary knowledge/ information and without the required systematic processes and systems for creation, updating and distribution of this knowledge and research, educational institutions would eventually face a crisis and reduction in the quality of the provided education and/ or research support. Availability of technology that should be used as platform for effective organising of knowledge management is indispensable.

Universities and schools are centres for creating and transferring knowledge by and among their students. Some authors (Holbeche, 1999) have found that the importance and impact of knowledge in our era at the highest possible level so knowledge by

itself can be considered as a source of power, core competency and quality for any advanced organisation. In fact, existence and growth of many organisations including research and educational ones are closely tied to the existence and good management of knowledge and information.

There are many reasons for development of knowledge management in organisations in general and in universities, colleges, schools, or research centres in particular. In this regard Walton (1999) believes “Knowledge is the key sustainable source of value added in an organisation and is central to the development of strategic advantage; Individuals are the primary agents of knowledge acquisition, and, in the case of tacit knowledge, are its principal repositories; Organisations need to tap into tacit knowledge, to identify ways in which it can be made public and transferable and to capture it so that it becomes part of the ‘structural capital’ of the organisation and available to others”. To put it simply, knowledge is power and it can contribute to the enhancement of the quality of research and education if it can be managed properly, otherwise it could damage the quality of education/ research and quality of educational and research institutions.

5.16. Findings and Analysis of the Eighth Proposition-Saudi

The eighth proposition is “The level of *Academics’ Achievements* can demonstrate the level of quality of education and quality of the educational institution”. A university/school cannot be considered as a quality institution if its academics/teachers do not have the opportunity of being successful in terms of publications, research and recognition. The answers given by Saudi participants show many a high degree of affinity with this question: *Is there any relationship between the level of Academics’ achievements (publications, etc..) in an educational institution and its level of quality of education?*

24 per cent *Disagreed* with the eighth proposition. While this proposition received enough support to be accepted, it seems that Saudi academics prefer not to associate their own achievements with quality of education as is evident in their responses:

(a) "The current trend is that there are 'tracks', the track of the researcher, and the track of the teacher. Being a full professor does not mean that he is wonderful in his teaching performance. Scientifically we need to consider what is meant by the existence of a relationship between the level of achievement and the quality of education. Therefore, the university now has a plan to separate successful teachers and the excellent researchers".

(b)"This question is thorny and perplexing because if you have a distinguished professor or lecturer they are supposed to be linked to the quality of education and improve the educational process, but in my opinion it is not necessarily true that distinguished academic achievements like scientific publications and awards etc., raise the level of the educational process in general., But if we are talking about the quality of education, I think that there are other elements that have a greater influence in this respect".

(c) "Researchers are on the axis of scientific education, and one of the university’s tasks, and if the environment is good, it will give you a good product, and if the environment is an educational environment, and if the knowledge is well transmitted and the means are available to the faculty member and to the student, the final product will be good, and of course the academic achievements of academics have an impact on the quality of education".

(d) "Any academic achievements like publications, indicate a high ranking, especially if it is in a high-ranking journal, and this will raise the enthusiasm of faculty members

to increase publishing and raise the ranking of the department and the College, which in the end results in a very good level of education provided to students who are the target audience. There is a direct correlation between the level of achievement of publications and improvement of the department and the college and the faculty member, and it is also important for the academics to be promoted. The final result is a good level of education and publications and good output".

(e) "On the subject of publications, if those publications were in the field of making a text book, this would be related to quality. Writing a book is more important than the publication of scientific papers, because they may not benefit students and publishing a paper may be for self-promotion only".

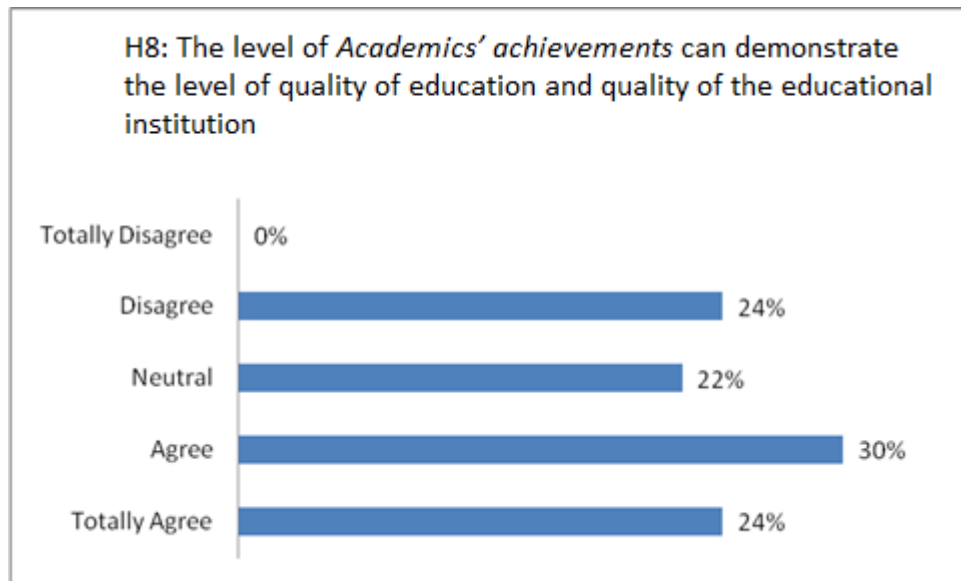
(f) "There should be a relationship, and there should be an impact, but in reality it may be something else, but no doubt there must be a relationship, otherwise what is the benefit? Any achievement for any academic is supposed to reflect on his students and his administration and in his syllabus and the curriculum that he teaches and without doubt the relationship is very strong". Unlike vast majority of academics, one of the participants in answer to this question said:

(g) "Not always; and sometimes a faculty member can exceed the quality of the institution he's working for, by his own efforts. In a similar vein, other academics believe there is a relationship, but it is limited. Academic achievements enhance academics capabilities, and it is important where they publish, as there is something of a difference between publishing in a local magazine from publishing in a cited journal".

(h) "If these achievements are built on the basis of valid and scientifically based research, then I think it has a positive effect in attracting good quality students who have the possibility to play a role in the future as an academic or as graduates, but if these achievements for self publicity, I think it is like soap bubble".

(i) "We must first determine whether the university is a research university or an education university, if we had a very prolific and distinguished research output and published internationally, and if so it is essential that this is transferred to the students. It can be said that it is an indicator of the quality of research and quality of scientific knowledge, but not necessarily be an indicator of the quality of education. During the developmental explosion, which began in some Arab universities, some universities moved into the area of research and neglected the area of education".

Figure 5.15. Saudi Perspectives regarding Proposition 8



Source: Findings of this study

The quality of education depends on the quality of the educators. To put it simply, the quality of education is related to the main educational service providers, lecturers and teachers. It is unlikely that an unsuccessful academic/ teacher can provide high quality educational services to students and develop successful students. From students' perspective, quality academics/ teachers are those who not only are expert in their own fields but they are capable of conveying their knowledge and skills to their students fully and in ways that are understandable, but this is just one side of the coin.

The success of an academic or a teacher can be assessed based on the degree to which this educator has progressed in his/ her career, non-academic roles/ responsibilities at academia/ schools/ government advisory posts, number of publications, level of the journals/ conferences, number of conducted research projects, amount of grants received, frequency of receiving grants; recognition received in the form of awards and publicity.

5.17. Findings and Analysis of the Eighth Proposition-British

This section is devoted to a discussion as to whether a university/school can be considered as a quality institution if its academics/teachers do not have the opportunity of being successful in terms of publications, research and recognition. The eighth proposition proposed that “The level of *Academics’ Achievements* can demonstrate the level of quality of education and quality of the educational institution”. The answers given by British participants showed a degree of affinity with this question: *Is there any relationship between the level of Academics’ achievements (publications, ...) in an educational institution and the quality of its education?*

Just one of the academics *Disagreed* with this proposition. This interviewee believed:

(a) "on paper the answer is yes, but I would say there are individuals that don't publish, or don't have many publications, but at the same time they provide a good quality of education. I believe that doesn't necessarily mean that a high number of publications means a high quality of education".

While this proposition received enough support to be accepted, it seems some British academics prefer not to associate their own achievements with the quality of education as is evident from their responses:

(b)"There is a direct relationship between academic achievements. However, what I mean by academic achievements is not just publications, it means honesty, integrity and having put a lot of effort into their research. To build up that reputation takes time and effort and once that reputation is there and among international community then that will definitely reflect in their education and the way they teach".

(c) "I would say that there is. I can give numerous examples of where some academic worker of mine has contributed to a new Master's programmes or a PhD programme and this filters down into the undergraduate curriculum. Some research, for example, that I did 15 years ago is now in textbooks which undergraduates' use, so I would go with that one certainly. In this institution over the last four years our work on our 'viva' has been introduced into our Master's programmes and this work is leading to publication in a peer reviewed journal, which will enhance Masters' students career opportunities".

(d) "I would hope that academics having a good research and publication track record would improve the level of education at an institution, but the two might not necessarily go hand in hand. It might be that staffs doing research do not teach, and teaching staff do not do research; it will depend on the department/institution. Also, people who are good at research do not necessarily make good teachers and vice versa – it might come down to the personality and skills mix of the individual academic".

(e)"There should be a connection, and in a simple sense there is. However, it is possible to have a situation in a university where teaching and research are not completely working together and so one might have colleagues who have masses of publications, but do not actually have anything to do with the people who are teaching. I do think it's a core value of higher education and what makes a university in a very large part is this particular commitment to research and knowledge creation and students should be brought into this as well".

(f) " Good research gets published in journals and so on, and good research informs our teaching and so there can be a correlation between these things, but I would say it is not the only measure. I think you have to consider many measures to make up your mind, I think like most of the rankings you know whether it's *The Times* ranking of world universities, an American one or one in Shanghai or whatever, they use a number of different ways of ranking the quality, one will pay more attention to the number of Nobel prizes you have and the next one does not. In conclusion, while there is definitely a relationship, there are also many other measures".

(g)"When academic achievement increases, the rating of the institution will increase and that will increase the quality, for example, next year is the Research Assessment Exercise in the UK, and all universities are working hard to increase the level of academic achievement and publication to be highly rated. However, once they are rated another issue we have to deal with is the NSS (the National Student Survey) where students must give their feedback on their experience. If there is no quality in an institution the NSS result will be low, therefore there is a contradiction and there is no achievement. Of course, once an institution reaches a high level, they want to maintain that level because they have worked so hard to achieve it".

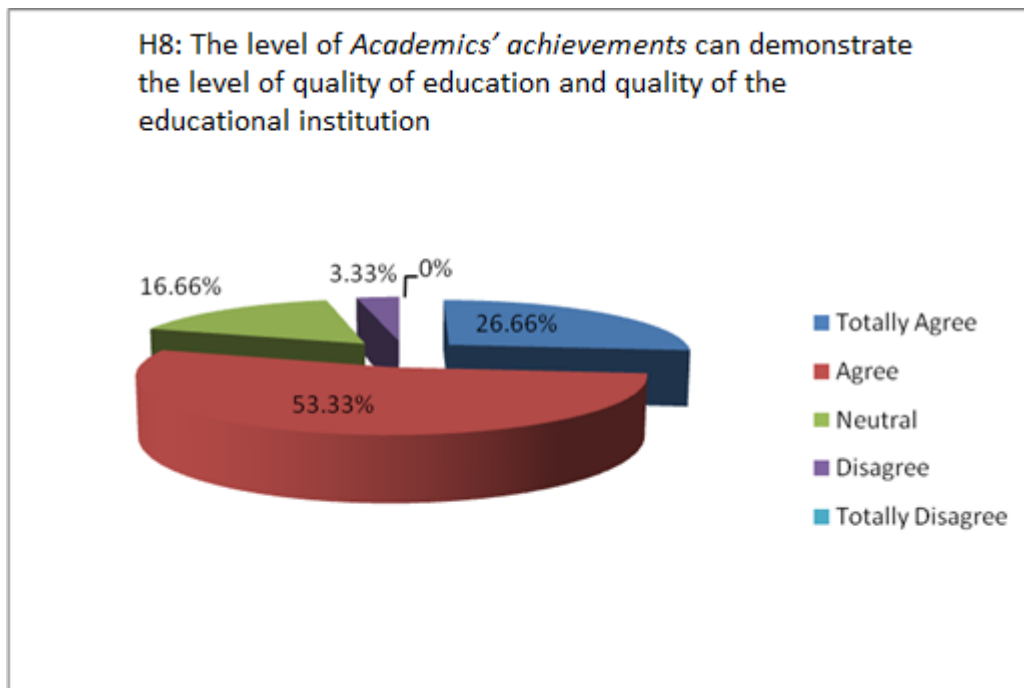
(h) "Research active staff always inform their lectures and amend them constantly as the result of new findings and new concepts they are developing through their

research; so, yes, I totally agree that academic achievement and publication helps the process of education within an institution by 100 per cent".

(i) "This relationship is really strong when you have academics in your institutions who are engaged and involved in publications it means that you know what they are doing and they are looking for the gaps, what has to be proved and it helps quality of education. So in most cases there should be a positive correlation but I feel that in some cases it may not necessarily translate into high quality education but, generally speaking, a high level of academic achievement of the faculty members should translate into a high quality learning experience".

(j) "This will depend entirely on how achievements are measured and whether and how these can be measured or assessed as impacting on students' learning experiences. At my own university, we ask all academics to evaluate their achievements in terms of their impact on the student experience during their annual appraisal and we set objectives for the following year based on the student experience and enhancement of their teaching".

Figure 5.16. British Perspectives regarding Proposition 8



Source: Findings of this study

From students' perspective, quality academics/ teachers are those who not only are expert in their own fields but they are capable of conveying their knowledge and skills to their students and in ways that are understandable; but this is just one side of

the coin. The success of an academic or a teacher can be assessed based on the degree to which this educator has progressed in his/ her career, including non-academic roles/ responsibilities in academia/ schools/ government advisory posts, number of publications, level of journals/ conferences and the number of research projects conducted.

Although it is unlikely that a student could receive high quality educational services from an unsuccessful academic/ teacher, it not impossible. However, the difficulty for students is that for success they need more than quality educational services, they need motivation too. Academics/ teachers should be inspirational to encourage their students to overcome any difficulties and progress toward a brighter future.

Employee training and development is an acceptable method that schools and universities can use to help their lecturers/ teachers to accomplish more. In addition, academics at universities/ higher education institutions have the opportunity of not teaching for one semester and instead focus on publication and research, which helps to increase their achievements.

In summary, a university/ school cannot be considered as a quality institution if its academics/ teachers do not have a chance of being successful in terms of publications, research and recognition. The rationale is, successful academics/ teachers can contribute to the quality of education and success of their students in two ways: First, by delivering high quality education and research support to their students, and second, by intensifying the impact of those services by inspiring students to embrace lifelong learning and success.

5.18. Findings and Analysis of the Ninth Proposition-Saudi

The ninth proposition is “*Student progress, success and satisfaction* is one of the important indicators of quality of education”. The most important customers of educational institutions are students, thereby it make sense to measure quality of a university/school in terms of progress, success and satisfaction of its students. Saudi academics/authorities were somehow varied in answering this question: *Would you please highlight your opinion regarding the assumption that Student progress, success and satisfaction is the most or at least one of the most important indicators of quality of education?*

This proposition received the highest level of disagreement with 31% compared to the others. As is reflected in the following answers, it seems not all Saudi academics believe that *Student progress, success and satisfaction* is one of the main criteria to assess the quality of education at schools and universities:

(a) "It is an indicator but it is not a real indicator. The real challenge is when you graduate a medical doctor and the number of mistakes he makes as a doctor is very low and when you graduate an engineer and discover that he is an excellent engineer in the marketplace etc. .. In short, the meaning is; 'who is the client of the university?' Is it the student or the employer later? This is the argument. The university may graduate a student with a high GPA, but when he goes to work in the field, employers don't find him good".

(b) " It may be an indicator, but, I link the real indicator of the quality of education with the labour market. If you are progressing and will succeed and satisfied at university, but the labour market does not need you, this is not enough. So all courses should be available, and graduates find their way to the labour market because the labour market needs them".

(c) "The problem that we develop our programmes away from the view of employers and decision-makers, or chambers of commerce, and I wish that there would be meetings between the universities and among people who are involved with our outputs, and we show them our programmes, and see their views. They could tell us that they do not need this programme, and I imagine that progress and success and satisfaction are indicators, but if it does not have a link to the labour market or is not acceptable to the labour market, then it has no value".

(d)"This index is too complicated. Unfortunately, some authorities measure the students' progress by their success and success is easy, all students can succeed but without really learning anything. I think if 'student progress" means progress in learning and not the subject of grades then I think it is an essential issue, the big challenge is how to measure their learning. The success and satisfaction are important and we should train students how to be satisfied, because some students are happy when they cancel lectures. The biggest challenge is to determine the goals and specific elements by which we measure what we mean by the progress of students, if we mean the amount of learning that is achieved, then it is a key factor in the whole process".

(e) "I am one of those who believe, that the student is the centre of the educational process, and also the university professor, and I think we must be careful with the meaning of satisfaction. If satisfaction means that the student has learned and benefited and grown and succeeded and became a better person, then I am with you, but it is too general to say the student is satisfied and happy. I would say 80% yes, but the remainder is attributable to other factors including individual differences of students and the effects of environmental factors and family. Achievements reflect excellence in correlated areas in the whole process of education".

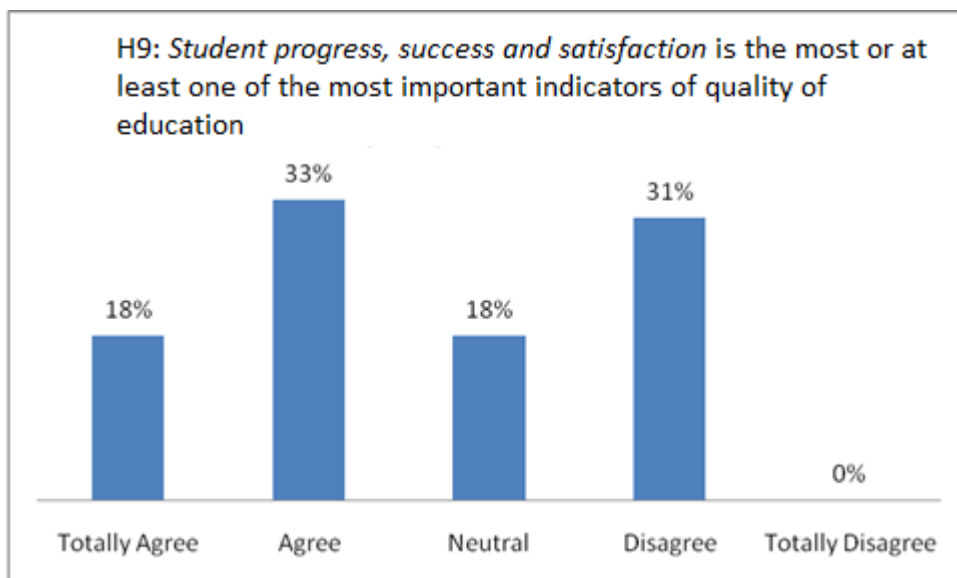
(f) "In my opinion, this is a true assumption, because these indicators can evaluate how good the designed curriculum is, the teaching methods, and the assessment. They can also evaluate the different levels of the students themselves, so we can assign those who need more academic help and support, those who need encouraging ... and so on. It is one of the indicators, but should not be relied upon entirely - some educational institutions may be over generous in marking, and that does not mean that this is a positive indicator".

(g) "I personally believe, that if the majority of students who are studying did not finish in the time limit, then I would consider myself as part of the problem and responsible for that, because I do not expect that all students are stupid or have problems, but if the number is limited, then it is acceptable. There is an example of the statistics model in our university, which failed a lot of students, and thus all students were either stupid or the teachers did not do their job properly fullest and do not provide material in an understandable way. Success and satisfaction in Western countries are more accurate and more objective because students pay money, but our students have a lot of courtesy".

(h) " It is one of the indicators, but not the most important, if the student was satisfied with the atmosphere and the environment, it is undoubtedly a sign of quality. Students progress academically and their success demonstrates the seriousness of academics, equipment support from administrators, and management style in creating a good environment to live and work within the institution and the extent of its success in dealing with the surrounding community because the relationship of universities with the surrounding community reflects the community's respect for employees of this institution And the significance of students' success is their satisfaction with the educational institution" .

(i) "It is for sure an important indication of education quality. We know that all British graduates are required to fill out forms upon graduation. It is sort of questionnaire consisting of around 20 questions measuring student satisfaction; a correlation of that to their progression. What happened to one of the well- known British universities when its ranking dropped dramatically is just an example showing how important student satisfaction is, so this could give a hint of diminishing education quality. The question: how reliable is a student view? Or does it depend on the quality of students? I believe generally it is a good indicator and good education produces students with great satisfaction and progression".

Figure 5.17. Saudi Perspectives regarding Proposition 9



Source: Findings of this study

While there are many different quality models/ theories each of which have some differences, almost all have consensus on one issue which is the emphasis on

measurement of quality based on the perspective of the main customer/ stakeholder. The only client and one of the most important stakeholders of any educational institution are students; thus it makes sense to measure the quality of a university/ school in terms of the progress, success and satisfaction of its students. Progress, success and satisfaction of students are interrelated issues but they are not the same as each other.

From the 'Progress' point of view, education and an educational organisation have quality if the student who received educational services or support for research has made reasonable progress in their study or/ research. Student progress can be assessed based on how much and how well the student has learnt the required topics/ skills/ knowledge during a specific period of time.

From the 'Success' perspective, quality education should demonstrate itself in form of student achievement. While the 'progress' focuses on the 'Processes' of student development, student 'success' mainly but not only emphasises the 'Outputs/ results' of education.

From the 'Satisfaction' aspect, quality of education and educational/research organisations need to be perceived and understood according the degree to which the student is satisfied with. From this perspective, it does not matter how much academics, universities/ schools, or other stakeholders are pleased with the education and the provision of educational/ research services. The only thing that matters is the level of satisfaction of the student who receives these education educational/ research services. To put it simply, the education and the educational/ research services provided have quality if the student is satisfied with them. The degree of the student's satisfaction determines the degree of quality of education and quality of the educational/ research organisation.

5.19. Findings and Analysis of the Ninth Proposition-British

Built on this assumption that the most important customers of educational institutions are students, it makes sense to measure the quality of a university/school in terms of the progress, success and satisfaction of its students. Thus, the ninth proposition is “*Student progress, success and satisfaction* is one of the important indicators of quality of education”. British academics/authorities responses were somewhat varied in answering this question: *Would you please highlight your opinion regarding the assumption that Student progress, success and satisfaction is the most or at least one of the most important indicators of the quality of education?*

Two out of 30 British academics opposed this proposition. They believed this was not a really important indicator of quality of education:

(a) "This is not what my organisation believes in, but, I, as a person, believe that not every aspect of quality is reflected in the student's success and satisfaction. This is also very much dependent on the background of the students and the quality of their previous education, and how much effort they have put affects their progress, success and satisfaction. So, generally, I would say that it is not the most important indicator of the quality of education".

The other lecturer said:

(b)"This notion of student progress is completely meaningless. I don't care about his progress. If the curriculum is right, he'll learn the curriculum and that is fine but student progress means nothing to me and has nothing to do with society, so for progress as an indicator for effort contribution to society is fine".

Unlike the above responses, and as is reflected in the following answers, it seems vast majority of British academics believe that *Student' progress, success and satisfaction* is one of the main criteria by which to assess quality of education at schools and universities:

(c)"It is one of the most important purposes of education. As well as students progressing on to careers, can they get jobs at the end of the day? Have they really developed through the course? So all students here have to write personal development portfolios, and graduation statements to highlight how they have progressed through the course, , what skills they have learnt, and how they can take that to the next stage whether it's academic work or professional work".

(d) "If you're talking about my opinion, of course, I agree. But if you are talking about how the government judges the success of institutions, it's based mostly on what you just said: how many students you get, how many progress from year to year and how many manage to achieve the degrees, and when you say success it's how many get 2:1s or 2:2s, and then there is satisfaction, which is the most important factor that affects the ranking of universities. That's why this university focuses a lot on student satisfaction and we came first recently among all the universities. It was a huge effort and I'm not sure we can maintain the same standard. However, we know that satisfaction is important because if you're talking about commercial companies, it's all about customer satisfaction and usually the public sector lags behind in this practice but it's essentially these three and when we say success, it's not just success within the institution, we even look at the alumni, their employability and where they ended up, because this is the first thing that new students will look at is where the alumni go to, how much did they achieve in their lives, their salaries etc.... so this is very important this is key and this is a personal opinion and a government based approach, so, yes, I totally agree on this one".

(e) "These three factors (in a regimented system) have quality factors linked to them; if student progression is good then it shows that the learning and teaching environment is appropriate for those students so there is success. Although, I think there is one thing that is important when we talk about student satisfaction, and I think it is the term 'student feedback' because students are part of a learning process and I think staff occasionally do need to learn from students' experience".

(f) "It's one of the most important indicators and the reason I say that is that I think learning is difficult, I think it can be troubling and it can be challenging and I think the moment when all of us as learners are challenged and troubled we may not think that we are making great progress, but actually that is what it's all about. So, I think spot checks on how you feel at any given moment about the institution isn't necessarily representative of the learning and the change in growth that is going on and we, as a whole sector, rather suffer from an over-simplistic view of student satisfaction".

(g) "I think it is definitely one of the most important indicators. Students who receive a good quality of education and have been enabled and helped to succeed and are going to progress through the levels and achieve success. Talking very generally, you could say, let's see how many of our graduates are employed two years after they

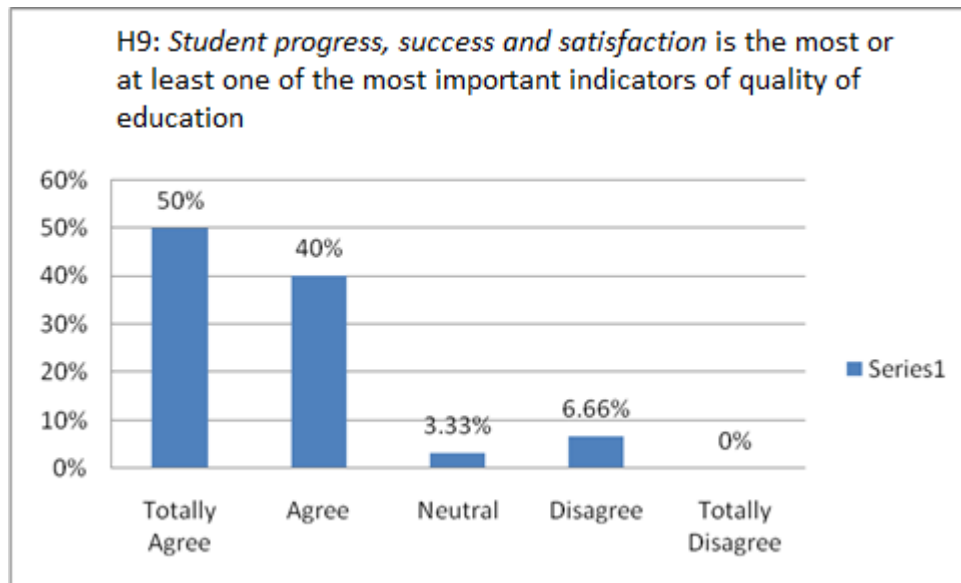
have graduated, that would seem to be a good measure, but then along comes a huge economic downturn with unemployment figures rising, you would say we expect that number to drop next year or the year after but that does not mean the quality of our education has dropped, so you have to be careful with the measures you need. You have to consider the variables with your research., so if you talk about the economic success of your students and their employability, other factors can affect this. But how students do and how positive they feel about their experience is a huge indicator, students do a survey on satisfaction and we pay great attention to this, there are many different ways that we can obtain feedback from students, anonymously or in focus groups so we actually place a lot of importance on satisfaction as an indicator of how well we are doing".

(h) "Student progress, success and satisfaction are very important, but the question here is how do we measure the students' progress, success? As for satisfaction; we have a strong feedback mechanism in our university. In the UK higher education system, the National Student Survey (NSS) is a very important instrument of universities evaluations/ratings. From personal experience, we (my institution/employer) paid extra attention to student satisfaction, which had a direct impact on the university ranking. If the institution is considered as customer or 'student- driven' they usually score highly in the NSS".

(i) "Sometimes we cannot please our students. Some students come to university from very restricted UK or foreign education institutions in terms of attendance and because attendance is not mandatory in our university, they kind of relax and enjoy this freedom, but at the same time they abuse this and expect quality, so Students' progress, success & satisfaction" is important indicators of quality of education".

(j)"These can be measures of quality and are currently used to rank universities across the UK. However, success is not just the academic qualification; it can be securing employment after graduation and a career in the professions, which the course aimed to prepare the student for. Student satisfaction (as measured through the NSS) is very a good measure of the quality of the whole student experience but is an evaluation of a much broader experience than the quality of teaching and learning. Ultimately, the assessment of satisfaction will also be related to student expectation and ensuring that students are provided with the experience promised at the start of the course".

Figure 5.18. British Perspectives regarding Proposition 9



Source: Findings of this study

Progress, success and satisfaction of students are three interrelated issues but they are not the same as each other. From 'Progress' point of view, education and an educational organisation have quality if the student makes reasonable progress in his/her study or/ and research. The student's progress can be assessed based on how much and how well the student has learnt the required topics/ skills/ knowledge during a specific period of time. Different types of formative evaluation (coursework), and summative evaluation (examinations), can be used to measure the student's progress. So moving from the first semester to the second semester, or progressing from the first year to the second year, or going from a first degree level to Master's level in a designated time with good grades are signs of the student's progress and consequently signs of quality education.

While the student's progress focuses on the 'Processes' of a student's development, student 'success' mainly but not only emphasises the 'Outputs/ results' of education. Student success can be assessed by analysing the percentage of students who finished their full study in a reasonable time; or/ and who could gain admission to continue their study/ research; or/ and who could have publications/ inventions; or/ and who could get relevant jobs shortly after graduation. Therefore, these factors can be considered as one of the important indicators of quality education and quality educational institutions.

The 'Satisfaction' aspect, quality of education and research organisations need to perceive and understand the degree to which the student is satisfied. From this

perspective, it does not matter how much academics, universities/ schools, or other stakeholders are pleased with the education provided. The only thing that matters is the level of satisfaction of the student. To put it simply, the education has quality if the student is satisfied with it. The degree of student satisfaction determines the degree of quality of education and quality of the educational/ research organisation.

Although considering customer satisfaction for measuring the level of quality is a widely accepted notion in almost all industries, some authors deny this right to students in the education sector. Some authors believe that university students are not mature enough or qualified to make judgements about the quality of the education they receive.

So, by understanding the view that students are customers of universities/ colleges and schools, all educational/ research organisations should consider students' needs and wants. These educational organisations must endeavour to create and improve the quality of their institutions by focusing on these three interrelated issues of student progress, success and satisfaction.

5.20. Findings and Analysis of the Tenth Proposition-Saudi

The tenth proposition is “High *University/School Achievements* are one of the signs of having high quality education”. This can be measured based on the ranking, amount of grant received, and rate of growth of these institutions. To examine this proposition Saudi academics and senior managers were asked: *Can University/School achievements be considered as one of the signs of having high quality education?*

Like the eighth and ninth propositions, there were some *disagreements* (15%) with the tenth proposition by some of the academics, which is evident in these responses:

(a) "If we work the right way, we can say, the more advanced the university in the world rankings the more it indicates that we have a good quality of education. However, because there are some universities that achieve a high classification, but it is known that the quality is not high, we should understand that even if the University is highly ranked, this does not always mean that there is quality in the outputs, which are the students. There is a need to look again into the details of these rankings to see the amount of quality in that university".

(b) "I think it is a key indicator of the existence of the quality, and depends on the scale or a scale ranking of the institution, website measurement might not be linked to quality, but there are standards for assessing the quality associated with universities, for example in the Faculty of Business Administration, we have local and external measurement organisations. In America, we have the AACSB which efficiently evaluates the adoption of management colleges, if an organisations obtains a good evaluation from the AACSB, it is considered to be a good thing, because the evaluation process comprises many different stages".

(c) "If we are talking about ranking ... etc., this is a relative quality in the case of attracting funds for the University and recognition, but if we are talking about quality itself and quality education, I don't think this will achieve much. A very simple example: when you enter any university and look for faculty members, you will not find them and this is a problem, can a faculty member find what he wants? Can a student find a faculty member whenever he wants"?

(d) "If the achievements reflected real practice in the educational institution, of course it reflects the existence of the quality of the educational institution. Indicators or rankings have been developed to measure certain aspects in educational institutions such as scientific research, which have certain criteria. If a university has the

fundamental constituents which reflect these criteria, of course this distinction reflects the university in those respects".

(e) "Achievements of each college, such as the Faculty of Pharmacy and the Faculty of Medicine and Faculty of Health Sciences are counted for this college, and thus affect the overall ranking of the University. Colleges abound with achievements, and the more impact at the university level on the international ranking scheme, the more it is one of the signs of quality, provided that there is real work and the product is their product, and the recognition comes from an independent recognition organisation and this indicates that the university or college has made the achievements that it claims to have done, then the final product indicates quality education".

(f) "This is a sensitive point, there are achievements for publicity purposes, and there are real achievements. It is easy to go up the rankings, and it is easy to create a great website on the Internet, and become one of the most visited sites in the world. But, in my opinion, there are achievements that benefit the community, such as the ability of graduates to get jobs, and good career opportunities, and the presence of researchers in the journals from the faculty and not from outside, these are all achievements, but achievements for the sake of propaganda have no value".

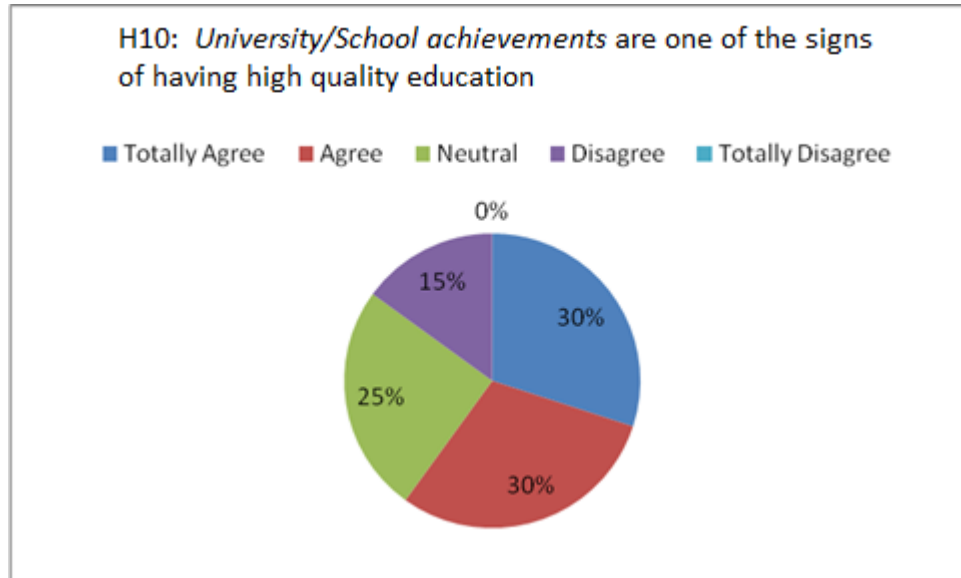
(g)"Without a doubt, if the achievement is in the field of an industrial or an engineering programme, without doubt, any accomplishment in this area will affect the quality of teaching, also in the humanitarian and theoretical area, meaning that if we have professors who are creative and achieve awards of excellence in scientific research in their field, it is assumed to reflect on the quality of teaching and will be an indicator of the quality of education".

(h) "This is supposed to lead to quality in education, but during the ranking process, it is required to make sure of the ranking criteria and the second thing, during the ranking process, we need to know whether a direct interaction between access to the ranking occurred and its reflection on the student and on the ground . We can bring in excellent staff, and have strong labs and gain a high rate in the field of research, but if the students do not enter the labs, the exercise is not worth anything .The most important thing is not to make the ranking a goal in itself".

(i) "The methodologies of measuring the quality of education are commonly shared around the world based on almost the same variables. Now, considering them as

'signs' is a mild way of putting it, but 'achievements' can be viewed in many different ways and their relationship to quality may vary".

Figure 5.19. Saudi Perspectives regarding Proposition 10



Source: Findings of this study

It is expected that quality universities/schools would provide quality education. One of the indicators of the quality of education is the degree of superiority of the institution that provides this education compared to other educational/ research organisations. In other word, university/ school success is another sign of having a quality education system. Based on the same logic, the degree of success of educational/ research institutions may represent the degree of quality of education provided.

The achievements of universities/ schools can be measured based on given criteria such as the ranking, amount of grant received, and the rate of growth of these institutions. There are some organisations that rank universities or/ and schools which are not reliable thus their published rankings should not be considered as a sign of quality. There are a few independent institutions that are generally reliable with acceptable degree of bias. Every year universities/ schools are ranked based on different criteria. Not only all universities/ schools but also majority of prospective students/ researchers consider these ranking levels as one of the important metrics of achievement and quality of education.

5.21. Findings and Analysis of the Tenth Proposition-British

Proposition 10 is “*High University/School Achievements*” are one of the signs of having high quality education”. This can be measured based on the ranking, amount of grant received, and rate of growth of these institutions. To examine this proposition British academics and education authorities were asked: *Can University/School achievements be considered as one of the signs of having high quality education?*

Although no one *Totally Disagreed*, , the tenth proposition received the highest level of *Disagreement* with 16.66% alongside 13.33% *Neutral* responses. These are the views of these who disagreed:

(a) "I think when we are talking about universities and schools that is a very generalist term, because I think there are individual members of staff who contribute to providing high quality education through their commitment to their students and also to the type of the research they do. These institutions may not be ranked particularly highly purely because the criteria they use are very different to Oxbridge, for example. Oxbridge has other resources, which these don't have, and another example is Harvard's alumni who do better than those in the UK at this moment in time. It's very difficult to measure one institution against another one unless you know the exact resource constraints, so I don't necessarily agree with that".

Another participant who 'disagreed' said the following:

(b)"It depends on what you think an achievement is but I think that many of the criteria of achievement don't reflect the substantial impact that an institution can have. I happen to think that the elite table doesn't actually in any way reflect the quality of what we do here. It is also overrated because pockets of resistance exist in all universities and I can show you very poor lecturers in high calibre universities and I can show you very good lecturers in low ranking universities, so therefore it can mean nothing in general. It is an individual thing".

Another academic who opposed the tenth proposition said:

(c)"An institution which is always ranked near the bottom made a fuss about its ranking and its reflection of the actual quality, it may simply mean that a university ranked at the bottom in this country still offers a good quality of education. I think the ranking system is a bit too crude. It does not reflect each institution as each one is slightly different in the students in its catchment area, in the staff they have, so I think

that sort of indicator is probably not a good one, so I disagree. The way we do the ranking isn't necessarily about the given knowledge, or the quality of education students get., I disagree with that".

The majority (but not a vast majority) of British academics and senior managers supported the tenth proposition, which is evident in these responses:

(d)"This is a straightforward question. To say which one would provide better quality, because looking at quality and value for money, where value is the quality of service because we don't provide any physical products, it is really important from our point of view as an institution or as a lecturer to maintain standards and achievements, which are like an outcome. If you really work hard you will be able to achieve a higher ranking or high achievement in terms of your ranking. So, yes, it makes a big difference and for students this is what they look for, how are we ranked and it's a bit global. So I can't say we have X Y Z who are good, we are talking about the institution so that's a very high level evaluation and But this is the starting point and you can lose students from this point on, you can't really force them to come to your open day. So these achievements are like a doorway".

(e) "University or schools' achievements can be considered as one of the signs of having high quality education. This could be in terms of research, in terms of innovation, and in terms of teaching innovation as well. Because that will draw in students into the university or school and it will also attract funding for research but really these achievements come from the academic staff and the research staff and their initiative and their expertise".

(f) "It is hard to be in the top ten without having a quality education isn't it!, so I think the relationship is quite strong , it's just that whenever you consider the many things that contribute to a university, it depends on the criteria listed. I will just use the same example I used before. I know of some universities, which have a number of Nobel prizes, but can you be good institution without any Nobel Prize winners? Yes, of course you can. So it does depend on the criteria used. Also you can look and say we are slightly further down the list because of reasons 1.2.3 x.y.z , but teaching quality puts us in at number 12 or something like that, so yes it definitely can be considered as one of the signs of having high quality of education, but you have to look into the criteria that have been used".

(g) "Definitely! There is no doubt that universities achievements' can be considered as one of the signs of having high quality education, because the assessment and rating

of universities and reviews are all based on quality elements and most of our programmes are reviewed every four years. I think from country to country and university to university and educational system to educational system is a different matter so some countries, for example, attract a high number of international students to their universities and this helps the ranking of the university, while in some other countries the number of publications will help the ranking of the university".

(h)"I think the educational indices used which produce this ranking are very dependent on how much money a university attracts from industry. In some countries it is very important to the ranking of a university, while in some others there is no relationship between universities and industry Generally speaking, when a university has a good ranking it means the university at least has very good ranking in some educational indices but you need to decide what your interests are and whether those interests match with the educational indices in that university or that educational system or not, I think that's really important".

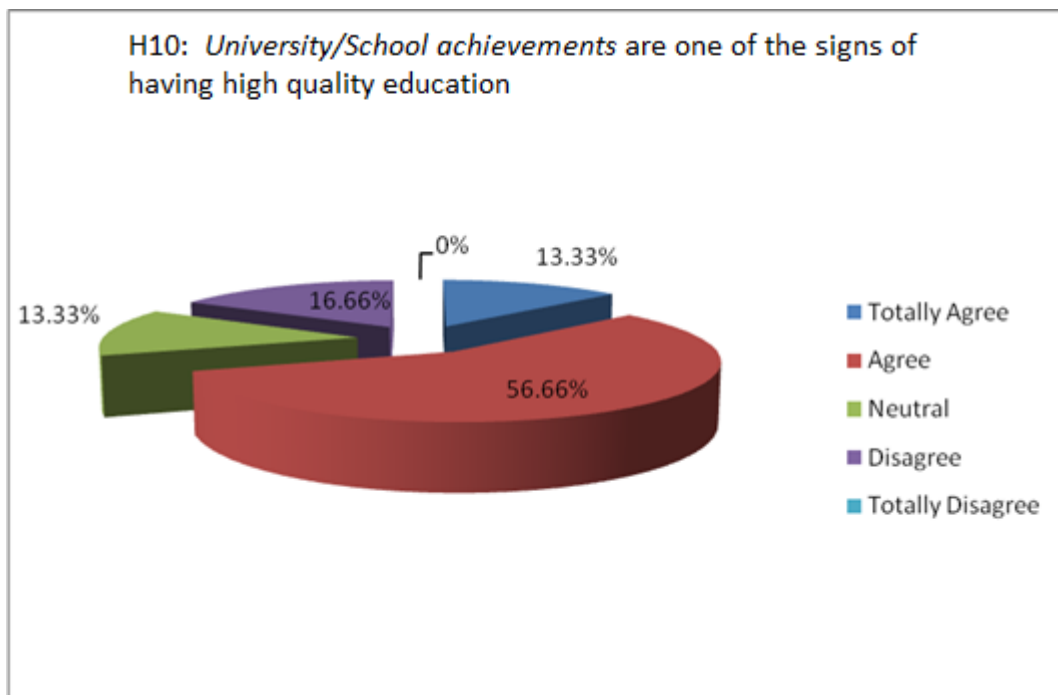
(i) "There should be a positive correlation, the achievement of the institution should translate into quality education for its learners, but there would be exceptions to this generalisation and there would be cases where an institution that may not be deemed to be really right at the top but the learning or the experience of the students may be of really high quality and vice versa; so I agree, but what I'm saying is there may be exceptions".

(j)"The answer is probably a combination of things: student achievement in assessments; student achievement following graduation? (What jobs they have got, their career progression); student feedback (not just during and immediately after their course, but also a couple of years after to get a sense of long-term progress and how the education they acquired in their university directly contributed to their progress); student satisfaction (in the sense, did they feel empowered because of their education; did they learn new skills etc.?)".

(k) "Ranking is one of the ways of measuring of how good an institution is. Now the challenge here is how the school can benefit from the ranking institution because most of the time these ranking institutions can be quite subjective, you are not sure how they measure the ranking, or where they got their feedback from. , For example, at one point we were scoring quite badly in the NSS, the score was beginning to look harmful. But the problem was that only the ones who did not have a good experience

were engaging with this sort of survey. So we had to find a mechanism to ensure that as many people as possible, including the ones who felt positive about their experience engaged with this survey in order to give a true reflection of students' experience here. Ranking is important, and the ways to measure ranking are either through your research output or your students experience output, and here, in the UK, we have the RAE to measure research, the NSS to measure the student experience and the QAA to measure teaching quality".

Figure 5.20. British Perspectives regarding Proposition 10



Source: Findings of this study

University/ school success is another sign of having a quality education system. In short, the degree of success of educational/ research institutions may represent the degree of quality of the education provided. The achievements of universities/ schools can be measured based on various criteria such as the ranking, amount of grant received, and rate of growth of these institutions. There are some organisations that rank universities or/ and schools which are not reliable thus their published ranks should not be considered as a sign of quality. However, there are a few independent institutions that are generally reliable with an acceptable degree of bias.

In addition to the rankings, two other determinants of universities/ schools' achievements are the amount of grant received, and rate of growth of these institutions. Governments, non-governmental organisations, charities, individuals and

sometimes companies donate money to generally good universities/ schools, and universities/ schools consider the amount of grant received as an achievement which reflects the quality of education in their institutions. Furthermore, it is commonly accepted that a fast rate of growth of universities/ schools indicates a higher level of achievement and better quality of education.

That is to say, the achievements of universities/ schools are closely linked to the achievements of their academics and the success/ achievements of their students. Consequently, a higher degree of academic and student success and achievements would almost directly contribute to higher achievements of educational/ research institutions, which, in turn, would lead to higher quality of education. Thus, the quality of education can be reliable and stable if quality universities/ schools recruit and retain quality academics/ teachers as well as quality students/ researchers.

5.22. Findings and Analysis of the Eleventh Proposition-Saudi

The 11th proposition is “Continuous, purposeful and well-planned *Innovation and Change Management* is one of the keys to high quality education”. Innovation is change and it is the lifeblood of any organisation but innovation would be lost if there was no adequate change management system to support it. Saudi participants were requested to answer this question: *Can you see any meaningful relationship between well-planned Innovation and Change Management and the quality of education?*

As with Knowledge Management, the concept of Change Management was not completely familiar to all participants, however, after discussion, the majority of them supported this proposition as is demonstrated in the following answers:

(a) "I think nowadays with the changes and rapid developments in the education system in particular, I think it has a strong relationship. Because whenever we have qualified people and have more than one dimension, we can look and discover the things that can develop our curriculums and evaluate them in a better way instead of waiting for many years".

(b) "There is a relationship, which is a reality and change comes from innovation and discovery and dealing with errors and efforts with information systems are calculated to manage change. Perhaps there is a relationship in case we have introduced something that stimulates innovation and this is what happened in the preparatory year where the students started to study thinking skills, creativity and skills of innovation, and they were given an environment which enabled them to achieve success, the quality of education is one of the innovation's positive outputs, and if we don't have change management we will not have innovation. I see that one of these elements is a must in order to achieve the other.. If we did not have change management like the development of creativity, innovation and focus, we will not get what we want".

(c) "It is nice to link innovation and change management, because, unfortunately, innovation does not find applause. On the contrary, you may find innovation face problems, innovation needs protection, because it is really does make change happen, and unfortunately not everyone accepts innovations. Change is costly and faces resistance, and resistance comes from the inside, innovation needs a sponsor and not necessarily to show results immediately, you may need years to reap the fruits".

(d) " Change in the learning environment is a marathon which takes generations, and so that we can preserve it, we should resort to the global indicators that are well-known which are the level of development of procedures and the level of published research and the number of Patent inventions registered, and we want to get from the micro to macro levels. All the University and its units will participate in a small part of the Kingdom. Do not look at them as universities, but see a group of engines".

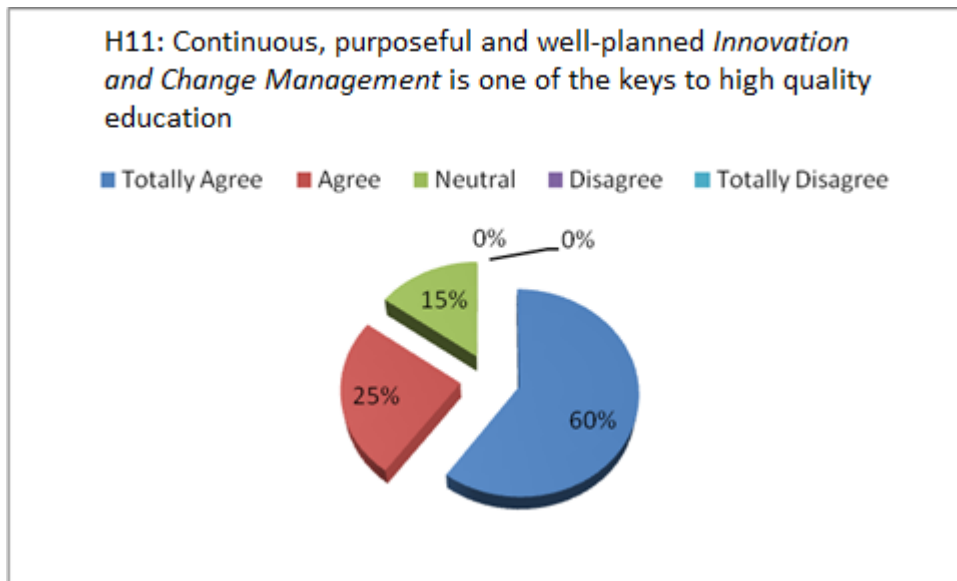
(e) "Here we talk about higher education, there is no doubt that higher education drives innovation and innovation develops higher education, and the problem of innovation is that it faces very big challenges and therefore there is a need for change management, and I think we must put innovation always as our top priority and must admit that innovation is costly and innovation faces many challenges, especially from people who have spent a long time in a given sector and who are obstacles to innovation"

(f) "We must encourage everyone at all levels of the university as a daily exercise to take care of this trend and provide an environment that reduce obstacles to innovation, which is change management and I think that this a major issue and without it all efforts being made to develop will remain in the drawer".

(g) "That is why all universities and colleges create different ways to challenge their academic or administrative staff and students to innovate or modify to the best of their ability, in order to improve the quality of education and have the best of graduates of different degrees i.e. Bachelor, Master, or Doctorate degrees".

(h)"Like other institutions, the educational institutions are undergoing change processes, but more may be required of the educational institutions than other institutions to innovate and change, and manage the process of change and innovation effectively and this is critical in influencing the qualitative level of academic programmes and their continuing suitability to the requirements of the labour market and ability to keep pace with technical developments and new circumstances."

Figure 5.21. Saudi Perspectives regarding Proposition 11



Source: Findings of this study

Education directly or indirectly is about innovation and development in different fields of study; thus, a higher level of innovation can represent a higher quality of education. There is consensus among different authors that innovation is the lifeblood of any organisation. Universities and schools should be a source of innovation and prepare students/ researchers to be innovative, so it is expected that universities and schools be innovative in almost everything they do. At universities and schools innovation can take many forms; it can be in recruiting students/ academics/ teachers, in preparing syllabus/ curriculums, in developing pedagogy, in the managing and provision of learning and research support, in teaching/ research, in knowledge management, in leadership and strategic management, and in university, student and academics' achievements.

Although it can be claimed that due to the innovative nature of the human race, the emergence of innovation goes back to the very beginning of the human history in general and human tool-making in particular, the modern conceptualisation of innovation was begun by Schumpeter (1934). Schumpeter (1934) described innovation as the creation of new elements or/and new arrangement of already existing elements. About 50 years later, Kanter (1983) expanded this definition and emphasised the process-based nature of innovation.

5.23. Findings and Analysis of the Eleventh Proposition-British

Innovation is change and it is the lifeblood of any organisation but innovation would fail if there was no adequate change management system to support it. So the 11th proposition is “Continuous, purposeful and well-planned *Innovation and Change Management* is one of the keys to high quality education”. British participants were requested to answer this question: *Can you see any meaningful relationship between well-planned Innovation and Change Management and the quality of education?*

Like Knowledge Management, not all participants were familiar with the concept of Change Management, however, after discussion, the majority of them supported this proposition. Just two of the 30 academics *Disagreed* with the 11th proposition. One stated that:

(a) "You might have a very well-planned system or programme initiated, but that plan needs to be executed and needs to be executed for the people on the ground and a very good plan does not necessarily result in very good execution and satisfaction for the recipients, so I would not say that there is a meaningful relationship. I think it sounds good in principle, but in practice it is difficult to relate it to what actually happens. So, while I think there should be a relationship, in practice, I don't think there is a relationship".

The positive responses of the rest of British academics and senior managers are demonstrated in the following answers:

(b) "It's too easy to just bring in change without thinking about the indication of that change and whether or not it is actually going to affect the quality of the education. For example, I can think of places where change is taking place where the quality of the education has not been considered in the context of those changes and if you change the environment in which you work, you change the facilities you have got, the curriculums, you change the style of teaching, you change the resources you have. Without considering the implications of that on the quality, then there is a serious risk that you will actually adversely affect the quality, maybe only for a short period but I think it could actually have very much longer term effect so there is a very careful line to be taken there otherwise mistakes can and are made. Maybe it's part of human nature that we make decisions based on money perhaps, but we don't think them through".

(c) "We are supposed to have a collegiate structure so that the teaching can contribute to the direction and the management of an institution like this and it is very difficult sometimes and I'm talking not just about this institution but lots of institutions around the UK. It is very difficult sometimes to see how decisions that I make in terms of change management have really been explained to the people who have to deliver those changes".

(d) "It's very important that it is correlated properly because what you are actually saying is: you get suggestions go and do this, and you say, yes, I can do this but I have other 12 people working with me, how do I get them to participate? I organised an event last Friday and I have done all the work organising everything, getting students together and so on. So this ceremony was going to happen but it was a challenge to get them to buy into it. It took me four years because there is no system for planning innovation. That can only happen if we have good leadership in the organisation".

(e) "There should be a meaningful relationship. It depends if the change is beneficial to the quality of the education, then of course 'well planned' Innovation and Change Management may have a meaning relationship with quality of education. The university has decided to be creative and more innovative and we are going through a huge change management process and ultimately it is all about improving the quality of education, so the answer is as long as it well planned and implemented properly then yes".

(f) " Universities need to be constantly reflecting on the changes required to respond to changing demands to deliver high quality education and this requires a high calibre of skilled managers to be focused on inspiring and motivating their staff to be creative and innovative in the delivery of education. There is huge change going on in the whole sector at the moment and there are changes going on within every institution in the UK, and I think that change can have two effects: if it is managed properly, change can have a good effect on the quality of the education, if it is managed badly it could be detrimental because you can lose all of your procedures. You need it to be run well otherwise it can bring down morale in terms how you look after the students and share everything with students., So if it is well planned, it is very important".

(g) "Academics are a little bit averse to change, and I think with change management, for example, the changes we have had in funding and the way we deliver education;

more work could have been done on managing these changes and getting people involved and making them feel some sense of ownership of the changes otherwise they are going to resist change".

(h) "I suspect academic staff are very like many other well established professional staff, they can be very resistant to change, and, of course, in that lie two issues; first, not all change is good and not all innovations are good and therefore you do need a perspective whereby any changes are looked at by professional people and they may say it is not appropriate for my teaching or my research and they may be right. On the other hand, the world is changing, science has a huge impact, and you have got to be receptive in your ideas and be prepared to innovate and managers have got to be able to engage and establish that innovation, for example, in the curriculum, in the way students are taught and in the facilities available for study".

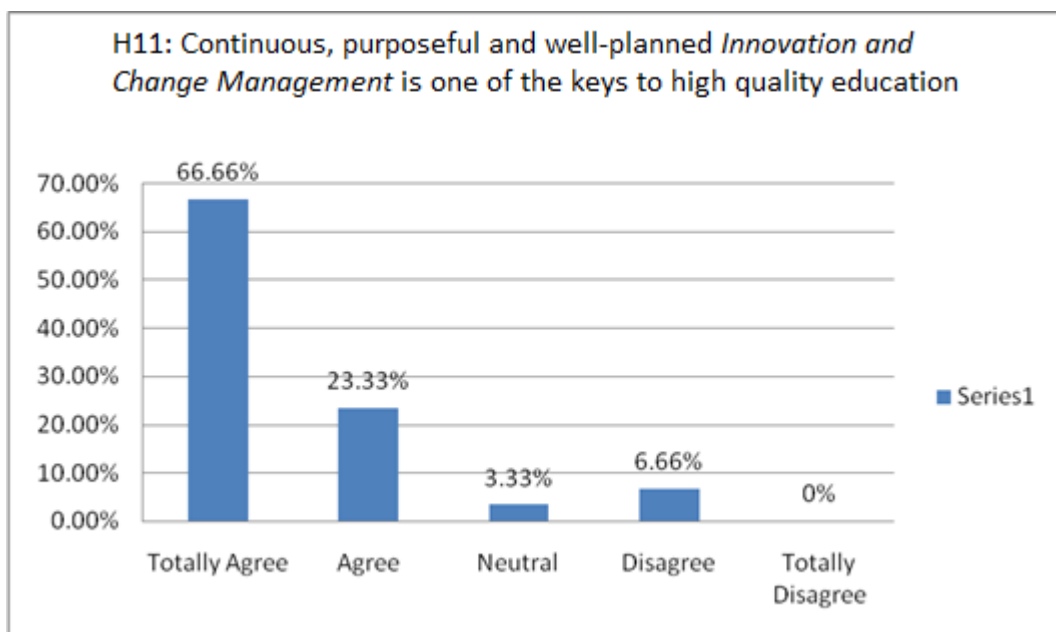
(i)"Innovation needs to be brought in at all levels because we live in a rapidly changing world and so when change is possible and that's often driven by technological change then these things should be tested. We should not rush headlong into change for its own sake. I think we take on board some things and it may not necessarily be an improvement when we take on some of those activities. If it is well planned then it may well be very useful in one area may but wouldn't necessarily be applicable in another area".

(j) "Innovation and change management are important and go hand in hand and in previous years we have had lots of innovative initiatives that could have enhanced the quality of service, the quality of education but because the change management process was not well planned, it didn't succeed and they actually managed to lower the quality of education. But if I may combine leadership and strategic management with innovation and change management together then anything is possible. So if we have leadership and a management team to support it, yes, there is a relationship between well-planned innovation, change management and the quality of education. I would totally agree".

(k) "As long as here has been consultation, while some people may be resist it, if there has been discussion, debates, then it can be moved forward as to what the best ways are and one should always look to the long-term strategy for the institution, for the employees and, most importantly, for the students because it's their education and their future. Yes, I do see a relationship".

(1)"It has to be managed and it all depends on which end of the barrel you are looking at. I think one has got to be very careful about innovation and change for the sake of change and one has got to relate that directly to whether these changes are going to be enhance the quality of the student experience. It's a good question and it needs the right balance where what the innovation is expected to achieve has been strategically developed for the quality of the higher education and one has always got to ask the question first of all: are we providing a quality education product? If we feel there is a shortfall then we need to look at innovation and change management".

Figure 5.22. British Perspectives regarding Proposition 11



Source: Findings of this study

There is consensus among different authors that innovation is the lifeblood of any organisation. Universities and schools should be the source of innovation and preparing students/ researchers to be innovative, so it is expected that universities and schools will be innovative in almost everything they do. At universities and schools, innovation can be in recruiting students/ academics/ teachers, in preparing syllabus/ curriculums, in developing pedagogy, in managing and provision of learning and research supports, in teaching/ research, in knowledge management, in leadership and strategic management, and in university, student, and academic achievements.

As regards the future of innovation, while Vanhaverbeke (2009) and Spradlin (2009) believe that open innovation will be the dominant theory, Dvir (2009) highlights co-creation, and Hissel (2009) emphasises the innovation chain as the

determinant of future innovation. Kaiserswerth (2009) combines these perspectives claiming that cooperation and open innovation will build the future of innovation.

Innovation is change but innovation would fail if there were no adequate change management system to support it. Change management can help that universities and schools benefit from innovation in full. Although well-managed innovation can be beneficial for any educational institutions and their students, there is almost always some resistance to the changes that innovation creates in organisations. Change management facilitates implementation of innovation and consequently contributes to innovation-based quality of education.

5.24. Conclusions

Every single finding in this research has been supported by ample evidence provided from the collected primary data via semi-structured interviews with Saudi and British academics and senior managers. As is evident from the data provided in this chapter, all of the findings are the direct result of analysing and discussing the 63 interviews conducted from 15 cases, so all of them are facts based on opinions of the participants. These findings are based on the collected evidence from these 15 cases/ universities that have been analysed using the 'content analysis' technique. Additional evidence from the interviews is provided in the next chapter. Not only each finding but also every other claim is backed by more than enough evidence that emerged from the interviews.

5.24.1. Saudi Perspective

The Saudi academics and senior managers were chosen by using the Stratified Sampling method, which is one type of Probability Sampling. First, simple random sampling was used to choose six Saudi universities as six case studies. Each of these six cases were considered as one separate strata (group), then randomly 120 potential participants were selected from these cases/universities. These people were contacted via email to invite them to participate in interviews. A total of 33 Saudi academics and senior staff agreed to participate in the interviews. A total of 33 out of 120 represent a response rate of 27.5%, which is a good rate.

The Education Quality Model has 11 main elements that are supposed each of them has impacts on quality of education. For each of these 11 factors one proposition has developed to be tested based on the collected primary data. Answers of these participants regarding each of the eleven propositions have been analysed and discussed.

The first proposition is 'Having professional and appropriate *Leadership and Strategic Management* can lead to higher quality in the education sector'. This proposition focuses on the importance of proper leadership and strategic management. Strong and visionary leadership includes thinking and planning

strategically which is necessary for high quality education and higher education. This proposition has been supported strongly by Saudi participants who 75% of them were totally agreed with the proposition's assumption.

The second proposition is "Quality people create quality results so *Students, Academics and Staff Recruitment* have a major impact on the quality of education ". There is no guarantee of quality in education, if a school or university recruits unqualified students, academics and staff. It is not reasonable to expect high quality from under-qualified people. This proposition overwhelmingly has been supported by total agreement of 90% of the Saudi participants.

The third proposition is "Syllabus/ Curriculum is another determinant of quality in education". Quality of education depends on what are being taught, syllabus/ curriculum, at the schools and universities. The main purpose of establishing and running a university/ school is educating students/ researchers and preparing them for better careers/ future. This aim can be achieved if the university/school develops and follows appropriate and quality syllabus/ curriculums. Likewise the first proposition, this proposition has been agreed with vast majority of interviewees.

The fourth proposition has received noticeably high endorsement from the Saudi academics. It is "Quality of education depends on the quality of *Research/ Teaching*, which are the main activities at educational institutions". Provision of good quality teaching (taught aspect) and having more and quality research (research aspect) are other success factors necessary for quality education.

Although the fifth proposition has been favoured by majority of participants, this support is a little less than previous propositions. That is "*Pedagogy* or suitability of the way in which the syllabus is taught to students can contribute to quality of education". Traditional teaching methods or learning by rote are no longer adequate. The quality of education/ higher education institutions cannot be guaranteed without a customised and effective pedagogy, which matches other important issues such as level of students and study, syllabus/ curriculum, and available learning and research facilities at schools/ universities and research centres.

The sixth proposition is "Effective and quality *Learning and research support* can lead to higher quality education". Having a proper classroom, with adequate teaching facilities, having a comprehensive library and online library, and having trained and helpful staff and processes that facilitate learning and research are necessary. Unlike

the fifth proposition, this proposition has received the second highest level of endorsement among these 11 propositions.

The seventh proposition is about impact of *Knowledge Management* on quality of education". Information overload can be as damaging as lack of information, so there is a need for systems to manage the collection, creation, storage and distribution of knowledge and information. Fortunately this proposition has been considered as true with good majority.

While about 55% of interviewees have supported proposition number eight, the level of support is much lower than previous propositions. The eighth proposition is "The level of *Academics' Achievements* can demonstrate the level of quality of education and quality of the educational institution". A university/school cannot be considered as a quality institution if its academics/teachers do not have the opportunity of being successful in terms of publications, research and recognition. It seems Saudi academics prefer not to be blamed for quality of education in Saudi's educational institutes.

The ninth proposition is "*Student progress, success and satisfaction* is the most or at least one of the most important indicators of quality of education". The most important customers of educational institutions are students, thereby it makes sense to measure quality of a university/school in terms of progress, success and satisfaction of its students. The proposition has been approved but by about 50% of participants. This proposition received the highest level of disagreement with 31% compared to the others. As is reflected in the following answers, it seems not all Saudi academics believe that *Student progress, success and satisfaction* is one of the main criteria to assess the quality of education at schools and universities

The tenth proposition is "High *University/School Achievements* are one of the signs of having high quality education". It is expected that quality universities/schools would provide quality education. One of the indicators of the quality of education is the degree of superiority of the institution that provides this education compared to other educational/ research organisations. Although 61% of Saudi participants have backed this proposition, like the eighth and ninth propositions, there were some *disagreements* (15%) with the tenth proposition by some of the academics.

The 11th proposition is "Continuous, purposeful and well-planned *Innovation and Change Management* is one of the keys to high quality education". Innovation is change and it is the lifeblood of any organisation but innovation would be lost if there

was no adequate change management system to support it. As with Knowledge Management, the concept of Change Management was not completely familiar to all participants, however, after discussion, the majority of them supported this proposition.

Table 5.1. Case-based Summary of the Findings: Saudi Perspective

<i>The Research Propositions</i>	<i>Average of Answers by each Case</i>					
	<i>S1</i>	<i>S2</i>	<i>S3</i>	<i>S4</i>	<i>S5</i>	<i>S6</i>
P1: Having professional and appropriate <i>Leadership and Strategic Management</i> can lead to higher quality education	TA	A	TA	TA	TA	TA
P2: Quality people create quality results so <i>Student, Academic and Staff Recruitment</i> have a major impact on the quality of education	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA
P3: <i>Syllabus/ Curriculum</i> is another determinant of quality in education	TA	A	A	TA	A	TA
P4: Quality of education depends on the quality of <i>Research/Teaching</i> , which are the main activities at educational institution	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	A
P5: <i>Pedagogy</i> or suitability of the way in which the syllabus is taught to students can contribute to the quality of education	A	TA	A	TA	TA	A
P6: Effective and quality <i>Learning and research support</i> can lead to higher quality education	TA	A	TA	TA	TA	TA
P7: Reliable and effective <i>Knowledge management</i> can help educational institutions to enhance the quality of their education	TA	A	TA	TA	TA	A
P8: The level of <i>Academics' achievements</i> can demonstrate the level of quality of education and quality of the educational institution	N	N	A	A	A	N
P9: <i>Student progress, success and satisfaction</i> is one of the important indicators of quality of education	A	D	N	A	A	N
P10: <i>University/School achievements</i> are one of the signs of having high quality education	A	N	N	N	A	A
P11: Continuous, purposeful and well-planned <i>Innovation and Change Management</i> is one of the keys to high quality education	TA	A	A	TA	TA	A

Keys: (TA = Totally Agree, A = Agree, N = Neutral, D = Disagree, TD = Totally Disagree)

S1, S2, S3, S4, S5 and S6 are the given codenames to each of six Saudi cases/universities. Due to confidentiality, the identity of these cases cannot be divulged.

Table 5.2. Brief Summary of the Findings: Saudi Perspective

<i>The Research Propositions</i>	Quantification of the Given Answers				
	Totally agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Totally disagree
P1: Having professional and appropriate <i>Leadership and Strategic Management</i> can lead to higher quality education	23	9	1	0	0
P2: Quality people create quality results so <i>Student, Academic and Staff Recruitment</i> have a major impact on the quality of education	30	3	0	0	0
P3: <i>Syllabus/ Curriculum</i> is another determinant of quality in education	22	9	2	0	0
P4: Quality of education depends on the quality of <i>Research/Teaching</i> , which are the main activities at educational institution	23	10	0	0	0
P5: <i>Pedagogy</i> or suitability of the way in which the syllabus is taught to students can contribute to the quality of education	21	8	4	0	0
P6: Effective and quality <i>Learning and research support</i> can lead to higher quality education	28	5	0	0	0
P7: Reliable and effective <i>Knowledge management</i> can help educational institutions to enhance the quality of their education	22	10	1	0	0
P8: The level of <i>Academics' achievements</i> can demonstrate the level of quality of education and quality of the educational institution	8	10	7	8	0
P9: <i>Student progress, success and satisfaction</i> is one of the important indicators of quality of education	6	11	6	10	0
P10: <i>University/School achievements</i> are one of the signs of having high quality education	10	10	8	5	0
P11: Continuous, purposeful and well-planned <i>Innovation and Change Management</i> is one of the keys to high quality education	20	8	5	0	0

Source: Developed by the author

As is evident from the above table, there is consensus among Saudis regarding strong support for all 11 propositions of this research. Although some participants *disagreed* with three of the propositions (H8, H9, and H10), none of the interviewees *totally disagreed* with any of the propositions. While the degree of agreement with each of these propositions varied, all the Saudi participants believed that the 11 pillars/criteria of quality education are: Leadership and Strategic Management; Students, Academics and Staff Recruitment; Syllabus/ Curriculum; Research/Teaching; Pedagogy; Learning and research support; Knowledge management; Academics' achievements; Student progress, success and satisfaction; University/School achievements; and Innovation and Change Management.

5.24.2. British Perspective

By considering the analysed data collected through semi-structured interviews with 30 British academics and senior managers from nine different universities/cases in the UK, all the propositions of this study received overwhelming support. As is evident from the above discussion, there was consensus among British academics who gave average to strong support for all 11 propositions of this research.

It is normal to have some opposing or neutral points of views so not the all propositions were backed as strongly as each other. Although some British academics *disagreed* with a few of the propositions, none of them *totally disagreed* with any of the propositions. To put it simply, these 11 propositions can be categorised into three interrelated groups based on the degree of support they received from the British participants: A) Propositions with 'Very Strong Support', B) Propositions with 'Strong Support', C) Propositions with 'Average Support'. The criteria for defining these three categories are *Agreement*, *Disagreement* or *neutral* responses.

A) Propositions with *Very Strong Support* are those propositions that none of the British participants *Totally Disagreed* with, *Disagreed* with or were *Neutral* about. Among the 11 propositions, one of them is the first proposition (Having professional and appropriate 'Leadership and Strategic Management' could lead to higher quality in education) which can be considered as the only member in this category.

B) Propositions with *Strong Support* refer to the propositions that at least one of the interviewees was *Neutral* about them but no one *Totally Disagreed* or *Disagreed* with them. Four propositions are in this group including P4 (Quality of education depends on the quality of 'Research/Teaching', which are the main activities at educational institutions), P5 ('Pedagogy' or suitability of the way in which syllabus is taught to students can contribute to the quality of education), P6 (Effective and quality 'Learning and research support' can lead to higher quality education), and P7 (Reliable and effective 'Knowledge management' can help educational institutions to enhance the quality of their education).

C) Propositions with *Average Support* are those propositions that although none of the British academics and senior managers *Totally Agreed* with, at least one of the participants *Disagreed* with them. Six propositions would be located in this category including P2 (Quality people create quality results so 'Students, Academics and Staff

Recruitment' have major consequences for the quality of education), P3 (What is supposed to be taught to the student in terms of 'Syllabus/ Curriculum' is another determinant of the quality of education), P8 (The level of 'Academics' achievements' can demonstrate the level of quality of education and quality of the educational institution), P9 ('Student progress, success and satisfaction' is the most or at least one of the most important indicators of quality of education), P10 (High 'University/School achievements' are one of the signs of having high quality education) and finally, P11 (Continuous, purposeful and well-planned 'Innovation and Change Management' is one of the keys to high quality education).

Table 5.3. Case-based Summary of the Findings: British Perspective

<i>The Research Propositions</i>	<i>Average of Answers by each Case</i>								
	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	B7	B8	B9
P1: Having professional and appropriate <i>Leadership and Strategic Management</i> can lead to higher quality education	A	TA	TA	TA	TA	A	TA	TA	TA
P2: Quality people create quality results so <i>Student, Academic and Staff Recruitment</i> have a major impact on the quality of education	TA	TA	A	TA	TA	A	TA	TA	TA
P3: <i>Syllabus/ Curriculum</i> is another determinant of quality in education	TA	A	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	A
P4: Quality of education depends on the quality of <i>Research/Teaching</i> , which are the main activities at educational institution	A	TA	N	A	TA	TA	A	A	A
P5: <i>Pedagogy</i> or suitability of the way in which the syllabus is taught to students can contribute to the quality of education	TA	TA	A	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA
P6: Effective and quality <i>Learning and research support</i> can lead to higher quality education	A	TA	A	TA	TA	A	TA	TA	TA
P7: Reliable and effective <i>Knowledge management</i> can help educational institutions to enhance the quality of their education	TA	A	TA	TA	A	A	A	TA	TA
P8: The level of <i>Academics' achievements</i> can demonstrate the level of quality of education and quality of the educational institution	TA	A	A	A	A	N	TA	A	TA
P9: <i>Student progress, success and satisfaction</i> is one of the important indicators of quality of education	A	TA	TA	A	TA	A	A	TA	TA
P10: <i>University/School achievements</i> are one of the signs of having high quality education	A	A	N	A	A	N	A	A	A
P11: Continuous, purposeful and well-planned <i>Innovation and Change Management</i> is one of the keys to high quality education	TA	A	A	TA	TA	A	TA	TA	TA

Keys:

TA = Totally Agree; A = Agree; N = Neutral; D = Disagree; TD = Totally Disagree

B1, B2, ... are the given codenames to each of 9 British cases/universities
Table 5.4. Brief Summary of the Findings: British Perspective

<i>The Research Propositions</i>	Quantification of the Given Answers				
	Totally agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Totally disagree
P1: Having professional and appropriate <i>Leadership and Strategic Management</i> can lead to higher quality education	24	6	0	0	0
P2: Quality people create quality results so <i>Student, Academic and Staff Recruitment</i> have a major impact on the quality of education	22	6	1	1	0
P3: <i>Syllabus/ Curriculum</i> is another determinant of quality in education	23	6	0	1	0
P4: Quality of education depends on the quality of <i>Research/Teaching</i> , which are the main activities at educational institution	9	17	4	0	0
P5: <i>Pedagogy</i> or suitability of the way in which the syllabus is taught to students can contribute to the quality of education	25	4	1	0	0
P6: Effective and quality <i>Learning and research support</i> can lead to higher quality education	20	9	1	0	0
P7: Reliable and effective <i>Knowledge management</i> can help educational institutions to enhance the quality of their education	15	14	1	0	0
P8: The level of <i>Academics' achievements</i> can demonstrate the level of quality of education and quality of the educational institution	8	16	5	1	0
P9: <i>Student progress, success and satisfaction</i> is one of the important indicators of quality of education	15	12	1	2	0
P10: <i>University/School achievements</i> are one of the signs of having high quality education	4	17	4	5	0
P11: Continuous, purposeful and well-planned <i>Innovation and Change Management</i> is one of the keys to high quality education	20	7	1	2	0

As is evident from the above table, there was consensus among British academics and senior managers with strong support for all 11 propositions of this research. While nobody *totally disagreed* with the propositions, a few of the interviewees *disagreed* with 5-6 of the propositions. While the degree of agreement with each of these propositions varied, all the British participants believed that the 11 pillars/criteria of quality education are: Leadership and Strategic Management; Students, Academics and Staff Recruitment; Syllabus/ Curriculum; Research/Teaching; Pedagogy; Learning and research support; Knowledge management; Academics' achievements; Student progress, success and satisfaction; University/School achievements; and Innovation and Change Management.



Chapter 6

Discussions: Saudi Vs. British Perspectives

The Sixth Chapter's Abstract

There are some discrepancies between Saudi and British academics and senior managers in their perspectives regarding the importance of each of the 11 influential factors. In brief, there was more variety in the answers given by the British participants than their Saudi counterparts. While some degree of disagreement with almost all of the 11 propositions was shown by a few British lecturers, Saudi academics demonstrated partial disagreement with only three of the propositions: proposition eight (The level of *Academics' achievements* can demonstrate the quality of education and the quality of the educational institution), proposition nine (*Student progress, success and satisfaction* is the most, or at least one of the most, important indicators of quality of education) and proposition ten (High *University/School achievements* are one of the signs of having high quality education).

It is a normal phenomenon to have some opposing or neutral points of view so not all the propositions have been backed as strongly as each other. Although some of the Saudi and British academics *disagreed* with a few of the propositions, none of them *totally disagreed* with any of the propositions. After considering the analysed data that was collected through semi-structured interviews with 33 Saudi and 30 British academics and senior managers from six Saudi universities and nine different universities in the UK, all the propositions in this study received substantial support. As is evident from the above discussion, there was consensus among both Saudi and British interviewees regarding average to strong support for all 11 propositions in this research.

Part of the reason for choosing Saudi Arabia and Britain for the study is based on the assumption that these two countries can be considered as typical countries in their own region. The majority of countries in the Middle East are Arab and/or Muslim, thus, Saudi as an Arab country where Islam originated is acceptable as a typical country for this area. Britain is considered as a typical Western country because it does have considerable similarities to other Western countries in terms of culture, religion and educational system. The findings show that regardless of differences among Eastern and Western countries, Saudi and Britain as partial representatives of Eastern and Western countries have reached a consensus regarding the 11 influential factors on the quality of education, consequently, just one model, 'The Education Quality Model' is smilingly suitable for both Eastern and Western countries.

6.1. Introduction

In this research in general, and in this chapter specifically, the intention is not just simply comparing one country to another. In this research Saudi has been partly representing Eastern countries and Britain partly representing Western countries. This study has tried to establish whether or not it is possible to have just one ‘Quality Education Model’ for both Eastern and Western countries. Otherwise, it was intended to develop a separate ‘Quality Education Model’, one customised for Eastern countries, the other for Western countries. None of the countries, even in the same region, are totally similar so one country cannot fully represent a region. Each of these countries is considered only as a typical country in their region so they are chosen. The majority of countries in the Middle East are Arab and/or Muslim, thereby, Saudi as an Arab country where Islam originated may be considered acceptable as a typical country for this area. Britain is considered as a typical Western country because it does have considerable similarities to other Western countries in terms of culture, religion and educational system.

Regarding the scope of research and analysis in this study that is to say reasons behind the given answers by participants will NOT be discussed because this is beyond this research’s scope. Any research has its own scope and limitations (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). Naturally, there are some important issues outwith the scope that can have effect on research, researcher or research participants; however, it is not feasible to consider all influential factors on a research in the research because they are beyond the stated research scope (Lancaster, 2007). Every research has some limitations (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). The chosen research topic has already been big enough to take more than four years for the researcher to complete, so adding any other variable to this research would go beyond its limited time, budget, and manpower.

There are many ‘*cultural*’ factors that might have some influence on the research, researcher, or research participants (Schultz and Hinings, 2012). Some of these cultural factors are religion, language, values, norms, perceptions, learning styles, attitudes, etiquettes, expectations, rules, gender role, approaches to problem-solving, patterns of handling emotions, social interactions, decision-making patterns, notions of beauty, literature and even the types of the food participants eat or types and colours of the dress participants wear are part of their culture (Hofstede *et al.*, 2010;

Van-den-Berg and Wilderom, 2004). As has been mentioned, considering the possible effects of participants' culture on the variety of the answers given to interview questions has never been one of the research objectives, nor has it ever been within the scope of this research. Even if assessing impact of participants' culture on their given answers was one of the research objectives or was within the scope of the research, conducting such an assessment would be too complicated because culture has so many aspects (Hattie, 2009). Even if a researcher decides to select a limited number of aspects of culture to examine, this research would be non-defensible because this research could assess only a very small fraction of the impact of culture due to ignoring vast majority of aspects (Hofstede *et al.*, 2010). Another problem is the way in which culture would be assessed. While some valuable efforts have been made by few scholars such as Hofstede (1984) or Trompenaars (1995) to quantify culture, it cannot be disregarded that culture is a highly subjective issue so it is not possible to measure the exact effect of any aspect of culture on participants' answers (Schultz and Hinings, 2012).

In Chapter 5 two levels of analysis have been used to compare (findings their similar views) and contrast (findings differences in) the participants' perspectives against each other:

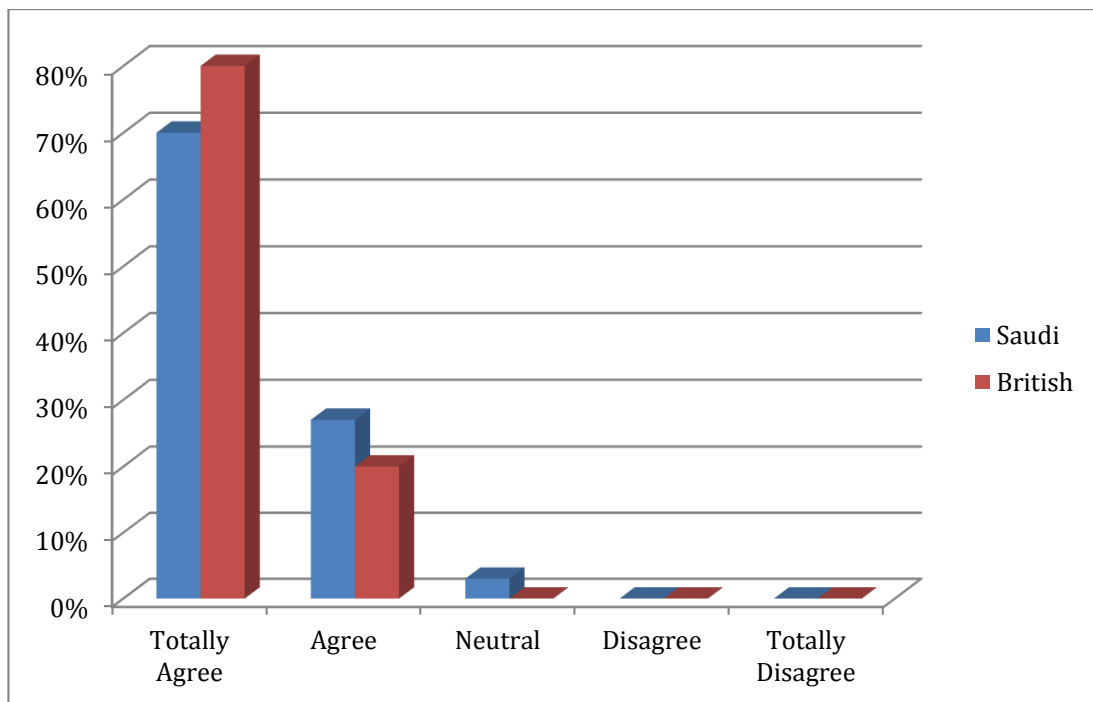
- 1- At the first level, participants' ideas have been compared to test each of the 11 propositions individually and separately. At this level, an attempt was made to assess the interviewees' opposing points of views regarding the propositions one by one;
- 2- At the second level, the degree of agreement or disagreement of participants with each of propositions are compared to see which propositions have stronger support among Saudi academics and senior managers and British ones (see Chapter 5);
- 3- The third level of comparison and analysis will be utilised in this chapter (Ch 6) in which Saudi and British perspectives regarding the propositions will be compared with each other and with the current literature to find any differences among them.

In this chapter, after the introduction, first a brief summary of findings based on collected data through interviews at universities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Britain will be demonstrated in the form of frequency and percentages. The main body of this chapter is dedicated to discussing and analysing the findings regarding each of the 11 propositions separately by relying only on 15 cases/universities from both Saudi and British academics and senior managers as well as the relevant literature. The chapter ends with a summary.

6.2. Discussion regarding the First Proposition

“Having professional and appropriate *Leadership and Strategic Management* can lead to higher quality in the education sector” is the first proposition in this study, highlighting the importance of professional leadership and strategic management. Strong and visionary leaders who can think and plan strategically are necessary for having high quality education and higher education. Although schools and universities, like other organisations, need qualified leaders with a strategic perspective, traditionally the vast majority of school/university heads are recruited from among the teachers/academics and have no managerial education. As is reflected in the following graph, this proposition was supported very strongly by both Saudi and British academics and senior managers.

Figure 6.1. Saudi and British Perspectives regarding Proposition 1



Source: Findings of this study

While 70% of Saudi interviewees *totally agreed*, 27% *agreed* and just 3% were *neutral*. On the other hand, 80% of British participants *totally agreed* and the rest *agreed* with the proposition. Apart from the fact that British academics tend to be slightly (10%) more in favour of this proposition, there is not a noticeable difference between these two sets of academics from the two different countries. It is a really

interesting finding to know that nobody *totally disagreed* or even *disagreed* with the idea that proper leadership and strategic management can certainly contribute to the enhancement of the quality of education in schools and universities.

"This is important from the point of view developing an educational sector that is open, flexible and appropriate for meeting future marketplaces for students. Without question a good education structure does provide many more opportunities for young people and also for career changes for mature students. In other words, if we have a leadership programme which can identify strengths, weaknesses and opportunities then clearly we are going to enhance the quality of the sector".

It is an unfortunate fact that, with a few exceptions, industrial companies and businesses in general create and maintain higher quality and customer value than educational institutions (King *et al.*, 2003). It is believed that one of the reasons for lower quality at universities/colleges compared to for-profit organisations is the lack of professional and trained leaders to manage their organisations strategically (Sadler, 2007).

"It depends on the management style. Sometimes in the higher education system you get a laissez-faire approach when you need a more aggressive management style to push things forward and this is what we have had for the last five to six years in this school. The number of PhD students has increased, the ranking of the school itself has jumped in every respect, there is more research output, more satisfied students so it makes a difference, the leader makes a difference in this case and management style was really important, I'm not just speaking hypothetically, I've been through this where the business school was low in the rankings, but now among the middle and pushing every year two or three places up, so it makes a difference. Yes, I totally agree".

Strong and visionary leaders who can think and plan strategically are necessary for improving quality in higher education (Amosa & Cooper, 2006). Schools and universities, like other organisations, need qualified leaders, thus it is unlikely that, for instance, a professor of microbiology, as a dean, could lead a university toward higher quality (Yorke, 1998).

"From the reality of practical experience, this dimension is of great significance in influencing the quality of education, Strategic planning sets the direction for the institution over the long term and how to direct the financial and human resources to

serve this plan, since most of the problems facing our universities are improvised in the decision-making and the absence of the strategic dimension of leadership and management of educational institutions. This is an integral, which affects the overall development of the quality of education".

One of the Saudi participants believes: "it's very important, and this is what we miss, which is leadership in higher education with a strategic project that gives a strong sense of orientation and, also linked to achieving specific targets, but let me give you something important, and this is something central to the quality issue in particular with regard to Saudi universities, the issue of the role of the university, up to now has not been decided nor put to debate at the university level, not even within the community in an orderly way , it's what is the role of the university? Does the university aim to produce, organise and transfer knowledge? Or does it service the market and development needs together? Now even if you read the policy of higher education in the Kingdom will not find clarity particularly with regard to the role, and in any organisation, where its role is unclear, it is difficult to talk about a sense of quality".

Not having long-term strategies and strategic management can be considered as one of the root causes of low quality or unstable quality at universities and schools (Gibbs & Dunbar-Goddet, 2009). Day- today planning and management instead of long-term and strategic management can damage the quality and performance of those educational institutions that disregard strategic management (Andriessen, 2006).

In the same vein, one of British academics believes that leadership is very important, because within the organisation there needs to be someone who is giving the direction in consultation with the management team and what that vision is and management's vision is of the future of the university will have an impact on how they wish the education to be taught in the university. "In my opinion, you need to know where you are going and what you are trying to achieve, you need to have a common mission, a common vision, and common goals. There is no point in the strategic management going one way and the academics going a different way, so I think strong leadership and strategic management is essential in the current climate, you have to ensure the success of your institution otherwise you will not have the

funding to be able to undertake research and if you can't undertake and resource your research, you can't inform the teaching, you can't be a research-led teaching institution and so on, so it is essential".

The vast majority of deans, alongside their leadership job, continue their teaching, research and publication jobs (Lane, 2008). In fact, the amount of time and effort they spend on their non-leadership jobs are sometimes much more than their official job as leaders (Jessop *et al.*, 2012).

" Leadership and Strategic Management have a great impact on the quality in education because they set the direction and level of quality in their institutions. You can have good students, you can have good staff but if the management is not good the process is missing the leadership element here. Therefore to get the best quality education this triangle should exist, I mean strong students, reliable students, responsible students and research-active staff or updated staff (for those who are those not research active) and excellent leadership management".

The fact that vice chancellors of higher education institutions do not consider leadership of their institute as a full-time and serious job intensifies the crisis of lack of leadership at universities and colleges (Bloxham & Boyd, 2007).

One British lecturer said: "If you do not have the right leadership, the right strategic management then the university loses its direction, it loses its confidence and then people outside the university lose confidence in the university and you can see cases where there have been significant problems in the senior leadership of universities and it leads to a drop at least in perceived quality if not in actual quality. This is not necessarily general across a whole university, but nevertheless the quality suffers unless there is a clear framework in which people like ourselves can actually operate and deliver the teaching and we need to have confidence that the framework of the curriculum is correctly structured, that there are sufficient opportunities to deliver that teaching, that the resources are there and all those other responsibilities of management".

Strategic management is not just about planning; it is about environmental analysis, strategy development, strategy implementation, and strategic review and improvement (Westerheijden *et al.*, 1994).

Another British academic stated: "I think these days that the person at the top of the institution has an increasingly bigger impact on the way an institution goes and

we have experienced this directly. And so even though there are support structures leadership seems to be important and strategy is also important. I think leadership and strategic management need to think about the direction of development. Leadership and a strategic vision that puts teaching and education at the heart of university strategy is important. For example, if academics are performance reviewed primarily on their research outputs or grant monies, and if their promotion is based on these factors, that is in direct conflict with their desire and ability to teach".

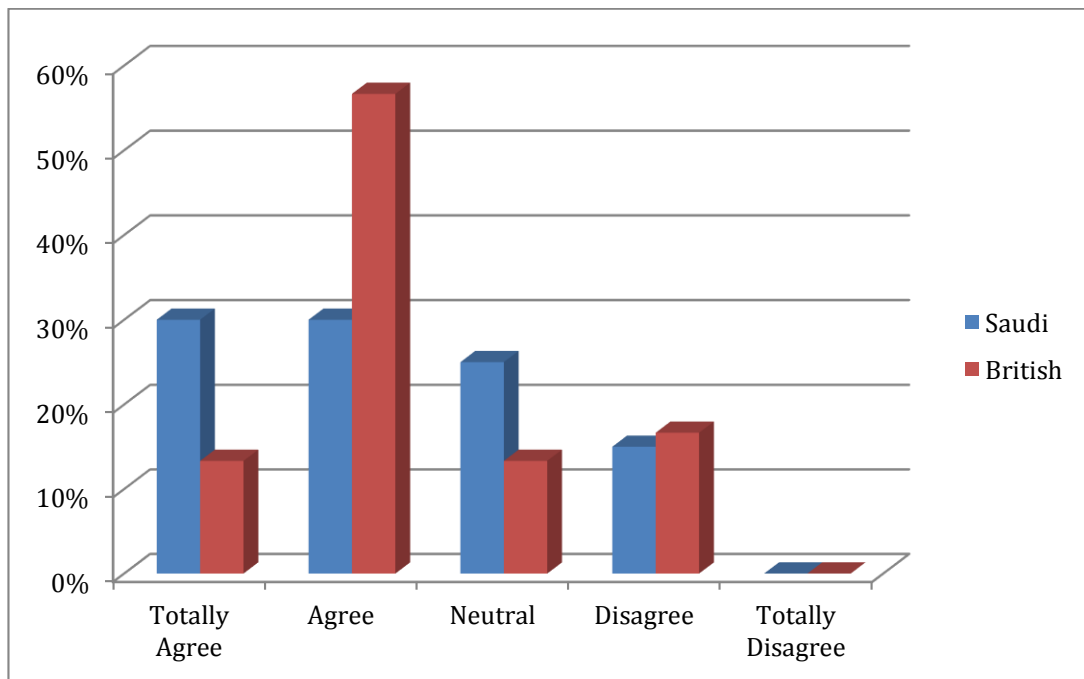
So the solution to this problem is not about using the professional services of management consultancy companies to develop a strategic plan (Bereiter, 2007). These consultancy companies prepare good strategies and strategic plans but the problem of implementing these strategies by a non-professional vice chancellor and staff still remains unsolved (Evans, 2008).

"Having the vision is important, if you don't have a good leader you don't have good process and there are so many problems a School will face, so the leadership is important, having visionary leadership, a person or a group of people who know how they want to improve or what needs to be done to improve the quality of teaching and the quality of research is quite vital. A leader will look at it from the point of view that I want to improve my School or my institution in order to compete with others but, unfortunately, not many people have this sort of quality in terms of leadership. It is crucial, because if you have a good leader you have the inspiration to improve and make things better both for yourself and the people you are working with, so it is very important".

6.3. Discussion regarding the Second Proposition

If inputs to a system lack quality, outputs of that system may lack quality too. As the input to any education system, students, staff and academics are the key to having quality education. If it assumed that it is not reasonable to expect high quality from under-qualified people, the second proposition has been formulated as “Quality people create quality results so the *Students, Academics and Staff Recruitment* have major consequences for the quality of education”. There can never be a guarantee of quality education if a school or university recruits under-qualified students, academics and staff.

Figure 6.2. Saudi & British Perspectives regarding Proposition 2



Source: Findings of this study

This proposition, which focuses on the inputs of educational institutions, was backed very strongly by both Saudi and British participants. The degree of support by Saudi lecturers was higher than their British counterparts. None of the Saudis *totally disagreed, disagreed, or were even neutral* regarding the content of this proposition. Just one of the British participants was *neutral* and another *disagreed* with the proposition. The British academic who disagreed with this proposition believed: "One of the problems we face is the diversity of student abilities, and having a wide range of students from very good to weaker ones means it's difficult to keep everyone

happy. So that's one of the problems we face; clearly the academics have to be very interested in their subjects and the ability to teach doesn't necessarily relate to their ability in their subject. I don't think there is a necessary link between how good somebody is as an academic in the sense of what they can do in an academic field and the ability to deliver that as part of an education. I think that there isn't necessarily a strong link between them and support staff is important for things to move smoothly throughout the students education to help that process; academics can't do everything. When you're talking about postgraduates, there, clearly, the level is important and you would expect the link between what's taught to be more academic and research focused". The quality of education is influenced not only by a variety of systems, processes and plans but also by the people who provide the educational services as well as those who receives these services (Boud, 2000). So if educational institutions really care about the quality of education in their institutions, they should illustrate their intention by recruiting only high-calibre students, academics and non-academic staff (Dale & Pymm, 2009).

All of the Saudis and the rest of the British academics and senior managers who *totally agreed or agreed* with the proposition answered this question as follows:)

"For anything to be quality is really important so we try to recruit students who are able to achieve and also to provide wide opportunities, but what is very important is that we measure the extent to which they can achieve, which is obviously very important. How we measure quality is something that can be debated and I would say it is absolutely essential that we have academics who are able to deliver the curriculum to the types students that we have. Support staff are also critical; they are the glue that holds everything together".

The quality of education is influenced not only by various systems, processes and plans but also by the people who provide the educational services as well as those who receive these services (Boud, 2000).

"The quality of education is, to an extent, dependent on the knowledge, skills and attributes of the staff (both academics and professional service staff) employed within the university. It is important not only to select the highest calibre staff but also to maintain and enhance the knowledge, skills and attributes of existing staff, through the identification of development needs in annual appraisal and through peer

observation. I do not see the quality of education related to the 'quality' of the student. This is a value-laden descriptor, which implies discrimination of students by certain characteristics. Given that all students meet the entry criteria for the courses they study, I do not see this as relevant to the quality of the education provided".

"There are no doubt good students who are engaging more; and not all academic staff engage in the process of education. It is very important that we get the right academics and the right support staff to support students, so I would say that students are crucial to quality education. But while I think you need to have intelligent students, they don't necessarily have to have three A-levels at a certain level. It may be that they have other experiences which you can work with to make students achieve and benefit from quality education",

People-related quality difficulties can have at least three interrelated causes (Brittain *et al.*, 2006). Sometimes education that is lacking in quality is due to recruiting students who cannot learn/benefit from existing academics/teachers and staff (Bryman, 2001). Setting low entry or very easily fulfilled entry requirements by the universities/schools for prospective students/researchers could end up attracting untalented students/researchers (Torrance, 2007).

"This is something you take for granted, if the quality in the input of students admitted and faculty members is good, and the output quality will be high, but the problem is what is known as 'black-box', which is the 'Process' which I have mentioned, if the environment is good, even if students are at a high level of quality and professors also, the learning environment and the university environment itself, may occasionally produce a negative output, and to give you an example of higher education in the Kingdom, sometimes this can happen even when we have a number of excellent students admitted to the university and a number of excellent members of the faculty who graduated from well-known universities".

There is no guarantee of quality in education if a school or university recruits under-qualified students, academics and even staff (Nicol & McFarlane-Dick, 2006). It is not reasonable to expect high quality performance from inappropriate people (Cragin, 2004). Quality people create quality results, so 'Students, Academics and Staff Recruitment' have major consequences for the quality of education (Taras, 2008).

"I would say that the fundamental element here for the quality of education would be the academics and in many ways, depending on the quality of academics, the students and the support staff can enhance the quality of the education. But if you start off with academics who lack quality, then even if you are contracted with very good students, you will not give them a quality education. There is a belief that universities should have structures that are only for the best students, but I think we have passed that stage in society. I think we need to provide education for everybody irrespective of the quality of the student and the key aspect that has to come out of universities is a quality education. So, good students are easy to teach, they can also be more challenging, but we need to be able to care for all students, and I think to do that effectively you need quality academics".

Another people-related difficulty related to quality in education is the main educational service providers, lecturers and teachers (Claxton, 1998). Quality academics/teachers are those who not only are expert in their own fields but they are capable of conveying their knowledge and skills to their students fully and in ways that are understandable to the average student (King, 2002). Some academics are excellent researchers but they may not be able to teach their research skills to their students and train prospective researchers, so these academics can have a negative effect on the quality of education (Taras, 2002).

"Obviously it's nice to recruit the top students, but also I think it's very important in higher education to give students 'value added'. We are used to taking students with a wide spectrum of academic ability and of different racial origins, so while I think it's good to have high quality students but we are used to dealing with a very broad spectrum from the very best to students who struggle a little bit, but I think value added is the important thing. For some people, if they come out with a third class degree that's still a good achievement so I think a good quality of education reflects being able to add value to the academic learning of different types of people. It is important that academics are at the forefront of their disciplines, that they are good academic scholars. Support staff is incredibly important in order to take away from the academics the sort of administration things they should be better at and let the academics develop as academics and teach and support their students".

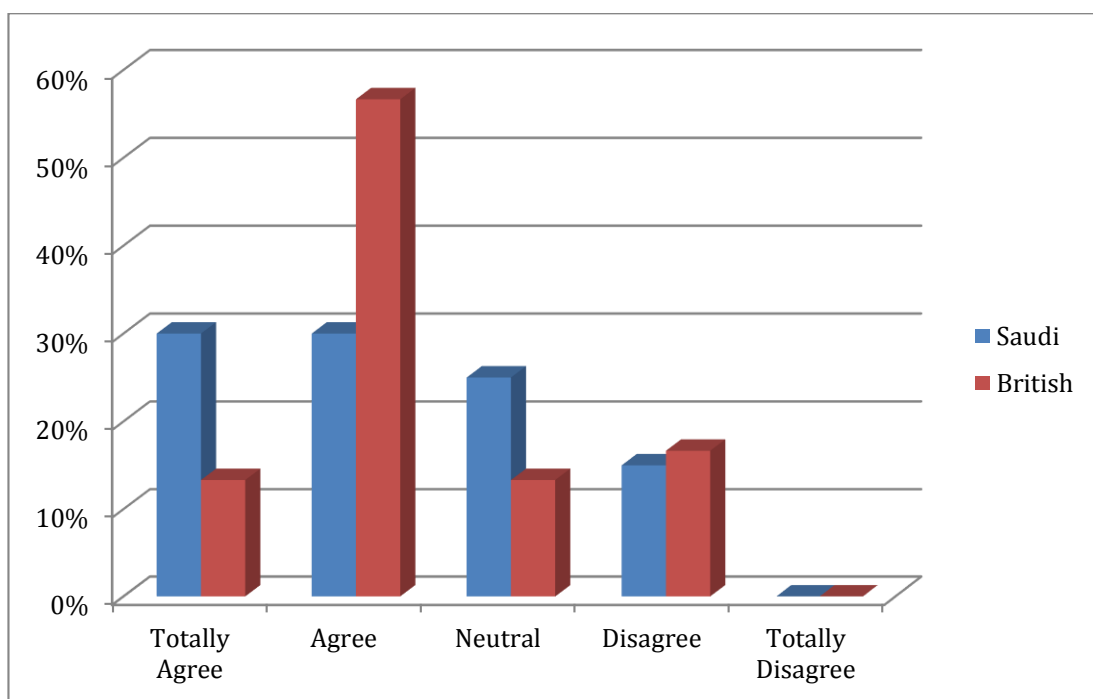
Last but not least, another people-centred difficulty that affects the quality of education is the non-academic members of staff who work as administrators, IT technicians, or librarians at educational institutions (Cousin, 2008). Education does

not just happen inside classrooms through academics/teachers, it is also reliant on staff who have roles in recruiting, supporting, motivating students and maintaining the universities/schools teaching facilities for the use of students (Van Berkel & Wolfhagen, 2002). So it is necessary to recruit and train quality staff to have quality education.

6.4. Discussion regarding the Third Proposition

In addition to the importance of inputs to education systems/institutions, the quality of processes in this system (educational institutions) is critical in having quality education too. Built on the assumption that quality of education partly depends on what is being taught at the schools and universities, the third proposition is “What is supposed to be taught to the student in terms of *Syllabus/Curriculum* is another determinant of the quality of education”.

Figure 6.3. Saudi and British Perspectives regarding Proposition 3



Source: Findings of this study

As regards the positive impact of suitable syllabus/curriculum on the quality of education there are considerable similarities in the support demonstrated by both Saudi and British academics and senior managers. As with the second proposition, only one of the British interviewees *disagreed* with the third proposition. According to this participant: "most of the curriculum is actually the same if you look at any university and compare them they are very similar and this can be downloaded from the Internet. But because it's very good quality it doesn't mean it's going to give quality education".

A total of 31 of 33 Saudis and 29 out of 30 British participants supported this proposition (with *totally agree* or *agree* responses). Consensus among the Saudi and British academics and senior managers can be found in the following answers: " A curriculum that is relevant to the learning needs and wants of students impacts significantly on the quality of their education. This is the real deal, to be honest, when you are talking about the curriculum and the content delivered, it reflects the quality of the lecturer and the quality of the institution, so it is like a translation of what the lecturer is in reality. So if you are looking at low quality content, low quality engagement, low quality provision of services, it reflects how good or bad the lecturer is and how good or bad the institution is in recruiting their staff, and it is a very important factor".

The main purpose of establishing and running a university/school is educating students/researchers and preparing them for better careers/future (Ely, 1991). This aim can be accomplished if the university/school develops and follows an appropriate and quality syllabus/curriculum (Ractham & Zhang, 2006).

One British academic believes: "The syllabus and curriculum are the guidelines as to how education is taught in schools and at universities so it provides in a sense the direction which the universities have to follow. so it's at the top and therefore it will have a big impact on the quality of the education. Understanding knowledge, developing skill bases, which are in line with current developments in that particular discipline, for example, there are molecular biology techniques, which weren't around 20 years ago in the biological sciences. That is crucial apart from giving a rounded high quality knowledge of the curriculum. In my view, the curriculum should also be focused towards career opportunities in the future".

It would be pointless to have high-quality students, academics/teachers, facilities, strategies, and leaders but not have an appropriate quality syllabus/curriculum (Erdem, 2009). All these issues would be worthwhile if they support the delivery of quality education based on a quality syllabus/curriculum (Blom & Meyers, 2003).

"One thing that immediately springs into mind with the syllabus and the curriculum is the relevance of that particularly with postgraduate education since the students aren't really signing up to get a qualification but are engaging with something that will develop them and clearly that's all about the syllabus and the curriculum".

Of course. The syllabus/curriculum needs to be reviewed, modified and adjusted to the requirements of the changing environment and expectations of students, their parents, society, employers and governments (McGrath-Champ *et al.*, 2010). It would be unreasonable to teach topics to students that are obsolete, unnecessary or mismatched to what student really needs to learn (Gibbs & Dunbar-Goddet, 2007).

One Saudi lecturer said: "The quality of the curriculum and syllabus reflects the level of a student's achievement (learning outcome). The more the curriculum is well constructed, the more it reflects positively on the quality of education. A combination of good educators and good curricula results in a good quality of education. The questions that were posed are all logical questions, but on the other hand, it may be that the curriculum is good, but we get into the factors that include the inputs of the teaching staff and students, even if the quality of the curriculum is high, that is not necessarily that it is reflected in the education due to other contributory factors affecting. So logically, yes, I think it's very important and there is a significant relationship between the curriculum and syllabus and the quality of education if you look at them in isolation".

Although having a high quality and well-developed syllabus/curriculum is a must, it is not enough (Knight & Yorke, 2003). Sometimes the problem is not a lack of suitable syllabus/curriculum; it is carelessness in following the syllabus/curriculum (Gibbs & Simpson, 2004).

Another British academic states that: "Well that's one of the biggest factors that affects the quality of education but perhaps I need to add that the syllabus or curriculum does not necessarily lead to better quality education, this is part of the improvement of the quality of education. Whether we like it or not, the syllabus or curriculum are there, but in practice, it is very much down to the individual lecturers or academics to how actually interpret those syllabuses or how they actually present those syllabuses to the students, you could have the same syllabus delivered by two different lecturers of totally different quality, so I would say it is important, but very much depends on who actually uses those syllabuses in the teaching".

Any syllabus/curriculum would be useless if the university/school or the academic/teacher did not implement the syllabus/curriculum correctly and fully (Harvey, 2005).

"The effect of the quality of syllabus/curriculum on the quality of education is extremely important because it offers guidance and also it helps both academics, staff and students to understand the expectations we make of them. In our university we have study guides, and study guides work like a contract between students and the university, so everything is set down there, we know what to follow, the learning outcomes are there and also there is a detailed plan there. And a detailed plan means what we are covering each week, so it provides clear guidance for both students and staff and this, without doubt, will enhance the quality of education".

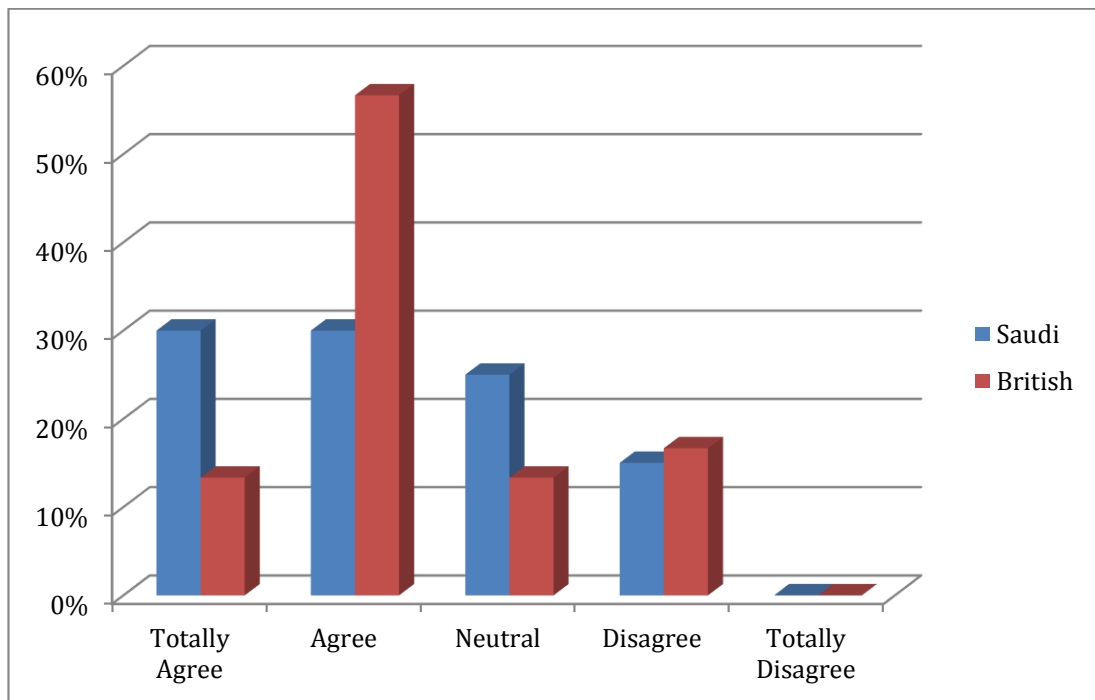
So another issue that has a noticeable effect on the quality of education is developing, reviewing, updating, adjusting and fully implementing a quality syllabus/curriculum which supports the general aim of providing education to students/researchers (Louis, 2008). Quality of education depends on what is being taught, i.e. the syllabus/curriculum, at schools and universities (Roelofs & Terwel, 2009).

" The higher the quality of syllabus, the higher the quality of education and that is what we have seen in different universities and that is via their students' feedback and questionnaire when they comment on the quality of education based on the curriculum and the content and indicative syllabus of modules. I think that a relevant and sophisticated curriculum and syllabus is of vital importance for having good quality education, you might have everything in place but with the wrong direction, or an irrelevant syllabus the quality will go wrong".

6.5. Discussion regarding the Fourth Proposition

One of the most aspects of the education process is research/teaching. Proposition number four is “Quality of education depends on the quality of *Research/teaching*, which are the main activities at educational institutions”. Two other success factors in having quality education can be the provision of teaching (taught aspect) of a good quality and having more and quality research (research aspect). Considerable differences emerged between the answers given by Saudi and British interviewees regarding the correlation between ‘research/teaching’ and quality education as is evident in the following graph.

Figure 6.4. Saudi and British Perspectives regarding Proposition 4



Source: Findings of this study

Saudi lecturers showed much stronger support for this proposition (with 69% *total agreement* and 31% *agreement*) compared to their British counterparts (with just 30% *total agreement*, 56.66% *agreement* and 13.33% *neutral*). Among the British respondents, although no one *disagreed* with this proposition and altogether 86.66% either *totally agreed* or *agreed* with it, the percentage of people who *totally agreed* was considerably lower than with the three previous propositions.

Noteworthy agreement regarding this question is reflected in these responses: "No, it is not possible to have low teaching quality and expect high quality education. The quality of teaching and learning is essential to the success of the students. There are of course many factors, which contribute to learning and teaching, not just the academics, which include the learning environment. It is also essential that academics are engaged in scholarly activity and research to ensure that their teaching reflects the latest research findings in the discipline and is delivered using a range of innovative pedagogical approaches".

As was argued earlier, an appropriate syllabus/curriculum that highlights the topics to be discussed is necessary for quality education (Rust, 2000); however, there is an issue that is equally or even more important than syllabus/curriculum, which is the quality of the teaching and/or research activities (Hattie, 2009). Quality education relies on the availability of high quality teaching and research (Walton, 1999).

One of the British academics said: "I think, in today's world, you need to teach people as much about the process of research as about facts, because facts change and if you recruit research students you essentially teach them that facts may change. It is a big debate in higher education, of course, the balance between research input into teaching; but I think for undergraduate students, the quality of teaching is much more important than the quality of research, but research is meant to inform teaching, but research does not always give you the quality of teacher that you need".

Another British lecturer explains that perhaps you can have both: "I think, to some extent, that if you want to be 'leading edge' such that students value tutors engaged in research and publication and writing books, then it is a different experience, I have known people who can deliver somebody's else work in a fantastic way, so just because someone is a very good researcher does not mean they are a very good teacher, thus as long as the curriculum has the right things in it, you can still have quality education. I can give examples of both cases where you can have a curriculum which is based on strong research but if you don't have the right teacher in post, it wouldn't necessarily work and vice versa. So, I don't think one is a prerequisite for the other, but if you can get a synthesis of research and the quality of teaching together then you have an amazing programme and amazing quality".

Although education is not limited to teaching or research and people can learn by self-study, observation or discussion with friends and family, the main justification for the existence of educational institutions is providing more systematic and effective education to people through “teaching” and/or “research” (Taylor *et al.*, 2012).

In support of the literature, one British lecturer said: " I think that you can't have quality education if the teaching quality isn't good., I also think you can be a very good researcher but not a good teacher, but if you can combine the two, it would be great, but you can be a good teacher without being a good researcher as long as you use up-to-date research to inform the teaching, I think for postgraduate levels, particularly PhD level, then research obviously important, you need to be talking about your own research as well as others research".

Clearly, it would be entirely unacceptable for an educational institution to claim to have quality if this institution did not provide any teaching/tutoring services and no research was conducted in the institution (Ladwig, 2007).

"Teaching must be informed by research. I think that in order to have a quality education it does not mean that an academic needs to be research active and participating in their own research but they do need to be aware of current research and development in their area in order to offer quality education but that could be through scholarly activity rather than pure research. People must know how to teach and at our institution, everybody has to do a teaching qualification and I think membership of the HA academy should be mandatory".

"Poor quality teaching inevitably leads to low quality education. A strong research environment is beneficial to education but not essential, except for PhD students. I think you can still have a quality education. The research side is separate from that certainly at under-graduate level. For teaching at undergraduate level it is important to have good teachers to deliver quality education".

The degree to which universities and schools should place emphasis either on research or on teaching depends on the level of study, the nature of education, the actual capabilities of students, the syllabus/curriculum and the study requirements

(Kennedy, 2009). Any mismatch or weakness in the provision of teaching or research can adversely affect the quality of education (Harvey *et al.*, 1993).

A Saudi academic mentioned that "There can be no quality education if the quality of "Research/Teaching" is low, but I would add that practical experience is needed as well. We should transfer practical experience to the students, because the university teaches students how to think but does not teach them how to solve problems. Students will go to the outside world without knowing how to solve problems".

The scope and level of research are other measures of having quality research. Another widely accepted sign of quality research is the possibility of publication (Orrell, 2006). The quality of teaching can be measured by assessing the output of teaching in terms of the degree to which students learned the concepts and obtained the skills and got acceptable grades/marks in the designated time by a normal level of effort (Knight, 2001).

"The only way that progress can be made in terms of education is if research is involved with the teaching because that's where the expertise lies. Without that then the students will learn but will not really learn the in-depth knowledge that they need to progress. This can create problems especially for at Master's level projects, where skills and new technologies need to be developed, and if staff are not leading edge in their field it can result in students getting a raw deal. I think research is fundamental to the development of teaching".

"Research and teaching are very different. In an institution like ours we would say that our teaching is research led, so if we are doing research and we are at the forefront of something which we receive back into our teaching, we would argue that it that it makes our teaching better., So if the quality of research was low we would feel that it has an impact on our teaching, but not necessarily on teaching technique, the methodology, or how we deliver a lecture. The quality of research isn't going to impact on these aspects of teaching, but it would impact on the knowledge aspect of teaching, so if the quality of research and teaching is low, I wouldn't think it is possible to have quality of education".

The quality of teaching or research can be assessed based on different criteria by using different methods (Baker, 1997). The quantity of each of these two interrelated issues is one of the criteria (Knight, 2000). The number of research projects that are

being conducted in relation to the number of students/researchers and academics is one such indicator (Scutter *et al.*, 2010).

In a similar vein, one of the British academics believes: "It is very much down to the level of education, at the lower level perhaps it is not as important as at the higher level of education, especially when it comes to Master's and PhD programmes. It is very important to have research input in order to update the teaching. I am not saying it is not important in undergraduate studies but it is more important in postgraduate studies".

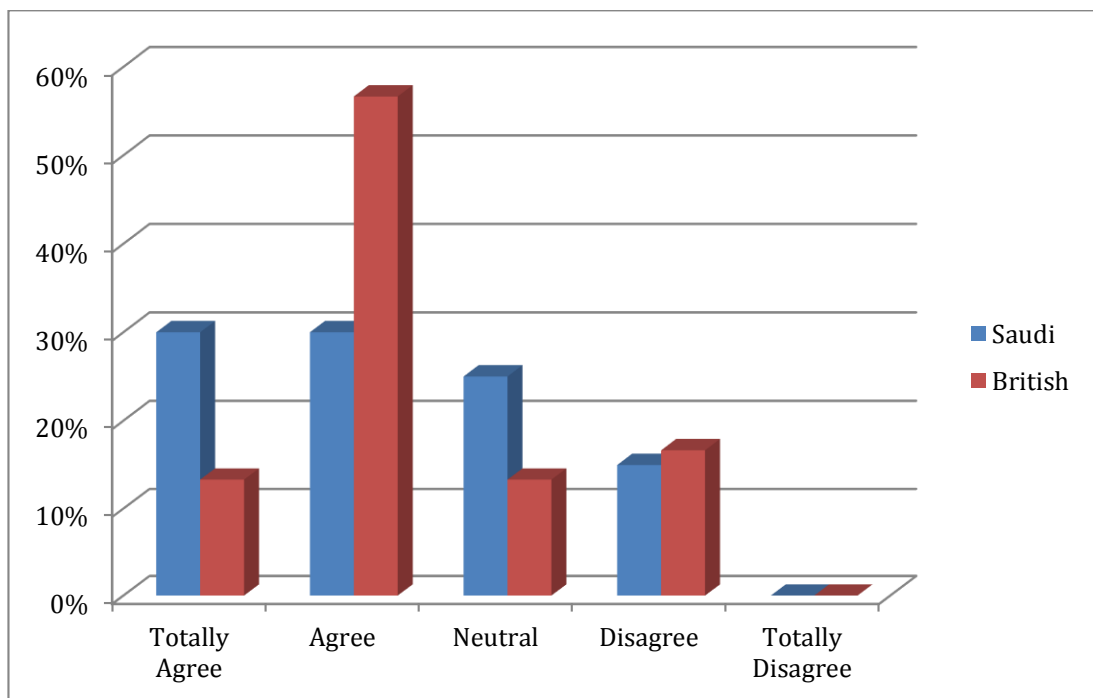
Therefore, in brief, provision of good quality teaching (taught aspect) and having more and quality research (research aspect) are other success factors for having quality education (Stoddart, 2004).

If members of the faculty do not have experience in teaching and in the syllabus they do teach, the quality of teaching would be deficient and the student would be the victim., At the same time, academic staff must be up-to-date with the new knowledge in their field, so that their students are not surprised when they go out into the marketplace and discover that what they studied is outdated.

6.6. Discussion regarding the Fifth Proposition

Not all teaching methods work at different levels of education just as different students have different learning styles. The fifth proposition is “*Pedagogy*, or the suitability of the way in which a syllabus is taught to students, can contribute to the quality of education”. The way in which a subject is being taught is another key factor. Traditional 'chalk and talk' teaching methods are no longer acceptable.

Figure 6.5. Saudi and British Perspectives regarding Proposition 5



Source: Findings of this study

Unlike the previous proposition, this proposition received stronger support from British academics and senior managers (with a remarkable 83.33% in *total agreement*, 13.33% in *agreement* and 3.33% *neutral*) compared to their Saudi peers (with 63% in *total agreement*, 25% in *agreement* and 12% *neutral*). The number of British academics who *totally agreed* with this proposition is the highest among all 11 propositions.

The considerable level of agreement about the importance of quality pedagogy for the quality of education is highlighted in the following answers: One British academic explained his view using a rather novel metaphor: "The process of delivery is based the ability of the human brain. In this sense, the ability to deliver knowledge

in a pedagogical way is like an amplifier with an equalizer you can tune through pedagogic tricks. The amplifier can deliver music, but if you don't have the pedagogic tricks, you can hear something but it is unpleasant. Therefore it is required, but I still believe that the subject is the most important thing and then a way to deliver it pedagogically is secondary and tuned to the subject".

Quality education and higher education have many advantages, though creating and maintaining such quality rely on fulfilling certain requirements. One of the requirements of quality education is having quality pedagogy (Ladwig *et al.*, 2007).

"The suitability and coherence of the way the syllabus has been put together informs the learning process for students and enhances their quality of education. Pedagogy is very important but some students don't know how to learn the skills they need as other students may do in an institution higher up the league tables. I think it can be extremely important especially in an institution where there is a broad range of students".

In other words, education/higher education and its related quality have many dimensions, one of which is the quality of teaching methods in these academic institutions (Tippin *et al.*, 2012). Ineffective and inadequate teaching methods could sharply reduce the quality of higher education (Roelofs & Terwel, 2009) and consequently undermine the expected results and advantages of education/higher education (Lomas, 2007b).

Another British lecturer in agreement with this proposition states that: "Having a good pedagogy and a suitable and relevant syllabus for students is definitely a very important factor because the thing is you might have some very good students, but if you don't have any educational planning and the right pedagogy for them, everything can go wrong. I think they are very closely allied and related because pedagogy, as I understand it, is about the process of learning and enabling that learning to take place. It's more a process rather than a product, so I think the process of our teaching directly translates into the process of education or the state of being an educated person".

Pedagogy as the way in which a subject is taught is another key factor (Aspin & Chapman, 1994). Traditional teaching methods are no longer relevant (Gore, 2001).

One Saudi academic in full support of the literature and proposition noted the importance of using the latest technology to engage students:) "The science of Education, is important, yet some faculty members refuse to participate in training courses on the pretext that the education teachers know less than them, and cannot develop them. We do not say, that we know what others don't know, but we think we have theories and ideas, which may help members of staff to implement their work in a way that leads to renewal of their work. Lecturers must change and must cope with the latest developments, they cannot use the old ways of teaching students, because they are now familiar with Facebook etc., and the old ways will not succeed when teaching the current students. Pedagogy or appropriateness of the way they contribute to improving academic performance and improving the teaching environment therefore will contribute significantly to the issue".

The quality of education/higher education institutions cannot be guaranteed without having a customised and effective pedagogy, which matches other important issues such as the level of students and study, syllabus/curriculum, and available learning and research facilities at schools/universities and research centres (Stoddart, 2004).

"Good education quality requires a good teaching quality that relies on engagement in effective discussions. The practical part is parallel to the theoretical one. And promoting the research spirit among learners and assigning to them related research. New learning equipment including audio and video means should be present. Exploratory visits, which motivate learners and feed their spirit of enquiry should be there too. The quality of all of this will help in shaping a quality education".

The 'intellectual quality' of pedagogy can be achieved by setting standards to check precisely the suggested pedagogy and having an open, participative management that involves experienced and intellectual teachers (Amosa & Cooper, 2006).

"It is well recognised now that Freire's philosophy of teachers being facilitators, guiding experiential learning promotes deeper levels of learning by engaging with students. Teaching pedagogy does therefore impact on the quality of education. Another example is the move towards greater e-learning/distance learning- these are

underpinned by a different pedagogy and if the pedagogical principles are ignored, then teaching will not be effective".

There is no doubt that teaching methods, ways and styles which vary according to the nature of the curriculum and the nature of the syllabus and the nature of the learner. Every professor or teacher should develop and use a methodology which is appropriate to the nature of the situation in which he finds himself, and no one should teach unless they have studied, reviewed and know the multiplicity of different teaching methods.

Research about quality in higher education covers many aspects, one of which is the quality of pedagogy or the study of teaching methods (Harman & Meek, 2000). It is a commonly accepted issue among scholars that 'Quality of pedagogy' is built on three interrelated notions: 'intellectual quality' (Ladwig *et al.*, 2007), the 'learning environment' (King, 2002) and 'authentic teaching methods' (Roelofs & Terwel, 2009).

" Academics need to sustain a good approach in terms of the way that they engage with students. I am not saying that we have to be like clowns and entertain our students but the at the same time we need to be more or less up-to-date in terms of the material and ensuring that the right syllabus is being developed and utilised for a specific course and is reviewed constantly and continually to ensure that everything is in place".

" Obviously the school/faculty has some sort of role in this process in that, for example, here every academic is paired with another academic who will act as a reviewer for his module. We do this process every year and every year the reviewer will ensure and will have the opportunity to go through the study guide material to check if there are any changes needed to improve class performance. They look at some of the reflections done by the module leader and they try to provide some positive feedback and some ideas that can help the module leader to enhance his or her teaching and learning process in the class for the next academic year".

The 'intellectual quality' of pedagogy is about the importance of serious logical thinking in the process of goal setting and designing the process of teaching and learning in order to achieve these goals (Gore, 2001).

"The Method of teaching by modern techniques leads to quality, and hence to the quality of the output of education, and new technologies help in research and in its

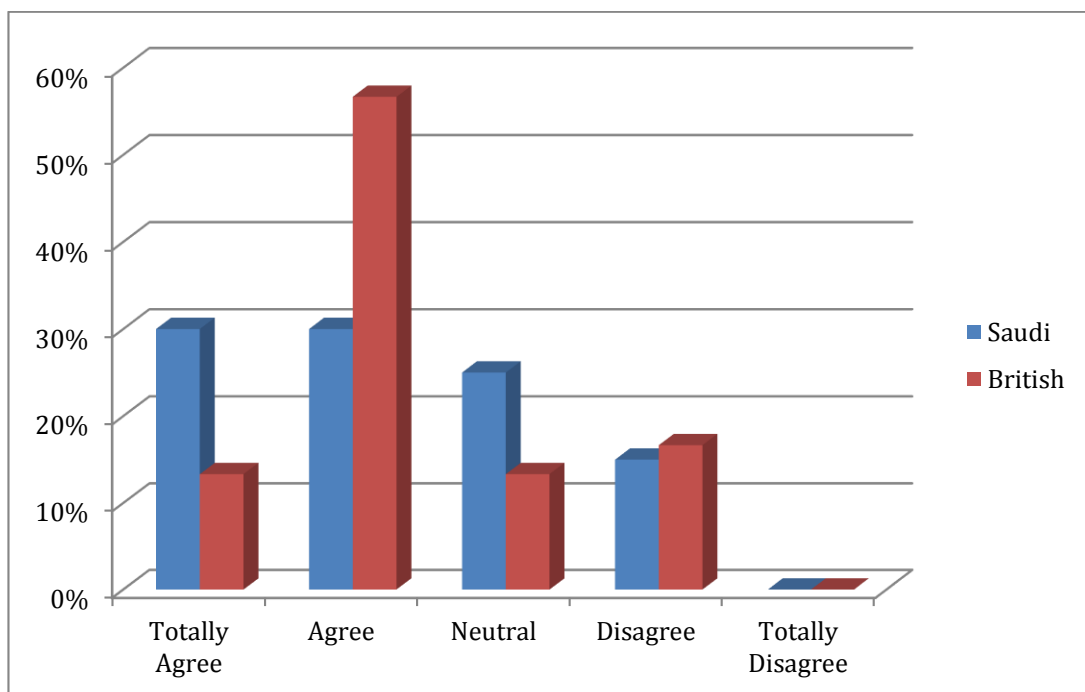
quality, because methods of dictation used in universities do not help in quality or in anything, the student will memorise and then complete the exam paper and when he graduates he does not remember anything. Also, a student needs to demonstrate skills such as leadership, communication with third parties and responsibility and he cannot show these qualities in the manner now being pursued in teaching, which is a method of indoctrination".

It is a common mistake to take for granted that all academics and postgraduate students are intellectual so whatever objectives are set by them or any processes designed by them are assumed to be automatically intellectually-based and of high quality (Amosa & Cooper, 2006). But the fact remains that there are many teachers, who are not educated to the highest level, that can be more intellectual than a number of highly educated academics and university pedagogy team members (Ladwig *et al.*, 2007).

6.7. Discussion regarding the Sixth Proposition

Regardless of levels of study, methods of teaching, modes of study and the nature of courses/research, the availability of quality support facilities and people can contribute substantially to the quality of education. Having a proper classroom, with adequate teaching facilities, a comprehensive library and online library, and having trained and helpful staff and processes that facilitate learning and research are very important. The sixth proposition is “Effective and quality *Learning and research support* can lead to a higher quality of education”.

Figure 6.6. Saudi and British Perspectives regarding Proposition 6



Source: Findings of this study

Although, in general, the assumption that proper ‘learning and research support’ would promote the quality of education in educational institutions was emphasised by both Saudi and British academics, Saudi support was stronger than British support. Considerable discrepancies between the responses of Saudi lecturers and senior managers (with 85% total agreement, 15% agreement with none neutral, in disagreement or total disagreement) and British ones (with 66.66% total agreement, 30% agreement and 3.33% neutral) were noticeable.

Strong support of this proposition and the literature is illustrated in the answer given by one of the British academics: "In reality that is the case. I can see it from my experience of being an academic for 12 years. Sometimes you have a good lecturer and students are very satisfied but then they go to the library, they can't really find the right materials, it's not available on the shelf, or there are only a few limited copies that they can borrow and this will affect the overall quality of the education because it's like a chain and whenever there is a broken link it affects the overall quality, so if I'm doing my job and you're doing your job but someone within the chain fails to provide the same level of quality it breaks the chain and affects overall quality and satisfaction". researchers need support to do their research properly, effectively in the given time (Amosa & Cooper, 2006). Access (sometime 24 hours) to laboratories, testing centres, printing, materials, tools, buildings, cutting materials, measuring, pressing, mixing, ... machinery, wind tunnels ... is crucial for researchers (Yorke, 1998).

In support of the proposition and the literature the same British academic mentioned that: "Research support is key especially when you're talking about postgraduate researchers and I'm saying this because it is often one person who is supporting students (they don't like to have more than one). It takes time to gain experience so any change in terms of recruitment or staff turnover makes a huge difference. So yes, it is essential because this institution is effectively encapsulated within just one person, which is the support member and/or the supervisor. To give an example; I usually tell prospective students or researchers look for the supervisor not the institution, because the supervisor is, in effect, the institution and you can be in a middle-ranking university but you can get a very good supervisor who is supportive and support is sometimes as important as the academic, in terms of experience and knowledge".

Schools, colleges, universities and other educational organisations are established to provide opportunities for learning and/or conducting research for students/researchers/learners (Holbeche, 1999). Fulfilment of such a mission depends on a variety of factors, and one of them is availability and the quality of the support provided to students/researchers in studying and/or doing their research (Jones, 2003).

"Yes, of course you have some expertise in learning and research support. In some universities in the UK, in addition to the lectures and tutorials, they have they have separate, independent tutorials, private tutorials given by PhD students, or by other academic staff to help them further in their studies. I think it can contribute to a great extent to the quality of education".

Having a proper classroom, with adequate teaching facilities, a comprehensive library and online library, and trained and helpful staff and processes that facilitate learning and research are necessary for quality education (Lomas, 2007a). Having access to proper learning and teaching facilities is no longer a privilege, but is a right for students and researchers (Mathias, 2004).

In the same vein, one Saudi lecturer states that " Research Support is an important aspect in supporting the educational process, and good universities have different ways to support students, such as research centres in colleges, which support the research of good students, and the research chairs attract outstanding students and employ their potential to serve the university and community. As for the learning, this is partly to do with the student and partly the university and partly the teacher, but I do think that integration of the three elements with each other, is an essential part in improving the quality of education".

One of the most important forms of support required for learning and research is the existence and effectiveness of well-trained, friendly, knowledgeable and dedicated staff who are hired to help and support students/researchers to progress in their own study/research (Andriessen, 2006).

Another British lecturer who was in agreement with the literature and the proposition said: "You know what you are supposed to do and you have the chance to talk to someone, clarify an assessment, you do the assessment and get feedback on it formatively before you do any kind of final exam, I think it is important whether it is the tutorial system or just the module leader or research supervisor, they are in a field where they should actively encourage people to come with questions. r. I guess I am thinking of research rather than undergraduate. I am a believer in research methodology, and clarity is important before the research goes too far, so I would say it is essential. It could make a great contribution to the quality of experience".

Staff should fully understand that the existence of the educational organisation and their jobs is mainly for the purpose of teaching and supporting students (Westerheijden *et al.*, 1994). Staff should never assume that helping students and researchers is not part of their job and responsibilities (Bereiter, 2007).

"Whatever support you get, especially the kind of training you get during your career in order to improve the learning techniques or learning and teaching techniques would improve the quality of education. I think there are developments in both learning and research that staff needs to be kept apprised of and so, yes, that support is important especially, I suppose, with the Internet and e-learning becoming more and more prominent, it is an issue that needs to be looked at more and more".

While access to these facilities is indispensable, researchers need good quality and reliable facilities to be available, because the validity of the findings of researchers relies to a very large extent on the reliability and quality of research facilities (Gibbs & Dunbar-Goddet, 2009).

Another supportive Saudi academic said: " One of the most important points when supporting people to learn how to study and how they contribute to raising the quality of education will play a very significant role. I do not expect there to be effective research that does not involve the student, it must involve the student. If we think that research is only for faculty members, we will not find any quality or any improvement, but if there was a type of research which involves the student, who becomes the main member in this research, this is what we mainly seek".

The quality of education will almost inevitably drop when universities/schools push 70-80 students into a classroom originally designed for 40 students. Holding a class with 150-200 students can have a remarkable effect on the quality of education, because students do not have the opportunity of asking questions and participating in the class or receiving the required help and supervision (King *et al.*, 2003). Inappropriate temperature, lighting, ventilation and even wall colour in classrooms can negatively affect the learning of students and consequently the quality of education (Sadler, 2007).

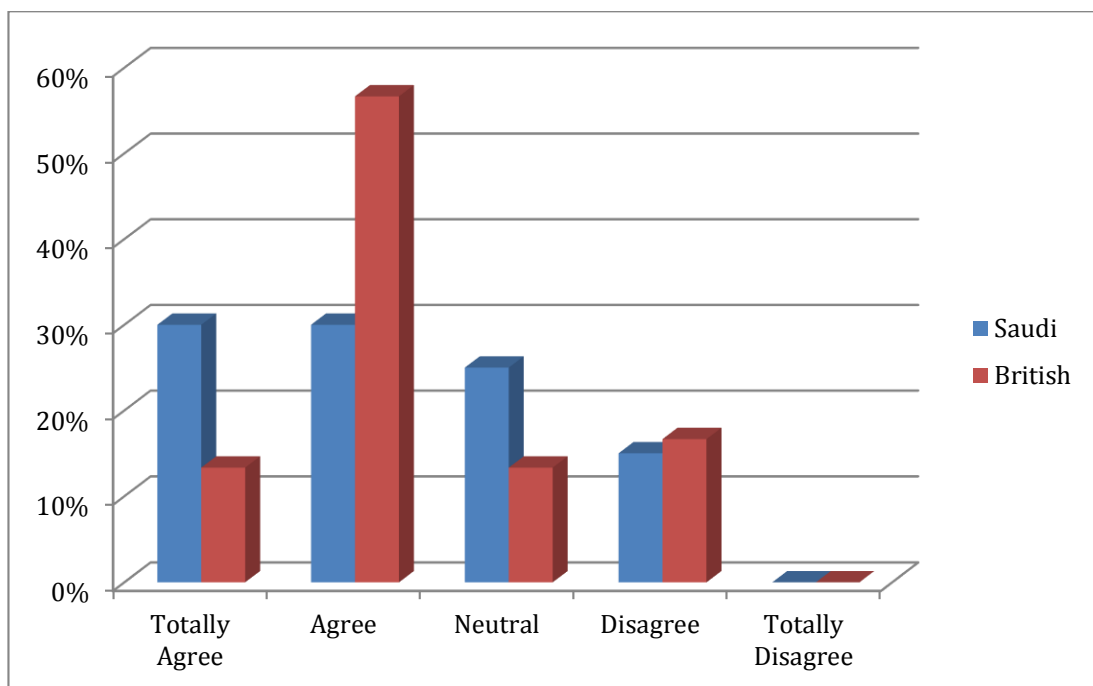
"Research Support will contribute, but it is not a priority right now, because we still have not achieved 'real' learning, so that we can achieve really effective learning support. Learning and research support will improve in quality, but is not a priority

now. I see that this is an essential and important element even if it not as important as other elements, but in the light of the trend of using technology widely and learning management systems and software which contribute to education, in addition to learning techniques in the classroom and in labs. This is a part of the thrill of study, it is no longer the time of the blackboard and indoctrination, now there is interaction and evaluation in different ways, which form part of the learning management system".

6.8. Discussion regarding the Seventh Proposition

Knowledge is power if we can manage to control this power properly. “Reliable and effective *Knowledge Management* can help educational institutions to enhance the quality of their education” is the seventh proposition. Information overload can be as damaging as a lack of information, so there is a need for a system to manage the collection, creation, storage and distribution of knowledge and information. There was a noticeable consensus in support of this proposition.

Figure 6.7. Saudi and British Perspectives regarding Proposition 7



Source: Findings of this study

Because the degree of *total agreement* regarding the impact of suitable ‘knowledge management’ on the quality of education was higher among Saudi academics (with 66%) compared to British lecturers (with 50%), it can be concluded that Saudis are more in favour of the seventh proposition. While just one Saudi academic and one British academic were *neutral* about this proposition, none of the Saudis or the British *totally disagreed* or *disagreed* with the proposition.

In fact, the existence and growth of many organisations, including research and educational ones, are closely tied to the existence and good management of knowledge and information (Brittain *et al.*, 2006). While some of the participants were not completely familiar with the concept of ‘Knowledge Management’ at first,

following discussion, their support for this proposition can be seen in the following answers. One of the British academics who was in total agreement with the literature and the proposition said: " For many years I was actually living in a developing country, and because I came from a knowledge management system background that was very advanced, I came London and was surprised to find that this was not the case here. It was not because they didn't want to use an advanced system, but because there were some people who believed that their form of knowledge management was the best so they didn't want to change it. They resisted change for six years. A new system was installed this year and in September we will start using it. I can already see the results, because it's a different world".

Without the necessary knowledge/information and without the required systematic processes and systems for the creation, updating and distribution of this knowledge, research and educational institutions will ultimately face a crisis and reduction in the quality of education and/or research support (Lane, 2008).

Another British lecturer in favour of the proposition and literature believes: "Most universities do not have these systems, because academia tends to be quite individual and sharing is not viewed as necessary, but sharing is good practice, it is something that universities are moving much more towards, so I would say it is a good way of promoting the quality of education. It is extremely helpful and allows teaching staff to be more objective and students to be reflective".

Another commented: "A virtual learning environment is important to support students learning and it is good if we get someone monitoring students' use of the virtual learning system and the environment and I think communication between staff is something helps back up effective management in universities. We have just invested in a sort of hub system now, which means we can share a lot of documentation both within the School and across the whole university, so I think this hub system where a lot of material is going to be accessible to everybody and easily accessed is going to be very important".

There is a need for systems to manage the collection, creation, storage and to distribute knowledge and information (Evans, 2008). The quality of education and research are directly connected to the capability of a university, college, school or research centre to manage the knowledge required by their students and researchers properly (Bloxham & Boyd, 2007).

One Saudi lecturer, in supporting the proposition and the literature, said: " A knowledge management system is also one of the means which, if employed the right way, will contribute significantly to raising the quality of the educational process. This is linked to the level of qualification of faculty members and administrative staff to understand these concepts and apply appropriately. A good knowledge management system leads to accomplishing the purpose of promoting good education".

The availability of technology that should be used as a platform for effective organising of knowledge management is indispensable (Jessop *et al.*, 2012). As stated by Holbeche (1999), "KM [Knowledge Management] involves blending a company's internal and external information and turning it into actionable knowledge via a technology platform."

Strong support of the literature and the proposition can be seen in comments of this Saudi participant: "This is very essential, and a problem that we face in the higher education and at this university, there is a lack of 'knowledge management' systems. The fact that students do not have access to information and when they write short papers they cannot share knowledge, this process is expensive and cumbersome and impossible for me, when I give the students assignments or problem solving; I want them to learn from the experiences of each other".,

To put it simply, knowledge is power and it can contribute to the enhancement of the quality of research and education if it can be managed properly, otherwise it could seriously limit the effectiveness of education/research and the quality of educational and research institutions (King, 2002).

Another British participant who agreed with the literature stated that: " It can be a good resource for teachers. A well-developed system needs to be user friendly and easy to implement. I have to be a bit theoretical here, to a great extent, but how well can this be developed and realised is a big challenge but if you can capture the knowledge, I mean the tacit knowledge of those working within the institution so nothing would be lost if there is staff turnover or if you can even share good practice across different cohorts or different pathways or even across schools then this is what we are struggling to do and we have panels and meetings to do this to share experiences but yet again these are confined to individuals and we don't have current management systems per se. I'm not sure whether such a thing is, in reality, applicable in universities especially because everything is mostly tacit knowledge and

from my experience most staff are probably too overworked to be able to contribute to any great extent to this knowledge management system".

Universities and schools are centres for the creation and transfer knowledge to and among students (Boud, 2000). Some authors (Holbeche, 1999) found that the importance and impact of knowledge in our era is at the highest level in our history, so knowledge itself can be considered not just as a source of power, but as a core competency and a necessity for quality in any advanced organisation (Dale & Pymm, 2009).

"If we had such a system it would make a great difference towards maintaining the level of quality and probably enhance it in areas that need support. The problem that we have is information overload; we are really quite stressed in terms of what we already do, including receiving long emails that sometimes we don't have the time to read. Plus you believe you have your own way of teaching, but on a higher level it makes a difference if you are talking about the strategic level of managing a course, designing a course, yes it makes a difference, logistically speaking, and also if you go down to the level of disseminating knowledge and interacting with students".

There are many reasons for the development of knowledge management in organisations in general and in universities, colleges, schools, or research centres in particular (Bryman, 2001). In this regard, Walton (1999) believes "Knowledge is the key sustainable source of value added in an organisation and is central to the development of strategic advantage".

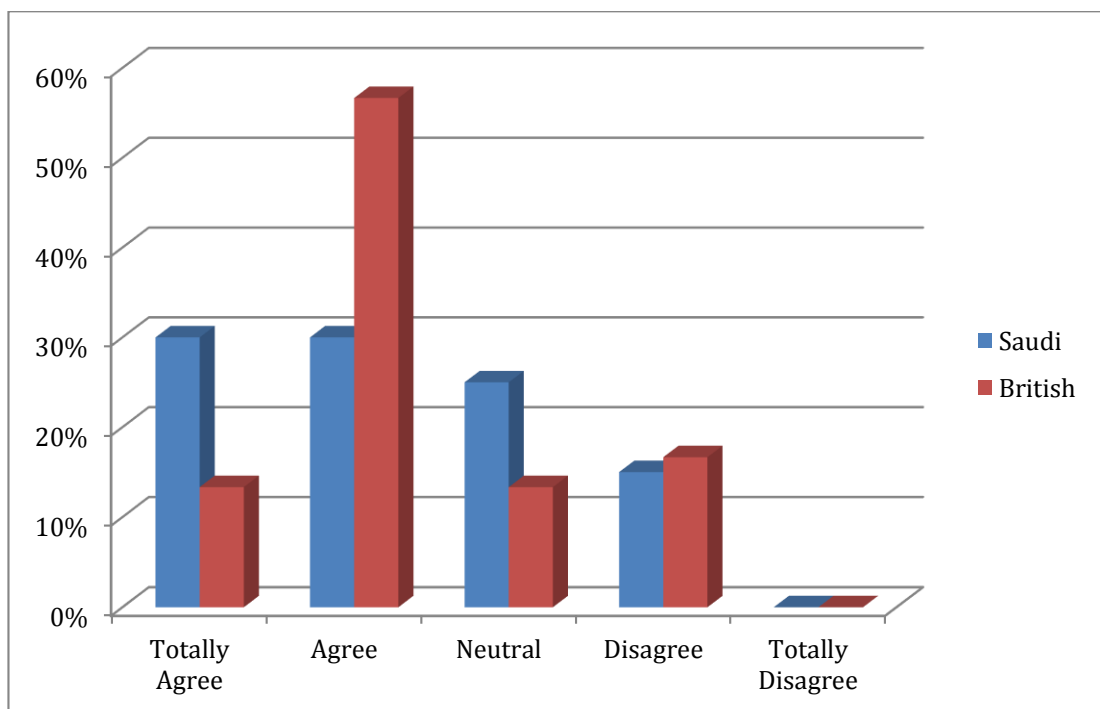
" The fundamental aspect in the case of knowledge is what we are doing in our practice, at least in the Middle East. There was an issue about finding the right type of cabinets so people can refer to information whenever they want, and we have created a kind of database, which is not bad, but there is no real knowledge management. For example, when we talk about the existence of e-learning or distance learning, in many places, they interpreted this as converting a book into a PDF and putting it on CD."

Individuals are the primary agents of knowledge acquisition, and, in the case of tacit knowledge, are its principal repositories (Torrance, 2007); organisations need to tap into tacit knowledge, to identify ways in which it can be made public and transferable and to capture it so that it becomes part of the 'structural capital' of the organisation and available to others" (Claxton, 1998).

6.9. Discussion regarding the Eighth Proposition

It is not a very realistic expectation to have successful students who are taught and guided by unsuccessful teachers/academics. It is difficult to visualise a university/school as a quality institution if its academics/teachers do not have a chance of being successful in terms of research publications, and recognition, thus the eighth proposition proposes, “The level of *Academics’ Achievements* can demonstrate the level of quality of education and quality of the educational institution”.

Figure 6.8. Saudi and British Perspectives regarding Proposition 8



Source: Findings of this study

This proposition was a sensitive one because it tries to make a connection between the quality of education and the level of achievement of academics. A number of the participants were not academic high achievers, so it was not easy for them to support this proposition. Indeed. The Saudis reacted adversely so, unlike previous propositions, this proposition received a notable degree of *disagreement* (with 24%) and *neutral* (with 22%). British participants demonstrated more support and agreement. Only one of the British academics disagreed with this proposition. This interviewee believes: "on paper the answer is yes, but I would say there are individuals that don't publish, or don't have many publications, but at the same time

they provide a good quality of education. I believe that doesn't necessarily mean that a high number of publications means a high quality of education".

While this proposition received enough support to be accepted, it seems many Saudi and some British academics prefer not to associate their own achievements with the quality of education, as is evident in their responses: "There is a direct relationship between academic achievements. However, what I mean by academic achievements is not just publications, it means honesty, integrity and having put a lot of effort into their research. To build up that reputation takes time and effort and once that reputation is there and among international community then that will definitely reflect in their education and the way they teach".

One of the British academics said: " I would say that there is. I can give numerous examples of where some academic worker of mine has contributed to a new Master's programmes or a PhD programme and this filters down into the undergraduate curriculum. Some research, for example, that I did 15 years ago is now in textbooks which undergraduates' use, so I would go with that one certainly. In this institution over the last four years our work on our 'viva' has been introduced into our Master's programmes and this work are leading to publication in a peer reviewed journal, which will enhance Masters' students career opportunities". Another British lecturer with contrasting ideas commented: " I would hope that academics having a good research and publication track record would improve the level of education at an institution, but the two might not necessarily go hand in hand. It might be that staff doing research do not teach, and teaching staff do not do research; it will depend on the department/institution. Also, people who are good at research do not necessarily make good teachers and vice versa – it might come down to the personality and skills mix of the individual academic".

The quality of education depends to a very large extent on the quality of educators (Taras, 2002). To put it simply, the quality of education is related to the main educational service providers, lecturers and teachers (Cousin, 2008). It is unlikely that an unsuccessful academic/teacher can provide a high quality educational service to students and develop successful students (Van Berkel & Wolfhagen, 2002). From the students' perspective, quality academics/teachers are (or should be) not only experts

in their own fields but capable of conveying their knowledge and skills to their students fully and in ways that are understandable by the average student, although this is just one side of the coin (Nicol & McFarlane-Dick, 2006).

While the literature emphasises the importance of having quality academics, some Saudi academics *disagreed* with this perspective. For example, one of them said: "In my experience, 'good researchers are usually lousy educators". I have noticed that some of our colleagues who we call teaching oriented are interested in the quality of the learning process itself, and we find they follow up and prepare their teaching plans, and sit with the students for more time. They are more available, and they are better than other colleagues who are excellent researchers, but not good teachers, and I believe that teaching and research could be two separate things. In our university a senior professor is less inclined than an assistant professor to take an interest in quality and standards, I do not say they're against it, but less inclined. I think it has a relationship with the image of the educational institution more than quality education."

So, although it is unlikely for a student to receive high quality educational services from an unsuccessful academic/teacher, it not impossible (Taras, 2008). However, the difficulty is that students, to achieve success, need more than quality educational services, they need motivation too (Ely, 1991). Academics/teachers need to be inspirational in order to encourage their own students to overcome any difficulties and progress towards a brighter future (Ractham & Zhang, 2006). (Erdem, 2009).

Another Saudi lecturer, in contrast to the literature, believes: "There may be a relationship, but the reality is otherwise. The researcher might be a professor and have several research projects published, but his students do not benefit from it. There is no doubt that there is a relationship, but is there really a link between research and reality? The researcher will benefit from the research himself, or he only does the research in order to be promoted and then quits the research after getting promotion".

Despite the view expressed above, a university/school cannot be considered as a quality institution if its academics/teachers do not have a chance to be successful in terms of research, publications, and recognition (Gibbs & Dunbar-Goddet, 2007). The rationale is that successful academics/teachers can contribute in two ways to the quality of education and success of their own students: First, by delivering high quality education and research support to their students, and second by inspiring students to enjoy learning and, possibly, to achieve success (Knight & Yorke, 2003).

Another Saudi academic, regardless of the findings of many pieces of research, stated that: "An example of what happens in Saudi universities is a kind of desire to sit with others at the same table, a kind of desire that the world looks at me as equal to him, and so they enter into the circle of competition on ranking and research, because it is related to rewards and associated with the renewal of contracts and they enter into this vortex, and maybe the main objective of the university is an issue of (I am with you on the same table), but at the same time it is influenced very significantly by the quality of research available to us, and most of the research fellows are concerned with what criteria are taken into account in order to be published in a Western magazine".

Employee training and development is an principal method that schools and universities use to help their lecturers/teachers to accomplish more (Blom & Meyers, 2003). In addition, academics at universities/higher education institutions have the opportunity of not teaching for one semester and focus instead on research and publication (McGrath-Champ *et al.*, 2010).

"The current trend is that there are 'tracks', the track of the researcher, and the track of the teacher. Being a full professor does not mean that he is wonderful in his teaching performance. Scientifically we need to consider what is meant by the existence of a relationship between the level of achievement and the quality of education. Therefore, the university now has a plan to separate successful teachers and the excellent researchers".

" If you have a distinguished professor or lecturer they are supposed to be linked to the quality of education and improve the educational process, but in my opinion it is not necessarily true that the distinguished academics' achievements, like scientific publications and awards etc., raise the level of the educational process in general. But if we are talking about the quality of education I that there are other elements that are more important and have greater influence in this respect".

" There should be a connection, and in a simple sense there is. However, it is possible to have a situation in a university where teaching and research are not completely working together and so one might have colleagues who have masses of publications, but do not actually have anything to do with the people who are teaching. I do think it's a core value of higher education and what makes a university

in a very large part is this particular commitment to research and knowledge creation and students should be brought into this as well".

" Good research gets published in journals and so on, and good research informs our teaching and so there can be a correlation between these things, but I would say it is not the only measure. I think you have to consider many measures to make up your mind, I think like most of the rankings you know whether it's *The Times* ranking of world universities, an American one or one in Shanghai or whatever, they use a number of different ways of ranking the quality, one will pay more attention to the number of Nobel prizes you have and the next one does not. In conclusion, while there is definitely a relationship, there are also many other measures".

"When academic achievement increases, the rating of the institution will increase and that will increase the quality, for example, next year is the Research Assessment Exercise in the UK, and all universities are working hard to increase the level of academic achievement and publication to be highly rated. However, once they are rated another issue we have to deal with is the NSS (the National Student Survey) where students must give their feedback on their experience. If there is no quality in an institution the NSS result will be low, therefore there is a contradiction and there is no achievement. Of course, once an institution reaches a high level, they want to maintain that level because they have worked so hard to achieve it".

"Research active staff always inform their lectures and amend them constantly as the result of new findings and new concepts they are developing through their research; so, yes, I totally agree that academic achievement and publication helps the process of education within an institution by 100 per cent".

"This relationship is really strong when you have academics in your institutions who are engaged and involved in publications it means that you know what they are doing and they are looking for the gaps, what has to be proved and it helps quality of education. So in most cases there should be a positive correlation but I feel that in some cases it may not necessarily translate into high quality education but, generally speaking, a high level of academic achievement of the faculty members should translate into a high quality learning experience".

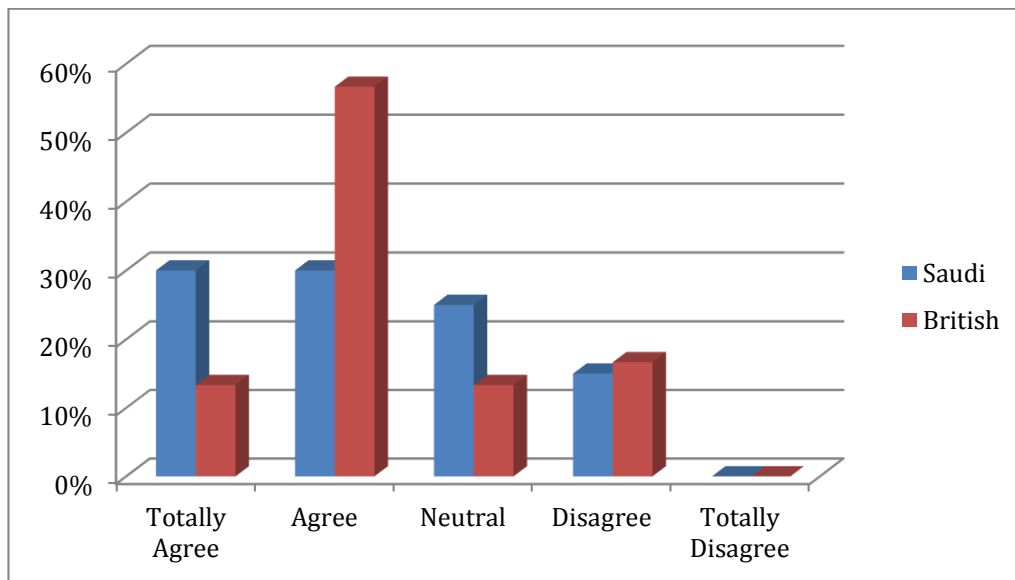
"This will depend entirely on how achievements are measured and whether and how these can be measured or assessed as impacting on students' learning experiences. At my own university, we ask all academics to evaluate their achievements in terms of their impact on the student experience during their annual appraisal and we set objectives for the following year based on the student experience and enhancement of their teaching".

The success of an academic or a teacher can be assessed based on the degree to which s/he has progressed in his/her career, non-academic roles/responsibilities in academia/schools/government advisory posts, number of publications, level of the journals/conferences that published their papers, number of research projects conducted, amount of grants received, frequency of receiving grants; and recognition received in the form of awards and publicity (Cragin, 2004).

6.10. Discussion regarding the Ninth Proposition

Like the eighth and tenth propositions, the ninth proposition focuses on the output of an educational system. Based on the assumption that the most important customers of educational institutions are students, it make sense to measure the quality of a university/school in terms of the progress, success and satisfaction of its students, thus the ninth proposition is “*Student progress, success and satisfaction is the most, or at least one of the most, important indicators of the quality of education*”. Saudi and British academics/senior managers varied somewhat in their reaction to this proposition.

Figure 6.9. Saudi and British Perspectives regarding Proposition 9



Source: Findings of this study

Although this proposition has been accepted statistically (with 51% in *total agreements or agreement*), Saudi academics and senior managers showed the lowest degree of *total agreement* (just 18%) and the highest degree of *disagreement* (31%) with this proposition compared to the other 10 propositions. In other words, while Saudis assume that there is some correlation between ‘student progress, success and satisfaction’ and the quality of education, they believe student satisfaction is not a very good indicator of the quality of education. However, the degree of support from British academics for this proposition was considerably higher (with 90% in *total agreement or agreement*).

Regardless of how much research has highlighted the importance of the student's perspective as a determinant of the quality of education, two out of the 30 British academics opposed this proposition. They believe this not really an important indicator of quality of education: "This is not what my organisation believes in, but, I, as a person, believe that not every aspect of quality is reflected in the student's success and satisfaction. This is also very much dependent on the background of the students and the quality of their previous education, and how much effort they have put in affects their progress, success and satisfaction. So, generally, I would say that it is not the most important indicator of the quality of education". The other lecturer said: "This notion of student progress is completely meaningless. I don't care about his progress. If the curriculum is right, he'll learn the curriculum and that is fine but student progress means nothing to me and has nothing to do with society, so for progress as an indicator for effort contribution to society is fine".

While there are many different quality models/theories and all of them have some differences, almost all of them have consensus on one issue, and that is the emphasis on measurement of quality based on the perspective of the main customer/stakeholder (Gibbs & Simpson, 2004).

Some Saudi academics were rather less in favour of seeing students as customers and taking account student satisfaction, progress and success. One of the Saudi lecturers claimed: "students' satisfaction is based on the grades they receive, and I notice that in the summer semester, and this is an indication of the degree of satisfaction, that the students avoid taking subjects with professors who demand a lot and they go to professors who are more lenient. In theory, yes; in reality, no. We have serious teachers whose students indicate that they are not satisfied with, but after progressing or graduating, we find them praising this professor and thanking him. Student satisfaction, even if they are progressing, may not be an indicator of the quality of education, quite the contrary. I think if we evaluate the outputs, which are the marketplace satisfaction or employer satisfaction or the satisfaction of other higher education institutions of the outputs, this may be a better way to measure quality. That is why the satisfaction and success in the preparatory year is very low".

The only clients and one of the most important stakeholders of any educational institutions are students; therefore, it makes sense to measure the quality of a university/school in terms of the progress, success and satisfaction of its students

(Harvey, 2005). These factors are interrelated issues, but they are not the same as each other (Louis & 2008).

The other Saudi academics, again in contrast to the existing literature, stated that: "It seems student satisfaction is not a factor indicative of quality. The question of students getting high marks and being satisfied with university, college and members of the faculty is not the basis or indicator of quality. Maybe there are universities lenient in grading and maybe a member of the faculty give grades easily, so there will be a disparity among students".

Regarding this claim that student satisfaction is just about the grade they receive, another Saudi lecturer commented: "A student may accept getting low grades, because he did not make any effort, but on the other hand, another student may come to the faculty member and protest in order to get grade A, even if he did not make any effort. I think that if the student's grades are equal to his effort, this is an achievement, which provides clarity for the student - if you made an effort, this is what you get".

Unlike the above responses, as is reflected in the following answers, it appeared that the vast majority of Saudi and British academics did believe that *Student progress, success and satisfaction* is one of the main criteria by which to assess the quality of education at schools and universities:" It is one of the most important purposes of education. As well as students progressing on to careers, can they get jobs at the end of the day? Have they really developed through the course? So all students here have to write personal development portfolios, and graduation statements to highlight how they have progressed through the course, what skills they have learnt, and how they can take that to the next stage whether it's academic work or professional work".

From the 'Progress' point of view, education and an educational organisation can have quality if the student who received educational services or support for research has made reasonable progress in their study and/or research (Roelofs & Terwel, 2009). The student's progress can be assessed based on how much and how well the student has learnt the required topics/skills/knowledge during a specific period of time.

" If you're talking about my opinion, of course, I agree. But if you are talking about how the government judges the success of institutions, it's based mostly on

what you just said: how many students you get, how many progress from year to year and how many manage to achieve the degrees, and when you say success it's how many get 2:1s or 2:2s, and then there is satisfaction, which is the most important factor that affects the ranking of universities. That's why this university focuses a lot on student satisfaction and we came first recently among all the universities. It was a huge effort and I'm not sure we can maintain the same standard. However, we know that satisfaction is important because if you're talking about commercial companies, it's all about customer satisfaction and usually the public sector lags behind in this practice but it's essentially these three and when we say success, it's not just success within the institution, we even look at the alumni, their employability and where they ended up, because this is the first thing that new students will look at is where the alumni go to, how much did they achieve in their lives, their salaries etc.... so this is very important this is key and this is a personal opinion and a government based approach, so, yes, I totally agree on this one".

Different types of formative evaluation (coursework), and summative evaluation (examinations), can be used to measure the amount of the student's progress (Hattie, 2009). So moving from the first semester to the second semester, or upgrading from the first year to the second year, or going from first degree level to Master's level in a designated time with good grades are signs of the student's progress and consequently signs of a quality education (Walton, 1999).

"These three factors (in a regimented system) have quality factors linked to them; if student progression is good then it shows that the learning and teaching environment is appropriate for those students so there is success. Although, I think there is one thing that is important when we talk about student satisfaction, and I think it is the term 'student feedback' because students are part of a learning process and I think staff occasionally do need to learn from students' experience".

From the 'Success perspective, quality education should demonstrate itself in the form of high student's success (Taylor *et al.*, 2012). While the 'student's progress' focuses on the 'Processes' of the student's development, the 'student's success' mainly, but not only, emphasises the 'Outputs/results' of a quality education (Ladwig, 2007).

"It's one of the most important indicators and the reason I say that is that I think learning is difficult, I think it can be troubling and it can be challenging and I think the moment when all of us as learners are challenged and troubled we may not think

that we are making great progress, but actually that is what it's all about. So, I think spot checks on how you feel at any given moment about the institution isn't necessarily representative of the learning and the change in growth that is going on and we, as a whole sector, rather suffer from an over-simplistic view of student satisfaction".

A student's 'success' can be assessed by analysing the percentage of students: who finish their full studies in a reasonable time, and/or who gain admission to continue their studies/research, and/or who could have publications/inventions, and/or who get relevant jobs shortly after graduation (Rust, 2000). Therefore, a higher success rate for students in terms of completed study/research, getting admission for further study/research, getting relevant jobs and having publications can be considered as one of the important indicators of having a quality education and quality educational institutions (Kennedy, 2009).

"I think one of the most important indicators, definitely, is students who received a good quality of education and they have been enabled to succeed and are going to progress through the levels and achieve success. Talking very generally, you could say let's see how many of our graduates are employed two years after they have graduated, well you would say that was a good measure and then maybe with the huge economic down turn and employment figures rising, you would say well, we expect that number to drop next year or the year after but that does not mean the quality of our education has dropped, so you have to be careful with the measures you need. You have to consider the variables with your research, so if you talk about the economic success of your students, the employability of your students, other factors can affect things but, yes, how students do and how positive they feel about their experience is a huge indicator. Our students do a survey on satisfaction and we pay great attention to this, there are many different ways that we can have feedback from students, whether anonymously or in focus groups, so we actually give a lot of importance to satisfaction as an indicator of how well we are doing".

So by understanding that students are customers of universities/colleges and schools, all educational/research organisations should give careful consideration to students' needs and wants (Tippin *et al.*, 2012). These should try to create and improve the quality of their institutions and the provided education by focusing on

the three interrelated issues of student progress, success and satisfaction (Lomas, 2007b).

"Student progress, success and satisfaction are very important, but the question here is: how do we measure the students' progress, success? As for satisfaction; we have a strong feedback mechanism in our university. In the UK higher education system, the National Student Survey (NSS) is a very important instrument of university evaluations/ratings. From personal experience, we (my institution/employer) paid extra attention to student satisfaction, which had a direct impact on the university ranking. If the institution is considered as customer or 'student- driven' they usually score highly in the NSS".

From the 'Satisfaction' aspect, the quality of education and educational/research organisations need to be perceived and understood according the degree to which the student is satisfied with them (Harvey *et al.*, 1993). From this perspective, it does not matter how much academics, universities/schools, or other stakeholders are pleased with the education provided (Baker, 1997). The only thing that matters is the level of satisfaction of the student who receives these educational/research services (Knight, 2000). To put it simply, the educational/research services provide have quality if the student is satisfied with them (Scutter *et al.*, 2010). The degree of the student's satisfaction determines the degree of quality of the education and the quality of the educational/research organisation (Orrell, 2006).

"Sometimes we cannot please our students. Some students come to university from very restricted UK or foreign education institution in terms of attendance and because attendance is not mandatory in our university, they kind of relax and enjoy this freedom, but at the same time they abuse this and expect quality".

These measures of quality are currently used to rank universities across the UK. However, success is not just an academic qualification; it can include securing employment after graduation and a career in the profession, which the course prepared the student for. Student satisfaction (as measured through the NSS) is a very good measure of the quality of the whole student experience, but it should be an evaluation of a much broader experience than the quality of teaching and learning. Ultimately, an assessment of satisfaction should also relate to student expectations

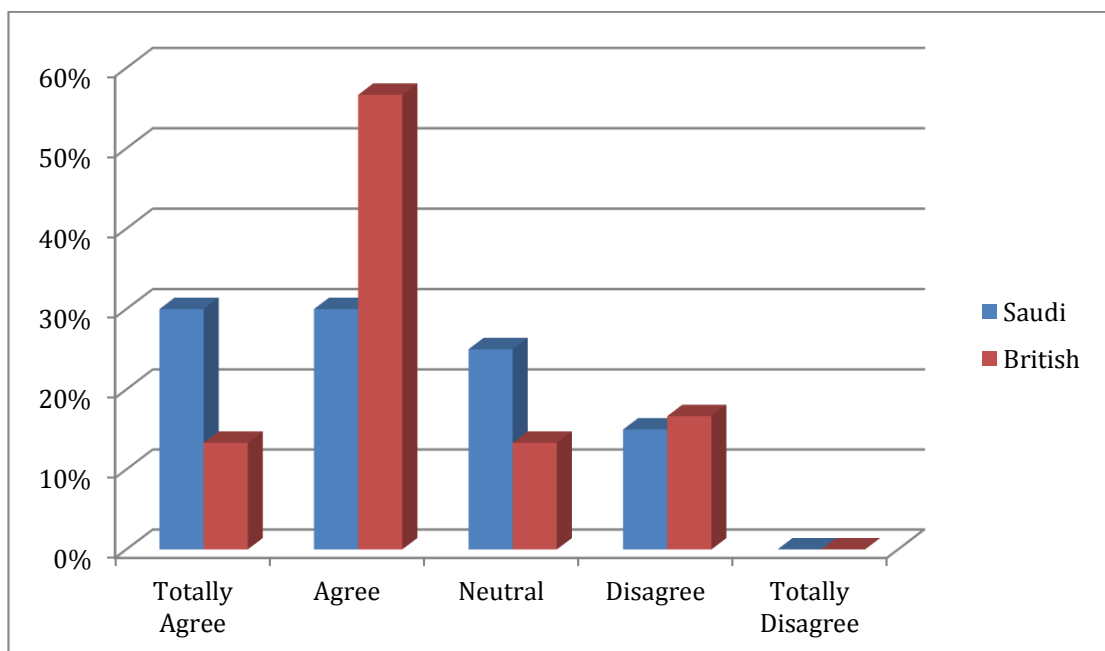
and ensuring that students are provided with the experience promised at the start of the course.

Although customer satisfaction as a measure of the level of quality is a widely accepted notion in almost all industries, some authors deny this right to students in the education sector (Knight, 2001). Some of these authors believe that students, even university students, are not mature or qualified enough to judge the quality of the education they receive (Stoddart, 2004). This patronising perspective does not have either the required academic rigour or public support in the 21st century (Ladwig *et al.*, 2007).

6.11. Discussion regarding the Tenth Proposition

As the last proposition that focuses on the output of the education system, proposition number 10 is “*High University/School Achievements* is one of the signs of having high quality education”. University/school success is another sign of having a quality education system. This can be measured based on the ranking, amount of grants received, and the rate of growth of these institutions. In view of the fact that all the Saudi and British participants were from universities of a low to medium ranking, it was predictable to see a lower level of support for this proposition.

Figure 6.10. Saudi and British Perspectives regarding Proposition 10



Source: Findings of this study

In general, this proposition received good but not very strong support. Saudi academics were less in favour of this proposition than their British peers. From the British perspective, the tenth proposition received the lowest level of *Total Agreement* with just 13.33%, the highest level of *Disagreement* with 16.66%, alongside 13.33% *Neutral* responses.

From the Saudi point of view, like the eighth and ninth propositions, there were some *disagreements* (15%) with the tenth proposition by some of the academics, which is evident in these responses: "If we work the right way, we can say, the more advanced the university in the world rankings the more it indicates that we have a

good quality of education. However, because there are some universities that achieve a high classification, but it is known that the quality is not high, we should understand that even if the University is highly ranked, this does not always mean that there is quality in the outputs, which are the students. There is a need to look again into the details of these rankings to see the amount of quality in that university".

It is expected that quality universities/schools will provide quality education (Aspin & Chapman, 1994). One of the indicators of quality of education is the degree of superiority of the institution that provides this education compared to other educational/research organisations (Gore, 2001). In other words, university/school success is another sign of having a quality education system (Harman & Meek, 2000).

While the literature indicates a convincing amount of research that suggests university/school achievement should be considered as one of the indicators of quality, not all Saudi academics agree with these findings. One of them said: "Achievements are usually not related to the educational process and the research process. A university may work with a particular company, and the company supports some particular research, a university or a group of universities to accomplish this research, but this may be at the expense of the educational process. University rankings and the question of the existence of good research does not indicate that the quality is high, there may be quality but not high quality, because the ranking is based on other things".

Based on the same logic, the degree of success of educational/research institutions can represent the degree of quality of the education provided (Holbeche, 1999). Another opposing Saudi lecturer believed: "The problem in our university and other universities is that we have no information on the research chairs, and whether they are fulfilling their role or not., For example, Henry Kissinger was teaching at Harvard, but he only attended twice or three times a semester, and he used to record the lecture, and the teaching assistant went with the students for a seminar and played the recorder to listen to Henry Kissinger. We know, without doubt, that Henry Kissinger is a well-known person, as well as Harvard University, but the quality delivered to the students of Harvard is not like the quality available to students at UCL University in the same subject".

The achievements of universities/schools can be measured based on criteria such as the ranking, amount of grants received, and the rate of growth of these institutions (Jones, 2003). There are some organisations that rank universities and/or schools some of which are not reliable, thus their published rankings should not be considered a sign of quality (Lomas, 2007a).

One of the Saudi academics even considered university ranking as a very negative tool. He claimed: "This is a sensitive point, there are achievements for publicity purposes, and there are real achievements. It is easy to go up the rankings, and it is easy to create a great website on the Internet, and become one of the most visited sites in the world. But, in my opinion, there are achievements that benefit the community, such as the ability of graduates to get jobs, and good career opportunities, and the presence of researchers in the journals from the faculty and not from outside, these are all achievements, but achievements for the sake of propaganda have no value".

There are a few independent organisations that are generally reliable with an acceptable degree of bias (Mathias, 2004). Every year universities/schools are ranked based on different criteria (King *et al.*, 2003). Not only all universities/schools but also the majority of prospective students/researchers consider these rankings as one of the important metrics of achievement and the quality of education (Sadler, 2007).

These are the opposing perspectives of the British academics: "I think when we talking about universities and schools that is a very generalist term, because I think there are individual members of staff who contribute to providing high quality education through their commitment to their students and also to the type of the research they do. These institutions may not be ranked particularly highly purely because the criteria they use are very different to Oxbridge, for example. Oxbridge has other resources which these don't have and another example is Harvard's alumni who do better than those in the UK at this moment in time. It's very difficult to measure one institution against another one unless you know the exact resource constraints, so I don't necessarily agree with that".

Another of the British participants who disagreed believed: "It depends on what you think an achievement is but I think that many of the criteria of achievement don't reflect the substantial impact that an institution can have. I happen to think that the elite table doesn't actually in any way reflect the quality of what we do here. It is also

overrated because pockets of resistance exist in all universities and I can show you very poor lecturers in high calibre universities and I can show you very good lecturers in low-ranking universities, so therefore it can mean nothing in general. It is an individual thing".

In addition to the rankings, two other determinants of university/school achievements are the amount of grant received, and the rate of growth of these institutions (Amosa & Cooper, 2006). Governments, non-governmental organisations, charities, individuals and sometimes companies donate money to generally good universities/schools, and these universities/schools consider the amount of grants received as an achievement, which reflects the quality of education in their institutions (Yorke, 1998).

The majority (but not vast majority) of British academics and senior managers supported the tenth proposition, which is evident in these responses: "This is a straightforward question. To say which one would provide better quality, because looking at quality and value for money, where value is the quality of service because we don't provide any physical products, it is really important from our point of view as an institution or as a lecturer to maintain standards and achievements, which are like an outcome. If you really work hard you will be able to achieve a higher ranking or high achievement in terms of your ranking. So, yes, it makes a big difference and for students this is what they look for, how are we ranked and it's a bit global. But this is the starting point and you can lose students from this point on, you can't really force them to come to your open day. So these achievements are like a doorway".

Furthermore, it is commonly accepted that the faster the rate of growth of universities/schools indicates higher levels of achievements and better quality of education (Gibbs & Dunbar-Goddet, 2009).

" University or schools' achievements can be considered as one of the signs of having high quality education. This could be in terms of research, in terms of innovation, and in terms of teaching innovation as well. Because that will draw in students into the university or school and it will also attract funding for research but really these achievements come from the academic staff and the research staff and their initiative and their expertise".

"Definitely! There is no doubt that universities achievements' can be considered as one of the signs of having high quality education, Because the assessment and rating of universities and reviews are all based on quality elements and most of our programmes are reviewed every four years. I think from country to country and university to university and educational system to educational system is a different matter; so some countries, for example, attract a high number of international students to their universities and this helps the ranking of their university, while in some other countries the number of publications will help the ranking of the university".

That is to say, the achievements of universities/schools are closely linked to the achievements of their academics and the success/achievements of their students (Andriessen, 2006). Consequently, a higher degree of academic and student success and achievement would almost directly contribute to higher achievements by the educational/research institutions, which, in turn, would lead to a higher quality of education (Westerheijden *et al.*, 1994).

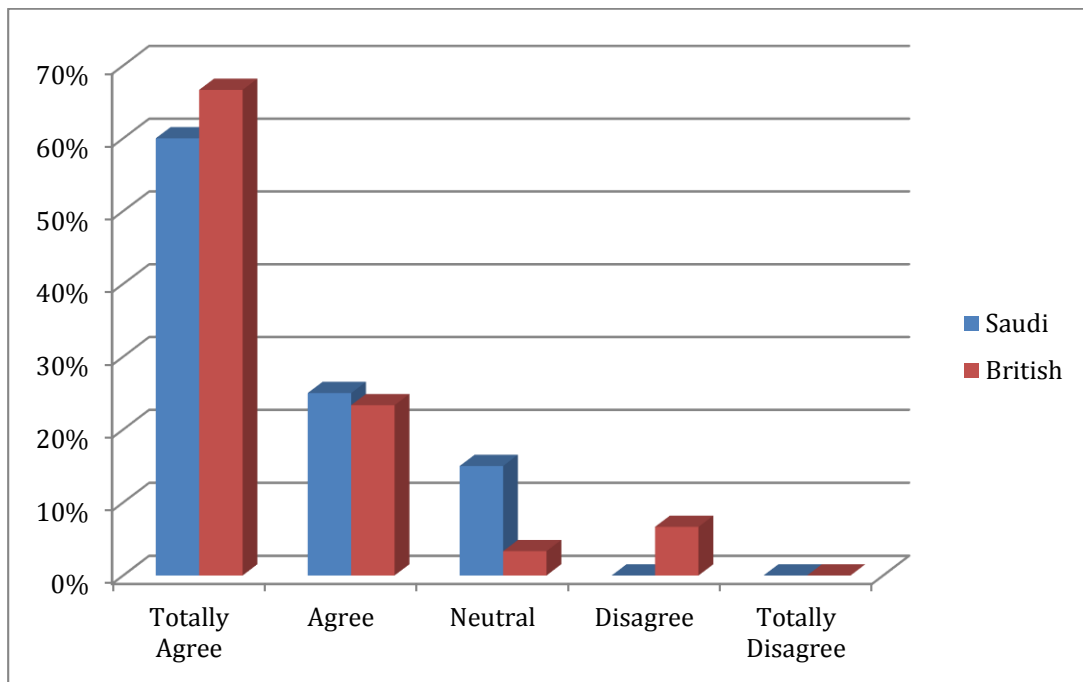
"I think the educational indices used which produce this ranking are very dependent on how much money a university attracts from industry. In some countries it is very important to the ranking of a university, while in some others there is no relationship between universities and industry Generally speaking, when a university has a good ranking it means the university at least has very good ranking in some educational indices but you need to decide what your interests are and whether those interests match with the educational indices in that university or that educational system or not".

Therefore, the quality of education can be reliable and stable if quality universities/schools recruit and retain quality academics/teachers as well as quality students/researchers (Bereiter, 2007).

6.12. Discussion regarding the Eleventh Proposition

In addition to inputs, processes and outputs there is a need for feedback to ensure continued improvement. Innovation is change and it is the lifeblood of any organisation, but innovation would fail if there were no adequate change management system to support innovation. So the 11th proposition is “Continuous, purposeful and well-planned *Innovation and Change Management* is one of the keys to high quality education”. Like Knowledge Management, the concept of Change Management was not completely familiar to all the participants. However, after they had become familiar with it, the majority of them supported this proposition.

Figure 6.11. Saudi and British Perspectives regarding Proposition 11



Source: Findings of this study

Interestingly, there are remarkable similarities between the perspectives of Saudi and British academics regarding the crucial effects of proper ‘innovation and change management’ on the quality of education. While none of the Saudis *disagreed* with this proposition, two of the British *disagreed*. One of the two (out of the 30 British academics) who *disagreed* with the 11th proposition, stated that: "You might have a very well-planned system or programme initiated, but that plan needs to be executed and needs to be executed for the people on the ground and a very good plan does not necessarily result in very good execution and satisfaction for the recipients, so I

would not say that there is a meaningful relationship. I think it sounds good in principle, but in practice it is difficult to relate it to what actually happens. So, while I think there should be a relationship, in practice, I don't think there is a relationship".

Although well-managed innovation can be beneficial for any educational institution and its students, there is almost always some resistance to the change that innovation creates in an organisation (Brittain *et al.*, 2006). Change management facilitates the implementation of innovation and consequently contributes to the innovation-based quality of education (Bryman, 2001).

The positive response of British academics is demonstrated in the following answers: "It's too easy to just bring in change without thinking about the indication of that change and whether or not it is actually going to affect the quality of the education. For example, I can think of places where change is taking place where the quality of the education has not been considered in the context of those changes and if you change the environment in which you work, you change the facilities you have got, the curriculums, you change the style of teaching, you change the resources you have. Without considering the implications of that on the quality, then there is a serious risk that you will actually adversely affect the quality, maybe only for a short period but I think it could actually have very much longer term effect so there is a very careful line to be taken there otherwise mistakes can and are made. Maybe it's part of human nature that we make decisions based on money perhaps, but we don't think them through".

Innovation is a change but innovation will fail if there is no adequate change management system to support it (Boud, 2000). Change management can more or less guarantee that universities and schools benefit from innovation in full (Dale & Pymm, 2009).

Another British lecturer who had the same opinion as other researchers in the literature stated that: "We are supposed to have a collegiate structure so that the teaching can contribute to the direction and the management of an institution like this and it is very difficult sometimes and I'm talking not just about this institution but lots of institutions around the UK. It is very difficult sometimes to see how decisions that I make in terms of change management have really been explained to the people who have to deliver those changes".

Education, directly or indirectly, is about innovation and development in different sciences and fields of studies; therefore, a higher level of innovation can represent higher quality of education (Evans, 2008). There is a consensus amongst the different authors that innovation is the lifeblood of any organisation (Bloxham & Boyd, 2007).

In a strong support of the literature and the proposition, one of the British academics said: It's very important it is correlated straight away because what you are doing is you are actually saying you get suggestions, go and do this, yes, I can do this, but I have another 12 people working with me, how do I get them to participate? I organised an event last Friday, I have done all the work, everything, organising it, getting students together... students have group leaders, so this ceremony is going to happen, it was a challenge to get them to buy it, it took me four years because there is no system of planned innovation and that can only happen if we have good leadership in the organisation".

Universities and schools should be a source of innovation and preparing students/researchers to be innovative, so it is expected that universities and schools be innovative in almost everything they do (Lane, 2008).

"There should be a meaningful relationship. It depends if the change is beneficial to the quality of the education, then of course 'well planned' Innovation and Change Management may have a meaning relationship with quality of education. The university has decided to be creative and more innovative and we are going through a huge change management process and ultimately it is all about improving the quality of education, so the answer is as long as it well planned and implemented properly then, yes".

At universities and schools innovation can be in recruiting students/academics/teachers, in preparing the syllabus/curriculum, in developing pedagogy, in the managing and provision of learning and research support, in teaching/research, in knowledge management, in leadership and strategic management, and in university, student and academic achievements (Jessop *et al.*, 2012).

" Universities need to be constantly reflecting on the changes required to respond to changing demands to deliver high quality education and this requires a high calibre of skilled managers to be focused on inspiring and motivating their staff to be creative and innovative in the delivery of education. There is huge change going on in

the whole sector at the moment and there are changes going on within every institution in the UK, and I think that change can have two effects: if it is managed properly, change can have a good effect on the quality of the education, if it is managed badly it could be detrimental because you can lose all of your procedures. You need it to be run well otherwise it can bring down morale in terms how you look after the students and share everything with students., So if it is well planned, it is very important".

Although it can be claimed that, due to the innovative nature of humans, the emergence of innovation takes us back to the very beginning of human history in general and human tool-making in particular, the modern conceptualisation of innovation was begun by Schumpeter (1934).

" Academics are a little bit averse to change, and I think with change management, for example, the changes we have had in funding and the way we deliver education; more work could have been done on managing these changes and getting people involved and making them feel some sense of ownership of the changes otherwise they are going to resist change".

In complete support of the literature and the proposition, one Saudi lecturer said: "There is a relationship, which is a reality and change comes from innovation and discovery and dealing with errors and efforts with information systems are calculated to manage change. Perhaps there is a relationship in case we have introduced something that stimulates innovation and this is what happened in the preparatory year where the students started to study thinking skills, creativity and skills of innovation, and they were given an environment which enabled them to achieve success, the quality of education is one of the innovation's positive outputs, and if we don't have change management we will not have innovation. I see that one of these elements is a must in order to achieve the other.. If we did not have change management like the development of creativity, innovation and focus, we will not get what we want".

Schumpeter (1934) described innovation as the creation of a new element and/or new arrangement of already existing elements. About 50 years later, Kanter (1983) expanded this definition to emphasise the process-based nature of innovation.

Another Saudi who shared the perspective reflected in the literature and the proposition believes: "It is nice to link innovation and change management, because, unfortunately, innovation does not find applause. On the contrary, you may find innovation face problems, innovation needs protection, because it is really does make change happen, and unfortunately not everyone accepts innovations. Change is costly and faces resistance, and resistance comes from the inside, innovation needs a sponsor and not necessarily to show results immediately, you may need years to reap the fruits".

Another British participant in favour of the literature and the proposition said: "I suspect academic staff are very like many other well established professional staff, they can be very resistant to change, and, of course, in that lie two issues; first, not all change is good and not all innovations are good and therefore you do need a perspective whereby any changes are looked at by professional people and they may say it is not appropriate for my teaching or my research and they may be right. On the other hand, the world is changing, science has a huge impact, and you have got to be receptive in your ideas and be prepared to innovate and managers have got to be able to engage and establish that innovation, for example, in the curriculum, in the way students are taught and in the facilities available for study".

As regards the future of innovation, while Vanhaverbeke (2009) and Spradlin (2009) believe open innovation would be the dominant theory, Dvir (2009) highlights co-creation and Hissel (2009) emphasises the innovation chain as the determinant of the future of innovation. Kaiserswerth (2009), by combining the perspectives mentioned, claims that cooperation and open innovation will build the future of innovation.

"Innovation and change management are important and go hand in hand and in previous years we have had lots of innovative initiatives that could have enhanced the quality of service, the quality of education but because the change management process was not well planned, it didn't succeed and they actually managed to lower the quality of education. But if I may combine leadership and strategic management with innovation and change management together then anything is possible. So if we have leadership and a management team to support it, yes, there is a relationship between well planned innovation, change management and the quality of education".

"As long as there has been consultation, while some people may be resist it, if there has been discussion, debates, then it can be moved forward as to what the best ways are and one should always look to the long-term strategy for the institution, for the employees and, most importantly, for the students because it's their education and their future. Yes, I do see a relationship".

"Here we talk about higher education, there is no doubt that higher education drives innovation and innovation develops higher education, and the problem of innovation is that it faces very big challenges and therefore there is a need for change management, and I think we must put innovation always as our top priority and must admit that innovation is costly and innovation faces many challenges, especially from people who have spent a long time in a given sector and who are obstacles to innovation"

6.13. Conclusion

Although not all of the 11 propositions have received the same level of support from Saudi and British academics, taken one by one, these propositions have been proved to be correct and reliable. There are some discrepancies between Saudi and British academics and senior managers in their perspectives regarding the importance of each of the 11 influential factors. In brief, there was more variety in the answers given by the British participants than their Saudi counterparts. While some degree of disagreement with almost all of the 11 propositions were shown by a few British lecturers, Saudi academics demonstrated partial disagreement with only three of the propositions: proposition eight (*The level of Academics' achievements can demonstrate the level of quality of education and the quality of the educational institute*), proposition nine (*Student progress, success and satisfaction is the most, or at least one of the most, important indicators of quality of education*) and proposition ten (*High University/School achievements is one of the signs of having high quality education*).

It is quite normal to have some opposing or neutral points of view so not all the propositions have been backed as strongly as each other. Although some of the Saudi and British academics *disagreed* with a few of the propositions, none of them *totally disagreed* with any of the propositions. After considering the analysed data that was collected through semi-structured interviews with 33 Saudi and 30 British academics and senior managers from six Saudi universities and nine different universities in the UK, all the propositions of this study have received overwhelming support. As is evident from the above discussion, there was consensus among both Saudi and British interviewees regarding average to very strong support of all 11 propositions in this research.

In this research in general, and in this chapter specifically, the intention is not just simply comparing one country to another. In this research Saudi has been partly representing Eastern countries and Britain partly representing Western countries. This study has tried to establish whether or not it is possible to have just one 'Quality Education Model' for both Eastern and Western countries. Otherwise, it was intended to develop a separate 'Quality Education Model', one customised for the Eastern countries, the other for the Western countries. No country, even in the same region, is totally similar so one country cannot fully represent a region. Each of these countries

is considered only as a typical country in their region so they are chosen. The majority of countries in the Middle East are Arab and/or Muslim, thus, Saudi as an Arab country where Islam originated can be acceptable as a typical country in this area. Britain is considered as a typical Western country because it does have considerable similarities to other Western countries in terms of culture, religion and educational system. Fortunately, the findings show that regardless of differences among Eastern and Western countries, Saudi and Britain as partial representatives of Eastern and Western countries have reached a consensus regarding 11 influential factors on the quality of education, consequently, just one model, 'The Education Quality Model' is eminently suitable for both Eastern and Western countries.

As explained in Chapters 5 and 6, the collected data from Saudi and British academics and senior managers has been analysed using the Content Analysis' technique. In the process of content analysis of the interviews conducted with both Saudi as well as British academics and senior managers, the content of each interview was coded, then similar codes were classified into a separate theme, and the degree of repetition of each code and each theme in each interview and all interviews were quantified. As a result, some interesting quantitative findings emerged from the qualitative interviews.

In the post-interview stage (process of data analysis), five Likert scale options (totally agree, agree, neutral, disagree and totally disagree) were considered hypothetically as possible answers to each question/proposition in order to quantify the results of interviews. By considering the words or statements that were used by each interviewee to explain their opinions regarding each question/proposition, the closest among the five options (totally agree, agree, neutral, disagree and totally disagree) was selected to represent each answer of each respondent. For example, if an interviewee said "There is no doubt that appropriate leadership and strategic management has a positive impact on the quality of education", because "There is no doubt" is a strong endorsement, *totally agree* was selected as equivalent to "There is no doubt".

The contents of interviews with Saudi and British lecturers and senior managers have been summarised briefly in quantitative format in the following table. The numbers inside each cell show the number of people (academics) in favour of each option. For instance, out of the 30 British academics who participated in interviews, 24 of them were *Totally Agree* and 6 of them were *Agree* with the first proposition

while none of the academics was *Neutral*, *Disagreed*, or *Totally Disagreed* with this proposition.

Table 6.1. Case-based Summary of the Findings: Saudi and British Perspectives

<i>Research Propositions</i>		Average of the Given Answers by each of 15 Cases/Universities														
		S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	B7	B8	B9
P1	Saudi	TA	A	TA	TA	TA	TA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	British	-	-	-	-	-	-	A	TA	TA	TA	TA	A	TA	TA	TA
P2	Saudi	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	British	-	-	-	-	-	-	TA	TA	A	TA	TA	A	TA	TA	TA
P3	Saudi	TA	A	A	TA	A	TA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	British	-	-	-	-	-	-	TA	A	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	A
P4	Saudi	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	British	-	-	-	-	-	-	A	TA	N	A	TA	TA	A	A	A
P5	Saudi	A	TA	A	TA	TA	A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	British	-	-	-	-	-	-	TA	TA	A	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA
P6	Saudi	TA	A	TA	TA	TA	TA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	British	-	-	-	-	-	-	A	TA	A	TA	TA	A	TA	TA	TA
P7	Saudi	TA	A	TA	TA	TA	A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	British	-	-	-	-	-	-	TA	A	TA	TA	A	A	A	TA	TA
P8	Saudi	N	N	A	A	A	N	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	British	-	-	-	-	-	-	TA	A	A	A	A	N	TA	A	TA
P9	Saudi	A	D	N	A	A	N	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	British	-	-	-	-	-	-	A	TA	TA	A	TA	A	A	TA	TA
P10	Saudi	A	N	N	N	A	A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	British	-	-	-	-	-	-	A	A	N	A	A	N	A	A	A
P11	Saudi	TA	A	A	TA	TA	A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	British	-	-	-	-	-	-	TA	A	A	TA	TA	A	TA	TA	TA

Keys:

TA = Totally Agree

A = Agree

N = Neutral

D = Disagree

TD = Totally Disagree

S1 to S6 and B1 to B9 are the given codenames to each of six Saudi and nine British cases/universities respectively. Due to confidentiality, the identity of these cases cannot be divulged.

Table 6.2. Brief Summary of the Findings: Saudi and British Perspectives (Frequency)

<i>The Research Propositions</i>		Quantification of the Answers Given				
		Totally agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Totally disagree
P1: Having professional and appropriate <i>Leadership and Strategic Management</i> can lead to higher quality education	Saudi	23/33	9/33	1/33	0	0
	British	24/30	6/30	0	0	0
P2: Quality people create quality results so <i>Student, Academic and Staff Recruitment</i> have an impact on the quality of education	Saudi	30/33	3/33	0	0	0
	British	22/30	6/30	1/30	1/30	0
P3: What is supposed to be taught to the student in terms of <i>Syllabus/Curriculum</i> is another determinant of the quality of education	Saudi	22/33	9/33	2/33	0	0
	British	23/30	6/30	0/30	1/30	0
P4: The quality of education depends on the quality of <i>Research/Teaching</i> , which are the main activities at educational institutions	Saudi	23/33	10/33	0	0	0
	British	9/30	17/30	4/30	0	0
P5: <i>Pedagogy</i> , or the suitability of the way in which a syllabus is taught to students can contribute to the quality of education	Saudi	21/33	8/33	4/33	0	0
	British	25/30	4/30	1/30	0	0
P6: Effective and quality <i>Learning and Research Support</i> can lead to higher quality education	Saudi	28/33	5/33	0	0	0
	British	20/30	9/30	1/30	0	0
P7: Reliable and effective <i>Knowledge management</i> can help educational institutions to enhance the quality of their education	Saudi	22/33	10/33	1/33	0	0
	British	15/30	14/30	1/30	0	0
P8: The level of <i>Academics' achievements</i> can demonstrate the level of quality of education and quality of the educational institution	Saudi	8/33	10/33	7/33	8/33	0
	British	8/30	16/30	5/30	1/30	0
P9: <i>Student progress, success and satisfaction</i> is one of the important indicators of the quality of education	Saudi	6/33	11/33	6/33	10/33	0
	British	15/30	12/30	1/30	2/30	0
P10: High <i>University/School achievements</i> are one of the signs of having high quality education	Saudi	10/33	10/33	8/33	5/33	0
	British	4/30	17/30	4/30	5/30	0
P11: Continuous, purposeful and well-planned <i>Innovation and Change Management</i> is one of the keys to high quality education	Saudi	20/33	8/33	5/33	0	0
	British	20/30	7/30	1/30	2/30	0

Source: Developed by the author

Table 6.3. Brief Summary of the Findings: Saudi and British Perspectives (Percentage)

<i>The Research Propositions</i>		Percentage of the Given Answers				
		Totally agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Totally disagree
P1: Having professional and appropriate <i>Leadership and Strategic Management</i> can lead to higher quality education	Saudi	70%	27%	3%	0%	0%
	British	80%	20%	0%	0%	0%
P2: Quality people create quality results so <i>Student, Academic and Staff Recruitment</i> have an impact on the quality of education	Saudi	90%	10%	0%	0%	0%
	British	73.33%	20%	3.33%	3.33%	0%
P3: What is supposed to be taught to the student in terms of <i>Syllabus/Curriculum</i> is another determinant of the quality of education	Saudi	67%	27%	6%	0%	0%
	British	76.66%	20%	0%	3.33%	0%
P4: The quality of education depends on the quality of <i>Research/Teaching</i> , which are the main activities at educational institutions	Saudi	69%	31%	0%	0%	0%
	British	30%	56.66%	13.33%	0%	0%
P5: <i>Pedagogy</i> , or the suitability of the way in which a syllabus is taught to students can contribute to the quality of education	Saudi	63%	25%	12%	0%	0%
	British	83.33%	13.33%	3.33%	0%	0%
P6: Effective and quality <i>Learning and research support</i> can lead to higher quality education	Saudi	85%	15%	0%	0%	0%
	British	66.66%	30%	3.33%	0%	0%
P7: Reliable and effective <i>Knowledge management</i> can help educational institutions to enhance the quality of their education	Saudi	66%	31%	3%	0%	0%
	British	50%	46.66%	3.33%	0%	0%
P8: The level of <i>Academics' achievements</i> can demonstrate the level of quality of education and quality of the educational institution	Saudi	24%	30%	22%	24%	0%
	British	26.66%	53.33%	16.66%	3.33%	0%
P9: <i>Student progress, success and satisfaction</i> is one of the important indicators of the quality of education	Saudi	18%	33%	18%	31%	0%
	British	50%	40%	3.33%	6.66%	0%
P10: High <i>University/School achievements</i> are one of the signs of having high quality education	Saudi	30%	30%	25%	15%	0%
	British	13.33%	56.66%	13.33%	16.66%	0%
P11: Continuous, purposeful and well-planned <i>Innovation and Change Management</i> is one of the keys to high quality education	Saudi	60%	25%	15%	0%	0%
	British	66.66%	23.33%	3.33%	6.66%	0%

By considering the summarised findings in the above table, it is evident that there is a consensus among Saudi and British academics and senior managers of medium to strong support for all the 11 propositions of this research. While no one totally disagreed with the propositions, a few of the interviewees disagreed with 5-6 of the propositions. While the degree of agreement with each of these propositions varied, all the Saudi and British participants believed that the 11 pillars/criteria of quality education are: Leadership and Strategic Management; Students, Academics and Staff Recruitment; Syllabus/Curriculum; Research/Teaching; Pedagogy; Learning and research support; Knowledge management; Academics' achievements; Student progress, success and satisfaction; University/School achievements; and Innovation and Change Management.

As regards the way in which findings are shaped, the collected data from Saudi and British academics and senior managers have been analysed using the Content Analysis' technique. In the process of content analysis of the interviews conducted with both Saudi as well as British academics and senior managers, the content of each interview was coded, then similar codes were classified into a separate theme, and the degree of repetition of each code and each theme in each interview and all interviews were quantified. As a result, some interesting quantitative findings emerged from the qualitative interviews.

This study is built on a 'mainly qualitative' research design with some quantitative elements. Although in purely qualitative research, researchers would rely on their own personal understanding of the data to interpret their findings, interpretation of the findings in this research has been done completely based on these quantitative outputs to ensure unbiased discussion. Interpreting findings based on purely qualitative data may lead to 'researcher bias' that would undermine the validity of discussions and claims; however, this research has avoided this bias by focusing on the quantitative aspects of the findings that are self-evident and cannot be interpreted differently.

If there are no substantial differences between the propositions and the findings, this is due to professional, unbiased and critical analysis of the literature that resulted in correct identification of the influential factors on the quality of education at the literature review stage. The literature review does not reflect the personal opinion of the researcher.



Chapter 7

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Seventh Chapter's Abstract

As will be discussed in detail in this chapter, the researcher has been successful in answering the research question and fulfilling the research aim (to build a new model of quality for education based on the major factors that contribute to education quality) and its 12 objectives (to examine the impact of *Leadership and Strategic Management* in educational institutions on the quality of education; to assess the contribution of appropriate *Student, Academic and Staff Recruitment* to the quality of education; to evaluate the degree to which a quality *Syllabus/Curriculum* is important for quality education; to explore how the quality of education is influenced by *Research/Teaching*; to identify the effects of proper *Pedagogy* on the quality of education; to investigate the correlation between good *Learning and research support* and an increase in the quality of education; to determine the relationship between suitable *knowledge management* in educational institutions and the level of quality of education; to test the extent to which the level of *academics' achievements* can indicate the level of quality of education; to establish the connectivity between *student progress, success and satisfaction* and the perceived quality of education; to evaluate a meaningful relationship between the quality of education and *University/School achievements*; to assess the importance of appropriate *Innovation and Change Management* in higher education institutions for the quality of education; and, in addition, to provide some recommendations to academics and education authorities regarding the ways to improve the quality of education.

By considering the analysed data that was collected through semi-structured interviews with 30 British academics and senior managers from nine different universities in the UK, all the propositions in this study received substantial support. As is evident from the above discussion, there was a consensus among the British interviewees of average to strong support for all 11 propositions in this research.

The main body of the chapter has been dedicated to providing two sets of interrelated recommendations. The initial set is some recommendations for future researchers. Some useful suggestions regarding the topics of research in the area of quality of education have been provided. The second set of recommendations is aimed at government and university/school authorities. Based on the 11 tested and accepted propositions of this research, 11 recommendations have been made.

7.1. Introduction

This chapter summarises the main investigated issues, aims and objectives to provide some recommendations for further research, as well as recommendations to schools/universities regarding how to attain and maintain quality. Quality development in education and higher education has gained attention, particularly over the last decade. Among educational institutions worldwide there have been various responses to this trend, ranging from implementing direct quality measurement scales to self-audit processes (Harvey, 2005). Increasingly, the rationale for quality development has been driven by funding mechanisms (Tippin *et al.*, 2012), accreditation tests (Taylor *et al.*, 2012), keeping pace with international practice (Harvey, 2004), national audits (Bereiter, 2007) and other trends, such as the massive growth in higher education and the influence of information technology (Harvey, 2004, 2005; Harvey & Green, 1993).

Since the 1980s there has been a gradual emergence of what Westerheijden *et al.* (1994) refer to as “new” approaches to quality assessment “*as a result of the expansion of higher education systems in combination with limited budgets, of internationalisation of higher education and of economic competition, of more openness of governments in general and... of ideologies of neo-liberalism and deregulation...*” (Westerheijden *et al.*, 1994, p. 19). Quality monitoring became a mechanism for governments worldwide to tackle these competing factors, and frequently also to disguise the dominant focus on accountability rather than enhancement (Harvey, 2005).

It is generally accepted that any research has its own scope and limitations (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). There are some important issues outwith its scope that can have effect on research, researcher or research participants; however, it is not feasible to consider all the influential factors on a research study because they are beyond the scope of the research (Lancaster, 2007). All research has some limitations (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). The chosen research topic has itself taken more than four years for the researcher to complete, so adding any other variable would have gone beyond its limited time, budget, and manpower. There is no perfect research because it is impossible to assess the possible impact of all the factors that might have an effect on a research, researcher or participants (Bryman and Bell, 2008). Even in a very large-

scale research with wide scope that has big budget and hundreds of researchers to work on it, it is not possible to consider every influential factor on this research.

Furthermore, any research has its specified research question to answer, the research aim and some research objectives to achieve (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). Not only it is not necessary to discuss the issues that are not mentioned in the research question, the research aim or the objectives, but also, many scholars believe that it is inappropriate to consider issues that have nothing to do with the research aim, objectives or the research question (Bryman and Bell, 2008; Cadden *et al.*, 2010; Hattie, 2009).

The research question in this study was “*How do the main education quality drivers have an impact on the quality development of education in general and higher education in particular?*”. The research aim was ‘to build a new model of quality for education based on a Saudi-British consensus regarding the major factors contributing to education quality and after considering other models (such as EFQM) and other authors’ perspectives’. The research objectives were to assess the impact of each of the 11 main ‘education quality drivers’ on the quality of education. As is made clear from the aim, objectives and question, this study did not consider why participants gave such answers or what factors (either macro-environmental or micro-environmental) have an impact on their given answers.

There are so many macro-environmental and micro-environmental elements that might have some effect on the research, researcher, or participants (Cadden *et al.*, 2010). Macro-environmental issues are very widespread and general factors that could affect everything and anything. The effects of macro-environmental factors are generally (but not always) indirect and limited (Agranoff and Radin, 1991). Macro-environmental factors are generally grouped into six main domains including political, economical, socio-cultural, technological, environmental, and legal domains that are known as PESTEL (Agranoff and Radin, 1991).

Similarly, there are many ‘*cultural*’ factors that might have some influence on the research, researcher, or research participants (Schultz and Hinings, 2012). Some of these cultural factors are religion, language, values, norms, perceptions, learning styles, attitudes, etiquettes, expectations, rules, gender role, approaches to problem-solving, patterns of handling emotions, social interactions, decision-making patterns, notions of beauty, literature and even the types of the food participants eat or the types and colours of dress participants wear are part of their culture (Hofstede *et al.*,

2010; Van-den-Berg and Wilderom, 2004). As has been mentioned, considering the possible effects of participants' culture on the variation of the answers given to interview questions has never been one of the research objectives nor it has it ever been within the scope of this research. Even if assessing impact of participants' culture on their answers was one of the research objectives or was within the scope of research, conducting such an assessment would be too complicated because culture has so many aspects (Hattie, 2009). Even if a researcher decides to select limited number of aspects of culture to examine, this research would be non-defensible because this research can assess only a minute impact of culture due to ignoring the vast majority of aspects of culture (Hofstede *et al.*, 2010). The other problem is the way in which culture would be assessed. While some valuable efforts have been made by few scholars such as Hofstede (1984) or Trompenaars (1995) to quantify culture, it cannot be disregarded that culture is a highly subjective issue so it is not possible to measure the exact effect of a particular aspect of culture on participants' answers (Schultz and Hinings, 2012).

Micro-environmental issues are more specific, limited and personal factors with important and direct effects on researchers or participants (Duke and Mallette, 2004). These micro-environmental factors can be divided into domains such as life style, personality, disposable income, level of education, age group, gender, type of job, marital status, sexual orientation, race and possessions (Karahanna *et al.*, 2005). Such issues might well have some effect on research participants and their answers; however, they should be considered only if they are asked in either the research question, aim, research objectives or scope of research (Bloxham and Boyd, 2007).

Chapter 7, as the last chapter, is organised as follows. After the introduction, the research aim and objectives and their coverage are discussed reflecting the concluding part of this chapter. The main body of the chapter is dedicated to providing two sets of interrelated recommendations. The initial set comprises some recommendations to future researchers for further research. Some useful suggestions regarding topics of research in the area of quality of education have been provided. The second set of recommendations is aimed at government and university/school authorities. Based on 11 tested and accepted propositions of this research, 11 recommendations are given.

7.2. Research Aim and Objectives

Any research is expected to have a research question, aim and objectives (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). These three issues should be related directly to each other and support the fulfilment of each other (Bryman and Bell, 2008). In this section the question, aim and objectives of this research are stated.

Research Question

While there are many parameters that can directly or indirectly contribute to the quality of education in general and the quality of higher education in particular, only a limited number of these elements can have an important impact on the quality development of education. Furthermore, the ways in which these ‘quality drivers’ contribute to the quality of education might differ from one another, so the **Research Question** is:

How do the main education quality drivers have an impact on the quality development of education in general and higher education in particular?

The research question was answered first by identifying main ‘quality drivers’ based on literature review. Then, by asking Saudi and British academics and education authorities to share their valuable opinions and experiences about these ‘quality drivers’ and the ways in which these factors influence the quality of education. In fact, the research aim and objectives that are derived directly from the research question would be the required instruments to answer the research question.

Research Aim

This study aims to build a new model of quality for education based on a Saudi-British consensus regarding the major factors contributing to education quality and after considering other models (such as EFQM) and other authors’ perspectives.

The aim of this research (building a model of quality for education) can be achieved only by identifying main ‘education quality drivers’ that are the components of this model. These ‘quality drivers’ would initially be identified based on the literature review. Then the components of the model (‘quality drivers’) as well as the model as a whole would be assessed based on analysis of the collected primary data from Saudi and British academics and education authorities.

Research Objectives

The ‘Research Objectives’ originate directly from the ‘Research Aim’ and its related literature review. In fact, the research objectives are the required leverage to fully achieve the ‘Research Aim’. The aim of this research is building a model of quality of education, so this aim can be achieved only by identifying the main ‘education quality drivers’ that are, in fact, the components of this model. No model can be built without knowing its building blocks. The research objectives are to assess the impact of each of these main ‘education quality drivers’ on the quality of education to ensure the model is built on genuinely influential components/factors. Conducting a literature review is the only reliable way to determine potential ‘education quality drivers’.

Based on the analytical and critical literature review that is discussed in chapters two and three, especially in section 3.3, 11 main factors were identified as having a noticeable effect on the quality of education. These quality drivers are *Leadership and Strategic Management; Students, Academics and Staff Recruitment; Syllabus/Curriculum; Research/Teaching; Pedagogy; Learning and research support; Knowledge management; Academics’ achievements; Student progress, success and satisfaction; University/School achievements; and Innovation and Change Management.*

Building a model for quality of education is the ‘Aim’ of this research. These identified ‘education quality drivers’ can be used to build the model only if each of these elements has an effect on the quality of education. Thus, to fulfil the research aim and objectives, each of these ‘education quality drivers’ needed to be assessed based on analysis of the collected primary data from Saudi and British academics. Assessing the impact of each of these factors that are the building blocks of the model formed the ‘Research Objectives’ of this research. The literature review that helped to

identify these 11 components of the model can be found in section 3.3. After considering the 'Research Aim' as the origin and indicator of objectives, these 11 influential factors on the quality of education, plus the recommendations have shaped the 12 'Research Objectives' of this study as follows:

1. To examine the impact of *Leadership and Strategic Management* in educational institutions on the quality of education;
2. To assess the contribution of appropriate *Student, Academic and Staff Recruitment* to the quality of education;
3. To evaluate the degree to which a quality *Syllabus/Curriculum* is important for quality education;
4. To explore how the quality of education is influenced by *Research/Teaching*;
5. To identify the effects of appropriate *Pedagogy* on the quality of education;
6. To investigate the correlation between good *Learning and research support* and an increase in the quality of education;
7. To determine the relationship between suitable *Knowledge management* in educational institutions and the level of quality of education;
8. To test the extent to which the level of *Academics' achievements* can indicate the level of quality of education;
9. To ascertain the connectivity between *Student progress, success and satisfaction* and the perceived quality of education;
10. To evaluate a meaningful relationship between the quality of education and *University/School* achievements;
11. To assess the importance of appropriate *Innovation and Change Management* in higher education institutions for the quality of education.
12. To provide some recommendations to academics and education authorities regarding ways to improve the quality of education

7.3. Achievement of the Research Aim

7.3.1. Covering of the Research Aim

The aim of the research was "*to build a new model of quality for education based on a Saudi-British consensus regarding the major factors contributing to education quality and after considering other models (such as EFQM) and other authors' perspectives*" and this research has developed 'The Education Quality Model'. So the research aim is achieved. Discussion regarding 'The Education Quality Model' and its development can be found in chapter 3 (Focal Theory: The Education Quality Model), in which sections 3.3-3.6 in particular are dedicated to describing the model. Chapters 5 and 6 discuss details of analysing the primary data collection for testing each dimension of the model.

7.3.2. Towards Modelling Quality

The tendency towards having a single quality model/theory that can universally cover all aspects and all types of sector and organisation has led to the development of over-generalised models that ignore the essential characteristics of different sectors like education. There are some theories/models in quality management such as TQM, TQC, Quality Management System (ISO 9000), and MBNQA (Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award), which have been used by different organisations around the world. One of the best known theories/models in quality management is the EFQM Excellence Model, which has been used as a benchmark in this study due to its partial advantages over other models in terms of scope, practicality, measurability, reliability, and flexibility.

Although the EFQM Excellence Model is a viable and reliable model/theory for implementing quality in various organisations, it is very general and disregards the particular requirements of different sectors. While universities/schools and research centres are one type of organisation, they are very different to other organisations in terms of the services they provide, the service providers, the recipients of services, and the nature of education and its unique requirements. So, relying on a general theory/model like the EFQM Excellence Model can be useful, but it may sabotage the unique characteristics and requirements of higher education institutions.

Consequently, one solution for the creation and advancement of the quality of education/research and the quality of educational/research organisations is to develop a customised model of quality for education and research, which acknowledges all the requisite and specialised aspects of education and research.

It is a widely accepted fact that 'if something is worth doing, it is worth doing well'. According to UNESCO (The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), having higher education in any country is considered one of the most important signs of a high standard of living and the quality of life in that country. The future of nations depends considerably on educated people who can perform at a high level, help their economy flourish and govern their countries properly (Blom and Meyers, 2003). The key to having educated people is having quality tertiary institutions (Aspin and Chapman, 1994; Baker, 1997). However, the quality of education/ higher education institutions may be damaged without having a well-designed and customised quality model for these universities and research centres (Stoddart, 2004; Van Berkel and Wolfhagen, 2002).

This study primarily tries to build a new model of quality for education by considering other models and other authors' perspectives in general and other quality models (e.g. EFQM model) in particular. The research aim was to develop a customised model/theory of Quality for Education based on the EFQM Excellence Model by consulting Saudi and British academics and senior education managers.

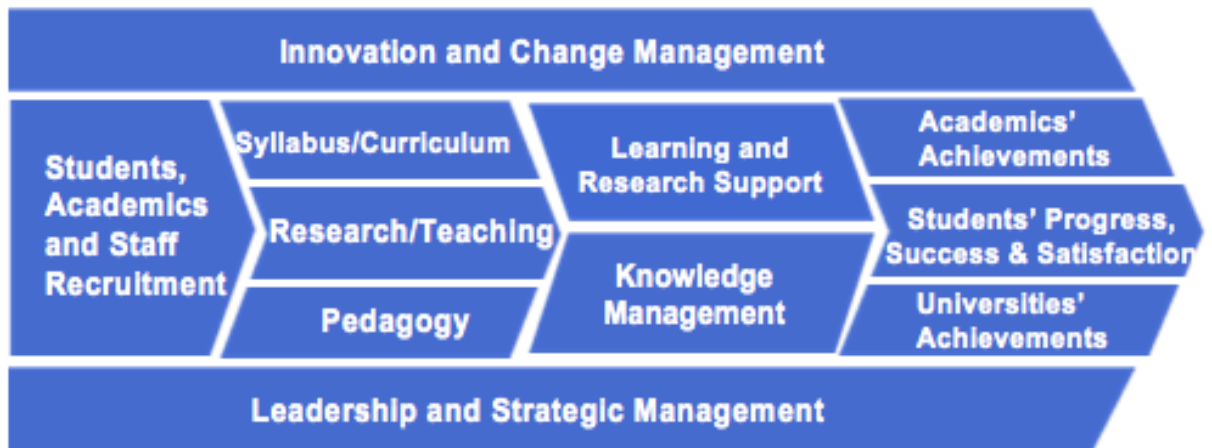
7.3.3. The Education Quality Model

While there are many parameters that can directly or indirectly contribute to the quality of education in general and the quality of higher education in particular, only a limited number of these elements can have important impact on the quality development of education. Mainly built on the Literature Review in the second chapter, 11 critical success factors were identified that together form the pillars of a quality education system. Each of these factors, even taken separately, possibly has an effect on the quality of education; however, a synergistic combination of them is likely to lead to reliable quality in education. In this research, an attempt was made to arrange these influential factors in a meaningful and logical order to build a customised model for quality in education, which the author has called “**The Education Quality Model**”. Figure 7.1 demonstrates the Education Quality Model. The 11 factors that play crucial roles in creating, maintaining and developing the quality of education are as follows:

- **Leadership and Strategic Management** (Cartwright, 2007; Husrn, 2009)
- **Student, Academic and Staff Recruitment** (Hattie, 2009; Taylor *et al.*, 2012)
- **Syllabus/Curriculum** (Harvey, 2005; King *et al.*, 2003)
- **Research/Teaching** (Bloxham and Boyd, 2007; Kennedy, 2009)
- **Pedagogy** (Roelofs and Terwel, 2009; Stoddart, 2004)
- **Learning and research support** (Largrosen *et al.*, 2004; Spradlin, 2009)
- **Knowledge management** (Billig and Waterman, 2003; Kaiserswerth, 2009)
- **Academics’ achievements** (Bereiter, 2007; Knight and Yorke, 2003)
- **Student progress, success and satisfaction** (Erdem, 2009; Jessop *et al.*, 2012)
- **University/School achievements** (Cousin, 2008; Resnick, 2007);
- **Innovation and Change Management** (Amosa and Cooper, 2006; Dvir, 2009)

These 11 factors are arranged in this form due to the view that the components of this model shape a system that changes its inputs (students, academics and staff) into appropriate outputs (academics’ achievements, student progress, success and satisfaction, university/school achievements) through sets of well-managed and quality processes and systems (syllabus/curriculum, research/teaching, pedagogy, knowledge management, etc.)

Figure 7.1: The Education Quality Model



Source: developed for this research

The synergistic arrangement of the different influential elements on the quality of education to create the Education Quality Model should guarantee long-lasting and reliable provision and continuity of quality at any education and higher education institution.

It is not only the combination of the elements in the Education Quality Model, but also each and every one of these factors is expected to contribute considerably towards the achievement and maintenance of high quality education at universities and other educational institutions.

7.4. Fulfilment of the Research Objectives

7.4.1 Achieving the Research Objectives

This research had 12 objectives. The first 11 objectives were fulfilled by testing 11 relevant propositions and each proposition was developed directly based on the equivalent research objectives. In other word, the objective fulfilment is the direct result of collecting/analysing primary data regarding these objectives and conducting a literature review as reflected in this section. The final objective (providing recommendations) is covered in the recommendations sections of this chapter. While there are many parameters that can directly or indirectly contribute to the quality of education (Sadler, 2007), in general, and the quality of higher education in particular, a limited number of these elements can have more impact on the quality development of education (Amosa & Cooper, 2006).

The literature review helped to narrow down the list of influential factors on the quality of education to the 11 critical success factors. Then, in the field research in the 15 cases/universities, conducting semi-structured interviews with 33 Saudi and 30 British academics and education authorities, the relevance and impacts of each of these 11 factors was tested. The first 11 objectives of the research are about assessing the effects of each of these 11 factors. The first objective is about testing the possible impact of one of these 11 factors, which is '*Leadership and Strategic Management*'. The second objective focuses on another factor (*Students, Academic, and Staff Recruitment*). In a similar way, the rest of the first 11 objectives were about the remaining 11 factors.

7.4.2 Relationship between Objectives and the Tested Propositions

As the following table demonstrates there is a direct and one-to-one relationship between each *Research Objective* and each *Research Proposition*. All of these propositions were tested and accepted so all of these objectives were achieved.

Table 7.1. Connectivity of the Research Objectives with the Propositions

<i>The Research Objectives</i>	<i>Related Research Propositions</i>
O1: To examine the impact of <i>Leadership and Strategic Management</i> in educational institutions on the quality of education	P1: Having professional and appropriate <i>Leadership and Strategic Management</i> can lead to higher quality education
O2: To assess the contribution of appropriate <i>Student, Academic and Staff Recruitment</i> to the quality of education	P2: Quality people create quality results so <i>Student, Academic and Staff Recruitment</i> have a major impact on the quality of education
O3: To evaluate the degree to which a quality <i>Syllabus/Curriculum</i> is important for quality education	P3: <i>Syllabus/ Curriculum</i> is another determinant of quality in education
O4: To explore how the quality of education is influenced by <i>Research/Teaching</i>	P4: Quality of education depends on the quality of <i>Research/Teaching</i> , which are the main activities at educational institutions
O5: To identify the effects of appropriate <i>Pedagogy</i> on the quality of education	P5: <i>Pedagogy</i> or suitability of the way in which the syllabus is taught to students can contribute to the quality of education
O6: To investigate the correlation between good <i>Learning and research support</i> and an increase in the quality of education	P6: Effective and quality <i>Learning and research support</i> can lead to higher quality education
O7: To determine the relationship between suitable <i>Knowledge management</i> in educational institutions and the level of quality of education	P7: Reliable and effective <i>Knowledge management</i> can help educational institutions to enhance the quality of their education
O8: To test the extent to which the level of <i>Academics' achievements</i> can indicate the level of quality of education	P8: The level of <i>Academics' achievements</i> can demonstrate the level of quality of education and quality of the educational institutions
O9: To ascertain the connectivity between <i>Student progress, success and satisfaction</i> and the perceived quality of education	P9: <i>Student progress, success and satisfaction</i> is one of indicators of quality of education
O10: To evaluate a meaningful relationship between the quality of education and <i>University/School achievements</i>	P10: <i>University/School achievements</i> are one of the signs of having high quality education
O11: To assess the importance of appropriate <i>Innovation and Change Management</i> in higher education institutions for the quality of education	P11: Continuous, purposeful and well-planned <i>Innovation and Change Management</i> is one of the keys to high quality education

7.4.3. Covering of the Research Objectives

Discussions regarding the fulfilment of each of these 11 objectives of this research are as follows (to read the full discussion regarding each objective, the relevant sections from different chapters are provided):

Objective 1: Leadership and Strategic Management

Seemingly, with a few exceptions, industrial and business organisations in general create and maintain higher quality and customer value than educational institutions. It is believed that one of the reasons for lower quality at universities/colleges compared to for-profit organisations is the lack of professional and trained leaders to manage their organisations strategically. Strong and visionary leaders who can think and plan strategically are necessary for high quality education in higher education. Schools and universities, like other organisations, need qualified leaders. The theoretical aspect of this objective was discussed in chapter three section 3.3.1, and practical analysis and sense-making of the collected primary data can be found in chapter five, section 5.2, section 5.3 as well as chapter six in section 6.2.

Objective 2: Student, Academic and Staff Recruitment

If a school or university recruits under-qualified students, academics and even staff, quality of education can be damaged. The quality of education is influenced not only by various systems, processes and plans but also by the people who provide the educational services as well as those who receive these services. Therefore, if educational institutions really care about the quality of education in their institutions, they should illustrate their commitment to quality by recruiting only high-calibre students, academics and non-academic staff. People-related quality difficulties can have at least three interrelated causes. Each objective has both theoretical and practical dimensions. The discussion regarding the theoretical side of this objective is available in chapter three, section 3.3.2. On the other hand, practical analysis and sense-making of the collected primary data can be found in sections 5.4 and 5.5 in chapter five, and section 6.3 in chapter six is dedicated to analysis and testing of the data gathered during practical research.

Objective 3: *Syllabus/Curriculum*

The quality of education depends on what is being taught (the syllabus/curriculum) at schools and universities. The main purpose of establishing and running a university/school is educating students/researchers and preparing them for better careers/future. This aim can be achieved if the university/school develops and follows an appropriate and quality syllabus/curriculum. It would be pointless to have high-quality students, academics/teachers, facilities, strategies, and leaders, but not have a syllabus/curriculum of appropriate quality. All these factors would only be worthwhile if they supported the delivery of quality education based on a high quality syllabus/curriculum. This objective was fully covered by the literature review in chapter three section 3.3.3 as well as relevant primary data analysis which is highlighted in chapter five (sections 5.6 and 5.7) and chapter six in section 6.4.

Objective 4: *Research/Teaching*

Provision of teaching (taught aspect) of good quality and having more and quality research (research aspect) are other factors necessary for good quality education. As argued before, having an appropriate and high quality syllabus/curriculum that highlights what topics are supposed to be discussed is necessary for quality education; however, there is an issue that is equally or even more important than the syllabus/curriculum, which is the quality of the actual teaching and/or research activities. Quality education relies on the availability of quality teaching and research. The theoretical aspect of this objective was discussed in chapter three, section 3.3.4, and practical analysis and sense-making of the collected primary data can be found in chapter five, sections 5.8 and 5.9 as well as chapter six in section 6.5.

Objective 5: *Pedagogy*

The way in which a subject is taught is another key factor. Traditional teaching methods are no longer credible. Quality education and higher education have many advantages, though creating and maintaining such quality relies on fulfilling certain requirements. One of the requirements of quality education is having quality pedagogy. In other words, education/higher education and its related quality have many dimensions, one of which is the quality of teaching methods in these academic institutions. Ineffective and inadequate teaching methods would sharply reduce quality. The discussion regarding the theoretical side of this objective is available in

chapter three, section 3.3.5. On the other hand, practical analysis and sense-making of the collected primary data can be found in sections 5.10 and 5.11 in chapter five and section 6.6 in chapter six.

Objective 6: *Learning and research support*

Having a proper classroom, with adequate teaching facilities, a comprehensive library and online library, and having trained and helpful staff and processes that facilitate learning and research are necessary. Schools, colleges, universities and other educational organisations are established to provide opportunities of learning and/or conducting research for students/researchers/learners. The fulfilment of such a mission depends on some factors, one of which is the availability and quality of the support provided to students/researchers in studying and/or doing their research. This objective was fully covered by the literature review in chapter three, section 3.3.6 as well as relevant primary data analysis which is highlighted in chapter five (sections 5.12 and 5.13), and six in section 6.7.

Objective 7: *Knowledge management*

Information overload can be as damaging as a lack of information, so there is a need for a system to manage the collection, creation, storage and distribution of knowledge and information. Quality of education and research are directly connected to the capability of a university, college, school, or research centre to manage the knowledge required by their students and researchers properly. Without the necessary knowledge/information and without the required systematic processes and system for the creation, updating and distribution of this knowledge, research and educational institutions would be faced with a crisis and a reduction in the quality of the education and/or research support provided. The theoretical aspect of this objective was discussed in chapter three, section 3.3.7, and practical analysis and sense-making of the collected primary data can be found in chapter five, sections 5.14 and 5.15 as well as chapter six, section 6.8.

Objective 8: *Academics' achievements*

A university/school cannot be considered a quality institution if its academics/teachers do not have the opportunity to be successful in terms of research, publication, and recognition. The quality of education depends on the quality of

educators. To put it simply, the quality of education is related to the main educational service providers, lecturers and teachers. It is unlikely that an unsuccessful academic/teacher can provide a high quality educational service to students or develop successful students. The discussion regarding the theoretical side of this objective is available in chapter three, section 3.3.8. On the other hand, practical analysis and sense-making of the collected primary data can be found in sections 5.16 and 5.17 in chapter five, and section 6.9 in chapter six is dedicated to analysis and testing of the data gathered during practical research.

Objective 9: *Student progress, success and satisfaction*

The most important customers of educational institutions are students. Therefore, it makes sense to measure the quality of a university/school in terms of the progress, success and satisfaction of its students. While there are many different quality models/theories each of which has some differences from the others, almost all of them have reached a consensus on one issue, which is their emphasis on the measurement of quality based on the perspective of the main customer/stakeholder. The only client and one of the most important stakeholders of any educational institution is the student. Therefore, it makes sense to measure the quality of a university/school in terms of the progress, success and satisfaction of its students. This objective was fully covered by the literature review in chapter three, section 3.3.9 as well as relevant primary data analysis which is highlighted in chapter five (sections 5.18 and 5.19) and chapter six in section 6.10.

Objective 10: *University/School achievements*

University/school success is another sign of having a quality education system. This can be measured based on the ranking, amount of grants received and the rate of growth of these institutions. It is expected that good quality universities/schools will provide good quality education. One of the indicators of the quality of education is the degree of excellence of the institution that provides this education compared to other educational/research organisations. University/school success is another sign of having a quality education system. The theoretical aspect of this objective was discussed in chapter three, section 3.3.10, and practical analysis and sense-making of the collected primary data can be found in chapter five, sections 5.20 and 5.21 as well as chapter six in section 6.11.

Objective 11: *Innovation and Change Management*

Innovation is change but innovation will fail if there is no adequate change management system to support it. Education, directly or indirectly, is about innovation and development in the different sciences and fields of study; therefore, a higher level of innovation can represent a higher quality of education. There is a consensus among different authors that innovation is the lifeblood of any organisation. The findings of this research show that universities and schools should be a source of innovation and prepare students/researchers to be innovative, so it is expected that universities and schools be innovative in almost everything they do. The discussion regarding the theoretical side of this objective is available in chapter three, section 3.3.11. On the other hand, practical analysis and sense-making of the collected primary data can be found in sections 5.22 and 5.23 in chapter five and section 6.12 in chapter six which are dedicated to analysis and testing of the data gathered during practical research.

7.5. Outline of Methodology

The study relies on the perspective of realism and, as a multiple case study, it utilises a mainly qualitative research design that employs the semi-structured interview as its research instrument. Unlike many other similar pieces of research, this study has adopted an ‘inductive’ approach to build a new theory regarding the quality of education, instead of testing one of the existing models. The primary data in this study was collected by interviewing 33 Saudi and 30 British academics and senior education managers from 15 cases/universities (six Saudi and nine different universities in the UK).

The philosophical position of this study is realism due to its match with the research aim and question. Realism is the philosophical position that is most suitable to this topic because, according to Saunders, “*Realism’s essence is that what the senses show us is reality, is the truth: that objects have an existence independent of the human mind*” (Saunders *et al.*, 2009 p. 114).

That is to say, the research approach contains two domains: deduction and induction. The deductive approach is characterised by scientific principles as moving from theory to data. Induction, however, is characterised by the importance of human aspects that relate to the research issue, understanding of the research context, gathering qualitative data, and flexibility to change the research structure during the research process and less attention to generalisation. This research relies on an inductive approach to build a new theory because there is no comprehensive and customised theory regarding the quality of education.

Qualitative research design was considered to be the most suitable research design for conducting this research built on the argument by Cooper and Schindler (2008, p. 162) that “*qualitative research is ideal if you want to extract... motivations, perceptions ...*” from the participants in it. The main focus of the qualitative method in answering the questions “how” and “why” makes this more suitable than the quantitative method which is based mainly on the measurement of things and focuses on answering questions such as “how much”, “how many”, “when” and “who” (Cooper and Schindler, 2008, p. 164). Also important is that the primary aim of qualitative enquiry is related to “*understanding and interpreting*” while quantitative enquiry has its primary focus “*describing, explaining and predicting*” (Cooper and Schindler, 2008, p. 164).

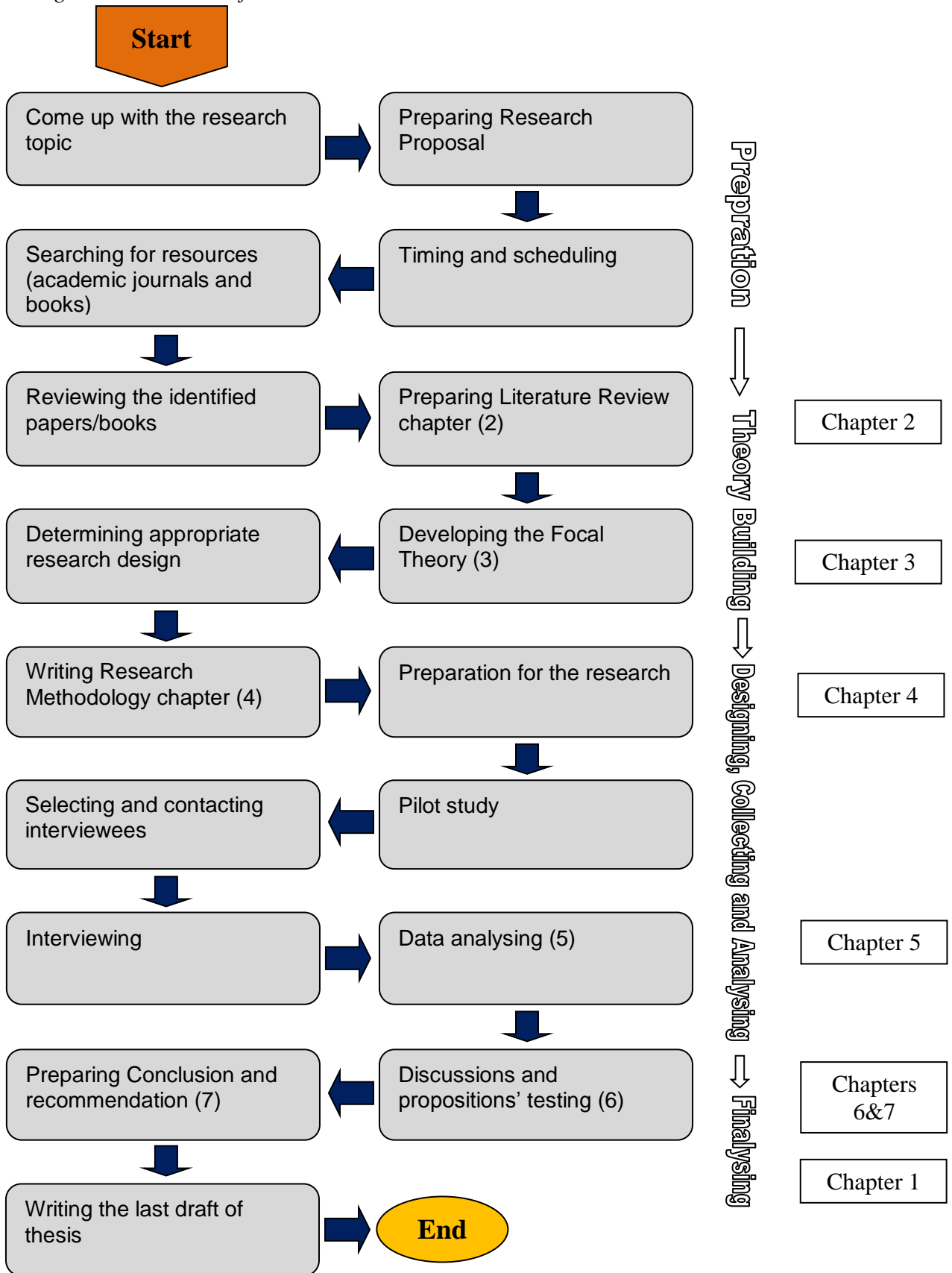
Among the different research strategies, the case study in general and multiple case studies, in particular, are identified as appropriate for this research. According to Yin (2009), case studies are suitable for research that looks for a profound understanding of a phenomenon on a limited scale, rather than a superficial exploration of a wide range of phenomena. Understanding the roots of the quality of education by focusing on a limited number of universities in one country made multiple case studies the best choice for this study.

Interviews are the most suitable instrument when the research topic requires a qualitative approach (Cooper and Schindler, 2008). However, according to Saunders *et al.* (2009), there are three types of interview: structured, semi-structured and unstructured. The semi-structured interview was considered to be the most suitable method to develop this research. From six Saudi and nine British universities, 33 Saudi and 30 British academics and education managers participated in the research.

The stratified sampling method, which is one type of probability sampling, was employed to collect data from British interviewees. A total of 120 potential participants were chosen and contacted from nine universities in the UK. Of these 120, 30 people agreed to take part in this research by giving an interview. The response rate was 25%, which is considered to be average to good. A total of 33 Saudi academics and education managers granted the researcher's request and participated in interviews. 33 out of 120 represents a response rate of 27.5%, which is a good rate.

7.6. Research Process

Figure 7.2: Process of Research in this Thesis



7.7. Recommendations for Further Research

Quality of education is a very wide area of research that still needs further attention by other researchers. By considering the research conducted in this study, the following topics and issues can be recommended to future researchers for further research in this area:

- A) The geographical scope of this research was limited to two countries: the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom. Other research could cover another country or more than two countries in one piece of research.
- B) This study only selects one Middle Eastern country and one European one. However, it is possible to have a comparative study of two or more countries in one region to establish possible similarities and differences in their perspectives regarding the quality of education.
- C) Based on the methodological perspective, this research has relied mainly on a qualitative research design and it used semi-structured interviews for data collection. Other researchers could use a quantitative or mixed research design with different data collection tools.
- D) In this research the data was collected from academics and senior education managers but other research may focus on the perspectives of other stakeholders, such as students.
- E) The validity of the Education Quality Model could be tested in different countries to see if any possible adjustments in the model are necessary if this model is to be used in other countries
- F) This research has focused on the most influential factors that influence the quality of education, though other research could consider other factors too. This could lead to a model with more than 11 elements.
- G) For practical purposes, it is recommended that information systems researchers consider developing software based on this model. This software could be used in different universities and schools to check and monitor the quality of education by assessing all the influential factors in the model.
- H) It would be useful to test just one of the elements of the model in more depth in more than two countries.

7.8. Relationship between Objectives, Findings & Recommendations

All of the recommendations originate very directly from the collected data and findings. In chapters 5 and 6, 11 propositions that are associated with the first 11 Research Objectives are tested based on the collated primary data. For each of these 11 accepted propositions one recommendation is given. So there is a one-to-one relationship between the main 11 findings and the 11 suggested recommendations.

Due to importance of each of the 11 identified ‘quality drivers’ and to make sure their impact is considered seriously, the author has tried to provide at least one-page-long recommendations about each of these factors. Although some of the details may be mentioned earlier in previous chapters, they are repeated here for emphasis. Higher education authorities may just read the recommendations given instead of reading the whole thesis so it is necessary to give enough detail in each recommendation.

The content of the interviews with Saudi and British lecturers and education managers have been summarised briefly in quantitative format in the following table. The numbers inside each cell show the number of academics that are in favour of each option.

As is evident from the following tables, there is a consensus among Saudi and British academics and senior managers who give medium to strong support for all the 11 objectives of this research. While nobody *totally disagreed* with the objectives/propositions, a few of the interviewees *disagreed* with 5-6 of the objectives /propositions. Although the degree of agreement with each of these objectives /propositions varied, all the Saudi and British participants believed that the 11 pillars/criteria of quality education are: Leadership and Strategic Management; Students, Academics and Staff Recruitment; Syllabus/Curriculum; Research/Teaching; Pedagogy; Learning and research support; Knowledge management; Academics’ achievements; Student progress, success and satisfaction; University/School achievements; and Innovation and Change Management.

Table 7.2. Support of the Research Objectives by the Findings (Frequency)

<i>The Research Objectives</i>		Quantification of the Answers Given				
		Totally agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Totally disagree
O1: To examine the impact of <i>Leadership and Strategic Management</i> in educational institutions on the quality of education	Saudi	23/33	9/33	1/33	0	0
	British	24/30	6/30	0	0	0
O2: To assess the contribution of appropriate <i>Student, Academic and Staff Recruitment</i> to the quality of education	Saudi	30/33	3/33	0	0	0
	British	22/30	6/30	1/30	1/30	0
O3: To evaluate the degree to which a quality <i>Syllabus/Curriculum</i> is important for quality education	Saudi	22/33	9/33	2/33	0	0
	British	23/30	6/30	0/30	1/30	0
O4: To explore how the quality of education is influenced by <i>Research/Teaching</i>	Saudi	23/33	10/33	0	0	0
	British	9/30	17/30	4/30	0	0
O5: To identify the effects of appropriate <i>Pedagogy</i> on the quality of education	Saudi	21/33	8/33	4/33	0	0
	British	25/30	4/30	1/30	0	0
O6: To investigate the correlation between good <i>Learning and research support</i> and an increase in the quality of education	Saudi	28/33	5/33	0	0	0
	British	20/30	9/30	1/30	0	0
O7: To determine the relationship between suitable <i>Knowledge management</i> in educational institutions and the level of quality of education	Saudi	22/33	10/33	1/33	0	0
	British	15/30	14/30	1/30	0	0
O8: To test the extent to which the level of <i>Academics' achievements</i> can indicate the level of quality of education	Saudi	8/33	10/33	7/33	8/33	0
	British	8/30	16/30	5/30	1/30	0
O9: To ascertain the connectivity between <i>Student progress, success and satisfaction</i> and the perceived quality of education	Saudi	6/33	11/33	6/33	10/33	0
	British	15/30	12/30	1/30	2/30	0
O10: To evaluate a meaningful relationship between the quality of education and <i>University/School achievements</i>	Saudi	10/33	10/33	8/33	5/33	0
	British	4/30	17/30	4/30	5/30	0
O11: To assess the importance of appropriate <i>Innovation and Change Management</i> in higher education institutions for the quality of education	Saudi	20/33	8/33	5/33	0	0
	British	20/30	7/30	1/30	2/30	0

Source: Developed by the author

Table 7.3. Support of the Research Objectives by the Findings (Percentages)

<i>The Research Objectives</i>		Percentages of Answers Given				
		Totally agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Totally disagree
O1: To examine the impact of <i>Leadership and Strategic Management</i> in educational institutions on the quality of education	Saudi	70%	27%	3%	0%	0%
	British	80%	20%	0%	0%	0%
O2: To assess the contribution of appropriate <i>Student, Academic and Staff Recruitment</i> to the quality of education	Saudi	90%	10%	0%	0%	0%
	British	73.33%	20%	3.33%	3.33%	0%
O3: To evaluate the degree to which a quality <i>Syllabus/Curriculum</i> is important for quality education	Saudi	67%	27%	6%	0%	0%
	British	76.66%	20%	0%	3.33%	0%
O4: To explore how the quality of education is influenced by <i>Research/Teaching</i>	Saudi	69%	31%	0%	0%	0%
	British	30%	56.66%	13.33%	0%	0%
O5: To identify the effects of appropriate <i>Pedagogy</i> on the quality of education	Saudi	63%	25%	12%	0%	0%
	British	83.33%	13.33%	3.33%	0%	0%
O6: To investigate the correlation between good <i>Learning and research support</i> and an increase in the quality of education	Saudi	85%	15%	0%	0%	0%
	British	66.66%	30%	3.33%	0%	0%
O7: To determine the relationship between suitable <i>Knowledge management</i> in educational institutions and the level of quality of education	Saudi	66%	31%	3%	0%	0%
	British	50%	46.66%	3.33%	0%	0%
O8: To test the extent to which the level of <i>Academics' achievements</i> can indicate the level of quality of education	Saudi	24%	30%	22%	24%	0%
	British	26.66%	53.33%	16.66%	3.33%	0%
O9: To ascertain the connectivity between <i>Student progress, success and satisfaction</i> and the perceived quality of education	Saudi	18%	33%	18%	31%	0%
	British	50%	40%	3.33%	6.66%	0%
O10: To evaluate a meaningful relationship between the quality of education and <i>University/School achievements</i>	Saudi	30%	30%	25%	15%	0%
	British	13.33%	56.66%	13.33%	16.66%	0%
O11: To assess the importance of appropriate <i>Innovation and Change Management</i> in higher education institutions for the quality of education	Saudi	60%	25%	15%	0%	0%
	British	66.66%	23.33%	3.33%	6.66%	0%

Source: Developed by the author

As it is illustrated in the following table, there is a direct and one-to-one relationship between each *Research Objective*, *Proposition* and each of the given *Recommendations*. All of these propositions are tested and accepted based on the findings (see chapters 5&6) so all of the stated recommendations are directly driven by the findings.

Table 7.4. Connectivity of the Propositions & Objectives with the Recommendations

<i>The Research Objectives</i>	<i>Propositions/ Findings</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>
O1: To examine the impact of <i>Leadership and Strategic Management</i> in educational institutions on the quality of education	P1	7.9. Recommendations on Leadership and Strategic Management
O2: To assess the contribution of appropriate <i>Student, Academic and Staff Recruitment</i> to the quality of education	P2	7.10. Recommendations on Student, Academic and Staff Recruitment
O3: To evaluate the degree to which a quality <i>Syllabus/Curriculum</i> is important for quality education	P3	7.11. Recommendations on the Syllabus/Curriculum
O4: To explore how the quality of education is influenced by <i>Research/Teaching</i>	P4	7.12. Recommendations on Research/Teaching
O5: To identify the effects of appropriate <i>Pedagogy</i> on the quality of education	P5	7.13. Recommendations on Pedagogy
O6: To investigate the correlation between good <i>Learning and research support</i> and an increase in the quality of education	P6	7.14. Recommendations on Learning and research support
O7: To determine the relationship between suitable <i>Knowledge management</i> in educational institutions and the level of quality of education	P7	7.15. Recommendations on Knowledge management
O8: To test the extent to which the level of <i>Academics' achievements</i> can indicate the level of quality of education	P8	7.16. Recommendations on Academics' Achievements
O9: To ascertain the connectivity between <i>Student progress, success and satisfaction</i> and the perceived quality of education	P9	7.17. Recommendations on Student progress, success and satisfaction
O10: To evaluate a meaningful relationship between the quality of education and <i>University/School achievements</i>	P10	7.18. Recommendations on University/School achievements
O11: To assess the importance of appropriate <i>Innovation and Change Management</i> in higher education institutions for the quality of education	P11	7.19. Recommendations on Innovation and Change Management

A one-to-one relationship between the research objectives, propositions, findings and the given recommendations can be seen in the following table.

Table 7.5. Connectivity of the Findings, Propositions & Objectives with the Recommendations

<i>The Research Objectives</i>	<i>Propositions</i>	<i>Findings</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>
O1: To examine the impact of <i>Leadership and Strategic Management</i> in educational institutions on the quality of education	P1	5.2, 5.3 & 6.2	7.9. Recommendations on Leadership and Strategic Management
O2: To assess the contribution of appropriate <i>Student, Academic and Staff Recruitment</i> to the quality of education	P2	5.4, 5.5 & 6.3	7.10. Recommendations on Student, Academic and Staff Recruitment
O3: To evaluate the degree to which a quality <i>Syllabus/Curriculum</i> is important for quality education	P3	5.6, 5.7 & 6.4	7.11. Recommendations on the Syllabus/Curriculum
O4: To explore how the quality of education is influenced by <i>Research/Teaching</i>	P4	5.8, 5.9 & 6.5	7.12. Recommendations on Research/Teaching
O5: To identify the effects of appropriate <i>Pedagogy</i> on the quality of education	P5	5.10, 5.11 & 6.6	7.13. Recommendations on Pedagogy
O6: To investigate the correlation between good <i>Learning and research support</i> and an increase in the quality of education	P6	5.12, 5.13 & 6.7	7.14. Recommendations on Learning and research support
O7: To determine the relationship between suitable <i>Knowledge management</i> in educational institutions and the level of quality of education	P7	5.14, 5.15 & 6.8	7.15. Recommendations on Knowledge management
O8: To test the extent to which the level of <i>Academics' achievements</i> can indicate the level of quality of education	P8	5.16, 5.17 & 6.9	7.16. Recommendations on Academics' Achievements
O9: To ascertain the connectivity between <i>Student progress, success and satisfaction</i> and the perceived quality of education	P9	5.18, 5.19 & 6.10	7.17. Recommendations on Student progress, success and satisfaction
O10: To evaluate a meaningful relationship between the quality of education and <i>University/School achievements</i>	P10	5.20, 5.21 & 6.11	7.18. Recommendations on University/School achievements
O11: To assess the importance of appropriate <i>Innovation and Change Management</i> in higher education institutions for the quality of education	P11	5.22, 5.23 & 6.12	7.19. Recommendations on Innovation and Change Management

The following **Recommendations** are based on the 11 **Findings** and **propositions** that have fulfilled the 12 **Research Objectives**:

7.9. Recommendations on Leadership and Strategic Management

Based on the collected data it seems that, some industrial and business organisations in general create and maintain higher quality and customer value than some educational institutions. Possibly one of the reasons for lower quality at some universities/colleges compared to for-profit organisations is putting less emphasis on recruiting professional and trained leaders to manage their organisations strategically.

Strong and visionary leaders who can think and plan strategically are necessary for high quality education in higher education. Schools and universities, like other organisations, need qualified leaders.

A less developed long-term strategies and strategic management can be considered as one of the roots of unstable quality at universities and schools. Day-to-day planning and management, instead of long-term and strategic management, can damage the quality and performance of those educational institutions that disregard strategic management. Strategic management is not just about planning; it is about environmental analysis, strategy development, strategy implementation, and strategic review and improvement. So the solution to this problem is not using the professional services of management consultancy companies to develop a strategic plan for them. While these consultancy companies can prepare good strategies and strategic plans, there is need for more engagements by universities' vice-chancellor and staff (Evans, 2008).

One issue that may intensify the matter of having less professional leadership at some universities and colleges is the view that some vice-chancellors of higher education institutions may not consider leadership of their institution as a full-time and serious job. Some of vice-chancellors may continue their teaching, research, and publication jobs alongside their leadership job. Sometimes, the amount of time and effort they spend on their non-leadership jobs is rather more than their official job as leaders.

7.10. Recommendations on Student, Academic and Staff

Recruitment

The quality of education is influenced not only by varied systems, processes and plans but also by the people who provide the educational services as well as those who receive these services, so if educational institutions really care about the quality of education in their institutions, they should demonstrate this intention by recruiting only high-calibre students, academics and non-academic staff.

People-related quality difficulties can have at least three interrelated causes. Sometimes low quality education is due to recruiting under-qualified students who would not learn and benefit from existing quality academics/teachers and staff. Setting low entry or very easily fulfilled entry requirements for prospective students/researchers could end up attracting inappropriate or untalented students/researchers (Torrance, 2007).

Another people-related difficulty connected to the quality of education is related to the main educational service providers, the lecturers and teachers. Quality academics/teachers are those who not only are expert in their own fields but also are capable of conveying their knowledge and skills to their students fully and in ways that are understandable by the average student. Some academics are excellent researchers, but they may not be able to teach their research skills to their students and train prospective researchers, so these academics do not enhance the quality of education.

Last but not least, another people-centred difficulty is related non-academic members of staff who work as administrators, IT technicians and librarians at educational institutions. Education does not just happen inside classrooms through academics/teachers; it also relies on staff members who have roles in recruiting, supporting, motivating students and maintaining the universities'/schools' teaching facilities for use by students. So it is essential to recruit and train high quality staff.

There cannot be any guarantee of quality in education if a school or university recruits under-qualified students, academics and administrative staff. It is not reasonable to expect high quality performance from inappropriate staff. Quality people create quality results so 'Student, Academic and Staff Recruitment' has major consequences for the quality of education.

7.11. Recommendations on the Syllabus/Curriculum

The main purpose of establishing and running a university/school is educating students/researchers and preparing them for a better career/future. This aim can be achieved if the university/school develops and follows an appropriate syllabus/curriculum. It would be pointless to have high quality students, academics/teachers, facilities, strategies, and leaders without a syllabus/curriculum of appropriate quality. All these factors are only worthwhile if they support the delivery of a quality education based on a quality syllabus/curriculum.

Undoubtedly, the syllabus/curriculum should be reviewed, modified and adjusted to meet the requirements of the changing environment and expectations of students, their parents, society, employers and governments. It is pointless to teach topics to students that are obsolete, unnecessary or mismatched to what the student really needs to learn.

Although having a quality and well-developed syllabus/curriculum is a necessity, it is not enough. Sometimes the problem is not a lack of suitable syllabus/curriculum; it is carelessness in following the syllabus/curriculum. Any syllabus/curriculum can be undermined if the university/school or the academic/teacher does not implement it correctly and completely (Harvey, 2005).

So another issue that noticeably affects the quality of education is developing, reviewing, updating, adjusting and fully implementing a quality syllabus/curriculum which supports the general aim of providing education to students/researchers. The quality of education depends on what is being taught in schools and universities.

7.12. Recommendations on Research/Teaching

As argued before, having an appropriate and quality syllabus/curriculum that highlights what topics are supposed to be discussed is necessary for a quality education; however, there is an issue that is equally or even more important than syllabus/curriculum, which is the quality of the actual teaching and/or research activities. Quality education relies on the availability of quality teaching and research.

Although education is not limited to teaching or research and people can learn by self-study, observation or discussion with friends and family, the main justification for the existence of educational institutions is providing more systematic and effective education to people through 'teaching' and/or 'research'. It would be unacceptable for an educational institution to claim to have quality if this institution did not provide good teaching/tutoring services and conducted little or no research.

The degree to which universities and schools should emphasise either research or teaching depends on the level of study, the nature of education, the actual capabilities of students, the syllabus/curriculum and the study requirements. Any mismatch or weakness in the provision of teaching or research can have an adverse effect the quality of education (Harvey *et al.*, 1993).

The quality of teaching and research are assessed based on different criteria using different methods. The quantity of each of these two interrelated issues is one of the criteria. The amount of research being conducted relative to the number of students/researchers and academics is one indicator of quality research. Size and level of research are other measures of having quality research. Another widely accepted piece of evidence of quality research is the number of publications based on the research conducted. The quality of teaching can be measured by assessing the output of teaching in terms of the degree to which students have learned the concepts, obtained the skills and achieved acceptable grades/marks in the designated time.

Therefore, in brief, the provision of good quality teaching (taught aspect) and having more high quality research (research aspect) are other essential elements for having quality education.

7.13. Recommendations on Pedagogy

Quality education and higher education have many advantages, although the creation and maintenance of such quality relies on fulfilling a number of particular requirements. One of these requirements is having high quality pedagogy. In other words, education/higher education and its related quality have many dimensions, one of which is the quality of teaching methods deployed in these academic institutions. Ineffective and inadequate teaching methods can be detrimental to the quality of higher education and consequently undermine the expected results and advantages of education/higher education.

Pedagogy, as the way in which a subject is taught, is one such factor. Traditional 'chalk and talk' teaching methods no longer have any impact. The quality of education/higher education institutions cannot be guaranteed without having a customised and effective pedagogy, which matches other important issues such as the level of students and study, the syllabus/curriculum, and the available learning and research facilities at schools/universities and research centres.

Research about quality in higher education covers many aspects, one of which is the quality of pedagogy or study of teaching methods. It is a commonly accepted issue among scholars that 'Quality of pedagogy' is built on three interrelated notions: 'intellectual quality', a proper 'learning environment' and 'authentic teaching methods' (Roelofs & Terwel, 2009).

The intellectual quality of pedagogy is about the importance of serious, logical thinking in the process of goal setting and designing a process of teaching and learning in order to have high achievement. It is a common mistake to take for granted that all academics and postgraduate students are intellectual, so whatever objectives are set by them or any processes designed by them will automatically be intellectually-based and of a high quality. But the fact is many teachers, who are not particularly highly educated, can be much more intellectual than some highly educated academics and universities' pedagogy team members. So the intellectual quality of pedagogy can be achieved by setting standards to check the suggested pedagogy and having an open, participative management that includes experienced and intellectual teachers.

7.14. Recommendations on Learning and research support

Schools, colleges, universities and other educational organisations are established to provide opportunities for learning and/or conducting research for students/researchers/ learners. The fulfilment of such a mission depends on the provision of certain factors, one of which is the availability and quality of the support provided to students/researchers in studying and/or doing their research.

Having a proper classroom, with adequate teaching facilities, a comprehensive library and online library, and having trained and helpful staff and processes that facilitate learning and research, are all necessary for quality education. Having access to proper learning and teaching facilities is no longer a privilege - it is a right of students and researchers (Mathias, 2004).

The quality of education would inevitably be affected when universities/schools push 70-80 students into a classroom that was originally designed for 40 students. Holding a class with 150-200 students can have a dramatic effect on the quality of education, because students would not have any opportunity to ask questions and participate in the class or receive the required help and supervision. Inappropriate temperature, lighting, smell, ventilation and even wall colour in classrooms can negatively affect the student learning experience and consequently the quality of education.

Researchers need support to do their research properly and effectively in the given time. Access (sometime 24 hours) to laboratories, testing centres, printing, materials, buildings, cutting, measuring, pressing and mixing tools, ... machinery, wind tunnels, ... is crucial for researchers. While access to these facilities is indispensable, researchers need good quality and reliable facilities to be available because the validity of their findings relies massively on the reliability and quality of research facilities.

One of the most important forms of support required for learning and research is the existence and effectiveness of well-trained, friendly, knowledgeable and dedicated staff who are hired to help and support students/researchers to progress in their own study/research. Staff should fully understand that the existence of the educational organisation and their jobs is mainly for the purpose of teaching and supporting students. Support staff should never assume that helping students and researchers is not part of their job description.

7.15. Recommendations on Knowledge management

Information overload can be as damaging as a lack of information, so there is a need for a system to manage the collection, creation, storage and distribution of knowledge and information. The quality of education and research is directly connected to the capability of a university, college, school, or research centre to manage the knowledge required by their students and researchers properly.

Without necessary knowledge/information and without the required systematic processes and system for the creation, updating and distribution of the requisite knowledge, research and educational institutions would face a crisis and reduction in the quality of education provided and/or research support. The availability of a technology platform for the effective organising of knowledge management is indispensable. As stated by Holbeche (1999): “KM [Knowledge Management] involves blending a company’s internal and external information and turning it into actionable knowledge via a technology platform.”

Universities and schools are centres for creating and transferring knowledge by and among their students. Some authors have found that the importance and impact of knowledge today is at the highest level in our history, so knowledge itself can be considered a source of power, core competency and quality for any advanced organisation. In fact, the existence and growth of many organisations, including research and educational ones, are closely tied to the existence and good management of knowledge and information.

There are many reasons for the development of knowledge management in organisations in general and in universities, colleges, schools, or research centres in particular. In this regard, it is believed that “Individuals are the primary agents of knowledge acquisition, and, in the case of tacit knowledge, are its principal repositories; organisations need to tap into tacit knowledge, to identify ways in which it can be made public and transferable and to capture it so that it becomes part of the ‘structural capital’ of the organisation and available to others”. To put it simply, knowledge is power and can contribute to the enhancement of the quality of research and education if it can be managed properly.

7.16. Recommendations on Academics' Achievements

The quality of education depends on the quality of educators. In short, the quality of education is related to the main educational service providers, lecturers and teachers. It is unlikely that an unsuccessful academic/teacher would be able to provide a high quality education to students or develop successful students. From the students' perspective, quality academics/teachers are those who are not only expert in their own fields but are capable of conveying their knowledge and skills to their students fully and in ways that are understandable by the average student, but this is just one side of the coin.

The success of an academic or a teacher can be assessed based on the degree to which this educator has progressed in his/her career, non-academic roles/responsibilities in academia/schools/government advisory posts, the number of publications, the level of the journals/conferences that published his/her papers, the amount of research conducted, amount of grants received, frequency of receiving grants; recognition received in the form of awards and publicity.

Although it is unlikely to receive a high quality education from an unsuccessful academic/teacher, it is not impossible. However, the difficulty is that students, for success, need more than quality educational services, they need motivation too. Academics/teachers should be inspirational in order to encourage their own students to overcome any difficulties and progress towards a brighter future.

Employee training and development is the normal method that schools and universities use to help their lecturers/teachers to accomplish more (Blom & Meyers, 2003). In addition, academics at universities/higher education institutions have the opportunity of not teaching for one semester and focusing instead on research and publication, which would increase their achievements.

In summary, a university/school cannot be considered as a quality institution if its academics/teachers are not given the opportunity to be successful in terms of research, publication and recognition. The rationale is that successful academics/teachers can contribute to the quality of education and success of their own students in two ways: First, by delivering high quality education and research support to their students, and second, by intensifying the impact of this by inspiring students.

7.17. Recommendations on Student progress, success and satisfaction

While there are many different quality models/theories, and each one has some differences, almost all agree on one issue, which is their emphasis on the measurement of quality based on the perspective of the main customer/stakeholder. The only client and one of the key stakeholders of any educational institution is the student; therefore, it makes sense to measure the quality of a university/school in terms of the progress, success and satisfaction of its students. Progress, success and satisfaction of students are three interrelated issues but they are not the same as each other.

From the 'Progress' point of view, education and an educational organisation have quality if the student has made reasonable progress in his/her study and/or research. The student's progress can be assessed based on how much and how well the student has learnt the required topics/skills/knowledge during a specific period of time. Different types of formative evaluation (coursework) and summative evaluation (examinations) are used to measure the student's progress. So moving from the first semester to the second semester, or from the first year to the second year, or going from first degree level to Master's level in a designated time with good grades, are all signs of student progress and consequently signs of the quality of the education.

From the 'Success' perspective, a quality education should manifest itself in the form of high student success. While the student's progress focuses on the 'Processes' of a student's development, the student's success mainly, but not solely, emphasises the 'outputs/results'. The student's success can be assessed by analysing the percentage of students who complete their studies in a reasonable time and/or who gain admission to continue their study/research, and/or who could have publications/inventions, and/or who can get relevant jobs shortly after graduation. Therefore, a higher success rate for students in terms of completed study/research, getting admission to further study/research, getting relevant jobs and having publications can be considered as one of the important indicators of having quality education and quality educational institutions (Kennedy, 2009).

From the 'Satisfaction' aspect, the quality of education and educational/research organisations need to be perceived and understood according to the degree to which the student is satisfied with them. From this perspective, it does not matter how much

academics, universities/schools, or other stakeholders are pleased with the education provided. The only thing that matters is the level of satisfaction of the student. To put it simply, the education and the educational/research services provided have quality if the student is satisfied with them. The degree of the student's satisfaction determines the degree of quality of education and the quality of the educational/research organisation (Orrell, 2006).

Although considering customer satisfaction as a measure of the level of quality is a widely accepted notion in almost all industries, some authors tend to deny this right to students in the education sector. These authors believe that students, even university students, are not mature and qualified enough to make judgements about the quality of the education they receive. This perspective does not have the required academic rigour and public support in the twenty-first century.

All educational/research organisations should consider students' needs and wants by understanding that students are their customers. These educational organisations should try to create and improve the quality of their institutions and the education provided by focusing on the three interrelated issues of student progress, success and satisfaction.

7.18. Recommendations on University/School achievements

One of the indicators of the quality of education is the degree of merit/success that one institution provides compared to other educational/research organisations. In other words, university/school success is another sign of having a quality education system. Based on the same logic, the degree of success of educational/research institutions may represent the degree of quality of the education provided.

The achievements of universities/schools can be measured based on criteria including the ranking, the amount of grants received, and the rate of growth of these institutions. There are a number of organisations that rank universities and/or schools, but some of them are not reliable, thus their published rankings should not be considered as signs of quality (Lomas, 2007a). However, there are a few independent organisations that are generally reliable with an acceptable degree of bias. Every year universities/schools are ranked based on different criteria. Not only all universities/schools but also the majority of prospective students/researchers consider these ranking levels as one of the important metrics of achievement and the quality of education.

In addition to the rankings, two other determinants of university/school achievements are the amount of grants received, and the rate of growth of these institutions. Governments, non-governmental organisations, charities, individuals and sometimes companies donate money to generally good universities/schools, and universities/schools consider the amount of grants received as their achievement, which is an indicator of the quality of education in their institutions. Furthermore, it is commonly accepted that the faster the rate of growth of a university/school shows a higher level of achievement and better quality of education.

That is to say, the achievements of universities/schools are closely linked to the achievements of their academics and the success/achievements of their students. Consequently, a higher degree of academic and student success and achievements would almost directly contribute to higher achievements by the educational/research institutions which, in turn, leads to a higher quality of education. Therefore, the quality of education can be reliable and stable if quality universities/schools recruit and retain quality academics/teachers as well as quality students/researchers.

7.19. Recommendations on Innovation and Change Management

Education, directly or indirectly, is about innovation and development in different sciences and fields of study; therefore, a higher level of innovation can represent a higher quality of education. There is a consensus among different authors that innovation is the lifeblood of any organisation. Universities and schools should be a source of innovation and preparing students/researchers to be innovative, so it is expected that universities and schools be innovative in almost everything they do. At universities and schools innovation can be in recruiting students/academics/teachers, in preparing the syllabus/curriculum, in developing pedagogy, in the managing and provision of learning and research support, in teaching/research, in knowledge management, in leadership and strategic management, and in university, student and academics' achievements (Jessop *et al.*, 2012).

Although it can be claimed that, due to the innovative nature of humans, the emergence of innovation can be traced back to the very beginning of human history in general and human tool-making in particular, modern conceptualisation of innovation began with Schumpeter. Innovation has been described as the creation of new elements and/or new arrangement of already existing elements.

Regarding the prospect and future of innovation, while it is believed that open innovation will be the dominant theory, this research highlights co-creation and emphasises the innovation chain as the determinant of the future of innovation. By combining the aforementioned perspectives, this study recommends cooperation and open innovation as determinants of the future of innovation in education.

Innovation is change, but innovation will fail if there is no adequate change management system to support innovation. Change management can guarantee that universities and schools benefit from innovation fully. Although well-managed innovation can be beneficial to any educational institution and its students, there is almost always some resistance to change that innovation creates in an organisation. Change management facilitates the implementation of innovation and consequently contributes to the innovation-based quality of education.

7.20. Research Limitations

As with all research, this research has its limitations. In brief, this research is limited to the issue of quality in education. Its source of primary data is limited to academics and senior managers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom. The duration of data collection in this research was limited to the period between July 2011 and April 2012.

The type of research instrument was limited to the semi-structured interview. There is a possibility of limitations in access to British authorities for interviewing. The researcher had a limited budget for the study, so unnecessary travelling, printing, and other expenditure had to be avoided.

Scope:

The focus of this research was solely on the quality of education in general and the quality of higher education in particular. Only scholars from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom participated in this research. University students were not be questioned in this study. About 63 scholars and education managers, 33 from Saudi Arabia and 30 from Britain were invited for interview.

Time:

Although the duration for completing a PhD is three years, the first year is mainly spent on taught courses as well as structuring and finalising the research plan. So, about two years have been spent on the main secondary and primary research. Primary data collection was planned for the period between July 2011 and April 2012.

Budget:

This research cost approximately £1,000, which included the following:

- Travel from London to Saudi Arabia at least once for a period of 10 days to gain access to academics and education managers for interview.
- Travel inside Saudi Arabia between different cities because the selected universities were not be in the same city.
- Some costs were incurred travelling between different cities in the UK to access scholars in three different universities in Britain.

- Although Brunel has a good collection of books and academic journals, it was necessary to buy some reports not available in the library.
- Phone calls to Saudi and inside Britain had to be factored in.
- Printing a few copies of my semi-finalised and finalised thesis before and after the viva session.

Methodology:

This study relies on a Case Study research strategy, which has its own limitations. There is no perfect research methodology. According to Yin (2009), “as a research endeavour, case studies have been viewed as a less desirable form of inquiry than either experiments or surveys. Perhaps the greatest concern has been over the lack of rigour of case study research”.

The next common concern about case studies is that “they provide little basis for scientific generalisation. ‘How can you generalise from a single case?’ is a frequently heard question. The answer is not simple (Kennedy, 1976). The short answer is that case studies, like experiments, are generalisable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or the universe. In this sense, the case study, like the experiment, does not represent a ‘sample’, and doing a case study, like an experiment, does not represent a ‘sample’, and in doing a case study, your goal will be to expand and generalise theories (analytic generalisation) and not to enumerate frequencies (statistical generalisation)” (Yin, 2009). Yin (2009) explains that “A third frequent complaint about case studies is that they take too long, and they result in massive, unreadable documents. This complaint may be appropriate, given the way case studies have been done in the past (Feagin, Orum and Sjoberg, 1991), but this is not necessarily the way case studies - yours included - must be done in the future”.

Access to academics and authorities for interviews

The main source of data collection in this research was based on interviews. Due to some professional connections of the author in Saudi’s higher education system, it was hoped that there would be no major difficulties persuading some senior managers to answer the questions, but not all academics were happy to participate in interviews. In Britain, the researcher anticipated there would be some difficulty in approaching academics and senior managers for interviewing.

7.21. Contribution of the Research

The main contribution of this research is developing and introducing the 'Education Quality Model'. Although there has been some research regarding the quality of education, seemingly it has not led to the development of a research-based customised model such as the Education Quality Model. Although there is one quality model regarding education (Baldrige Education Criteria) that is assembled based on a panel discussion between a few staff who share their professional experience (USA NIST, 2011), the researcher after a wide literature review could not find any research-based quality model for education. Thus, possibly the 'Education Quality Model' is the first customised quality model for education and educational institutions based on a comparative study of Saudi and British education systems.

According to the official website of the European Foundation for Quality Management that developed the EFQM Excellence Model, there is no such a thing as the 'EFQM for Higher Education' (EFQM, 2013). There is only one EFQM model for all sectors including the education sector (McGrath-Champ, 2010). Unfortunately, some researchers, notably from Sheffield Hallam University used EXACTLY the same model (the EFQM Excellence Model) but with a new name, 'EFQM for Higher Education' (Sheffield Hallam University, 2003) instead of developing a customised model for quality of education. The 'EFQM for Higher Education' is nothing but exactly the EFQM Excellence Model (Sadler, 2007) with one or two education-related examples regarding each of the nine pillars of the EFQM Excellence Model (see Sheffield Hallam University, 2003).

The European Foundation for Quality Management claims that more than 30,000 organisations worldwide from almost all industries have successfully used the EFQM Excellence Model to improve their quality and general performance (EFQM, 2013). According to independent studies, the EFQM Excellence Model has been used mainly in the industrial and production sectors (McGrath-Champ, 2010; Rissom, 2012). There are reports of the positive impact of the EFQM Excellence Model on quality promotion in some service sectors such as information technology, banks and health care too (Sadler, 2007; Tippin, 2012).

The researcher could not find any papers or news regarding successful implementation of the EFQM Excellence Model in any universities. There are some small-scale studies that show the rate of failure of full implementation of EFQM in

the service sector is much higher than in production sectors (Rissom, 2012; Scutter, 2010). Even if the EFQM Excellence Model has been utilised successfully in some service sectors such as IT or finance, it does not mean that the EFQM Excellence Model can be used in the education sector too (Woodhouse, 2004), because the nature of education is fundamentally different from IT, finance or other forms of services (Taylor, 2012). In the worst case scenario, even if one or two universities could manage to implement EFQM, it does not mean that EFQM is a suitable model for the education sector or that there is no need for a customised model of quality for education. Thus, even if the number of organisations in other sectors that implement EFQM become 10 times higher than the current figure of 30,000, this number not only cannot justify usage of EFQM in the education sector, but also it cannot rule out the usefulness of having a customised model of quality for the education sector.

After considering the 11 main elements of the Education Quality Model with the five components of the 'Baldrige Education Criteria' as the only other education model, it seems the Education Quality Model is more comprehensive than the 'Baldrige Education Criteria'. Other quality models such as EFQM, TQM or ISO 9000 are not customised specifically for educational institutions by taking account of the unique nature of the education sector, which makes it very different from other sectors. The Education Quality Model has 11 factors that are based on 11 propositions of the research which emerged from the literature review. Each of these 11 propositions is examined meticulously based on an analysis of 63 interviews with Saudi and British academics and higher education authorities from 15 cases/universities. All of these propositions are strongly supported by these academics. So, it can be claimed that each element of the Education Quality Model has been tested and accepted to be influential on the quality of education.

Given that the Baldrige model is not an academic and research-based model, it seems, the Education Quality Model is possibly the only model/ theory of quality that has been developed solely for research, education and higher education at educational and research institutions by conducting an academic research. Other existing models are either too general or inappropriate for a highly sensitive and valuable sector such as education.

The researcher, after searching among existing academic publications, has realised that while some attempts have been made by other researchers and/or organisations to

develop a unique model for quality in research and education, almost none of them have led to the formulation of a comprehensive and usable model.

The Education Quality Model is important because probably it is a practical and comprehensive solution for the problem of the lack of a customised and viable model for quality in research/education. The researcher hopes that this model can contribute to the establishment and promotion of quality of education and research at universities, colleges, schools and research institutions.

The Education Quality Model is a '**guideline**' for quality development in terms of the quality of education, higher education and research at research and/or educational and training organisations. The Education Quality Model can be used by any university, college, school or other research educational organisations for the purpose of creating, maintaining and improving the quality of education and research at their respective institutions. This model identifies the 11 important factors that possibly have an impact on the quality of education/research. So the model can hopefully assist any educational or research organisation that wants to provide quality educational and research services.

Furthermore, like the EFQM, the Education Quality Model can be used as a '**self-assessment tool**' that enables research and education organisations to take the lead in evaluating their current education/research quality situation. These institutions do not need to rely on any external parties to determine the existence of quality in their universities/schools. This model would be a self-explanatory handbook explaining which factors should be assessed and what should be considered in the assessments.

There are some tasks/steps that should be considered in the use of the Education Quality Model. The first task of the dean/headteacher/top management in any university, college, school or other research and educational organisation is to use this model as a guideline to determine which of these components exist in their organisations. If some of these 11 elements do not exist in some universities and schools, the dean/headteacher/top management should create all of these 11 factors as their second task for quality development. The third task would be to focus on each and every one of these 11 components to ensure they are of an appropriate quality. The fourth task/step is to connect all of these elements to each other in a synergistic and logical way to create a better and more stable quality of education and research. The fifth and final task/step is to review, troubleshoot and upgrade this quality system

continually. Quality requires constant attention and nurturing, otherwise it can diminish gradually.

Another important contribution of this research is the preparation of a new and comprehensive 'Taxonomy of Quality'. In previous taxonomies, either the only focus is on education or, in contrast, education is missing in these taxonomies. The new 'Taxonomy of Quality' with a comprehensive perspective, encompasses all possible aspects and sectors including education.

In addition to the model (the Education Quality Model), this research contributes to the current body of literature in quality and education by introducing Saudi perspectives on the quality of education. While there are many research papers which take account of the points of view of Western scholars, academics or authorities, almost no attention has been paid to the perspectives of Saudi academics and education authorities. This thesis is used as a platform to present these views. Suggested recommendations for future research are helpful in developing this area of research in more depth.

7.22. Conclusion

As has been discussed in detail in this chapter, the researcher has been successful in answering the research question (*How do the main education quality drivers have an impact on the quality development of education in general and higher education in particular?*) and fulfilling the research aim (to build a new model of quality for education based on a Saudi-British consensus regarding the major factors contributing to education quality and after considering other models (such as EFQM) and other authors' perspectives) and its twelve objectives (to examine the impact of *Leadership and Strategic Management* in educational institutions on the quality of education; to assess the contribution of appropriate *Student, Academic and Staff Recruitment* to the quality of education; to evaluate the degree to which a quality *Syllabus/Curriculum* is important for quality education; to explore how the quality of education is influenced by *Research/Teaching*; to identify the effects of proper *Pedagogy* on the quality of education; to investigate the correlation between good *Learning and research support* and an increase in the quality of education; to determine the relationship between suitable *knowledge management* in educational institutions and the level of quality of education; to test the extent to which the level of *academics' achievements* can indicate the level of quality of education; to establish the connectivity between *student progress, success and satisfaction* and the perceived quality of education; to evaluate a meaningful relationship between the quality of education and *University/School achievements*; to assess the importance of appropriate *Innovation and Change Management* in higher education institutions for the quality of education; and, in addition, to provide some recommendations to academics and education authorities regarding the ways to improve the quality of education.

By considering the analysed data that was collected through semi-structured interviews with 30 British academics and senior managers from nine different universities in the UK, all the propositions in this study received substantial support. As is evident from the above discussion, there was a consensus among the British interviewees of average to very strong support of all 11 propositions in this research.

So, in brief, while the degree of agreement with each of these propositions varied, all the Saudi and British participants believed that the 11 pillars/criteria of quality education are Leadership and Strategic Management; Students, Academics and Staff Recruitment; Syllabus/Curriculum; Research/Teaching; Pedagogy; Learning and research support; Knowledge management; Academics' achievements; Student progress, success and satisfaction; University/School achievements; and Innovation and Change Management.

The main body of the chapter has been dedicated to providing two sets of interrelated recommendations. The initial set is some recommendations for future researchers. Some useful suggestions regarding the topics of research in the area of quality of education have been provided. The second set of recommendations is aimed at government and university/school authorities. Based on the 11 tested and accepted propositions of this research, 11 sets of recommendations were given.

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Appendices:

Appendix A: List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

EFQM = European Foundation for Quality Management

ISO = International Standards Organisation

MBNQA = Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award

QAA = Quality Assurance Agency

QMS = Quality Management Systems

TQC = Total Quality Control

TQM = Total Quality Management

UK = United Kingdom

Appendix B: Interview Guide (English Version)

For Academics and senior Education managers



The Education Quality Model: The Saudi and British Perspectives on Pillars of Quality in Education

About the Author of the Thesis and the Research

About the Author:

My name is Mohammed and I am a PhD researcher at Brunel Business School. I am currently undertaking a research project that aims to develop a customised quality development model for education in general and higher education in particular (please see below for details).

About the Research:

This study primarily tries to build a new model of quality for education by considering other models (such as EFQM) and other authors' perspectives in general and the author's personal experience and Saudi-British consensus regarding this issue in particular. While there are many parameters that can directly or indirectly contribute to the quality of education in general and quality of higher education in particular, a limited number of these elements can have a substantial impact on sustainable quality development in education. Mainly built on a literature review, 11 critical success factors are identified that shape the pillars of a quality education system. Each of these issues, even separately, has a considerable effect on the quality of education; however, a synergetic combination of them can lead to more sustainable quality in education. In this research, an attempt has been made to arrange these influential factors in a meaningful and logical order to build a customised model for quality in education, that I name "**The Education Quality Model**". Accuracy and reliability of these 11 factors are going to be evaluated by consulting Saudi and British academics and senior education managers.

Confidentiality and Privacy

I am interested in hearing your opinion in order to better understand your ideas about the pillars of quality development in education. It is important that you say what you really think but make sure that your answers are relevant to the question that was asked. There are no right or wrong answers, so we would encourage you to speak openly. **I will keep the content of this interview entirely confidential.**

The following questions will be asked in the interview

Section I. Inputs of Education System

1. To what extent does the quality of education depend on quality of recruited *Students, Academics and Staff*?

Section II. Process of Education System

2. What is the impact of a good quality *Syllabus/ Curriculum* on the quality of education?

3. Do you think it is possible to have a quality education if quality of *Research/Teaching* is low?

4. Does *Pedagogy* or suitability of the way in which the syllabus is taught to students contribute to the quality of education?

5. Can effective *Learning and research support* contribute to the quality of education?

6. To what extent does a well-developed *Knowledge management* system help Educational institutions to enhance the quality of their education?

Section III. Outputs of Education System

7. Is there any relationship between the level of *Academics' achievements* (publications, etc.) in an educational institution and its level of quality of education?

8. Would you please highlight your opinion regarding the assumption that *Student progress, success and satisfaction* is the most or at least one of the most important indicators of the quality of education?

9. Can *University/School achievements* be considered as one of the signs of having high quality education?

Section IV. Feedback and Common Elements of the Education System

10. To what extent does suitable *Leadership and Strategic Management* enhance quality in the education?

11. Can you see any meaningful relationship between well-planned *Innovation and Change Management* and the quality of education?

For any enquiry please contact me via email: mkhail@yahoo.com

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION!

Appendix C: Interview Guide (Arabic Version)

للأكاديمين والمدراء التنفيذيين بالجامعات



نموذج جودة التعليم : وجهات النظر السعودية والبريطانية على أعمدة الجودة في التعليم

About the Author of the Thesis and the Research

عن باحث الرسالة والبحث

عن الباحث :

أنا باحث دكتوراه بكلية إدارة الأعمال بجامعة برونيل وأقوم حالياً بتنفيذ مشروع بحثي يهدف إلى تطوير نموذج مخصص للجودة لتطوير التعليم عموماً والتعليم العالي على وجه الخصوص (أمل الإطلاع أدناه لمزيد من التفاصيل).

*حول البحث:

تحاول هذه الدراسة في المقام الأول بناء نموذج جديد لجودة التعليم من خلال النظر إلى نماذج أخرى مثل نموذج EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management) ومن خلال النظر لوجهات نظر الباحثين الآخرين بصفة عامة والتجربة الشخصية للمؤلف والتوافق السعودي البريطاني بشأن هذه الموضوع على وجه الخصوص.

وفي حين أن هناك الكثير من العوامل التي يمكن أن تسهم بشكل مباشر أو غير مباشر في جودة التعليم بشكل عام وجودة التعليم العالي على وجه الخصوص ، يمكن فقط لعدد محدود من هذه العوامل أن يكون له تأثير كبير على التنمية المستدامة لجودة التعليم.

في هذا البحث تم تحديد 11 عامل من عوامل النجاح الحاسمة والتي تشكل ركائز نظام جودة التعليم وبنيت أساساً على ما تم نشره من أبحاث سابقة .

كل من هذه العوامل لها تأثير كبير بشكل منفصل على جودة التعليم ، ولكن التآزر التوافقي لها مع بعضها البعض يمكن أن يؤدي إلى مزيد من الجودة المستدامة في التعليم .

هذا البحث هو محاولة لترتيب هذه العوامل المؤثرة ترتيباً منطقياً وهاذف لبناء نموذج مخصص للجودة في التعليم ، والذي أطلق عليه اسم "نموذج جودة التعليم " وسيكون تقييم الدقة والموثوقية لهذه العوامل الـ 11 عن طريق استشارة الأكاديميين والتنفيذيين السعوديين والبريطانيين في الجامعات ومراكز الجودة في كل من السعودية وبريطانيا.

Confidentiality and Privacy

الباحث مهتم لسماع رأيكم من أجل فهم أفضل الأفكار حول ركائز تنمية الجودة في التعليم. ومن المهم أن تقول ما تعتقد حقا وأن تكون إجاباتك ذات صلة بالسؤال المطروح . ليس هناك إجابات صحيحة أو خاطئة، لذلك يمكنك التحدث بحرية . مع التأكيد لك بأن مضمون هذه المقابلة سوف يظل سرياً تمام وأن المعلومات التي سيتم الحصول عليها ستستخدم لغرض البحث العلمي فقط.

سيتم طرح الأسئلة التالية في المقابلة

The following questions will be asked in the interview

Section I. Inputs of Education System

القسم الأول :مدخلات النظام التعليمي

1. To what extent does quality of education depends on quality of recruited *Students, Academics and Staff*?

إلى أي مدى تعتمد جودة التعليم على جودة الطلاب المقبولين في الجامعة والأكاديميين من أعضاء هيئة التدريس والموظفين في قطاعات الجامعة الأخرى ؟

Section II. Process of Education System

القسم الثاني: عملية نظام التعليم

2. What is the impact of a quality *Syllabus/ Curriculum* on the quality of education?

ما هي تأثيرات جودة المنهج و المقرر على جودة التعليم؟

3. Do you think it is possible to have a quality education if quality of *Research/Teaching* is low?

هل تعتقد أنه من الممكن أن يكون هنالك تعليم ذا جودة في ظل انخفاض جودة البحوث وجودة التدريس ؟

4. Does *Pedagogy* or suitability of the way in which the syllabus is taught to students contribute to the quality of education?

كيف يمكن لعلم أصول التدريس أو ملاءمة الطريقة التي يتم تدريسها لطلاب المنهج أن تساهم في جودة التعليم؟

5. Can effective *Learning and research support* contribute to higher quality Education?

هل يمكن أن يساهم التعلم ودعم البحوث الفعال في تحسين جودة التعليم؟

6. To what extent can a well-developed *Knowledge management* system help Educational institutions to enhance the quality of their education?

إلى أي مدى يمكن أن يساعد نظام إدارة المعرفة المطور جيداً المؤسسات التعليمية لتعزيز جودة التعليم الخاصة بهم؟

Section III. Outputs of Education System	القسم الثالث: مخرجات نظام التعليم
<p>7. Is there any relationship between the level of <i>Academics' achievements</i> (publications, etc.) in an educational institution and its level of quality of education?</p> <p>هل هناك أي علاقة بين مستوى الانجازات الأكاديمية للأكاديمين (مثلًا منشورات أكاديمية،...) في المؤسسة التعليمية ومستوى جودة التعليم؟</p>	
<p>8. Would you please highlight your opinion regarding the assumption <i>that Student Progress, success and satisfaction</i> is the most or at least one of the most Important indicators of quality of education?</p> <p>هلا تفضلت بتسليط الضوء برأيك فيما يتعلق بفرضية أن تقدم الطلاب دراسياً، ونجاحهم ورضاهم هو الأكثر أو على الأقل واحداً من أهم مؤشرات جودة التعليم؟</p>	
<p>9. Can <i>University/School achievements</i> be considered as one of the signs of having high quality education?</p> <p>كيف يمكن اعتبار انجازات الجامعات / الكليات واحدة من علامات وجود تعليم عالي الجودة؟</p>	
Section IV. Feedback and Common Elements of Education System	القسم الرابع: ردود الفعل والعناصر المشتركة في نظام التعليم
<p>10. To what extent does suitable <i>Leadership and Strategic Management</i> enhance quality in education?</p> <p>إلى أي مدى يمكن أن يعزز وجود القيادة والإدارة الاستراتيجية المناسبة جودة أعلى في قطاع التعليم؟</p>	
<p>11. Can you see any meaningful relationship between well-planned <i>Innovation and Change Management</i> and the quality of education?</p> <p>هل ترى أي علاقة ذات معنى بين الابتكار وإدارة التغيير التي تم التخطيط لها بشكل جيد وبين جودة التعليم؟</p>	
<p>لاي استفسار أمل التواصل معي عبر الأيميل التالي: mkhail@yahoo.com</p> <p>يمكن إجابة الأسئلة باللغة العربية أو باللغة الإنجليزية مع خالص الشكر والتقدير لتعاونكم....</p>	

Appendix D: Propositions against Questions

Table D. Connectivity of the Propositions with Interview Questions

<i>The Research Propositions</i>	<i>Related Interview Questions</i>
P1: Having professional and appropriate <i>Leadership and Strategic Management</i> can lead to higher quality education	10. To what extent does suitable <i>Leadership and Strategic Management</i> enhance quality in education?
P2: Quality people create quality results so <i>Students, Academics and Staff Recruitment</i> have a major impact on the quality of education	1. To what extent does the quality of education depend on the quality of recruited <i>Students, Academics and Staff</i> ?
P3: <i>Syllabus/ Curriculum</i> is another determinant of quality in education	2. What is the impact of a good quality <i>Syllabus/ Curriculum</i> on the quality of education?
P4: Quality of education depends on the quality of <i>Research/Teaching</i> , which are the main activities at educational institutions	3. Do you think it is possible to have a quality education if the quality of <i>Research/ Teaching</i> is low?
P5: <i>Pedagogy</i> or suitability of the way in which the syllabus is taught to students can contribute to the quality of education	4. Does <i>Pedagogy</i> or the suitability of the way in which syllabus is taught to students contribute to the quality of education?
P6: Effective and quality <i>Learning and research support</i> can lead to higher quality education	5. Can effective <i>Learning and research support</i> contribute to the quality of education?
P7: Reliable and effective <i>Knowledge management</i> can help educational institutions to enhance the quality of their education	6. To what extent does a well-developed <i>Knowledge management</i> system help educational institutions to enhance the quality of their education?
P8: The level of <i>Academics' achievements</i> can demonstrate the level of quality of education and quality of the educational institutions	7. Is there any relationship between the level of <i>Academics' achievements</i> (publications, etc.) in an educational institution and its level of quality of education?
P9: <i>Student progress, success and satisfaction</i> is one of the important indicators of quality of education	8. Would you please highlight your opinion regarding the assumption that <i>Student progress, success and satisfaction</i> is the most or at least one of the most important indicators of the quality of education?
P10: <i>University/School achievements</i> are one of the signs of having high quality education	9. Can <i>University/School achievements</i> be considered as one of the signs of having high quality education?
P11: Continuous, purposeful and well-planned <i>Innovation and Change Management</i> is one of the keys to high quality education	11. Can you see any meaningful relationship between well-planned <i>Innovation and Change Management</i> and the quality of education?

Source: Developed by the author