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Higher Education Management in Saudi Arabia:
A Case Study of the
University of Business and Technology (UBT)

Summary

University Of Sussex

School of Education and Social Work

Student Name: Ahmed A. Sager

Thesis Title: Higher Education Management in Saudi Arabia: A Case Study of the University of Business and Technology (UBT)

Within the context of a wide and structural transformation of the educational system within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the issue of privatization remains a relatively new phenomenon. As it stands, the vast majority of higher education institutions continue to be run by the state. However, this situation has led to an increasing number of debates about the ability of the current higher education system to meet modern educational standards, and produce graduates that are able to compete and succeed in the present labour market. The quality output of higher education is a particularly pressing issue for the country, given that Saudi Arabia currently faces an ever-increasing problem of integrating a large youth segment of the population into the requirements of the modern labour market. Critics contend that, both in terms of their management and their governance, higher education in the Kingdom is outdated. Excessive government control is seen as a key factor that is inhibiting the current higher education institutions from having the autonomy and flexibility required in order for them to succeed.

This thesis set out to examine and gain a better understanding of the management practices used within the University of Business and Technology (UBT) in Saudi Arabia. In order to do this, it focused on three core areas: approaches to management by senior management at UBT, the view and experience of the academic staff in how such approaches are applied, and UBT's relationship with the government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the broader social environment that exists in the country.

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List of Key Abbreviations

HE	Higher Education
HRM	Human Resource Management
IBA	Institute of Business Administration
KSA	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOHE	Ministry of Higher Education
UBT	University of Business and Technology

Abstract

Within the context of a wide and structural transformation of the educational system within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the issue of privatization remains a relatively new phenomenon. As it stands, the vast majority of higher education institutions continue to be run by the state. However, this situation has led to an increasing number of debates about the ability of the current higher education system to meet modern educational standards, and produce graduates that are able to compete and succeed in the present labour market. The quality output of higher education is a particularly pressing issue for the country, given that Saudi Arabia currently faces an ever-increasing problem of integrating a large youth segment of the population into the requirements of the modern labour market. Critics contend that, both in terms of their management and their governance, higher education in the Kingdom is outdated. Excessive government control is seen as a key factor that is inhibiting the current higher education institutions from having the autonomy and flexibility required in order for them to succeed.

In response to some of the criticisms, the government has started to license a number of private institutions for higher education. Given that this is a relatively new development that only began in earnest in 2010, the success and readiness of the government remain uncertain. As such, and within the above context, this dissertation presents a critical analysis of the nature of management at a private university in Saudi Arabia. It focuses on gaining a better understanding of the management practices used within the University of Business and Technology (UBT), a privatized institution located in Jeddah. A key aspect is to analyse how management approaches are applied in practise, how effective they are, and how does this translate into understanding the overall relationship between a private institution such as UBT and a government institution in the form of the Ministry of Education. In this manner, one is able to gain a full understanding of Saudi Arabian university management and its links to the nation's government.

Based on numerous interviews with university officials, professors and government representatives, this work outlines three main themes that characterize UBT as a private higher education institution in Saudi Arabia. The first is that despite the commitment of the government to allow for privatization to take hold in the educational domain, the

Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) continues to have a large amount of control over the management of UBT, leading to differences of opinion over the degree of autonomy that exists when it comes to decision-making in the university. Second, a degree of marketization is taking place at UBT, with education being treated more as a commodity. This, in turn, influences the management approach that is taken and, as a result, leads to a difference of opinion between management and academic staff in terms of what the priorities of UBT should be and how best to pursue its objectives. Finally, religion and tradition continue to play a major role in the approaches that senior managers at UBT take to management. This is due to the culture of Saudi Arabia and the religious nature of the society. However, there are also mixed opinions amongst staff members about whether the role of religion and tradition enhances the role being played by UBT.

The main themes emerged from consideration of three research questions. These focused on the approaches that senior managers at UBT take to management, the experience of the academic staff with the management approach at UBT, and the relationship between UBT and the government by way of the Ministry of Higher Education. Overall, senior managers have a differentiated view with regard to how privatized education should be practised and implemented. One key dichotomy exists between the view of UBT as primarily being a business enterprise as opposed to being an institution dedicated first and foremost to delivering high quality education. The result is a degree of confusion when it comes to concepts such as accountability, performance metrics and cost efficiency. For staff members, the priority areas appeared to be more forthcoming, with the institution's academic standing and academic output in the forefront. While staff members argued that that UBT as a privatized institution allows for greater flexibility in terms of planning and plan implementation, there was also a level of frustration with management not pushing the case of autonomy far enough, especially with the government authorities.

While management's emphasis was to show that UBT can deliver better services and output, the oversight role being played by the Ministry of Education is also such that it tends to restrict UBT's ability to act as a true privatized institution with high degrees of autonomy. Both staff and management acknowledged this fact, while at the same time arguing that the role played by government remained relevant.

Given UBT's role within the broader context of the role that reforms in the higher education sector play in the relation to the societal transition that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is currently undergoing, this thesis allows for an important insight to be gained into the way privatization functions in the higher education segment, and what this suggests for the overall direction of further reform as Saudi Arabia copes with the impact of modernization and globalization.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The objective of this thesis is to present a critical analysis and further understanding of the nature of management at a private university in Saudi Arabia. In particular, the thesis intends to provide a more detailed understanding of the management practices used within the University of Business and Technology (UBT) located in Jeddah as its case study. It is of interest to study such practices due to the fact that privatization is a relatively new phenomenon in the kingdom where the vast majority of higher education institutions continue to be run by the state. Therefore, this work presents a case study analysis of the UBT higher education institution, provides perspectives from those that work at UBT as to how management approaches are applied and whether they are effective, and shows how the approaches being adopted affect the relationship with the government, and in particular the Ministry of Higher Education.

The concept of management within education is a topical issue in Saudi Arabia. This is because the government has placed increased focus on the quality of education and on education output. In this context, the thesis seeks to gain an insight on how management techniques have adapted over time to meet new standards. Related to this is the question of how the rise of privatized institutions has assisted that effort, and whether those newly created institutions can in fact exist independently outside stringent government control. In order to be able to answer these questions, this study assesses the nature of the approaches to management by senior management and academic staff, as well as outline the development of the relationship between a private university and the government, in particular the Ministry of Higher Education. In addition, the analysis provided here highlights the advantages and disadvantages of UBT being a private education institution through the perspectives of those senior management and academic staff that are employed at the university. This is then carried forward to understand the impact of the cultural environment of the kingdom on the objectives and work of private institutions and what this suggests about the medium- to long-term outlook of education reform in Saudi Arabia.

1.1: Background and Context of the Problem

Higher education institutions in Saudi Arabia have been an increasing subject of criticism, both in terms of their management and their governance. The criticism has come from a variety of directions, with some arguing that extensive government control inhibits higher education institutions and universities in the kingdom from having the autonomy and flexibility required in order for them to succeed (Jamjoom, 2012). Others suggest that educational institutions have failed to undertake sufficient reforms themselves in order to produce high quality graduates, especially when it comes to meeting labour market requirements. The quality output of higher education is a particularly pressing issue for the country, given that Saudi Arabia currently faces an ever-increasing problem of integrating a large youth segment of the population into the requirements of the modern labour market. To date, the kingdom's education system is considered to be of a poor standard, with learning largely based on rote memorization rather than promoting critical thinking skills. This, in turn, leaves higher education graduates unprepared for the requirements of the labour market. One direct result is that vast numbers of Saudi nationals, including already established academics, prefer to study abroad in order to live and work in a proper educational environment. Such trends, however, are a factor in exacerbating social tensions as outside education is expensive and not all Saudi students can take advantage of going abroad for several years. Studying abroad also means an increase in foreign influence into the kingdom, which can lead to increased tensions between these returning students and those that have stayed behind. Returning students also suffer a certain degree of loss in their social and cultural identity.

The government has recognized the problem and begun to allocate and spend large sums of money on Saudi Arabian universities in an attempt to rectify the substandard quality of the country's higher education (*Times Higher Education*, 2009). In the years 2012, 2013 and 2014, the percentage of the state budget allocated for education stood at 24%, 21% and 25% respectively, one of the highest figures in the world (King Saud University, 2012; Carey, 2012; US-Saudi Arabian Business Council, 2014). Widespread efforts are being undertaken, aimed at improving the educational infrastructure, while encouraging Saudis to study overseas. This is being done by providing them with

scholarships and the establishment of numerous different new universities in a variety of different areas of the country (Mohammed, 2013).

However, it can be argued that a genuine change in educational output will not occur if attention is not paid to the issues of management and governance. There have been recent reforms in the nation aimed at granting universities a greater degree of autonomy with regards to the manner in which they are governed and managed (Al-Eisa and Smith, 2013). In spite of this, further analysis is still required in order to ascertain the precise way in which universities within the nation are run, and what impact the changes that have been put forward are actually having on the ground. In order to gain a better insight into these processes, the perspectives and opinions of staff and management at the university are important, and can be used to identify respective strengths and weaknesses.

1.2: Rationale of the Study

Looking at the kingdom's education sector at the beginning of 2015, it is clear that numerous structural factors exist that have prevented wide-ranging reform efforts from being effective. These problems have been addressed by numerous commentators and extensive studies that have been produced in recent years and thus will not be repeated here. Instead, two key factors that directly pertain to the current study are highlighted. One is the excessive bureaucracy that remains a major feature of the Saudi higher education system. A centralized system that has come from the Ministry of Higher Education acts as an obstacle to the development of a progressive education policy (Alamri, 2011). The centralized state-favoured system run in Saudi Arabia has also led to an excessive degree of bureaucratization, which in turn has led to the demotivation of Saudi change agents. Both of these elements are critical when focusing on how a privatized institution is being managed within the context of the current system on the ground.

Pervasive state control has had an impact on a second key element, which is the limited number of degree programmes being offered within higher education. This has led directly to a debate about educational output and whether Saudi students are receiving the right kind of education that prepares them for the requirements of the modern labour market. In Saudi Arabia, there is a lack of certain degrees being offered due to gender

differences, the lack of support for online programmes (despite the growing acknowledgement of the power of technology in global society), a limited availability of scientific conferences and journals in most university departments, and restrictions on academic freedom based on cultural and political factors. The sum total of these deficiencies is not only a reduction in motivation of students in achieving the goals in their respective degree programmes (due to the fact that they feel the country is not undertaking a serious drive to modernize), but also pushes them to seek alternatives outside of the country.

The result is that the outlook for the state higher education in Saudi Arabia in the near future is uncertain. In order to respond to some of the criticisms, the government has responded by licensing a number of private institutions for higher education. The rationale behind this policy is not only to be able to offer a wider variety of educational programmes for the benefit of the student population but also to offer degrees that are more closely aligned to labour market requirements. Given that private institutions would operate based more on market conditions, it was suggested that the licensing of such institutions would have a positive impact on producing more qualified and needed graduates. In addition, it was suggested that if proven successful, such institutions would also have an indirect impact on forcing public institutions to adjust some of their criteria so as to be able to continue to attract sufficient numbers of students.

Given that some time has passed since a policy of educational reform with some limited decentralization has been in effect, it is now possible to examine to what degree the policy has been successful and whether it has achieved its stated objectives. More importantly for the purpose of this study, it allows one to explore the potential differences between the majority of state-led higher education institutions and the University of Business and Technology (UBT), a privately managed higher education facility. The key questions to be pursued are to what degree has UBT been successful in implementing its stated objectives and missions, in what areas has it been successful, and what core issues remain unfulfilled. Focusing on the areas in which UBT has not been successful allows one then to look further into the reasons behind such shortcomings.

This work therefore presents a case study analysis of the UBT as an institution in order to gain perspectives from those that work at UBT as to what management approaches

are effective, which are less so, and how this translates into understanding the overall relationship between a private institution such as UBT and a public institution in the form of the Ministry of Education. The main objective of this study is to gain an understanding of Saudi Arabian university management and its links to the nation's government through the analysis of the management practices applied in UBT.

In order to achieve the objective, this study focuses on three areas and applies to each of these the management approaches being adopted within UBT: the issue of governance within the higher education sector; state centralization and the impact of privatization; and issues related to the cultural and social environment of Saudi Arabia. Looked at from these three perspectives, one is able to gain a unique insight into the internal workings of a critical component of the Saudi social system.

The focus on management was chosen because the actions of the managers of higher education institutions play an important role. On one hand, their actions have been linked to the performance of the organizations. Effective managers are capable of bolstering the effectiveness of universities and improving the quality of research and teaching (McCormack *et al.*, 2013). Therefore, it is important to study the approaches that are used by these managers in order to gain an insight into what techniques are being utilized and which methods have shown themselves to be the most successful at producing positive results.

However, management is of further importance because they represent the key link between the institution they represent and work for and the overall environment in which the institutions themselves function. It is the management that is responsible for implementing and abiding by overall higher education regulations and frameworks. In this context, and by its very definition, government policy affects the running of institutions in all countries, at least to some extent. Saudi Arabia is no exception to this. Therefore, the focus of this research will be to examine the approaches that are adopted by management within a university and how those approaches relate to governmental practices.

The research also aims to ascertain whether or not the management practices adopted by UBT are curtailed or accepted by the government, and to what degree the administrators are able to implement their management approaches in the given framework. Saudi

Arabia has been undertaking a broad effort at educational reform that has also led to the expansion of private sector education provision throughout the country. With many administrators attempting to optimize educational output, universities have begun to implement management approaches that stand in contrast to those pursued by the government over the previous decades. The research provided here evaluates the extent to which the government resists new management approaches and how this resistance manifests itself. It analyses whether or not resistance has continued or whether there have been changes over time. It further highlights the ways in which UBT deals with this situation or identifies how UBT has tried to mitigate government control.

The key issue that this thesis examines is how new management techniques are being incorporated into higher education governance, and what the response of the Saudi Arabian government has been to those new approaches. Related to this is the impact that policies have had on the overall course of Saudi Arabian higher education reform.

1.3: Methodology and Structure

In order to put the subject being studied into its proper context, first the situation of the universities within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia must be placed within the context of the development of higher education in Saudi Arabia. In addition, these developments must be analysed within the framework of the recent literature and scholarship on higher education that focusses on management and decentralization. The social and political issues of the nation as a whole have a direct effect on higher education management, meaning that such practices cannot be studied as if they are completely separate from the environment in which they exist. For example, issues such as decentralization are controlled by the government; therefore, government maintains an influence that directly impacts on university management.

In order to better understand the trends being pursued and the mechanisms that affect how decisions are implemented, the methodology being applied here involves interviewing staff members at UBT and posing questions to staff at the Ministry of Higher Education. This is done in order to ascertain their views on a range of different issues related to applied management techniques, as well as to provide an insight into management practices and perspectives within the nation's higher education

institutions. It should be noted here that ethical clearance was obtained from UBT to use its name in this thesis (clearance letter can be seen in Appendix 4).

The data obtained from these interviews are supplemented by the use of documentary data in order to be able to present the results of the primary research. The primary data will be analysed in conjunction with secondary data taken from official online sources, government information, academic journals and books. All of the data gathered have been analysed through the lens of Kaplan's institutional framework for higher education. Through such an approach, it is possible to lay out conclusions based on the available material.

This type of study has not been undertaken before at UBT. This study therefore presents a detailed analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of private management of a university from the perspective of key employees at the institution itself. The study therefore provides important information regarding the way that private education in Saudi Arabia is viewed. Based on its results, the thesis outlines changes that might need to be implemented in order to encourage more universities to take up the private management option if it is believed that management approaches in the private sector enable greater academic and business achievement.

In order to reach viable conclusions and ensure that the interview data is comprehensive, a series of research questions were developed that form the central analysis in this work. Each question has a number of specific sub-questions that allow the researcher to be more specific, and to highlight different aspects within the same general issue. These research questions were developed in order to achieve the objectives of this thesis as outlined above. They are:

1. What approaches do senior managers at UBT take to management, and what is their current understanding of the issue?

1.1. How do senior managers explain their approach at UBT?

1.2. What theories and ideas influence the senior manager's approach to managing staff and resources at UBT?

1.3. What has been the effect of their management approach on UBT and on their relationships with government? How can the relationship between them and the Ministry of Higher Education be described?

1.4. To what extent are local KSA conditions reflected in their understanding and approach to management?

2. What are academic staff members' experiences of the management approach at UBT, and what is their current understanding of these experiences?

2.1. How do academics in selected departments understand the management approach of UBT?

2.2. What are the experiences of academics in selected departments on the management approach of UBT?

2.3. What do academics in selected departments see as the advantages and disadvantages of working in a private university such as UBT in KSA?

3. What is the relationship between UBT and the government by way of the Ministry of Higher Education?

3.1. What policies have the government pursued when it comes to private education in the kingdom?

3.2. What do senior managers and academics in selected departments of UBT see as the advantages and disadvantages of the regulations governing private higher education such as UBT?

3.3. What do senior managers and academics in selected departments see as the effect of the regulations set for private universities such as UBT?

3.4. How does the government's regulation of private universities impact on decision-making within the institution and on its autonomy?

By formulating the major research questions in this manner, it is possible to focus on senior manager's understanding and approaches to management at a private university, the understanding and experiences of academic staff of the management approach followed at UBT, and the type of relationship that exists between UBT as a private university and the government through the Ministry of Higher Education. The key here is to better understand whether new management techniques are in fact being incorporated into higher education governance, and whether, under the current system of close centralized control by government, privatized institutions can operate as envisioned. This in turn provides a detailed evaluation of the specific advantages and

disadvantages brought about by private management, and how different types of stakeholders at the university view the effectiveness of their management approach.

All of these aspects contribute significantly to fill a gap in the knowledge with regard to the system of higher education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This is because a detailed examination of privatization efforts in the country from the perspective of management and staff has not previously been undertaken. Given that privatization of higher education in Saudi Arabia is a relatively new phenomenon, having only been initiated in the past few years, little empirical currently exists. In addition, there is little analytical data about how such privatization efforts are being undertaken and what the impact has been on the higher education system as a whole. Also, this author does not know of any study that examines the constraints and obstacles that privatized higher education institutions in the kingdom face as they try to implement their business plans. The study presented here attempts to fill these existing gaps.

Within the context of its methodological approach, this thesis follows the following structure. Chapter 2 places the emergence of privatized higher education in the kingdom within the context of the higher education system as a whole in Saudi Arabia. This allows the reader to get a better sense of the issues that currently define the debates within the kingdom. Chapter 3 provides an extensive literature review in order to further place the thesis within the context of debates within higher education concerning globalization, governance, management, and decentralization. Throughout the chapter, the reference to the case study of Saudi Arabia is maintained. In Chapter 4, the methodology is laid out in more detail. This gives the reader a better sense of the approach and methods being applied when it comes to analysing the data required for this thesis. Chapters 5 and 6 are the actual heart of the thesis in which the outcome of the data is analysed against the research questions as well as the aims and objectives posed in Chapter 1. It is in these chapters that the governance and management approaches of UBT and the role of government in references to these approaches are examined. Chapter 7 provides the overall conclusion and summarizes the main findings of this work.

Chapter 2: UBT and Higher Education in Saudi Arabia

This chapter aims to present a critical discussion of the context of higher education within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, focusing on the role of reform within higher education and the subsequent position of UBT within that context. The chapter presents an overview of Saudi higher education, outlining both its achievements and shortcomings, always keeping in mind the overriding economic and socio-political background of the country. Factors examined here include the demographic make-up of the country, the power and influence of religion within the state, the concept of patriarchy, and the overall economic context. This information is then used to describe the situation of UBT as a private university within the wider higher education system in Saudi Arabia.

The context within which the move towards privatization within higher education policy is initiated or modified shows considerable variability across countries and time periods. For example, Keppel (1977, pp.1-8) documents the impetus given to privatized higher education in the US in the 1970s against a background of falling enrolment. Morey (2004, pp.131-150) meanwhile stresses the role of economic globalization in driving recent educational privatization in many countries. In order to see how the educational landscape has shifted in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, it is important to first better understand the social, political, and economic context within which Saudi higher education reform has been instigated, particularly in the direction of privatization. This is to show both the unique characteristics that exist within the kingdom and to draw the line to the debates within higher education overall. Such an approach also enables one to get a better comprehension of how worldwide movements, and the process of globalization, has impacted and influenced the debate within Saudi Arabia.

2.1: Economic and Socio-Political Background of Saudi Arabia

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was established in 1932 by the late King Abdul Aziz Al Saud and covers an area of approximately 900,000 square miles, comprised of 13 provinces (Hamdan, 2005). It is currently ruled by King Salman Bin Abd Al-Aziz; it is an Islamic state with a Sunni majority. The nation is a major natural gas and oil producer, with 15.7% of global proven oil reserves (BP, 2015). It has predominantly an

oil-based economy with widespread governmental control over most significant economic activities.

Oil was first discovered in the kingdom in the 1930s. With the beginning of the production of energy resources, there was a great need for qualified personnel. This is because indigenous skills were not available and because there was a push to move the process of modernization and industrialization forward. The result was a large-scale import of foreign labour that, over the years as the wealth of the country grew, was further enhanced by the import of low-skill workers for jobs that Saudi nationals refused to take on (CIA, 2014). By 2014, there were nine million expatriate workers in the country out of a total population of approximately 29 million (CDSI, 2013). This large number of foreign workers, and the continued dependency of the kingdom on such labour, has raised a debate particularly because of the persistent high unemployment rates amongst Saudi nationals (Ramady, 2013). In response, the government began to institute a number of reform efforts, which include a diversification of the economy and emphasis on private sector growth. The issue of economic reform was made an overall priority, with the goal of strengthening the nation's infrastructure and elevating the level of investment (Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia, 2013). This was seen as bringing in productivity and increased employment opportunities for Saudi nationals.

In addition to structural economic reform efforts, a close correlation to the issue of education reform is seen as it was understood that there is a need to close the gap that exists between educational output and labour market needs. At the outset, the deficit in terms of qualified workers was related back to a lack of enrolment within higher education. Expanding both the quantity of and access to the higher education system within a country was seen as a step towards alleviating this problem (Machin and McNally, 2007a). A lack of people attending university can lead to skill shortages, which can be detrimental to a country's economy (Machin and McNally, 2007b). Therefore, unless the deficiency is tackled at the education level, the impact in terms of increased labour market opportunities for Saudi nationals would be minimal.

Undertaking reform is done within the socio-political makeup of Saudi Arabia which has been described as being defined by neo-patrimony and neo-patriarchy. The term 'neo-patrimony' is used to refer to a state in which the regime is organized around the ruler; other elite figures' positions are dependent on his good favour and grace.

However, in the case of Saudi Arabia, the word ‘ruler’ can be substituted for ‘rulers’, as it does not only include the monarch but also senior princes, a large number of whom possess their own constituencies and fiefdoms, which comprise a substantial proportion of the state’s overall structure. ‘Neo-patriarchy’ involves being heavily influenced by loyalty to sects, tribes and/or families and being shaped by tribal tradition. Although the Islamic faith remains Saudi Arabia’s ruling ideology, kinship and tribalism ties comprise an additional underlying dimension to its structure. Different tribal groups occupy different and often key positions within the nation’s hierarchy.

While Saudi Arabia remains a conservative nation that is governed according to tradition, its governance is also greatly influenced by external forces. It would therefore be incorrect to argue that the kingdom is naturally resistant to change. In fact, globalization and a changing regional political environment are having an influence on the country. One result has been that of fluid class affiliations being present within the nation that impacts its power structure. The country is further fragmented with regards to the political beliefs of its citizens, with moderate Islamists, Islamo-liberals, progressive democrats, liberal reformists and moderate reformists all featuring within the Saudi Arabian socio-political makeup (Thompson, 2012).

The head of the Saudi state is not selected via elections. Instead, the ruler is selected from the sons of the kingdom’s founder King Abdul Aziz al-Saud. Key ministries are staffed and run by other members of the ruling family, and the royal family has a hand in all key decisions that are made within the nation. The country is divided into 13 provinces, each of which possesses a governor nominated by the king. These provinces have their own councils, who are also selected by the king. There is no written constitution; Islamic law is taken as the defining source of legislation.

The majority of the nation’s citizens have been content with the current political system in the country given that they have seen their livelihood protected and advanced. At the same time, there have been increasing debates within the kingdom about the need for reform, with critics claiming that the government should not control all aspects of Saudi life. Given the rising complexities in governing, the rulers have accepted a certain level of reform seeing it as essential in preparing the population to meet the demands of a rapidly changing but also globalizing world. Their own legitimacy is in fact tied to being able to provide a safe and stable environment in which people can pursue their

economic opportunities. One particular area where such reform efforts play themselves out is in the field of education. While the government certainly continues to exert a great deal of power over all aspects of education policy in the kingdom (Albassam, 2011), this cannot be seen as meaning that there exists an inherent resistance to introduce changes in the educational make-up, or that society is suddenly demanding a degree of influence over educational policy-making. Instead, reforms are being undertaken, although in a subtle incremental way. This issue will be explored in more detail later in this thesis.

2.2: Demographics

Changes in education policy cannot be separated from the issue of demographics. Throughout the Middle East, birth rates have begun to fall meaning that population growth is largely occurring among those of working age (i.e., 15 to 64 year olds) rather than in the under-15-year-old category. This drop in birth rates is a result of Middle Eastern states having pursued effective family planning policies. However, this ‘demographic shift’, which should be leading to a more promising future for the region in the form of a ‘demographic gift’, has failed to materialize (Bloom and Williamson, 1998). A rise in the numbers of the working-age population will, indeed, relieve the pressure on pension and social welfare systems, but only if jobs are created at a rate sufficient to absorb them into the labour market (Cohen, 2006).

Saudi Arabia faces a similar problem but for different reasons: while fertility rates have begun to slow in recent years, falling mortality rates combined with previously high birth rates means that the population of Saudi Arabia has increased rapidly. The Saudi population grew from 7.3 million in 1975 to 19.6 million in 1999, and currently stands at 28.5 million. It is projected to reach 35.6 million by 2030 and 40.3 million by 2050 (ESCWA, 2015).

The demographic pressures have impacted on economic policy in two ways. First, Saudi per capita income has dropped sharply from its highest levels in the early 1980s, from about US\$22,500 in 1987 to about US\$18,500 in 2014. Second, social welfare costs have continuously risen; these include items such as free utilities, free education and free health care. As the population has continued to increase, the burden on the kingdom’s budget has also grown. This is acceptable while oil prices are high but

becomes problematic in period of low oil prices, as has occurred since June 2014. The volatility of the oil price must also be considered.

Demographics thus shape economic policy to a great extent. The entire Middle East region demonstrates that a balance between human and natural resources is critical. Clearly, all states in the region (including Saudi Arabia) should formulate policies that promote economic growth in order to be able to absorb the increased numbers of job seekers. While investment in education is seen as essential, the pressures on state budgets, even in the case of Saudi Arabia, have made it clear that the state alone cannot carry the burden of providing educational opportunities to its citizens without restrictions.

Privatization is one method that may be capable of mitigating the cost of educating a growing population. In this context, privatization is becoming an increasingly attractive prospect for government to both provide relief for state budgets as well as ensure that education output is more in line with labour market requirements. Private universities are seen as a way of educating citizens and preparing them for taking on a more productive role within society as part of a skilled labour force, but without the government having to spend as much on their education (Al-Dali *et al.*, 2013).

2.3: Religion and the State

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia holds a special place in the Muslim world (Field, 1994, p.67). Makkah and Madinah are two of the most important cities for all Muslims. These cities are where the two Holy Mosques are located together with other sacred sites. Every year millions of Muslims travel to these places to perform Haj and Umrah, and pay a visit to the Prophets' Mosque. Hence, it is neither surprising nor illogical that Islam and politics are deeply intertwined in Saudi Arabia.

In the years after the Prophet's death, Islamic scholars and rulers began the process of using the Qur'an to build a body of law, the *Sharia*, meaning 'the Path', by which a Muslim might achieve salvation. In addition, they drew on people's recollections of the Prophet's actions and judgements, known as *hadiths*. The schools of law developed during the 8th and 9th centuries CE produced a complete code for the administration of society, dealing with prayer, ritual, government, commerce, and all civil and criminal matters. The aim is the perfect state based on God's irreducible will (Coward, 2000,

p.99). This is true democracy and enlightenment, even if the fulfilment of the goal is difficult.

It is on the above context that King Fahd of Saudi Arabia insisted that Muslim peoples do not want or need western democratic principles, preferring ‘*shura, majlis, ijma*’ (‘consultation, tribal council, consensus’) (Halliday, 1996, pp.207-8). As for choosing the government, an electoral system had to be modified in the interests of Shariah law. Political systems differ considerably within the Islamic world according to historical precedence, social traditions and customary assumption about authority. Practice and theory may not always overlap, but Islamic laws provide a standard for the conduct of politicians and the way they are elected. The ruler should be chosen by those in the community who are best qualified to represent the people, being those who are wisest, most experienced and of the highest moral character. The ruler must be honest, just, modest, brave, merciful, who through these qualities will be able to command the respect of his people.

Although this is not always achieved, it remains a goal of Islam. As Field (1994, pp.240-41) demonstrates, religion in Islam crosses the boundaries in a way alien to the secularized West. Sensitive issues can be broached in a society strongly committed to moral imperatives where political compromise may be evident, but also where answerability to a higher and unchallengeable authority should curb excessive abuse of power. *Allah* has granted basic rights to the whole community and they are not dependent on the goodwill of the government; it is the duty of Muslims to actively protect them to avoid tyranny: *As you are, so you will have rulers over you* (Hadith). In Islam, the weak and oppressed must be protected and any attempt to subvert the Shariah law is a sin: *If anyone walks with an oppressor to strengthen him, knowing that he is an oppressor, he has gone forth from Islam* (Hadith).

Turner (1974, p.157) shows that firm beliefs may lack substance in societies where ‘rights’ are inscribed in constitutions and political systems in a purely secular manner. They appear more ‘democratic’ than Islamic societies, but it has been argued that secularization has its own pitfalls:

Without a shared system of values and symbols, no moral claims can have significance and authority; they can only be partial and sectional claims of

special interests, particularly class interests. Traditional communal values gave way to ... partisan morality [where] men become conscious that the moralities which are available ... are not natural, inevitable or God-given (Turner, 1974)

Even so, Islamic countries have been trying to resolve the clash of interests between traditionalist society and the outside pressures for western-style democratic reforms. Islam is not adverse to political change, but societal traditions and ethnic interests often interpose to frustrate reform. In Saudi Arabia, rational voices argue that importing ‘democracy’ into their society would be disastrous and re-introduce the spectre of tribalism and thus disintegration of the nation-state. Social disintegration might well ensue if strong authority were removed. However, as mentioned above, there are more positive notions based on history and the teachings of the Qur’an, showing that firm rule based on ‘consensus’ rather than merely liberal elections could be the best form of government.

In traditional Saudi Arabian society, tribes or towns accept the leadership of a respected member of a leading family who consults with advisers representing the views of all sections of the community. So ‘good government’ in Saudi Arabia has often been interpreted as *the rule of a person who is in touch with the opinions of society and governs firmly and effectively in its interests* (Field, 1994, p.313). In that context, however, Islamic societies also show a marked uneasiness about public dissent and open criticism of government as expressed in western countries.

This also relates to the field of education in general and to the management of universities in particular, as it means that it is difficult for Saudi Arabian higher education institutions to exercise autonomy if it means going against the wishes of the government.

2.4: Patriarchy

The strongly patriarchal nature of Saudi society is a key feature that must be examined when it comes to examining aspects of corporate governance, specifically in the higher education field. A patriarchal society is when the main power in the political, economic and social domain is male:

... in which men have highly preferential access to those activities to which the society accords the greatest value and the exercise of which permits a great measure of control over others (Friedl in Sanday, 1981, p.163).

Patriarchal societies have used monotheistic religions to strengthen their status quo. At the same time, monotheistic religions, in evaluating the principles related to the role and position of women, *drew inspiration and guidance from the values of the patriarchal societies prevalent at the time* (Al-Hibri, 1982, p.210). These patriarchal social attitudes are so pervasive that even progressive scriptural norms become affected; these are then interpreted in a way that reflects prevailing mental attitudes. Thus, patriarchal societies often harness even just and egalitarian norms laid down for women in divine scripture to perpetrate their hold (Engineer, 1992, p.1).

The Islamic religion was seen as being transmitted from a male power, therefore enshrining maleness itself as a power. This created a hierarchy where man stands beneath God, and woman stands below man. However, as Mernissi (1991, p.11) points out, Islam is, in itself, *no more repressive than Judaism or Christianity* with regard to the position of women. Neither of these three world religions can be adequately understood without taking into account the patriarchal social systems that gave rise to them.

In fact, the widespread patriarchy beneath the veneer of western secular societies is well stated by Catherwood (1991, p.24), who refers to early Christian views of women as *a helper to her husband physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually*’ perceiving her as *‘someone who runs her family and home so efficiently that her husband is free to take his place as a leader in the outside world.* With respect to Islam, although Shariah-based personal status law has obviously had an important impact, the combined weight of pre-capitalist ideologies and patriarchal kinship arrangements has also had, and continues to have, implications for status in countries of the Muslim world. However, one needs to keep in mind that, just as there is no universal interpretation of Islam, there is no universal system of patriarchy. Hence:

different systems of male dominance, and their internal variation according to class and ethnicity, exercise an influence that affects and modifies the

actual practice of Islam as well as the ideological construction of what may be regarded as properly Islamic (Kandiyoti, 1991, p.24).

The system of ‘classical patriarchy’, as found in Saudi Arabia, is a generalization and one should not overlook the reality that class and educational levels, for example, may undermine the impact of ‘classical patriarchy’. This again reflects the notion of subjective interpretation of images in Islam and how women and men have reacted to them. Thus, for example, women in that society are becoming increasingly vocal against a number of oppressive aspects of the system within which they live. One must avoid falling into the trap of creating stereotypes, especially regarding the position of women or employee subordinates in Islamic societies.

Patriarchy is an important issue to consider in relation to educational reform and privatization, as it may limit the amount of power that prominent female university management staff is capable of wielding over the decision-making process. It is possible that universities are being granted an increasing amount of autonomy but that this autonomy is mainly concentrated in the male staff that are making all of the decisions. A strong cultural emphasis on placing men in positions of power may also detract from the level of autonomy that universities are granted, as it may mean that the government wishes to limit the emergence of institutions in which women have a high degree of power.

2.5: The Economic Context

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia’s Higher Education policy must also be seen in the broader economic context. Given that Saudi Arabia has the largest reserves of petroleum (15.7%) in the world (BP, 2015) – and plays a leading role in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), it may seem surprising that there is a sense of urgency in the need to diversify away from oil as the principal economic activity in the Kingdom. However, given that oil revenues have given rise to the concept of the ‘rentier’ state (Beblawi, 1990, p.102), the kingdom suffers from what is referred to in the literature as the ‘oil curse’, where wealth is generated from ‘unearned income’ (the definition of rent from classical economics) in contrast to more productive methods of generating wealth such as manufacturing. Reliance on a source of unearned income tends to inhibit the overall process of economic diversification. The

concept of the rentier economy in many ways aptly describes the conduct of state business in the Middle East.

The concept of rentier economics has been described in the literature at length and it said to have three main characteristics (Beblawi and Luciani, 1987). First, a rentier state exists when the rent is external, i.e. there is no strong internal productive sector. Second, the rent in a rentier state is generated and distributed by only a few within the population: the rest are engaged in consuming or otherwise utilizing the rent. Third, rent accrues to the government (whatever its nature) and, since the members of the government are few in number, this inevitably means a significant vesting of powers of patronage within a small ruling class.

Defined in this way, Saudi Arabia is without doubt a prime example of a rentier economy. The kingdom relies on oil as external rent with oil revenues constituting more than more than 75% of budget revenue and over 95% of export revenue. A maximum of 3% of the labour force generates the oil wealth that then accrues directly to the government. While the state is the ultimate source of rent, further sources are created ‘downstream’ as the wealth is distributed to the whole population. This also means that the state does not extract income from the population, for example through taxation. However, in return for its distributive mechanisms, the government requires that citizens see the ruling family as the ultimate source of patronage, and especially as the ultimate source of employment (Beblawi, 1990, p.134).

Saudi Arabia has taken steps to move the economy away from its overwhelming reliance on oil income. One area of focus has been on developing non-hydrocarbon sectors in order to promote growth in other industries and lead to a better diversification of the economy. The emphasis placed on this approach, and the policies that have been implemented so far, have shown positive results, with the non-oil sector of the economy growing at 5.5% per year. Overall, the amount of annual GDP generation stemming from sources other than hydrocarbons increased from 51% in 1970 to just over 73% in 2009. Nevertheless, the objective of reducing the nation’s reliance on the oil industry represents an ongoing challenge, and the ability to implement further diversification will be a deciding factor in its economic growth and progress in the long term (World Trade Organization, 2011).

In 2005, Saudi Arabia was granted membership of the WTO, demonstrating its commitment to exploring new avenues for diversifying its economy. Some Saudis were openly opposed to this move, fearing that it would subject the kingdom to products and influence that are forbidden by Islam, for example pornography, alcohol and pork. This, however, was not the case, and the kingdom has enjoyed substantial benefits in terms of increased trade volumes and better competitiveness of its economy. As a result, its economic activity was boosted and foreign investment in the nation also witnessed an increase (Wynbrandt, 2010).

Along with WTO membership, privatization is seen another element in the kingdom's diversification strategy. There exists recognition that concerted privatization efforts sends strong signals locally and internationally that Saudi Arabia is serious about economic reform. This, in turn, will help the government's efforts to globalize and improve the credibility of Saudi Arabia as both an investment location and as a financial centre. In addition, to foreign investment laws that must be seen as adequate, fair and protect investors, studies show that the main proxy international investors use to gauge the seriousness of a government's economic reform programme are the results of its privatization programme (Speakman, 2002).

What the above discussion underlines is that factors such as demographics, politics, religion, patriarchy and economics impinge on Saudi culture and thus need to be understood in the context of any discussion of higher education governance. The continued reliance on oil price as the main income for the kingdom has not been able to resolve the perennial unemployment problem among Saudi nationals, in addition to not being able to reduce its dependency on foreign labour. While much emphasis has been placed on the expansion of higher education opportunities as a means of countering existing demographic challenges, education by itself does not resolve this problem. In addition, issues remain in terms of the quality of education being offered and the suitability of courses offered in relation to economic requirements.

Attempts to decentralize and privatize the higher education system are further impacted by political restrictions arising from an aversion to Western-style democracy, and a reluctance to change traditional political/legal structures based on the Shariah. As a result, a contradiction remains in place between the need for not only educational but also institutional reform and the ability of the Saudi system to accommodate and absorb

the changes associated with such reforms. There are also the traditions of a patriarchal society that remain deeply rooted in Saudi society and which themselves have implication for higher education reform, for example when it comes to the status of women. These aspects will continue to be referred to in subsequent sections of this study as explanations for progress (or otherwise) within higher education governance in Saudi Arabia are provided. In order to better understand the organizational and external challenges facing the higher education sector in Saudi Arabia, the reform efforts being undertaken, in particular under the reign of King Abdullah, and the role of the Saudi government as a whole, this study now turns to take a more detailed look at the educational sector in the kingdom. The case study of the University of Business and Technology on which this thesis is based is a product of the reform process being pursued.

2.6: Overview of Higher Education in Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia places a strong emphasis on learning, with education at primary and secondary school being free and higher education being heavily subsidized (Alamri, 2011). At the outset, Saudi Arabia's education system had three primary purposes: providing a basic academic education, teaching basic Islamic principles, and preparing students for employment. While the original objectives have stayed the same, in recent decades the emphasis has shifted to providing greater access to education. This in turn has resulted in increases in the literacy level, which reached 96% in 2013 (*Arab News*, 2013). Moreover, enrolment in higher education for Saudi citizens, including mechanisms such as supporting students with stipends on enrolment, has further raised literacy levels from their current level, especially among women (Alamri, 2011). Taken all together, not only has access to education improved in the kingdom, but the general quality has progressed as well.

Higher education institutions were non-existent when the kingdom was established. Higher education in the Kingdom began with King Saud University in Riyadh, established in 1957, a small education institution with twenty-one male students and nine staff members (Saleh, 1986). An expansion of the higher educational segment did not become a dominant focus of the nation's government until the early 1970s, when the country entered into a period of rapid development. This led to an increased emphasis on university education in order to ensure that the workforce was suitably equipped to

accommodate the changes that were occurring (Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia, 2013). Until 1975, the Ministry of Education was responsible for the expansion of the higher education system within the nation. After that point, the Ministry of Higher Education was created and placed in charge of higher education.

Throughout the years, the focus on higher education in Saudi Arabia grew stronger and stronger, with the government providing land to universities and soft loans for higher education colleges. Grants were also provided to large numbers of students to undertake higher education studies. Furthermore, the government established research centres and think tanks aimed at catalyzing the growth of higher education (Saudi Arabia Ministry of Higher Education, 2015), thereby underlining the emphasis being assigned to its expansion. In fact, this sector now receives the greatest degree of attention by the government and the public alike (Alromi *et al.*, 2008).

The result is that the number of universities inside the kingdom has increased significantly (Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia, 2013). As of 2015, there are a total of 32 higher education institutes, including 21 universities with 636,000 students enrolled in higher education, 10% of which are international students (*The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 2014). In conjunction with the expansion of educational institutions, educational spending has similarly increased significantly in recent years. In 2012, 24% of the kingdom's budget was allocated to education (King Saud University, 2012) with that percentage increasing to 25% in 2014 (US-Saudi Arabian Business Council, 2014).

Among the latest additions to the country's universities are the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, which currently ranks as the world's sixth wealthiest university (due to large donations from King Abdullah (*The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 2014), and which represents the nation's first coeducational university (Reisberg, 2011). This is important, as in such a patriarchal society, a university that allows women and men to collaborate and research together is clearly parting with tradition. There is also Princess Noura University in Riyadh, which is solely dedicated to providing educational opportunities to women.

When placed within the context of the overall education system in Saudi Arabia, it is clear that the proliferation of universities in the nation is part of a wider push to expand educational horizons. The ongoing economic growth in Saudi Arabia coupled with rapid

social changes has led to an expansion of choices within the educational field, including a wider curriculum and a greater range of subjects being available. Still, much of the focus of the education system at all levels has remained centred on religious learning.

It was only in 1967 that private universities were permitted to operate within Saudi Arabia. The first private university to open in the nation was King Abdul Aziz University, which is located in Jeddah and provided private higher education for a four-year period before being turned into a public university. The university initially only had small amounts of support from the Saudi government and was eventually taken over by the government due to funding issues. This had a substantial long-term negative effect on the proliferation of private universities within Saudi Arabia, and meant that private higher education did not take root until 1998, when the government permitted more private universities to be created (Jamjoom, 2012).

In 2000, Prince Sultan University came into being (Jamjoom, 2012; Prince Sultan University, n.d.), and since then nine other private universities have been established. However, many Saudis still view private higher education as being an experiment. Only 3.49% of Saudi students entering into higher education currently enrol in private institutions. The government has been criticized for not implementing more long-term initiatives aimed at getting more Saudi students into private higher education. While some of these institutions are experiencing rapid growth that exceeds expectations, it has been argued that the private sector still needs time to gain full acceptance from Saudi students (Jamjoom, 2012).

In addition to the emergence of private educational institutions, there has also been an effort at reforming the system from within. While the majority of educational facilities, as well as teachers and students, continue to be segregated by gender, some change has occurred on this front (e.g. at KAUST), including the fact that women can now attend all of the major universities and there are also numerous all-female higher education establishments. The nation is home to the largest all-female university in the world, Princess Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University, which is attended by over 52,000 students, meaning that although women are usually not educated in the same room as men, they are by no means excluded from tertiary education (Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia, 2013).

The Saudi government has undertaken a number of measures aimed specifically at increasing the number of women in higher education. These include opening more all-female universities and higher education colleges, and holding conferences to discuss ways of getting more women into higher education. Efforts have also been made to improve the infrastructure of women's education (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Ministry of Education, 2010). Still, there is quite a way to go. Princess Noura University, for example, only has a limited choice of subjects when compared to all-male universities. When examining the list of subjects available to study in comparison with those at the mixed King Abdulaziz University, it is clear that there are fewer subjects overall and far fewer scientific subjects on offer (Princess Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University, 2012; King Abdulaziz University, 2014).

Part of the reason for this lies with the Ministry of Higher Education that has only classified certain subject areas as being appropriate for study by females. The notion that females should be provided with the same subjects to study as their male counterparts has not received the full consensus of the authorities. This is in line with the social environment in the kingdom where, until recently, females were only encouraged to study subjects that were considered more traditional and in line with their roles as mother, wife and caretaker. As in the West, for example, nursing is always considered an area of study typically garnered for the female part of the population.

The rapid expansion of the higher education sector is grounded in numerous factors. One is the need for an increasing number of trained professionals in order to keep abreast of the needs of a modernizing society (Sawahel, 2010). Abir (2002) states that another reason for the rapid expansion is the desire to avoid dependency on foreign universities for educational needs, and the large amounts of money that the government has available to spend. Romani (2009) has stated that the expansion of higher education in Saudi Arabia has been due to economic, social and political changes. He has also pointed out that it is state-driven rather than market-driven, with the government engaging in a deliberate effort to improve the extent to which the population is qualified and expand its academic success.

In terms of governance, the Supreme Council of Higher Education (SCHE) is the highest authority in education and the Prime Minister (the King) serves as its chairman. The Minister of Higher Education, eight university rectors and representatives of the

other educational sectors serve on the SCHE. The SCHE's primary responsibility is the regulation and supervision of the higher education system at the national level, and the coordination of higher education policies and regulations with national policies and strategies (Alkhazim, 2003). In practice, the council regulates several academic areas and has developed unified regulations and policies (for faculty, researchers, examinations, and employment) to which universities must adhere. Each university has a higher council, and the Minister of Higher Education (who is the deputy of the SCHE President) is the chairperson for all higher councils. Textbook and curriculum approvals, faculty appointments, and approvals for scholarships, admission policies and graduations, etc., are all responsibilities of the university higher councils (Alamri, 2011).

Each university's president is appointed by the King for a term of four years, while the college/faculty deans are hired for 2-year terms by the Minister of Higher Education. The University Rector is responsible for appointing heads of departments and academic committees on renewable 2-year terms. Each university is allocated an annual budget on the basis of the common budgetary system applied to all government entities, irrespective of academic nature and performance (Ministry of Higher Education, 2010).

What this points to is the fact that higher education sector remains highly centralized from the perspective of the role of government. Outside of this framework, the Kingdom has made attempts to improve the educational process and system through the implementation of a 10-year plan (2004-2014), which aims to 'build skills and increase employability of the growing working population, insisting on compulsory education and to increase the annual enrolment rate to 33%' (Boston Analytics, 2012, p.6).

2.7: Shortcomings of Saudi Higher Education

Despite being aware that its educational institutions need to be reformed to maintain pace with modernizing demands, there exist a number of structural limitations that continues to highlight the shortcomings of the Saudi higher education system. One is the central role being played by the overall existing social environment. Islamic philosophical perspectives are embraced by the Saudi Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) as the guidelines and foundation for the development of educational curricula. The aim of both the nation's Ministry of Education and Ministry of Higher Education is

to educate as many people as possible in a manner that strongly emphasizes religious development and adherence to the Islamic faith. The nation's educational authorities hold the view that education is strongly linked to religious betterment (Alromi *et al.*, 2008). This emphasis on the value of education is evident from many passages in the Qur'an (IslamHadith.com 2013). For example: *Read and your Lord is most Honorable, who taught (to write) with the pen, who taught man what he knew not* (Qur'an, 96-3-5) and *Oh Allah You increase me in Knowledge* (Qur'an, 20:114). Hence, it is understandable that, as an Islamic state with traditionally high values placed on education (Field, 1994, p.55), Saudi Arabia allocates a large part of its GDP on investment in the education and higher education sectors. Despite this scenario however, learning continues to be based on exam scores rather than on knowledge acquired 'holistically', with the result that many graduates are not sufficiently qualified to compete in a labour market that, increasingly, has to compete within the context of globalization.

In such a system of learning based on exam scores (i.e. 'summative' rather than 'formative' learning and testing) qualitative reasoning, as well as knowledge retention and students' viewpoints, are largely ignored. This leads to undesired outcomes, i.e. high levels of unemployment due to mismatches between the degrees sought and the qualification obtained (Baghat, 1999). It is argued that despite the remarkable progress of education in Saudi Arabia in terms of quantity, the quality of learning has not witnessed a similar advancement (Rugh, 2002). Moreover, the World Bank states that 21st century needs in a globalized world are not being met by higher education institutions in the Kingdom, an observation also made in other studies. For example, Maroun *et al.* (2008) note the paucity of accounting degrees compared with degrees in 'management'.

One of the policies that has been pursued by the Saudi Arabian government with regards to education is expanding the list of subjects that are available to study at the nation's universities. This would minimize the number of Saudi students who are forced to study abroad (Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia, 2013). However, the wider literature suggests that a lack of variety of subjects is not the only reason other countries are considered to have superior higher educational facilities compared to Saudi Arabia. It suggests that although most Saudi deans of schools have received an international

education, excessive bureaucracy has been a major feature of Saudi higher education since before the turn of the millennium, and continues to feature prominently within the nation (Alamri, 2011; Bhagat, 1999; Alkhazim, 2003).

The centralized system emanating from the Ministry of Higher Education acts as a brake on the development of a progressive education policy. This is seen as holding the nation back with regards to the state of its higher education and could be argued to be creating an inflexible system that cannot offer the malleability of overseas institutions. It can be argued that this restricts the movement towards greater academic freedom, and prevents students from feeling that they are able to receive an education that prepares them adequately for the labour market.

A third problem area is the fact that the high proportion of expatriate faculty demotivates Saudi change agents by inculcating the mentality of *leaving it all to the expatriate faculty* (Alamri, 2011). The fact that tutors often come from backgrounds that are not necessarily in line with Saudi traditions can also be seen as potentially problematic. It is possible that some teachers will promote ideological agendas that are opposed to the culture and traditions that are associated with Saudi Arabia. This is a possible source of friction and might prevent managerial control from being placed in the hands of faculty members. In the area of salaries and incentives, Saudi Arabian faculty members receive higher salaries than non-Saudi faculty. Non-Saudi faculties also receive fewer incentives than their Saudi colleagues and they encounter obstacles, for example, when applying for promotion. This could reflect the notion that they are viewed as potentially subversive or at odds with Saudi culture.

A fourth area of concern is that many educators within Saudi Arabian universities are averse to using new technological innovations in order to facilitate learning. The Saudi educational policy states that it is focused on achieving excellence in the field of information technology. It states that it is doing this by targeting outstanding teaching staff and elevating the degree of competency that is held by lecturers within this domain (Saudi Arabia Ministry of Higher Education, 2010). However, this differs from the view that has been expressed within the wider academic literature concerning this topic. Research by Ageel (2011, pp.55-60) indicates that staff members possess an unwillingness to alter long-standing teaching techniques in order to incorporate the latest technology into their lectures, and that this is holding the nation's higher

education system back. The resistance to modernizing with respect to this issue is hampering the standard of academia in the country, as ICT is now an integral component of contemporary life (Ageel, 2011, pp.55-60). The same line of argument can be made with regard to a variety of subjects where the use of technology is becoming more prevalent to allow for better teaching methods and results.

Yamin (2013) has also pointed out that the Saudi government has not provided broadband access and that awareness of e-learning within the nation is experiencing only slow growth. A nationwide survey has found that the majority of the nation's learners are still unfamiliar with this concept, which entails the use of communications technology for the purpose of facilitating learning. There are also religious and cultural barriers present that prevent women from getting the most out of e-learning (Yamin, 2013). This is due to the perception that e-learning involves interaction with men, which is a taboo. It makes female students afraid of being judged for engaging in this variety of learning (Al-Jarf, 2005).

Fifth, the higher education system in Saudi Arabia is struggling to keep up with societal and education-based changes. According to Al-Maghraby (2011), Saudi Arabia is undergoing a rapid, continuous shift in terms of its academic requirements. This has led to a desperate need for a re-examination of universities, with a focus on adapting planning and research policies in order to keep up with the ever-changing times. The nation is in need of being more adaptive with regards to current trends towards new funding arrangements, increased accountability and a stronger emphasis on quality assurance within its higher educational institutions (Al-Maghraby, 2011).

The sum total of these deficiencies is to seriously impact and reduce the motivation of students in pursuing degree programmes given the existing restrictions and the general perception that there is an overall lack of a serious commitment to modernize. Funding arrangements for primary and secondary education as a whole also needs to be considered as higher education standards clearly depend on how the pre-university sector is faring. Since the 1980s, Saudi Arabia's average government expenditure on education (as a percentage of GDP) has been comparable to many developed countries (Maroun *et al.*, 2008). However, in 2004, Saudi Arabia ranked 97th in the Education Development Index (EDI) out of 125 countries, showing that investment in education was not translating into the desired outcome. For example, over the period 2000-2004,

the illiteracy rate in Saudi Arabia averaged around 24%, comparing poorly with Argentina (3%), and even other Arab countries such as Jordan (10%). Other EDI indicators also gave cause for concern, e.g. the average gross enrolment ratio (GER) for tertiary education in Saudi Arabia in 2004 was 23%, compared with, say, Canada at 57%.

All this has an impact on what happens with post-higher education. Factors cited to account for unemployment in Saudi Arabia include lack of skills, low motivation levels, and unreasonably high salary expectations (Maroun *et al.*, 2008). In recent surveys, private-sector business leaders have repeatedly emphasized the need for a radical socioeconomic transformation, both in the operating model and the infrastructure of the education system. In addition, business leaders point out that the current Saudi education system, with its overlapping organizations and inadequate infrastructure, cannot respond in a timely fashion to changing business requirements.

The result, for example, is an oversupply of certain specializations that bear no relation to actual private-sector demand. In August 2007, research findings showed that the number of pharmacy graduates needed to replace foreign workers in the pharmaceutical industry in Saudi Arabia was in the tens of thousands. Maroun *et al.* (2008) cite two of their sources verbatim: *We need fewer theoreticians and more capable professionals and technicians ... Provided with adequate training, our technicians are excellent in running daily operations. However, they lack problem-solving skills, which are crucial when things go wrong.*

The various shortcomings and contradictions of Saudi Arabian education are in plain sight. There are centralized decision-making structures at all levels in the kingdom, ranging from the hierarchical organized government to societal institutions such as family and local community (Bowen, 2008). Given the fact that government does not operate in a vacuum, many of the concerns have indeed been raised and brought to the attention of policy officials. As a result, Saudi education reforms have been introduced. One change has been to focus on teacher training as a means of employing more qualified faculty that can guide students and that are more familiar with the role played by information technology in learning. A second reform has been the introduction and development of a wider variety of topics garnered toward the labour market, including

fields such as business administration, accounting, business communication, and foreign languages.

A third key element has been opening the field of higher education to privatized institutions under the notion that, because such institutions are competing directly on the market for students, they will invest heavily in the delivery of core curricula and competencies directly related to labour market needs. Fiscal decentralization has also been identified by the government as the prime motive for pursuing educational decentralization given the rising costs of educational provision on the country's budget (Maroun *et al.*, 2008). Here, privatized institutions are seen as a path to lessen the financial burden on the state to provide solely for educational opportunities. In addition, privatized institutions are also seen as a way of putting pressure on public institutions to upgrade their service delivery with the aim of improving the educational standards being offered throughout the country.

Opening higher education to the private sector was thus also seen as a way of serving as an impetus to public education to institute necessary reforms that would maintain their attraction for a quality-level student body. Unless those reforms were undertaken, so the line of argumentation followed, public institutions would soon find themselves losing out to the privatized institutions in the competition for students as well as teachers. Competition was seen as a positive incentive for everyone to take the initiative and improve on their performance and output.

Finally, there is also the profit motive as the increase in the number of private institutions would not only drive down the budgetary costs for the government in the education field, but would also provide a new sector for the economy to generate revenue and contribute to the national GDP. In this context, higher education privatization fits well within the overall plans of the government to promote economic diversification, with the private sector in the lead for creating employment opportunities and integrating a higher number of Saudi nationals into the labour market. The revenues generated by the newly created private institution would constitute an important contribution to both private and public growth.

The move towards privatized higher education in Saudi Arabia has taken place in the context of similar moves in the other Arab Gulf states, where educational provision has

been identified as a priority among governments. This has been most prominent in the United Arab Emirates and in Qatar, with privatized institutions being added at a rapid rate within the last decade. In Bahrain, Oman and Kuwait, the emphasis on privatization has been somewhat lower, although there has also been some effort in this direction. In essence, the motives have been the same as in Saudi Arabia, with an emphasis on raising the overall quality of delivery of higher education, bringing about a better complementarity between education output and labour market requirements, bringing about a system of greater competition for service delivery, to broaden the range of options available for students to be able to choose from, and to spread the costs of providing higher education away from the government to the private sector.

In Qatar, the move towards privatized higher education has largely involved bringing in numerous institutions from abroad to set up facilities within the country. Here, Qatar Education City is the prominent example. This strategy has not only enabled Qataris to study within their country and avoid having to spend years abroad, it has also raised the impetus on national institutions such as Qatar University to raise their standards as a means to be able to compete for the Qatari student body. In the UAE, privatization has meant more of a mix, with some foreign institutions, such as New York University and the Sorbonne, establishing themselves, but also local institutions being created within the Dubai Education Free Zone.

In all of the Gulf states, the government maintains a supervisory capacity to ensure educational standards are being applied and regulations are being followed. This has led to some tensions with newly created privatized institutions in terms of their autonomy and independence. However, as a result of the organizational structure of higher education in Saudi Arabia, the instances where privatized institutions would be restricted in terms of recruitment, development of academic policies, staffing, budgeting, and investing regulations has been more extreme. In the kingdom, one impact has been that this has also inhibited the aspired competition between universities (Alkhazim, 2003). Denied autonomy in staffing and the freedom to invest in courses that they consider profitable, universities are essentially prevented from positioning themselves distinctively with regard to other universities. Hence, they do not compete as they should, and potential students are limited in their choices. In addition, there are also

instances where the fiscal elements of decentralization have proven to be as costly as with the state alternative (Maroun *et al.*, 2008).

While on paper private universities enjoy a relatively greater degree of autonomy, they are strictly regulated by the Ministry of Higher Education in terms of strategic planning, teaching staff recruitment, approval for university facilities, academic programmes, and teaching syllabus. In addition, the Ministry monitors the finances, budgets and administration of these universities (Ministry of Higher Education, 2010). Despite this, there is a desire to decentralize the education system due to the realization that these centralized structures do not meet the needs of higher education in today's global society (Amos, 2010). The current system is therefore held back by the contradiction of expectation and the ability to deliver on those expectations. This, in turn, might play a vital role in the nature of understanding the private university's aim of creating a decentralized system, if this is indeed in place.

2.8: University of Business and Technology (UBT)

It is within the above context, that the University of Business and Technology (UBT) needs to be placed. Starting in 2000 as the Institute of Business Administration (IBA), IBA granted diplomas in various business related courses. Only a small number of students were accepted in the autumn of 2000. The school started the Boys Section near the Jeddah Chamber of Commerce, while the Girls Section had classes in Makhmal Plaza opposite the Jamjoom Commercial Centre. Subsequently, the Boys Section relocated to the Sari Street Campus, Jeddah and the Girls Section, near the Jeddah Chamber of Commerce. IBA was established to educate and train high school graduates, improve their English language proficiency level, and equip them with essential skills, thus enabling them to find suitable jobs in the local labour market. This would then bridge the gap between education and market place needs as close as possible. IBA was authorized to grant a diploma in Business Administration, a study of two and a half years with 82 credit hours, including 8 weeks on the job training. Unexpectedly, it underwent rapid growth due to quality and standards of education it offered.

In 2003, the College of Business Administration (CBA) was established and evolved into a business school offering a Bachelor of Business Administration in various areas

of concentration, duly approved by the Ministry of Higher Education. The following majors were offered on both campuses (Boys and Girls): BBA in Accounting, Marketing, Finance, Human Resource Management, Management Information System, and Supply Chain Management. At present, CBA Boys Campus is located at the sprawling 100,000 square metres of land in Dhaban; this also houses the New College of Engineering and Information Technology (CEIT). The CBA Girls Campus is on Sari Street.

The UBT Vision Statement is: To be the pre-eminent business school that develops market needed skills and competencies of future leaders. The CBA Mission Statement is:

- i. To provide state-of-the-art of specialized business education;
- ii. To contribute to the closing of the gap between business education, job opportunities and the competencies required by private and public sector organizations;
- iii. To equip students with requisite knowledge, skills and attributes for outstanding leadership in the challenging local and global business environment.

UBT (2010-2011) was ranked by Eduniversal as one of the 1,000 Best Business Schools belonging to the official selection in the last Convention held in Paris. In total, ninety-eight courses (2010-2011) were offered, with an average class size of 25 and student to faculty ratio of 18:1. The Student Body (2010-2011) consisted of 1,374 undergraduate men, 212 graduate men, with total student numbers of 1,586. Table 2.1 below shows the distribution of faculty at UBT:

Table 2.1: UBT Faculty

Total	46
Full-time	40
Part-time	6
Saudi	14
Non-Saudi	32

Source: Devised by author

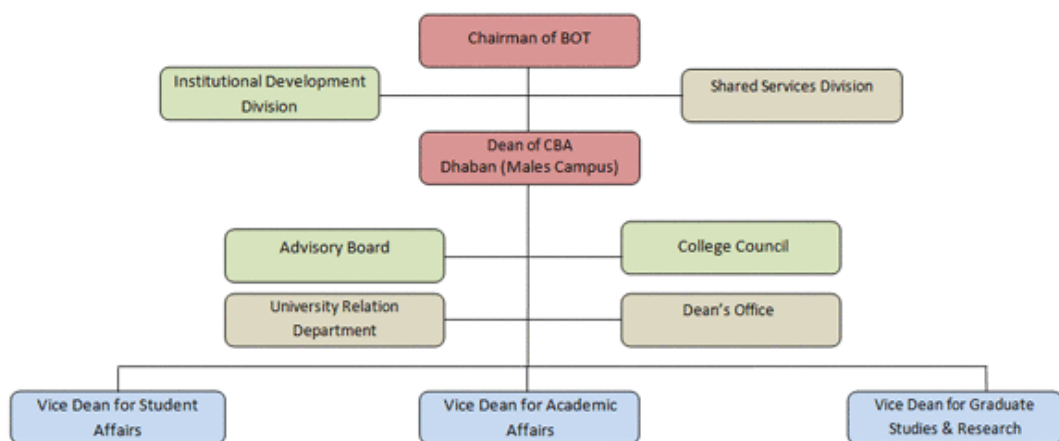
Table 2.2 below shows the composition of the UBT Board of Trustees:

Table 2.2: UBT Board of Trustees

POSITION
BOT Chairman
Assistant BOT Chairman
3 Members

Source: Devised by author

Finally, Figure 2.1 below is an organogram showing the UBT administrative structure:

**Figure 2.1: UBT Organogram Administrative Structure**

Source: UBT

UBT is distinctive in that it progressed from being a junior college to being a university within the space of just twelve years. The university has identified three main reasons

for this development: high levels of concern for providing quality education, an emphasis on specialized education, and an emphasis on developing the leadership skills of those in high positions within the institution (University of Business and Technology, n.d.). This implies that UBT is an establishment where leadership and management have played an important part in transforming the institution and moving it forward. The university is also in line with the government's proposed educational reforms in that its shift from a junior college to a university has created more opportunities for university places within the nation. It therefore lends itself to examinations of the role between government and the management of universities. It is in this context that it was chosen as an appropriate university to use as a case study for the purpose of this research.

In conclusion, Saudi Arabia is a country trying to grapple with the need to maintain its traditions while at the same time having to accept that keeping pace with a globalized world requires a degree of adaptability and the readiness to accommodate change. Given the foundation of the kingdom in terms of its legal system being based on Shari'a and its societal roots being anchored in tribalism and patriarchy, the implementation of actual reforms does not come easy. Here, even the tremendous wealth that the government has at its disposal has not allowed change to happen at a quicker pace than if such spending was not available. Nevertheless, there is recognition that the educational system is not producing what has been expected; therefore the government has made adjustments to try to improve on this sector's performance. The privatization of higher education institutions is one aspect in this equation and as such UBT is a prime example of what the kingdom is trying to achieve.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

Having outlined the status of higher education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the recent emphasis on privatized higher education, it is important to place the development of privatization in the higher education segment in the overall literature on privatization and globalization. This chapter therefore presents a review of the literature with reference to the overall research aims of the study. It aims to present the findings that exist in the empirical literature and how this knowledge has shaped the current understanding of the overall nature of management within higher education institutions. These findings will then be related to the situation in Saudi Arabia.

Within the literature review the focus will remain on the three major research questions that focus on senior manager's understanding and approaches to management at a private university, the understanding and experiences of academic staff of the management approach followed at UBT, and the type of relationship that exists between UBT as a private university and the government through the Ministry of Higher Education.

The influence on management as highlighted in the research questions must be understood in the context of the influences that impact on the development of higher education in Saudi Arabia. In addition to prevailing political and economic conditions and structures that exist within the kingdom and which have had an influence on how higher education has evolved in the country, more recent developments such as the process of globalization and the corresponding response of decentralization within higher education governance are relevant as far as Saudi Arabia is concerned. This is particularly the case as far as ownership forms, which includes privatization, but which also brings back the role of state and societal forces like the role of religion. All combined, these various circumstances have led to the overall evolution of higher education in Saudi Arabia.

Using evidence from the wider academic literature, it then becomes possible to understand the role of UBT, as a privatized higher education provider in Saudi Arabia, within the wider theoretical context.

3.1: Kaplan's Institutional Framework for Higher Education

The case study analysis of UBT undertaken in this thesis requires a framework derived from the literature through which the findings (secondary and primary in the form of interviews with senior managers and academic staff) can be properly evaluated. Kaplan's (2006) theory on higher education governance and his institutional framework for higher education provides such a construct.

Kaplan lays out various different pressures that can bring about the evolution of higher education, and conceptualizes the way in which these pressures relate to governance structures. It holds that both indirect and direct political and economic pressures affect higher education institutions and their outputs, and that these institutions react according to external market developments. External politics and markets influence the resources that are available for higher education establishments to draw on when they are making fundamental decisions regarding their funding and outlook. Internal political and market factors within the university also influence the decision-making process. All decisions that reach universities are filtered through the institutions' governance and ownership arrangements, value systems and organizational missions.

Kaplan's model holds that the governance and organizational outcomes adopted by universities are influenced by economic conditions and factors related to the external market in conjunction with the political climate of the country, the political structure and the party that is in control. It dictates that these outcomes have different effects on institutions depending on the amount of wealth that the institutions have at their disposal, their governance structures, their levels of selectivity, their prestige, their market power and their ownership forms (non-profit, religiously controlled, public or private). The elements of governance structure that are influential in this respect are the governance norms, assignments of power, institutional rules, and value and decision-making procedures. Once these factors have all been considered in conjunction with one another, a range of policy outcomes come about, including those relating to curriculum, tuition, mission and identity, strategic plans, resource allocation, capital planning, salaries and staffing (Kaplan, 2006).

The various different pressures, and the way in which they are filtered through the internal factors within higher education institutions, provides an insight into the reasons

for changes in governance and management outcomes as time progresses. It can be utilized for the purpose of ascertaining the way in which the evolution of universities occurs. In summary, Kaplan identified economic conditions, political climate and structure, wealth, assignments of power, institutional rules and values, decision-making processes, selectivity, prestige, market power and ownership form as all being important factors in determining the governance and management of universities. Equipped with the framework that Kaplan developed, this chapter will now analyse the key economic, political and structural factors that influence the direction of HE development.

3.2: Economic Conditions

Given the importance that Kaplan gives to economic conditions in HE development, a closer look at these conditions and their relationship to the Saudi Arabian environment is warranted. At the outset, it can be stated that a country's or company's economic condition can be measured in terms of poverty levels, employment figures, income levels, national wealth and economic participation (Boris and De Leon, 2010). From this list, it is clear that poverty will have a direct effect on educational standards. Research has clearly shown that by the age of three, a significant gap has already developed between the cognitive development of children within the poorest 20% of the population and those who hail from wealthier backgrounds. This gap grows throughout primary education and beyond. This ultimately means that people who grow up in economically deprived families are 50% less likely to attend university (Carter-Wall and Whitfield, 2012). High poverty levels within a society means either that access to university study is restricted due to a lack of institutions of higher learning existing, or the overall standard of existing institutions is low given the need to accommodate the levels available within an institution. For societies with low levels of poverty, the reverse will be the case.

A lower standard of education ultimately has an impact on employment rates and opportunities. If parents are unemployed, the chances of children achieving their educational goals are lower, as the research by Lindner *et al.* (2013) has shown. Similarly, people with lower educational standards will have difficulty finding meaningful employment. The broader the problem within a society, the greater the chances of a process known as human capital deterioration occurring (OECD, 2011). This is when the knowledge and skills of the population experience a decline, in this

case due to the fact that people have little workplace experience. Such a decline does not only impact labour market access as a whole but reflects on higher education institutions through the fact that they cannot locate adequate personnel for their own staffing needs. The issue thus becomes a self-perpetuating cycle in which students are taught by low qualified lecturers and the institution declines due to auxiliary employees being unable to fulfil the tasks to which they have been assigned. Boviard et al. (2007, pp.701-706) have further shown that low average incomes hamper the population's ability to become educated.

Naturally, the status of a country's wealth directly influences its educational development. Chien (2010) has pointed out that the higher a country's national wealth is, the greater the chance there will be of a larger proportion of its population, in particular its female population, entering higher education. In fact, in most wealthy countries, women outnumber men at the majority of universities. For example in the USA, there are 129 female university students per 100 male university students, whereas in Ethiopia, which is a substantially poorer country, there are fewer than 35 female university students per male university student (Chien, 2010).

Given Saudi Arabia's wealth, as well as its commitment to spending on education, there are parallels that can be drawn here from the literature in that educational opportunities and advancement should be a key aspect of the country's development. Certainly in the field of female participation, the rates are high when compared to other developing countries. This is despite the fact that the nation's traditional approach to gender, and the fact that there is still a high degree of gender-related segregation, plays an important role when it comes to education in Saudi Arabia.

However, one would expect that higher national wealth also leads into higher 'economic participation' rates in Saudi Arabia, i.e. the number of citizens who are either employed or searching for employment, since the literature suggests that the more people that are participating in the economy, the greater the stock of educated individuals universities have to choose from. Similarly, the higher the economic participation rate, the better the country is likely to be doing in financial terms as well, meaning that there will be greater amounts of money available for the government to invest in higher education institutions. That this is not necessarily so when it comes to higher education institutions in the kingdom means that the role played by economic conditions needs to

be closer examined. While the management and governance approaches that are used at UBT stand in relation to the economic situation in Saudi Arabia, the way in which these approaches have been shaped does not necessarily confirm presumptions as outlined in the existing literature. As a result, other factors also need to be considered.

As previously stated, Kaplan (2006) identified the amount of wealth that higher education institutions have as a factor that affected the effect of a variety of other issues on management and governance outcomes. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the economic status of universities within Saudi Arabia. This will provide an insight into how each of the primary factors that impact this form of education are influenced by the levels of funding that are available for universities.

Within the kingdom, the government allocates large amounts of the national budget to the development of higher education. This is especially due to the strong emphasis that the current ruler, King Abdullah, places on higher education (Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia, 2010). Examples of well-funded universities in Saudi Arabia include Princess Noura University, which is one of the world's largest women's universities (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Ministry of Higher Education, 2010) with an annual budget of the equivalent of US\$585.5 million (Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency, 2013), and the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, which was created with a budget of the equivalent of US\$12.5 billion (Al-Ghamdi, 2007). The bottom line is that there are virtually no budget restrictions getting in the way of the progression of higher education in Saudi Arabia.¹

This is not to say, however, that budget issues are of no consequence. An examination of management approaches at UBT will show that budget constraints do affect management decisions and governance within the university, in particular when it comes to private institutions. At the same time, and as the literature that has been reviewed suggests, such restrictions can have a positive effect rather than a detrimental impact.

¹ This is attracting international researchers to the nation's universities. However, it is worth noting that the nature of Saudi society might still be deterring some foreign academics. The restrictions placed upon personal freedoms and conservative attitudes to gender within the nation have the potential to undermine the effect of the funding that is being provided to universities by creating a climate that is not welcoming to researchers (Reisberg, 2011).

The term ‘market power’ refers to an institution’s ability to alter prices for goods or services so that they are substantially different from the competitive price in a way that enables the institution to remain profitable. The majority of profit-orientated entities have a degree of market power, as they can profitably alter their prices on some occasions (Baldick, 2010). Zetland (2011) argues that universities have zero market power over prospective students because of the competitive nature of higher education institutions. However, he points out that they have high levels of market power concerning fees that are charged to students for various different services once these students have started their studies. The argument is that the majority of these students will not switch universities once they have embarked on their higher education at one of these institutions. He provides the example of transcript fees and argues that universities are basically free to charge what they like with respect to these fees (Zetland, 2011).

According to Epple *et al.* (2013), higher education institutions can sometimes elevate their market power by taking advantage of students who possess strong idiosyncratic preferences for their institutions. This results in them paying more in spite of the fact that the cost is above the competitive price. It contradicts Zetland’s statement that universities only have high market power with regards to students paying for services once they are at an institution, and suggests that universities can capitalize on the propensity for students to pick universities based on factors that may not be obvious to observers.

Epple *et al.* (2006) have stated that high quality higher education institutions have more market power than medium and low quality institutions, as they are competing with fewer universities that are of a similar of quality than their lower quality counterparts. This allows them to set tuition fees that are above the effective marginal costs; this generates additional revenue that is utilized in order to further enhance the quality of the establishments (Epple *et al.*, 2006). This theory means that there is a direct link between the market power of an institution and the quality of education that its students are able to receive.

Another point that Epple *et al.* (2006) have made is that the higher the quality of a tertiary education institution, the less competition it has from universities that are above it in terms of quality. This means that, for this reason also, it has a greater degree of market power. The highest quality university normally has a much higher amount of

market power than the next university down. Low and medium quality universities only usually have a very limited amount of market power (Epple *et al.*, 2006).

Marginson (2004) has stated that higher education institutions can gain market power via a number of different avenues. She links graduation rates, selectivity, academic resources, research performance and the way in which universities are viewed by prospective students' peers to the levels of market power that these institutions have (Marginson, 2004). This is logical, as these are all ways in which universities can differentiate themselves from their competitors. It stands to reason that if an institution manages to excel in any area, it will be able to charge more than a university that cannot compete with it with regards to the characteristic in question.

According to Teixeira (2006), when it comes to higher education, market power can sometimes be concentrated within a small group of universities, which can cause them to act like cartels. This suggests that there is an element of collusion between institutions. It implies that they can cooperate in order to keep prices high.

In summary, a multitude of different points of view have been expressed regarding the degree of market power that universities can exert. The literature that has been examined indicates that higher quality tertiary education institutions have more market power than institutions that are of a lower quality. It also indicates that they have a particularly high market power with regards to providing services to students once they have enrolled. Collusion might also be utilized as a tool to increase the prices that are set for universities. However, it is notable that Saudi Arabian universities do not charge tuition fees. This means that this is not a factor when it comes to UBT.

3.3: Globalization

Globalization is an important factor relating to the development of education and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. It is a component of the external market, which was identified by Kaplan as an important factor in determining the governance and management of universities. Globalization has increased the level of competition between countries (Stiglitz, 2006, p.199). On the one hand, modern states have to compete with each other for a share of capital investment, but they must then sacrifice some state independence in order to remain globally competitive. Furthermore, the capacity of modern states for policy-making autonomy is compromised due to greater

international capital mobility (Watson, 2007). This in turn, has also created a state of global interdependence (World Health Organization, 2014).

In this context, the nation-state has had to adjust, and in many instances change its role, to accommodate the demands of the external environment (Mok, 2003). While some continue to refer to globalization as a ‘myth’², ‘‘it is still the case that with the spread of communication technology, the world has become a smaller place with people much more aware these days about development and changes that occur outside of their borders.

Indeed, globalization has brought about major changes in higher education. According to Yelland (2011), higher education is rapidly transforming and becoming a global sector of its own. As it expands, it also becomes increasingly international in its nature. Some of the ways in which globalization impacts on higher education in Saudi Arabia when filtered through the factors described by Kaplan (2006) can be summarized as follows:

Social Returns to Education: Under competitive pressure due to globalization, it is not surprising that governments have been keen to increase the human capital of their citizens. Human Capital results from investment in the health, knowledge and skills of the population and leads to considerable rate gains in GDP growth, as a number of studies have demonstrated (e.g. Patrinos and Psacharopoulos, 2011; Psacharopoulos, 2009).

Private returns are derived from the costs and benefits of higher education from the point of view of the individual student (Psacharopoulos, 2009). While there are several methods of calculation in use, the private return is essentially the cost of higher education in relation to the return (in higher earnings) after tax, compared to a control group of high school graduates who do not go on to higher education. The private return calculation is used to assess the strength of higher education demand derived from individual students. On the other hand, *social returns* are derived from the costs and benefits of higher education from the point of view of the economy as a whole. The costs are the ‘real’ costs of higher education to the economy rather than the individual

² For example, Rugman (2003) who argues that multinational enterprises (MNEs) do most of their business within the confines of one of the three ‘triad’ trading blocs, the European Union (EU), North America, and Asia, meaning that so-called global pressures are restricted rather than widespread,

student's costs. Social returns to education are used to evaluate the efficiency of public spending on higher education, and would indicate whether, for example, a particular course was worth continuing with at any particular university. Finally, social returns are known as *public returns* if they include additional taxes and social security contributions paid by higher education graduates (Psacharopoulos, 2009).

In addition, the concept of *opportunity cost* is needed to interpret the findings on private and social returns to higher education. The opportunity cost is the amount lost when any resource is not used in its best alternative use (Sloman and Garratt, 2009, p.84). For example, should I (as a student) invest in higher education if it yields an 8% private return? If the best alternative use of my funds is to deposit them in a bank account at 5% interest, then (all else being equal) the opportunity cost is positive at 3% and I should enrol in higher education. Although figures vary (due to different methods of calculation), all studies show a consistent and positive private and social rate of return to higher education that exceeds a reasonable estimate of opportunity cost of around 5%. For example, in their study using data from 1950 to 2010, Patrinos and Psacharopoulos (2011) found considerable social returns to investment in higher education by per capita income group (see Table 3.1 below).

Table 3.1: Social Returns to Investment in Higher Education

PER CAPITA INCOME GROUP	HE SOCIAL RETURNS [%]
Low income	11.2
Middle income	11.3
High income	9.5
World average	10.8

Source: Devised by author

These returns are clearly in excess of any reasonable estimate of opportunity cost (e.g. 5%), and large positive social returns are especially prevalent in economies with many firms concentrated in clusters with a consequent high density of educated workers. In Table 3.2 below, Psacharopoulos (2009) modifies OECD (2008) data to ensure

uniformity in data collection and analysis, and directly compares private and public returns to HE in 15 OECD countries.

On the basis of these results, Psacharopoulos (2009) concludes the following: private returns exceed social returns and this serves as a measure of public subsidization of HE; both private and social returns exceed a reasonable opportunity cost of capital, say 5%; finally, the telling point that *University graduates have an average 61% earnings advantage over secondary school graduates. Such differential helps explain the unabated demand for university entry* (Psacharopoulos, 2009).

Table 3.2: Comparison – Private and Public Returns to Higher Education in 15 OECD Countries

COUNTRY	PRIVATE	PUBLIC
Czech Rep.	26.5	8.9
Portugal	22.7	11.2
Poland	20.7	14.6
Hungary	16.8	16.0
UK	14.4	6.5
Belgium	12.7	10.6
Ireland	11.0	11.3
Switzerland	10.3	2.0
Finland	10.0	6.9
Spain	8.2	5.8
Norway	8.1	4.1
France	7.9	7.4
Germany	6.4	8.4
Sweden	4.7	3.7
Denmark	4.3	1.5
Average	12.3	7.9

Source: OECD

Finally, Psacharopoulos (2009) provides a useful synoptic table (Table 3.3 below) that summarizes the private and social benefits of participation in HE and serves as a reminder that ‘costs’ and ‘benefits’ are more than just financial measures:

Table 3.3: Private and Social Benefits of Participation in Higher Education

BENEFITS	PRIVATE	SOCIAL
MARKET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility in labour market • Greater earnings, mobility, and employability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher productivity and net tax revenue • Reduction in state finance
NON-MARKET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater consumer efficiency and health of family • Improved quality of life for children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in crime, spread of infectious diseases, and fertility • Improved social cohesion and voter participation

Source: Psacharopoulos (2009)

Knowledge Economy: It is often argued that globalization has resulted in a ‘knowledge economy’, in which technical expertise and innovative ideas are the key to global competitiveness (Ashton *et al.*, 2008). This has resulted in a number of different nations attempting to modernize their higher education institutions, for example China, which has granted universities a greater degree of autonomy, restructured university management systems, pooled together educational resources and implemented a teaching reform plan. India has put a number of strategies into action including taking steps to ensure that higher education institutions were periodically reviewed in order to make sure that high quality was maintained. They also engaged in additional resource commitments, consolidated and optimized the educational infrastructure via institutional networking, and conferred a greater degree of autonomy to universities that were deemed to be deserving of this measure (Gihar *et al.*, 2013).

A number of other developing nations have also been motivated to improve their higher education systems by the emergence of a global knowledge economy. Taiwan has pumped large sums of money into its university research facilities (Marginson, 2007). Malaysia has significantly expanded its number of universities (Grapragasem *et al.*, 2014), and even Iran has implemented a system of internal monitoring and evaluation in universities in order to increase educational standards (Farasatkah and Ghazi-

Tabatabaei, 2009). Many European universities have also become more entrepreneurial as a result of the knowledge economy, as this encourages growth. However, great diversity still exists within these institutions (Shattock, 2008), and not all of them derive a large proportion of their of funding from entrepreneurship; Spanish institutions get under 3% of funding from non-teaching activities, and private universities in the UK focus almost entirely on teaching (Morris, 2009).

According to Temple (2012), the knowledge economy causes nations to focus more on universities' roles as engines of research. This indicates that it brings about an increased focus on research within these institutions. It implies that implemented management and governance techniques are aimed at maximizing the research capabilities of these universities and give them priority over the tuition of students. Temple (2012) stated that the reason for this is the fact that there is a commonly held view that the knowledge economy means that a nation's economic status is directly connected to the quality and quantity of the research that its universities conduct. It stands to reason that the more discoveries are made by the staff at these institutions, the greater the level of innovation that exists within a country, resulting in a higher amount of wealth that it is capable of producing.

The notion that the emergence of the knowledge economy is leading to a greater amount of independence being granted to higher education institutions has been expressed by Komljenović (2013). She stated that it has transformed higher education from something that was originally under the control of the government to something that is now more autonomous. This is due to the belief that this move will allow the creation of knowledge at universities to influence the levels of innovation within the nation's businesses and stimulate economic growth (Komljenović, 2013).

The idea that the knowledge economy is causing universities to be granted more autonomy has also been put across by Buckner (2011). She has referenced it in the context of the Arab world, stating that it has led to more higher education institutions within the region becoming privatized. She has provided the example of Syria, which has rapidly expanded its number of private universities within recent years to the point where three-quarters of them now have private status (Buckner, 2011).

Chege *et al.* (2008) have stated that the knowledge economy has led to higher education institutions becoming more autonomous due to the fact that governments believe that this will cause them to be more competitive with regards to research, and therefore improve the amount of innovations that are generated. They have expressed the belief that this can in turn lead to the ‘marketization’ of universities, which refers to the practice of managing them in a way that projects a positive image as a means of getting more students and therefore generating as much profit as possible (Chege *et al.*, 2008). It stands to reason that the better a reputation a higher education institution has due to the quality of its research, the more people will be willing to pay to attend it.

On the one hand then, universities are thus being given more freedom due to the relationship between the knowledge economy and higher education. By allowing for greater autonomy, higher education institutions are seen as being given the means to unlock economic benefits by facilitating the production of knowledge.

On the other hand, however, there is the notion that higher education institutions should be kept under the control of the state as this is the key to using them in order to take advantage of the knowledge economy (St George, 2006). St George points out that many high-performing Asian nations have state-run universities, and expresses the notion that the idea that increasing the level of competition that exists between universities by encouraging them to become privatized is not necessarily an effective means of utilizing them for the purpose of increasing a nation’s prosperity (St George, 2006). This challenges the assertions that were made by Komljenović (2013), Buckner (2011) and Chege *et al.* (2008).

St George (2006) implies that the part of the world in which a country is located can dictate the methods that it uses for accommodating the knowledge economy by way of adapting the way in which its higher education institutions are run. She indicated that more Westernized nations tend to gravitate more towards granting autonomy, whereas this is not necessarily the case when it comes to countries in some other regions. This means that Saudi Arabia’s response to the emergence of the knowledge economy might entail keeping control of universities firmly in the hands of the government.

There is also the issue of institutional maturity to take into consideration. In the West, universities have been around for a long time in comparison to their Saudi Arabian

counterparts. This means that it can be argued that they have had time to develop an ethos that guides them, leaving less room for staff personalities to guide their management. However, it is possible that the relatively new status of private higher educational facilities in Saudi Arabia means that institutional processes are weak. In turn, this means that personalities are still likely to play a major role in decision-making and cause the government to limit the amount of independence that they are granted in order to prevent personal opinions from dictating managerial actions.

Globalization has other aspects that must also be considered. According to Molina-Ray (2010), the knowledge economy has stimulated a trend towards the increased use of information computer technology within higher education institutions. This is likely to mean that management and governance have to take into account more issues related to the technological prowess of universities and their ability to keep up with the latest computer systems. It is also probable that this development has resulted in a greater degree of attention being extended to managing the skills of staff and ensuring that they are prepared for the onset of e-learning.

Molina-Ray (2010) also stated that the knowledge economy has led to universities offering new ways of accessing learning, for example being taught via the Internet, as opposed to physically attending an institution. This creates a new set of management and governance issues, as managing a university that entails all of the students sitting in a classroom and absorbing information that is provided to them on a face-to-face basis is radically different from managing a university that provides a range of options regarding how to be taught. This includes the opportunity of engaging in learning from a remote location via the World Wide Web. It means that managerial staff have a greater range of considerations to take into account due to the influence of the knowledge economy.

Temple (2012) has pointed out that the knowledge economy also places a greater emphasis on universities' role as critics and guardians of existing knowledge. This suggests that it is equally important for them to focus on the way in which generated knowledge is interpreted and spread by academics, suggesting that although research is important, tuition is also required in order to improve the economy of a nation via academia. Tutors teach students how to critically view and use knowledge that is provided to them. This indicates that management approaches should be implemented

that strike a balance between research and supplying students with the skills that are required in order for them to be capable of effectively disseminating the knowledge that is uncovered.

Clarysse *et al.* (2012) have stated that the knowledge economy can often result in universities encouraging academics to produce new knowledge aimed at solving societal and industry-based problems, rather than simply conducting research for the sake of research and seeking to provide education to students for the purpose of bettering their educational levels and career prospects. This has caused some universities to expand the range of different disciplines in which they specialize. By doing this, they can better tailor their research towards providing the type of knowledge that is sought after in a knowledge economy (Clarysse *et al.*, 2012).

The notion that universities are expanding their specialization indicates that managerial techniques need to be applied that are suited to a wider range of different academic specialities. This suggests that managers need to stay abreast of developments in the world of industry in order to know which areas to tailor the production of knowledge towards. It is likely that higher education institutions have to transform their approaches in order to accommodate the emergence of this phenomenon.

Ivic (2010) pointed out that the emergence of the knowledge economy has resulted in structural and management-based changes in the domain of higher education. She has stated that it is bringing about an increase in autonomy for universities as a stronger emphasis is placed on allowing them the freedom to create knowledge. It has also resulted in new roles coming into being, such as that of the ‘knowledge manager’ (Ivic, 2010). The term ‘knowledge management’ refers to the process of organizing information in a holistic manner. It involves sharing, retrieving, evaluating, capturing and identifying an organization’s information assets (Koenig, 2012).

According to Cranfield and Taylor (2008), in the context of higher education, a knowledge manager is a member of staff who is charged with the task of facilitating and enabling the flow of knowledge that is derived from information it derives from data. The role works on the basis that human intervention is required in order to oversee the conversion of information into knowledge. This comes in the form of communication, developing connections and comparing it to other pieces of information. Knowledge

management in universities involves the use of resources that a higher education institution has already set up, for example HRM practices, organizational change management, and information systems management.

There is contention as to the usefulness of knowledge management, with some believing that it is an integral component of the overall management of universities and others passing it off as a fad (Cranfield and Taylor, 2008). The fact that the knowledge economy is acting as a catalyst for the spread of this phenomenon means that it is radically changing the way in which higher education institutions are being run. It means that it is increasing the likelihood of specialists being employed in order to apply expertise at facilitating the spread of knowledge. Yonezawa (2014) stated that the emergence of the knowledge economy has resulted in higher education being a commercial service in addition to a platform for the formation of skills. In this context, tertiary education could be seen as having been turned into a commodity that is to be bought and sold. What it does indicate, however, is that universities have started operating more along the lines of businesses in an attempt to accommodate a rapidly changing environment. Management approaches are likely to have altered in order to adapt to this development. One area would be that, in addition to worrying about the quality of the education that they are providing to students, managers now have to be able to effectively market and sell the concept of their university so that the institution continues to attract a high quality student body.

The knowledge economy has also resulted in university staff travelling across borders to a greater degree than they did in the past, as pointed out by Yonezawa (2014), therefore adding an international dimension to higher education institutions. What this means is multi-fold. First, university management need to be able to accommodate students and staff from a variety of different nationalities and cultural backgrounds. Second, effective staff members have become valuable commodities themselves and are often head hunted by other institutions from various places. This in turn means that the governance and management of universities needs to focus on a proper structure and retention policies that can maintain their quality workforce. Third, institutions themselves have to adapt to a variety of international influences on their own policies and procedures, and can no longer rely on traditional ways or on how things used to be done. A much higher degree of flexibility and adaptability is required.

As pointed out by Pruett and Schwellenbach (2004), another development is that the knowledge economy has resulted in an increase in the degree to which higher education institutions collaborate with other universities. The elevated emphasis on sharing knowledge has meant that these institutes communicate with each other to a greater extent than they did before (Pruett and Schwellenbach, 2004). This is yet another factor that needs to be included in managerial approaches. In addition to systems being put in place to deal with the flow of knowledge within universities, measures need to be implemented to accommodate the flow of knowledge from one higher education institution to another.

All of the above results in higher education institutions increasing the amount of emphasis that they place on quality assurance and assessment. This includes bringing about a greater focus on evaluation by external bodies in order to guarantee the high quality of the students' learning experience (Pavel, 2012). This suggests that the knowledge economy has placed elements of university governance in the hands of outside forces. At the same time, it can be argued that the role of the government has become more relevant as a body that strictly monitors these institutions in an attempt to keep their standards at a level where they will deliver the maximum level of benefit to the national economy by improving its base of knowledge. The problem for the institutions is that they are pulled in two directions; towards a more international role catering to wider audience, whilst at the same time they are pulled back under governmental supervision to ensure quality control.

Clarysse *et al.* (2012) have also expressed the notion that the emergence of the knowledge economy has brought about an increase in industry-funded research. This means that industries are likely to have a greater influence over the management and governance of higher education institutions, as these institutions will have to implement measures to conform to the wishes of companies that fund them. Taking this a step further, it indicates that university management has to take steps to make their institutions attractive for investment by industrial companies. This expands the managerial role and adds a new consideration to it that was far less prominent before the knowledge economy grew to be a dominant force in the running of higher education institutions.

According to Olssen and Peters (2005), the emergence of the knowledge economy has not only caused universities to forge closer links with the world of industry, but has also increased the extent to which they are connected with the business world in general. It has acted as a catalyst for venture partnerships between universities and businesses (Olssen and Peters, 2005). This supports the notion mentioned above of higher education institutions having to make themselves attractive to companies so as to be able to attract funding. It also indicates that the governance of universities is in part determined by external organizations, as the fact that higher education institutions desire to work with businesses suggests that these companies have a say in the way in which universities are run. It is likely that they are able to exert influence over the decision-making processes within these establishments.

For universities outside of the Western world, the factors cited above have resulted in institutions trying to copy or model themselves on institutions as they exist in Europe and the United States (Holsworth and Trani, 2010, cited in McMillian, 2010). This is due to the perception that European universities are capable of producing knowledge in a manner that is beneficial to the economy. Entire academic programmes are sometimes imported from European universities (Holsworth and Trani, 2010, cited in McMillian, 2010). It would appear that universities in Saudi Arabia have followed this approach. They have looked outside the country for management and governance approaches in an attempt to emulate methods for running higher education institutions that are likely to have the highest possible positive financial impact on the nation. It also means that management techniques might incorporate methods for remaining up-to-date about the latest developments in Western countries.

According to Jiang (2005), attempts to use universities in order to capitalize on the knowledge economy by placing nations at the forefront of knowledge creation are leading to the deregulation of higher education: regulations are being removed in order to facilitate easier production of knowledge (Jiang, 2005). Governments are removing rules surrounding the provision of this form of education in the belief that this will create a more flexible environment conducive to the production of knowledge that has the potential to benefit the national economy. This has been criticized, as some people believe that it devalues education and has detrimental effects on the learning experience (Jiang, 2005). In the context of higher education in Saudi Arabia, it means that there is a

possibility that the government has removed some of the rules that govern the way universities are run in an attempt to improve the country's educational situation. It contradicts the notion that the government is taking an increased role for reasons of quality assurance. In many ways, the government is in a dilemma, as it is faced with the difficult task of striking a balance between deregulating in order to accommodate the demands of the knowledge economy and maintaining its role as a means of keeping control over quality and output.

Given the factors outlined in this section, it is clear that there is an effect of the knowledge economy on UBT management approaches that should be a major consideration in this work. The key to highlight in the closer case examination to follow is the ways in which the transition into globalization and the knowledge economy has impacted UBT in particular, given that institutions react to these challenges in different ways. The literature that has been explored suggests that globalization will have altered the approach used by managers at UBT. It indicates that it might have made it more in line with global management techniques as opposed to those that are specific to Saudi Arabia.

3.4: Political Climate and Structure

Kaplan also identified the political climate and structure of a nation as being an important factor in determining the management and government of universities. Temple (2012) has acknowledged that the way in which the knowledge economy affects universities is also dependent on the functionality of the nations in which they operate. Societal attitudes dictate how effectively they can implement managerial techniques that are aimed at capitalizing on this phenomenon. Economic and political factors also come into play, meaning that not all higher education institutions adapt the way they are run in order to adapt to the knowledge economy in the same way as one another. The changes that take place are very much susceptible to individual differences dependent on the country in which the university in question is situated.

Economic issues and the process of globalization are conditioned by the political climate and the existing political structure of a country within which development and adjustment occurs. Linneman (2003) defines the term 'political climate' as a powerful, dynamic, multi-level, socially constructed phenomenon that is similar to an attitude or a

mood, but refers to a theme underlying the politics of a given area as opposed to an individual's emotional or cognitive response. According to Stephenson (2008), given the close connection between the political field and the value and historical mission related to continuing higher education, the educational field has to constantly accommodate itself to changes in the political climate. As a result, university administrators must be aware of the impact of political challenges to higher education and strategize accordingly. This indicates that effective management of higher education institutes requires adaptation to changing political climates.

Beyond the direct influence the political climate can have on the direction of higher education policies, there is also the matter of the cost of higher education being shared between the learners and the state (Kliucharev and Morgan, 2012, pp.3-8). This has a direct impact on which students attend university, as in a climate that is geared towards the state paying tuition fees, more students from poorer backgrounds will be likely to attend. However, in climates that are centred on learners paying their own way through university, poorer students might not be able to afford to pay to go to these institutions. It also means that the way in which universities are managed might require a degree of malleability in order to adapt to alterations in cost allocation as the political climate experiences changes due to the passing of time.

The International Institute for Educational Planning (2013) has also suggested that the political climate can have an effect on the amount of public funding available for research at universities. In a climate where educational development is identified as a priority area for government, universities are likely to have better access to capital and more money at their disposal for their activities. The IIEP has provided the example of the period immediately after World War II, when research was held to be critically important and higher education establishments were relied on for new innovations (International Institute for Educational Planning, 2013). The more the political atmosphere is geared towards educational development, the more funding universities are likely to receive.

Another facet of the political climate is the extent to which a nation has a stable political regime. According to Bunoti (2011), national political instability can sometimes manifest itself at an institutional level within universities. This means that the governance of these institutions can be affected by political power struggles. This

causes added complications with regards to the management of these institutions, and suggests that a stable political climate makes universities easier to run.

Similar lines of argument can be put forward when it comes to the political structure of a country. The term ‘political structure’ refers to the way in which the government is run. It is the way in which the political system of a nation is set up, whereas the political climate of a country is the theme or mood underlying its politics that determines the course that they take. The two concepts are connected and the political climate can affect the political structure, but they are not synonymous with one another. According to Berg (2010), the structure has a direct influence on which students are able to enter the higher education system. Some structures are geared towards enabling poorer students to go to university, whereas others are not (Berg, 2010; Illinois State University Center for the Study of Education Policy, 2005). This is due to the government’s budget priorities, which are influenced by the political climate but are a component of the political structure. Overall, the government’s budget priorities can determine how much money institutions are given by the state. They can also influence the amount of financial assistance that is provided to students at higher education institutions (Illinois State University Center for the Study of Education Policy, 2005).

Given the fact that the political structure and climate both affect higher education, it is a given that the specific party that is in power also influences it, as was expressed in Kaplan’s (2006) framework. There is a wealth of literature in existence that demonstrates the ways in which the nature of the ruling party impacts the state of higher education in a nation. Oberndorfer and Steiner (2006) studied the effects of the political parties that ruled Germany on spending on higher education in Germany between 1985 and 2002. They concluded that conservative governments and coalitions between conservative and social democrat parties spend greater amounts of their budgets on providing public higher education when compared to social democrat governments (Oberndorfer and Steiner, 2006). Meanwhile, analyses of the effect of political parties on higher education in the United Kingdom have revealed that conservative governments here have reduced funding for universities, whereas labour governments have led to increased funding and resources for these institutions (Bourn, 2007, p.32). This indicates that the impact that political parties have on university funding is perhaps more closely linked to the precise party that is in power as opposed to whether or not it

falls within the category of conservative or social democrat. It is also possible that the effect of the type of party that is elected varies according to the characteristics of the nation in question.

Research by Chen (2008) indicated that the amount of female members of a government also has an influence on the degree of funding that a regime allocates to higher education institutions. She studied the likelihood of a larger proportion of a nation's GDP being spent on university funding under the authority of male and female policymakers, and discovered that the latter are likely to assign larger amounts of money to this form of education. Chen has stated that conventionally held wisdom states that left-wing governments usually give higher levels of funding to universities, but that the right-wing/left-wing status of female policymakers has no bearing on the likelihood of them favouring increases in the amount of money that is assigned to higher education institutes. The main predictor of them doing this is gender as opposed to political orientation (Chen, 2008).

The results of Chen's study indicate that the characteristics of the individuals within a government party have a significant bearing on decisions that directly affect higher education institutions. This supports the notion that the political category that a party falls within is less important than the qualities of an individual within that party with regards to this issue. This has direct implications for Saudi Arabia where the role of the individual within the ruling arrangements is paramount.

3.5: The Role of Decentralization

Within the context of the politics, economics and globalization outlined above, the concept of decentralization is a major aspect that affects higher education management and governance outcomes. This section of the literature review will explore this phenomenon and critically analyse the literature that relates to decentralization and with regards to higher education institutions. Decentralization can be defined as the transfer of the responsibility for resource allocation, resource raising, management and planning from a nation's central government to either private voluntary organizations and other non-governmental organizations, semi-autonomous corporations or public authorities, subordinate levels of government or units, central government agencies' or ministries' field units (United Nations, n.d.).

Increased consumerism exerts pressure on the government to achieve quantitative and qualitative excellence in public service provision while minimizing cost. In an increasingly borderless global economy, interests of individuals as citizens come into conflict with their interests as consumers. To secure their interest as consumers, individuals seek *localization and regionalization of public decision-making* for the protection of their interests (Shah, 2004, p.8). As a result, nation-states have to respond by adopting *market-like mechanisms with increased competition* and a *public-private mix* in sectors (for example health and education) that were traditionally in the public realm (Atun, 2007, p.250).

The rise of neo-liberal economics in the 1980s stressed the benefits of free markets and strong incentives for these markets to function. Simultaneously, it called for reducing *state-dominated development* by minimizing the size, responsibilities and expense of the welfare state (Batley and Larbi, 2004), further driving the decentralization agenda in public services. Improvements in performance management systems resulting from increased IT use have created greater transparency, forcing politicians and public sector organizations to set explicit strategic goals.

The use of performance indicators in comparing the private sector with public organizations has allowed for the identification of best practice in service delivery. These, in turn, have helped identify poor performers within the public sector, and have led to the growing understanding that decentralized organizations operating close to the community generate better service delivery outcomes than their highly centralized counterparts (Keehley and Abercrombie, 2008).

It has been argued that one of the benefits of decentralization is that it enables policies to be tailored to local preferences. Supporters of decentralization also state that it allows for greater innovation with regards to the ways in which public services and policies are provided and improves the potential for economic growth and efficiency (Kroijer and Rodriguez-Pose, 2009). Despite positive views on the concept of decentralization, there are also voices of opposition. According to Poteete and Ribot (2009), the distribution of authority between the central and local governments is extensively altered by decentralization. While some actors may be empowered by it, decentralization can threaten the authority of central actors, and even that of local ones. However, through educational decentralization, the state is able to transfer management and fiscal

responsibility to subordinate stakeholders without having to grant them any real power. The autonomy of the educational institution is limited as it is controlled by standardized curricula, quota systems, and assessment systems; this suggests that increased autonomy in the context of decentralization is merely a myth (Bjork, 2006). This insight is helpful to the current research as it provides information about possible loopholes in the implementation of decentralization in higher education.

Two final points are important in the rationale for decentralization.

First, it is important to note the possible implications of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) on education in general. The inclusion of education in GATT is based on the notion that liberalizing access to the educational sector can open up large market segments (Kopp, n.d.). Consistent criticisms have been made of GATT and WTO agreements for their serving as a means to attack government policies as ‘barriers to trade’. In terms of education, investors are able to further leverage educational privatization and commoditization through trade regimes (Zajda, 2006, p.45).

Second, given the particular intake of UBT, it is important to take into account the emergence of graduate education as an area of policy interest. Higher education institutions, especially publicly funded ones, encounter unprecedented external demands as they grow in social and economic importance. Policymakers are urged to look more closely at the means through which higher education operates and the reasons why it costs so much.

Nevertheless, while these factors have combined to further the decentralization agenda in the past few decades, a number of practical considerations have impeded progress, particularly in developing countries (Shah, 2004). Politics and constitutional emphasis on unity, and prevention of ‘states within the state’, have often blocked decentralization reform. Wherever political ideologies such as communism and socialism (which favour centralized planning) have dominated historically, there is limited interest in decentralized institutions. Similarly, a history of political instability, feudal domination, and/or military rule hinders the decentralization process. Finally, the colonial heritage of an elite and control-oriented bureaucratic regime continues to prevail in the public sector of many countries, and is resistant to change regarding the distribution of decision-making authority (Shah, 2004).

Hence, decentralization efforts are often dampened, exhibiting the *paradox of decentralization*. This implies that an enabling environment, marked by institutional capacity building and achieving a balanced performance measurement system provided by central government, is a critical decentralization success factor (Witesman and Wise, 2009). In countries where central governments are inherently bureaucratic due to historical or political factors, the creation of a conducive environment is constrained, thereby limiting the success of decentralization efforts. Clearly, many of the above factors apply to Saudi Arabia.

From being the sole provider of higher education, the state is shifting to being a prominent purchaser representing students, employers, and taxpayers. Financial resources are allocated according to the size of student enrolment as well as the results of performance indicators; these cover the domain of teaching and research. The government is expected to play an active role as a facilitator in the generation of a favourable environment for higher education institutions in order for them to become competitive in the global knowledge market (Mok, 2004, p.129).

Similarly, another trend in the decentralization reform process is the denationalization of higher education. This is closely related to the privatization model of decentralization, detailed in the next section. Denationalization of higher education implies that the state forsakes its monopoly on higher education, and allows non-state actors and the market to engage in higher education provision.

This idea is rooted in neo-liberal thought, which argues for the reduced role of the state and the increased employment of market mechanisms for the delivery of all social services. According to Friedman (2004), this trend leads to wider choice in education and better outcomes, as the market (which is based on the price mechanism better information flow with regard to quality of education, and demand and supply of skills imparted) would serve as a more efficient channel of communication. In addition, Friedman (2004) argues that managerial efficiency would follow as a result of denationalization, as competitive education institutions would be superior to government-run institutions in meeting consumer demands.

With the spread of managerial methods into university administration stemming from decentralization, there may be an unspoken assumption that this is something

‘progressive’ that will yield efficiency gains compared to state sector centralized control. This assumption mainly rests on the belief that ‘modern’ management utilizes Human Resource Management (HRM) techniques that enhance worker commitment by conceding autonomy and encouraging empowered teamwork. However, many authors remain unconvinced as to the true nature of HRM.

Watson (2007) has stated that HRM is uncritical, functionalist and prescriptive, and that it focuses on the theoretically and methodologically naïve ‘rhetoric versus reality’ cliché that is frequently espoused. This practice has also been criticized for being overly focused on the notion that employees are ‘resources’ for employers to use, and that it often fails to take into account the perspectives of the workers. There are those who hold the view that it is little more than a PR cloak aimed at hiding work intensification, and that it is a method for conning employees into becoming aligned with management interests.

Another criticism that has been levelled towards HRM is that it lacks moral authority and effectiveness. In addition to these points, it has been criticized because elements of it are used in order to scare workers into compliance (Marchington, 2008). It is clearly a controversial area, meaning that it is something that a case study could be utilized in order to shed more light into its properties. This paves the way for the application of HRM to be examined at UBT in order to gain a further insight into the way in which it works in practice.

3.5.1: Case examples

In order to examine the effects of decentralization on higher education, it is important to consider real-life examples. In this context, we will have a closer look at how decentralization policies occurred in Chile, El Salvador and China, and the varying effects such policies had on higher education institutions in these three countries (Leung, 2004; Friedman, 2004; Mok, 2003; Vegas, 2005, p.257; Chen, 2004). Privatization is a form of decentralization (World Bank, n.d.), which means that these case studies will provide a direct insight into the effect that privatization might have had on UBT.

In order to further elaborate the significance of the studies, the research has been supplied with the case examples encompassing the relevant situations in multiple

countries. Most of the countries have been facing dilemmatic conditions in the management of higher studies management; therefore, supplementary research shall aid in establishing a better understanding of the procedural norms that are to be followed. In this regard, countries such as El Salvador, Chile and China have been chosen to be included in the study. One of the reasons for the inclusion of these countries is that each of them has been observed to be struggling against educational crises. Moreover, they have also been found to be addressing the content that is quite relevant, which can be included in the discussion on decentralization.

On the other hand, the case studies have been observed to be happening in developing societies. However, the countries have been found to be lacking in the availability of concrete procedural norms that would ensure the authentic institutionalization of higher education. In light of these considerations, all the countries mentioned have been seen to be lacking serious insight about educational practices. Considering the existing conditions of Saudi Arabia, the above mentioned countries seem to have the same educational conditions. However, each of them has been useful in drawing conclusions regarding the comparative analysis of the prevailing conditions.

It has also been one of the most significant aspects in incorporating and highlighting the gap that exists in the literature when it comes to the range of comparisons between the countries that are exclusively for the region of Saudi Arabia. As mentioned above, educational institutes in the Gulf region are being privatized; therefore, countries such as Chile, El Salvador and China are preceding through similar development stages. Nevertheless, their example highlights the debates within decentralization that are part and parcel of this thesis. As a result, the emphasis on these three studies is considered relevant.

3.5.1.1: Chile

The example of Chile provides a basis for saying that educational decentralization (according to Leung, 2004, Friedman, 2004, and Mok, 2003) does not, in general, guarantee positive results. In the case of Chile, increasing moves towards the privatization of its universities has resulted in universities becoming more expensive to attend, as private universities are generally more profit-orientated than their public counterparts. It is now the world's most expensive nation to go to university when the

purchasing power of the nation's citizens is taken into consideration (Castro *et al.*, 2012).

According to Jump (2011), a decline in state funding of universities led to higher education institutions in Chile gradually raising their tuition fees. Fees in Chile vary according to which course a student is doing and the prestige of the university that he or she attends. Fees start at up to the equivalent of US\$10,000 dollars at the leading private universities. In comparison to the Chilean annual GDP, this is a substantial amount.

Paying back student loans is now a prominent part of Chilean culture (Jump, 2011). It is a nation that suffers from a large amount of debt. There is also a widespread belief that the high cost of university fees has contributed significantly to this problem. This has led to ill-feeling and discontent amongst the Chilean people (Education International, 2012).

The rising cost of higher education provision in Chile is relevant for the argument against privatization in the Saudi Arabian case. This is especially true from the government perspective whereby education remains a public good that should not be subject solely to the profit motive. The move for privatization in higher education in Saudi Arabia has been undertaken from the perspective of improving the quality of education, and providing an alternative approach within the overall framework of higher education. The case study of Chile suggests that privatization should not be seen as the only alternative, but rather that some form of governmental control is needed in order for the system to retain a sense of balance. The same can be said for management where the primary focus needs to be placed on educational provision rather than the profit motive. As far as Saudi Arabia is concerned, there are lessons to be learned from the Chilean experience in moving to rapid privatization.

One of the direct impacts of the decentralization of higher education in Chile has been a spreading of student protests throughout the country (Gonzalez, 2013). Students have held large scale marches and occupied universities, locking out professors and administrators, in order to protest about excessive fees. Tens of thousands of students have taken part in some of the demonstrations.

The protests in Chile are more than just unruly students demanding tuition; opinion polls suggest that the majority of the nation's residents support them (Elacqua, 2012).

This is evidence of the fact that decentralization has had a negative effect on the nation's universities, not merely in terms of increasing the levels of debt but also in terms of creating a situation in which most people disagree with the current state of affairs. It suggests that the public would prefer a system that enables the costs that are associated with attending a Chilean university to be considerably lower than they currently are.

In May 2014, the ill-feeling towards the high costs that universities in Chile charge for attendance came to a crescendo. Opposition to the costs associated with being a student reached such a high level that Chilean activist Francisco Tapia took it on himself to steal official papers representing US\$500m 'worth' of student debts from the Universidad del Mar higher education institution. He then set fire to them during a protest, destroying any record of these debts. He stated that he did this because he disagreed with the negative impact that student debts were having on people's lives, and the fact that they were perpetuating poverty (Debnath, 2014).

The lengths to which Tapia was willing to go in order to lessen the amount of debt that students in Chile are burdened with demonstrate the extent of the problem. It also means that it can be argued that the trend towards private universities in Chile has cost the higher education system in the country dearly. For the Universidad del Mar it will be hard for the institution to recoup the money that it has lost and means that it will have to issue legal proceedings against each student individually in order to attempt to salvage some of the funds that it has lost (Debnath, 2014). It appears that privatization is having a negative effect on universities and students alike.

3.5.1.2: El Salvador

Theory suggests that problems resulting from imperfect information can be eased by school decentralization in that the poor amplify their voice in policy-making and strengthen providers' incentives. In El Salvador and its school decentralization, administrative activities and teacher behaviour in decentralized schools were compared with those of traditional schools. It was shown that several administrative processes in decentralized schools did not show a dramatic shift to the local level compared with traditional institutions, unlike selective activities such as hiring and firing. It was suggested that positive effects among the teachers included being more motivated in

decentralized schools with a resulting positive effect on student performance (Vegas, 2005, p.257).

The decentralization of education in El Salvador involved the administration and management of schools being placed into the hands of community education associations. These associations were also given the responsibility for monitoring, hiring and selecting teachers, and constructing and maintaining school buildings. The Ministry of Education contracted them to administer a set curriculum to a specific number of students.

The main focus of this initiative was to expand educational opportunities for rural communities. These areas were remote (Ponce, n.d.), which means that it is arguable that a centralized approach was unsuitable for them. The move towards centralization was aimed at improving the standard of education that students received (Ponce, n.d.).

Desmond (2009) has suggested that the approach to education adopted by El Salvador is more democratic than other approaches; this is due to the fact that members of the community education associations are elected to their positions. The local community also makes partial contributions to the finances of educational establishments (Desmond, 2009). This means that it could be argued that the decentralized approach to education that has been adopted in El Salvador makes sense from a monetary perspective.

According to Desmond (2009), there are numerous different benefits associated with this approach. It increases the transparency of funds management at a community level, fosters supportive relationships between parents and teachers, and increases community dedication towards improving educational outcomes (Desmond, 2009). It appears that its value extends beyond the financial contributions of the community education association, and that it is capable of bringing the community together to enhance the level of educational attainment that pupils are capable of gaining.

An evaluation of the effects of decentralized educational institutions in El Salvador concluded that it leads to parents taking a greater part in school affairs than they did before the move towards decentralization. It also led to parents having a better relationship with teachers and engaging with them to a higher extent than before, which improved the educational attainment levels amongst pupils. Research has also

demonstrated that the decentralization of Salvadorian schools reduced student absences stemming from teacher absences. This is because it adds to their accountability (Guerra and King, 2005).

One of the reasons for a reduction in teacher absences may also be because the decentralization of education institutions in El Salvador also brought about a reduction in the number of annual teacher strikes (Allcott and Ortega, 2006). This ties in with Vegas' (2005) suggestion that teachers are more motivated in decentralized schools. It indicates that the improvements in motivation directly improve the standard of education that the pupils receive.

Unlike the Chilean case study, the experience of El Salvador suggests that there are positive aspects of privatization that do provide concrete benefits for the provision of higher education. Here, instead of privatization being solely associated with an increase in tuition costs, the emphasis in El Salvador has been on service provision with a decentralized approach, allowing individual schools at the local level to be able to respond to local demands, therefore, increasing overall satisfaction with the educational output. The prevalence of the privatization boom in the Saudi region has also increased management techniques and employee motivation. Moreover, decentralized management techniques and approaches have also opened the door to illustrative arguments that revolve around the debates made by proponents of higher education in Saudi Arabia. In addition, incorporating the concept of privatization does not mean that the government can lower the quality of education; in fact, it is to provide benefits to the linked respondents. This is something of high relevance for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as officials within the kingdom debate to what degree and under which guidelines privatization should be implemented.

3.5.1.3: China

In China's experience, educational decentralization is considered 'controlled decentralization' whereby the administrative control of the state remains to facilitate the country's education system, i.e. a 'top-down' approach is still used to deliver educational services. Any dramatic changes in central government authority are not affected by the promotion of an educational decentralization policy. Contrary to this, decentralization policy is used by the state to recentralize its authority and power

through indirect control, or combined state control and minor inputs from local communities and the market as a whole (Chen, 2004).

Moreover, a clear tension exists between the use of decentralization as a means to free schools to be innovative and creative, and narrowing of diversity being pursued by intensifying inter-school competition. A growing hierarchy among schools and social stratification is the result of this competition, which is demonstrated in the examples where independent schools and autonomous schools are ranked high with the rest below (Bjork, 2006). This work by Bjork (2006) is relevant to this study as it provides empirical evidence on the implementation of educational decentralization in China, which can help the study to characterize the UBT experience.

According to Ngok (2007), the decentralization of Chinese higher education has also resulted in education being treated as if it is a marketable product. The fact that universities are being given a greater degree of autonomy means that they compete with one another for students, which causes them to market themselves. This has placed an emphasis on transforming universities into efficient institutions that are attractive to students as opposed to enhancing equity, which was one of the initial aims of decentralized higher education within the nation.

It has been argued that the decentralization of education in China has benefitted those in affluent, urban areas, but disadvantaged those who live in poorer, more rural parts of the country. This is due to the fact that local governments in the latter areas have less money at their disposal, meaning that they have fewer funds to inject into educational establishments. In some cases, school teachers do not even get paid salaries by the government in these areas (Ngok, 2006). This indicates that decentralization of education is only beneficial in countries in which there is no great disparity between the different areas in terms of wealth. It suggests that poorer regions benefit from centralized education.

Many local governments within China's less developed provinces actually requested that the process of decentralization was reversed, as they felt that their areas were disadvantaged by the move towards it. In 2001, this resulted in the responsibility for financing primary schools being given to the governments of larger administrative divisions, partially moving away from decentralization (Ngok, 2006). It is a clear

indication that decentralization was negative with regards to the funding that was available in some regions of the country.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia models itself to a degree on the Chinese experience, i.e. maintaining a high degree of administrative control at the political and social level. On the other hand, it also allows the authorities to decentralize the institutes while making them most likely to follow the service provision. Like China, Saudi Arabia practises a ‘top-down’ approach in terms of education provision, whereby the role of the central government remains paramount and unchallenged.

The Chinese experience is relevant in two aspects. First, as the case of UBT will illustrate, there is a need for privatized institutions to market themselves in order to show their effectiveness and underline the quality of their education provision. As is the case in China, the decision of the government in Saudi Arabia to allow privatization in higher education is based on the assessment that such a move will increase the efficiency of the overall system. It also aims to provide a greater amount of choice among educational programmes. The second factor is the impact of privatization on higher education in making the educational field more equitable throughout the country.

The case studies have shown that, as far as El Salvador is concerned, privatization has allowed schools at the rural level to make advancements and improve the quality of the schools. At the same time, the Chinese example suggests a greater urban-rural divide being created as a result of privatization efforts. This is an area that demands greater emphasis in Saudi Arabia in the near future. This is because, at the moment, the privatization experience is still too new to be able to evaluate its impact on rural and urban settings: as a result, this is an area for future research.

3.5.2: Summary of decentralization and higher education

The situation in China indicates that the effects of decentralization are heavily dependent on the nature of the country in which they exist. If the country does not have a high level of urban poverty then it will not disadvantage rural areas. However, in situations where there is a large gap between more affluent people who live in cities and their poorer counterparts who live in the countryside, this can widen the levels of inequality that already exist. This could influence the amount of decentralization in Saudi Arabia, and consequently affect the amount of autonomy that UBT is granted. In

the case of a country like El Salvador where poverty is more widespread, the impact of decentralization appears to benefit the rural areas more as it tends to respond more to the local needs on the ground. Here, the lack of funding through central authorities actually levels out the playing field between the centre and the periphery when decentralization is applied.

The varied experiences and formulations of decentralization across the countries outlined above illustrates the fact that, as with ‘good governance’ (Turner, 2002), there appear to be many different paths to decentralized HE. This is directly applicable to the case of UBT in Saudi Arabia where the investigation will reveal the existence (or otherwise) of any superficial imitation of non-local management models. Attention should be paid to ascertaining the interaction between the degree to which decentralization occurs within a nation and the secondary factors identified by Kaplan (2006). At the same time, it is necessary to distinguish between decentralization efforts and actual impact this has on governance. El Salvador shows that while decentralization was effective in terms of providing motivation for teachers, the effort in this direction was still organized by community organizers who were sent there by the central government. Similarly in China, decentralization is seen more as an effort to maintain a system of authority while not trying any methods of improving efficiency and adding competition to the higher education market. In Chile, the impact was that students demanded a re-asserting of the control of the government so that the costs of higher education were reduced.

Given these examples, it is important not to equate decentralization in local administration with decentralization of the broader governance level where the government maintains its level of control. This is certainly applicable as far as Saudi Arabia and UBT is concerned.

3.6: Leadership, Governance and Management

In order to gain an understanding of how the effects of the primary factors that Kaplan identified are modified by the governance structures of Saudi universities, it is first necessary to define what is meant by governance and how it differs from leadership and management. Given that the main focus of this study is management, and it also incorporates issues of leadership, it is important to make clear distinctions between

these terms. However, establishing such a distinction is far from simple given that the terms are sometimes used interchangeably (Altbach *et al.*, 2005, pp.16-18). Straightforward definitions are provided by UNCF (2013) although these tend to mask current controversies on the definitional question itself. Hence, executive leadership and governance in higher education institutions simply refers to the way in which colleges and universities are organized and managed. This function revolves around the development and maintenance of key stakeholder relationships in order to achieve strategic goals. Key stakeholders include funding institutions, other higher education institutions, the central government (Department of Education), accreditation bodies, local Boards of Education, trustees, faculty, alumni, and students and their families, etc. Clearly, it is often the case that these stakeholder groups have conflicting agendas (UNCF, 2013).

Specifically, governance refers to the way that higher education institutions organize themselves in order to manage their resources. Inevitably, in order to do this effectively, they must resolve conflicts among competing stakeholders because budget and/or financial matters are prone to conflict. Good university governance and good university leaders are those who operate so as to distribute limited resources in a manner judged to be fair and equitable. In addition to leadership and governance, ‘management’ has entered the picture because the concept of higher education governance has broadened to include functions that transcend the internal management of university operations. Kezar and Eckel (2004) note that governance is *a multi-level concept that includes several different bodies and processes with different decision-making functions* (Kezar and Eckel, 2004, pp.371-398).

Recent trends have emerged whereby higher education governance has become more ‘managerial’ or ‘corporate’ (i.e. less collegial) in style, driven not only by technological advances such as distance learning, but also by the new global connections in higher education described above. It is to be expected that ‘management’ would replace ‘governance’ when the focus shifts to markets and sustained revenue-generation.

At the same time, governance should be understood as applying to the broad framework that guides the work of institutions rather than the day-to-day running of that same institution. Governance as such represents the owner or group of owners of an organization, which in this case would be the state as owner of the education system.

Thus, governance is the method whereby rules and regulations are laid out in order to ensure that the output is done correctly. On the other hand, management is all about implementing the vision and the system of governance as provided for by the governing structure. Management; therefore, come a level below that of governance since it is the managers that have to ensure the proper administration of the institutions.

3.6.1: Higher education governance in general

This section reviews higher education governance in general. According to Rebora and Turri (2009), no scholarly consensus may be found on the concept of governance, and this may be attributed to changes in governance. Higher education governance was, until the 1980s, more or less seen as synonymous with government control, but later became associated with the idea of networks (Bevir *et al.*, 2003, in Rebora and Turri, 2009).

Tierney (2004) notes the debate on higher education governance and the range of perceived crises demonstrated in the 1990s, such as the perception on university and college presidents being overworked, and a relatively high turnover in the field. These crises were met by responses such as who should direct growth and change, as well as the imperative of corporatization and globalization, which were introduced into academic discourse, further intensifying issues of governance. In an attempt to regularize the governance of higher education, several programmes were advanced by academic institutions, including management, shared governance, and unionization (Tierney, 2004).

Another trend that increasingly began to confront higher education was the impact of globalization, causing internationalization to lose ground. There is said to be an existing tension between increasing diversity in higher education and facilitation of recognition pertaining to studies on student mobility. Teichler (2004) demonstrates the diversity of policies relating to steering and management in terms of globalization and internationalization. His work looks into whether globalization of higher education must be seen as ‘turbo-capitalism’ or a move towards global understanding (Teichler, 2004).

Mok (2002) focuses on diversification and decentralization in China, which the author considers a strong trend emanating from central government. The author discusses how the governance modes of higher education are being impacted by the policy of

decentralization, focusing on financing, educational provision and regulation, and local governments. The change has led to a diminution of the public-good functions of education. However, decentralization has strengthened the state's role as an overall service coordinator and regulator.

3.6.2: Governance models

Hénard and Mitterle (2008) distinguish two types of higher education governance models, '*theoretical frameworks*' (allowing different kinds of higher education systems to be placed within them), and higher education *typologies* (an inductive methodology that is 'bottom-up' in the sense that they result from assembling the characteristics of many higher education institutions).

The basis of all theoretical framework models is Clark's (1983) triangular model, illustrated below:

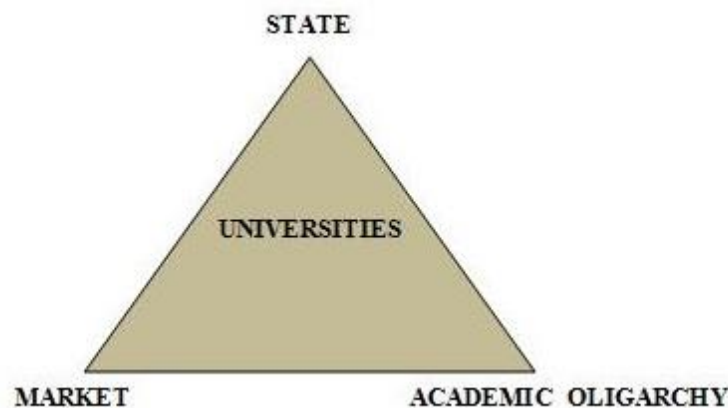


Figure 3.1: Clarke's Triangle

Source: Clarke (1983)

The university is placed within a triangle and the three factors that can influence the higher education system (the level of state authority, market forces and academic oligarchy) are at the vertices. The model shows the possibilities of different types of co-operation in higher education (Clark, 1983). The idea behind the triangle is that if a university moves away from one factor, this puts it nearer to at least one of the other two. For example, moving away from a state-dominated mode of operation leads to greater influence from market forces or the academic oligarchy. The final integrated

mode of operation reflects the input of all three. A weakness of the model is that it does not allow for a system oriented strongly towards two forces at the same time.

As an illustration of how the triangular model works, Clark placed French higher education midway between state authority and academic oligarchy and at the maximum distance from the market. However, such a simplistic analysis has been found to be inadequate in other cases where it has been applied, notably in Pusser's (2008) study of Virginia's restructuring of higher education in the US. When Pusser tried to apply the triangular model to the Virginia case he encountered difficulties. The question to be answered was whether the state, the market and the 'institutional estate' were in fact key players in contemporary governance.

Pusser (2003) realized there were problems with the concept in the triangular model of an 'academic oligarchy' because such a concept had never been developed in the US. On the other hand, the concept of an 'institutional estate' in place of an 'academic oligarchy' would be more appropriate to the US context. An institutional estate refers to power assigned to institutional leaders, faculty governance structures and internal governing boards (Pusser, 2003).

In this way, Pusser (2003) posits the institutional estate as more powerful than faculty governance acting alone when it comes to promoting the university's interests, and reflects the decline of faculty influence on institutional governance. This may have occurred as a result of tertiary institutions hiring growing numbers of part-time (and therefore non-tenured) faculty; this then created a 'power vacuum' filled by ever-increasing actors such as governing boards, trustees and external stakeholders such as legislators forming the institutional estate. It is the existence of these new additions to authority within higher education governance that render the triangular model too simplistic a tool for analysing the latter in the modern context (Maggio, 2011).

In fact, Pusser (2003) is led to a further revision of the triangular model in which he places the market and the institutional estate within the state itself, i.e., they are no longer discrete coordination centres. Hence, the state recognizes market and institutional interests but never loses sight of its own goals. In summary, the triangular model is seen as too 'static' in its treatment of the three factors and thus fails to capture the 'dynamic

tension’ between them as they constantly contest authority and negotiate power among themselves.

A final example of how the original triangular model has been modified is due to Van Vught (1993). As with Pusser (2003), the three dimensions are reduced to two giving a ‘state control model’ and a ‘state supervising model’. The former is characterized by a strong state authority operating through an extensive bureaucracy and retention of a strong university academic oligarchy. On the other hand, the latter separates a strong a strong university academic oligarchy from the internal administration of the university. According to Van Vught (1993), any higher education governance model can be positioned as under state control or state supervision. Framed in these terms, it should be relatively straightforward to ascertain to which model of governance UBT adheres.

In summary, the original triangular model used by Clark (1983) was a milestone in higher education governance studies because, for the first time, it made possible an analysis of the ways in which social, economic and cultural factors can coincide to create order and stability. However, subsequent studies have shown that these factors are not mutually exclusive and what happens in reality is that the state, the market and the institutional estate operate as a nexus to produce good governance.

3.6.3. Governance Typologies

Turning next to governance typologies, the number of these is very large indeed (Hénard and Mitterle, 2008). As with theoretical frameworks, the starting point is nearly always Clark’s (1983) triangular model, which is then modified to accommodate different concepts at the vertices. The plethora of new actors exerting influence on higher education governance is the reason behind the multiplicity of typologies; the principal ones are shown below in Table 3.4 (based on Enders, 2004):

Table 3.4: Actors in Higher Education Governance

Academic Heartland	Definition varies by country. In UK and US HE systems, we have the ‘academic workforce’. Continental European systems avoid this term as they do not see academics being part of a ‘knowledge production industry’. Hence, there are academics engaged in research who do not participate in academic self-governance and other academics that do (academic oligarchy or academic elite), sometimes on academic councils.
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Students	Students are an important group when quality issues are discussed but are a relatively weak governance group.
Central Administration	In HE systems with little entrepreneurial structure, central administration exerts considerable power in governance since the only rival, academic staff, suffers from an information deficit. CEOs are also a part of the HE administration in ‘corporate’ universities and these are discussed below in Section 3.7.
Head of the University	The head of the HE institution, variously known as president, chancellor or rector is invested with power that varies across country’s HE systems. This could be largely ceremonial (as with Chancellors in the UK), or they may possess strong executive powers (as with the vice-chancellor in the UK).
Boards	Faculty boards, senates and university councils are examples of traditional boards in HE. Newer arrangements distinguish between supervision and decisions-making (the governing board) and routine management (the CEO).
Stakeholders	Traditional stakeholders include students, academics and the government. Newer additions include representatives of industry or commerce, local community actors, alumni, unions and social/cultural groups. Their role in governance ranges from representation on governing boards to merely funding the HE institution.
Agencies	Quality assurance is often achieved through agencies acting on government benchmarks (e.g. they can audit accreditation criteria)
Government	In all non-US HE systems, the government is still a key player in governance through its funding function and the supervisory role it plays to ensure performance targets against the funds provided.

Source: Hénard and Mitterle (2008)

Given such complexity in contemporary HE governance, typologies are naturally numerous and complex themselves, especially in relation to the triangular model. This complexity has further increased as the focus within higher education has shifted to more effective forms of governance in light of declining rates of public funding, growing international competition for both faculty, staff and students, and a greater emphasis on educational output that can accommodate the increasingly complex and shifting external environments in which the higher educational institutions themselves operate. In light of these circumstances, the term ‘dysfunctional governance’ has been given more attention in the literature.

Arguing against a one-size-fits-all approach that can be used to explain governance typologies in the various environments in which higher education institutions operate

and exist, Trakman (2008) has attempted to move beyond Clark's framework to reflect the fact that certain concepts can characterize the type of higher education institution within a certain place and time. Trakman not only outlines the factors that should be considered when looking at governance models, he also allows for the diversified and changing forms of influence that are provided by both academic and the government in this context. This in turn allows for attention to be given for debate and deliberation within a university in relation to its governance approach.

Trakman (2008) posits five models of HE governance:

- i. *Faculty governance* places power in the hands of academic staff. Academics on governing boards exert strong influence and governing powers are also assigned to collegial senates;
- ii. *Corporate governance* adopts smaller boards of governors or trustees, and a CEO with significant financial and managerial power;
- iii. *Trustee governance* is unique in placing trust in a governing board, but this is a somewhat vague concept;
- iv. *Stakeholder governance* co-opts interest groups in HE governance to ensure that their voice is heard;
- v. *Mixed governance models* combine the four models above to varying degrees.

Within the context of the work presented here, these models are useful for defining the precise governance system that is in place at UBT. Trakman's approach allows for sufficient differentiation to be included that more adequately reflects the type of governance that is applied to an institution that operates in an environment as exists in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. As a result, attention is paid to using data that are uncovered to provide an insight into which model best fits the way in which it is run. It is also possible that the governance as practiced at UBT might not fit into one of the models that has been described. It might be unique, or may combine aspects from several models.

3.6.4: Governance norms

Underlying governance models are also governance norms that must be considered. 'Governance norms' are organizations' or institutions' best practices for corporate governance (Delhaise and Golin, 2013). Examples of corporate governance best

practices in higher education include such measures as those aimed at reducing cheating in examinations (Rezazee, 2009). Given that this is a substantial problem that universities currently face, there is pressure for higher education institutes to adopt zero tolerance policies in order to clearly communicate the rules regarding what constitutes cheating and the consequences of breaking them, and rigorously enforce all measures that are put in place (Rezazee, 2009).

Educational establishments in Saudi Arabia appear to have a higher tolerance for cheating when compared to other nations. This could be due to the fact that the culture of the nation is more tolerant of such behaviour. It could be argued that Saudi Arabia is a wealthy nation in which those who possess the money to do so can cheat with little chance of being caught. Meanwhile, Heitman and Litewka (2011, pp.104-108) have put forward the notion that there is a link between tolerance to cheating and the amount of corruption that takes place within a country. They have pointed out that, according to the Corruption Perceptions Index, Saudi Arabia has a higher level of corruption than many other nations, which is likely to have brought about a lenient attitude to academic cheating (Heitman and Litewka, 2011, pp.104-108). There is, however, no sufficient data or studies to corroborate such an assertion.

The prevalence of cheating within the kingdom could be an indicator that measures to avoid cheating have so far not emerged as a significant component of corporate governance in Saudi higher education institutions. This might be due to the fact that the prevalence of cheating and the effort required in stamping out such practices means that this is larger problem to be confronted at a later stage. Research by Al-Ghreimil and Colbran (2013), who surveyed Saudi students on the software that their universities put in place to detect plagiarism, shows that no plagiarism detection software is utilized on an extensive scale in the country. However, it did find that some efforts were being made to combat plagiarism and that detection methods were employed in some cases, indicating that this is an aspect that is more recently becoming a component of corporate governance in Saudi universities, albeit one that, for the moment, occupies a minor position within these institutions' lists of priorities (Al-Ghreimil and Colbran, 2013).

In addition to the abolishment of cheating practices, Caruso and Yanosky (2008) have stated that developing best practices for the management, measurement and monitoring of IT processes within higher education establishments is an important component of

corporate governance, although one that is often neglected. Effective best practices in this area include consideration being given to IT budgets, project reviewing processes, measurement of IT projects, and monitoring the competency of IT participants. This can determine how successful the use of IT is within an institution, which is an important factor in today's increasingly technology-based educational domain (Caruso and Yanosky, 2008).

According to Al-Ghreimil and Colbran (2013), there are few signs of a comprehensive strategy for evaluating the use of information technology in Saudi universities, or evidence that the current use of IT is inadequate. There are major deficiencies regarding the planning of technologically assisted activities and this indicates that this is another area of corporate governance that has perhaps been neglected in Saudi Arabia.

Matthews (2011) has identified avoiding conflicts of interest involving those who sit on university boards as another corporate governance best practice for higher education institutions. He has stated that it is important for board members to be loyal to the university and not allow their own personal needs to come above those of the institution. Therefore, it is essential for a system to be put in place in order to facilitate the declaration of any interests that might conflict with those of the university or cause a member to act in a biased manner (Matthews, 2011).

Many Saudi universities indicate that staff, board and committee members should declare conflicts of interest and provide a means for them to do so (King Faisal University, n.d.; King Saud University, 2011; King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, 2009). This suggests that the nation's higher education institutes reflect global values with respect to this issue. It indicates that Saudi Arabia has recognized their importance, although this does not necessarily mean that they are upheld.

Mulili (2011) has indicated that a move towards greater management autonomy should be part of corporate governance best practices for developing countries, as it helps them to get away from the autocratic nature that has characterized the governance of these institutions in these nations in the past. In Saudi Arabia, this would have to be considered a future goal given the continued high degree of state control that is exerted over universities by the government (Jamjoom, 2012). Regulations and policies that favour government supervision and intervention prevent institutions from gaining a high

degree of autonomy. Instead, governance of Saudi universities remains heavily regulated by the Saudi government, and there are no indications that the move towards gaining a higher degree of independence is currently gaining any traction.

According to Mulili (2010), the public declaration of performance should also be a component of corporate governance best practice within developing nations, as it can act as a catalyst for improvement and help to maintain standards. A report by Barber *et al.*, conducted in 2007 found that universities in the region lack transparency when it comes to issues of performance. More recently, however, the Ministry of Higher Education has emphasized the need for performance transparency in higher education institutes within the nation, and the National Commission for Assessment and Academic Accreditation has been task with improving the levels of transparency that currently exist (Association of Colleges, 2011). This indicates that it is viewed as an increasingly important issue within the nation's universities, and that external bodies are taking measures to ensure that it is regarded as a necessity.

The rules of academic institutions often depend on the level of autonomy that the institutions have. If they have a high degree of autonomy then the management at the institution has a high level of control over which regulations are in place. On the other hand, if the state has a significant amount of say in the activities of a university then it stands to reason that the management will be less able to put its own rules in place without ensuring that they conform to those that have been approved by the government (Maggio, n.d.).

The state has a high degree of control over universities in Saudi Arabia. The government has ownership of eight public higher education institutions and distributes academic positions (Romani, 2009), and administers the rules and regulations regarding HE institutions. This means that the government has a significant impact on the institutional rules that are implemented within the nation's universities. As previously stated, the government is also the main financier for universities, thus ensuring that policies of the government are being implemented. This, in turn, extends the government an unprecedented amount of influence both directly and indirectly.

Kaplan (2006) identified assignments of power as a facet of a higher education institute's governance structure. This refers to the power distribution within each

organization. According to Kennie and Woodfield (2008), most higher education institutions have a distinct hierarchy, with the higher management team at the top. This is the power base for making executive decisions. However, power structures vary from institution to institution (Kennie and Woodfield, 2008). There is also the question of how much autonomy this power structure has within the societal framework within which it exists. With government still playing a key role in determining the direction of higher education development, this is an aspect that must be considered.

Boser and Taylor (2006, pp.112-121) have stated that the power structures that exist within universities reflect elements of the power structures that are associated with the societies in which they exist. Therefore, the assignments of power within Saudi higher education institutions will be likely to mirror those of the nation as a whole, at least to a partial extent. This is logical, as the overriding culture of a nation is bound to have an impact on the functioning of the educational establishments that exist within it.

According to Boser and Taylor (2006, pp.124-125), several different conceptual themes can be applied when defining the power structures of universities. They stated that power structures can be adversarial, in which there is conflict, or mutualistic, in which powerful parties collaborate towards a mutual goal. Power can also be either balanced or asymmetrical, which is when the majority of the power is in the hands of a small number of individuals. They further state that power within higher education institutions can be upheld by formalized structures, delegitimization and exclusion or control of information and socialization. This means that it can be administered on an official basis, regulated on an interpersonal level through excluding and delegitimizing individuals who possess less power, and controlled via more subtle means by either limiting information, providing information aimed at fulfilling a specific, power-orientated function or indoctrinating values and beliefs into individuals with the aim of installing a specific power structure (Boser and Taylor, 2006, pp.124-125).

With regards to UBT, the literature that has been reviewed indicates that attention should be paid to analysing whether the management and governance approaches that are used involve power upheld by formalized structures, delegitimization and exclusion or control of information and socialization, whether the power is symmetrical or asymmetrical, and whether the power structure is adversarial or mutualistic. This will

help to place the approaches that are used within a wider context, and will allow them to be conceptualized within a pre-established framework.

The levels of selectivity within higher education institutions is another modifying factor identified by Kaplan (2006) for the political and economic pressures that affect their governance and management outcomes. This term describes how strict these institutions are when it comes to the criteria for admitting students into their establishments. The more qualified an individual needs to be in order to be accepted to a university, the more selective the university in question can be deemed to be.

According to Fryar (2011), the selectivity of various different higher education institutes can be measured by examining a variety of different admissions factors, and using a scale that ranges from the least competitive to the most competitive (Fryar, 2011). Hillman (2012) has categorized higher education institutions that admit under half of their overall number of applicants as being ‘highly selective’. He has noted that a large proportion of these institutions tend to be wealthy (Hillman, 2012), indicating that it might work in conjunction with the issue of university wealth in order to affect management and governance outcomes.

Selectivity is often expressed in terms of the percentage of individuals who apply for a place at an institution whose application is successful. The higher the percentage, the less selective an institution is. The selection process is usually based on previous academic achievement, although other factors also have an influence (Fryar, 2011). UBT’s admissions policy indicates that it is not a particularly selective university in terms of the grades and other accolades that are required (CBA, 2012). The literature, however, suggests that this fact should be taken into consideration when analysing the management approaches utilized at the university.

The prestige of a university is another factor that was identified by Kaplan (2006) as affecting the pressures that impact on governance and management outcomes. Kacos (2011) stated that the precise meaning of the term ‘prestige’ differs according to its use, but that it is usually held to include measures of respect and status. According to Brewer *et al.* (2009), there are a number of differences between prestige and reputation. Reputation depreciates slowly, tends to be viewed in terms of positive or negative, and is defined by institutional insiders; prestige is defined by customer perspectives, rapidly

depreciates when it experiences a fall, and tends to be defined in terms of a distinct level as opposed to in terms of positive or negative (Brewer *et al.*, 2009).

In terms of higher education institutions, prestige refers to the image of a university compared to that of others that offer similar ranges of qualifications. It is a measure of the extent to which an institution is regarded as desirable when placed in the context of other institutions. According to Kaplan's (2006) framework, this is a contributory factor in determining the way in which a university is governed. The examined literature can be used to identify the governance norms for UBT and how they relate to the norms for Saudi universities in general. This be useful for ascertaining where the university stands in relation to others within the nation with regards to this issue. Comparisons will be made based on the data that is uncovered by the interviews.

3.6.5: Institutional rules

Another aspect to be considered in terms of governance are the institutional rules that are applied within higher education. According to Closs *et al.* (2012, p.106), institutional rules are essential in universities for addressing staff' conflicts of interest, maintaining effective research processes and advancing cultural change.

According to Martinez and Richardson (2009), the rules at higher education institutions are usually aligned with the organizational aims of the institutions. The precise nature of the rules that are put in place can have a major impact on the educational performance of the students. It stands to reason that stricter rules may restrict academic freedom and therefore harm the standard of students' work; however, they can also ensure that they remain disciplined. These rules can be either formal or unwritten rules upheld by human-shaped interactions (Martinez and Richardson, 2009).

Sindane (2011) defines institutional values as ethical beliefs that are associated with institutions. It is an important component of leadership and governance (Sindane, 2011). According to Gosling and Gower (2011), three institutional values have traditionally been present within higher education institutions. They are organized scepticism, communalism, and disinterestedness. Organized scepticism is the quality of believing that all ideas are subject to testing and analysis, using systematic methods and processes (Gosling and Gower, 2011). It works based on the principle that if it was not for

scepticism all knowledge would be dependent on incidental curiosity and society's development would be stunted (Aarnio, 2011).

Communalism is the notion that knowledge comes about due to social collaboration and that the community has ownership of it (Gosling and Gower, 2011). There are conflicting opinions concerning whether universities' focus on this concept is positive or negative. Some hold the view that it encourages the free flow of knowledge. However, others believe that the individual or groups of individuals who discover a piece of knowledge have intellectual ownership of it and that communalism undermines this fact. Therefore, the extent to which this value exists in universities varies from institution to institution and shapes the nature of the establishments (Roosendaal, 2010); this will inevitably affect the way in which they are managed.

Disinterestedness is the idea that criticism of judgements, actions and ideas should be carried out selflessly (Gosling and Gower, 2011). It entails aligning research with opportunities for funding as opposed to being motivated by personal interest. According to Cheng and Macfarlane (2008), the virtues of this characteristic are regarded as being beneficial to higher education institutes due to the fact that they promote the pursuit of knowledge for the purpose of attaining objective truths rather than gaining glory or recognition.

Another aspect to be considered is that the institutional values of a higher education institute can impact on resource allocation (Bjorkquist, 2011). The amount of funding available influences the setting of institutional rules and the way the institution interacts with governmental policies. This has a direct influence on the way the universities are run. Similarly, the management approach adopted by universities is determined in part by the manner in which institutional values affect the interpretation of nationwide educational policies (Bjorkquist, 2011).

The management approach at UBT can be assessed to ascertain the extent to which it embodies scepticism, communalism and disinterestedness. The way in which the regulations fit in with the wider mission of the university can also be examined, and the context of the regulations within wider Saudi Arabian society can also be analysed. The literature that has been reviewed throughout the course of this section provides the

necessary background information that is required in order for these issues to be explored.

3.6.6: Decision-Making processes at higher education institutions

The decision-making process within universities is another important element. According to Timberlake (2004), this process is influenced by a range of different factors, including the levels of autonomy that the institutions in question have, their structures and the leadership styles that are exhibited by those within managerial positions. Timberlake hypothesizes that the institutions that have the most effective decision-making processes in place are those that are not entirely autonomous but not entirely controlled by the state either. Further, he states that the adaptability of leaders is essential to the decision-making process within universities. It stands to reason that different techniques are required in order to decide which course of action to take, dependent on the situation at the time.

Overall, there are three different factors that shape the influence of leaders on the decision-making process within higher education institutes. They are relationship building skills, the ability to manage collaborative decision-making, and the ability to deal with polarities and paradoxes. As UBT is required to cope with some of the more complex decisions that the issue of centralization reveals, all three factors will be analysed.

Higher education institutions in general are said to be lagging behind other institutions in terms of their use of quantitative and qualitative data in order to inform the decision-making process (Leimer, 2012). As a result, they are coming under increasing amounts of pressure to validate decisions by using data that managers often lack the expertise to evaluate properly. The extent to which universities use data in their decision-making processes in order to form the basis of decisions is, however, also dependent on their administrative structures. Some institutions adapt their administrative structures in order to ensure that decision-making is data-driven. They implement measures that are specifically aimed at enabling decisions to be backed up by hard facts. However, the majority of the decisions that are made within these institutions are still not based on the analysis of data, but tend to be rather of a personalized nature (Leimer, 2012).

Gilbert (2010) has identified two opposing approaches to decision-making in higher education institutions; one that involves using market-driven data to decide which course of action to take, and another that embraces the sensible use of data and accountability whilst displaying commitment to delivering high-quality, comprehensive education and faculty-driven decision-making. The former is solely driven by the desire to maximize profits, whereas the latter is concerned with providing a high-quality, well-rounded education to students. The approach that is taken depends on the specific ethos of the university in question. Some might hold that unbiased research should be based on available funding, and that disinterestedness is required in order for a university's activities to remain objective, as expressed by Bjorkquist (2011); others place the standard of education that is delivered above all other factors.

In summary, there are a multitude of different issues that affect the decision-making processes of universities; they are essentially shaped by the values of the institutions and the amount of power that they wield. As previously stated, Saudi universities are usually heavily influenced by the state, suggesting that the government has a high degree of control over their decision-making processes. However, management is still likely to filter governmental decisions through its own system of institutional values. An analysis of the information gained via the case study will allow the extent to which each of these issues manifests itself within the management approach at UBT to be discussed.

3.7: Ownership Forms

The ownership form of an institution is one of the key factors that was identified by Kaplan (2006) as determining how the primary factors that he detailed affect governance and management outcomes. He cited the specific examples of non-profit, religiously controlled, public and private (Kaplan, 2006). This section will examine the nature of these forms of ownership and their context within the domain of higher education.

3.7.1: Privatization

The term 'privatization' refers to the transfer of control and ownership to private investors (OECD, 2003). Zajda (2006) states that the extreme decision to privatize, as taken by many schools and universities across the globe including UBT, is because of

the constraints placed on management and administration. When privatized, the educational institutions are able to avoid:

‘political commitments, the centrality of the state in funding and distribution of resources to education and the slow development of curriculum and change that is associated with centralized education’ (Zajda, 2006, p.60).

However, in terms of education, it seems there are certain traits that can decide whether or not an educational institution can achieve success through privatization. According to Osokaya (2007), in order for an institution to be successful once it has been privatized, it needs to offer subjects that substantially increase the employability of its students. Levine (n.d.) has stated that the age of the population seeking higher education is another factor, as it can have an impact on the likelihood of students’ selecting a private or public institution.

The theory behind the privatization of education needs to be examined. It is thought to be important to understand the key aims and motivations of the desire to privatize as an educational institution. Work by Feyter and Gomez (2005) highlighted that:

‘in general, privatization has been hailed as a way to counter what is perceived to be a failure of governments to provide certain services in a cost-effective and efficient way...these objectives include fiscal objectives such as the reduction of public spending, attracting private investment, improving corporate efficiency and performance’ (2005, p.242).

The belief that privatization is a result of poor public performance is stated by Olel (2011). Her work stresses that public universities around the globe are seeking new ways of remaining competitive due to the cutbacks in government budgets that often target education, coupled with the dramatic rise of higher education and competition in the marketplace (see also Sloan, 2009).

This view is supported by Priest and St. John (2006), who note that the reduction of public spending on education is often a root cause of the need for educational institutions to seek privatization as a means of survival and success in an increasingly complex and competitive market. They stress that one consequence is the fact that the:

New financial strategies often hasten the organizational transformations of public colleges and universities by changing incentives and values within the universities once they privatize (Priest and St. John, 2006, p.4).

This desire to change and remain competitive directly influences universities in Saudi Arabia, where it has been observed that many students are now going overseas to foreign universities due to the availability of higher levels of disposable income, combined with the greater reputations of English and American universities (Yackley-Franken, 2007).

It is vital to consider, having been provided with an insight into why universities often decide to privatize, how management styles and organizational structure are impacted by this decision (Wellen, 2004). This type of discovery will lead to a comprehensive understanding of the decision to privatize, and will help to drive the questions provided to the participants during the primary data collection stage of this current study. It has been noted that there are distinct differences in the *subunit structures of public and private universities related to external influences from public and private institutions and the universities' dependence on them for resources* (Rainey, 2009, p.209).

In particular, the research and development units can differ widely in terms of their *size and structure of the administrative component of the organization and the way that the research teams are organized* (Rainey, 2009, p.209). It is clear here that private institutions, if well funded, can have large and expansive research and development units that can greatly raise a universities' individual reputation amongst its peers.

One final example of the manner in which privatized higher education institutions are able to change their management structure is the ability to adapt to labour market demands. It is stated that private universities in China have been able to *assure successful implementation of various emphases and necessary changes, setting up structures and made policies that were not open to them as a form of public institution* (Cao, 2007, p.111). In this scenario, it is clear that, when privatized, higher educational institutions are able to adapt far quicker to demands of the market and, with appropriate levels of funding, are able to offer advanced levels of research that combine to ensure that they rank near the top of their respective market.

Hence, the current dominant analytical framework applied to higher education is focused on governmental policies on national systems of higher education. Developments are being mapped out in terms of the relationship between national governments and HE institutions, as well as the impact of governmental policies on such relationships. Studies are also focused on the role of market pressures, i.e. student and employer demands in the structure of national systems.

According to Akhtar and Kalsoom (2012), the governance of privatized higher education institutes is completely different from that of public universities. The most direct difference is that government has considerably less of an influence over the way in which the institutions are governed. Moreover, there is a greater emphasis on generating income. Ensuring that every stakeholder's interests are catered to is considerably less important, and ensuring equity in the method of operation is also less vital. In Saudi Arabia, the distinction between private and public universities and the role of the government is less pronounced, and this is reflected in the general literature on higher education development. As Jamjoom (2012) clearly points out, private institutions are still heavily scrutinized and supervised by the nation's government. The Ministry of Higher Education is responsible for supervising them and has a great deal of power over their activities. The level of autonomy and possibility for flexibility in terms of administration, curriculum, etc., that exists within these institutions in Saudi Arabia is extremely limited. In essence, private institutions are governed by both the business stakeholders and the government, but the latter appears to have the final say on matters that concern these institutions (Jamjoom, 2012).

For the purpose of this section, it is necessary to make a clear distinction between management and governance. Governance is the rules that are put in place to guide the development of institutions, whereas management is the day-to-day implementation of those governance rules. In terms of management of privatized higher education, there are two different dimensions to consider: one external and one internal (Olayemi, 2011). At an external level, these institutions continue to be managed by the government, which ensures that they comply with all relevant standards and legislation. The internal management of these institutions is under the control of the chancellor, university council and all other relevant authorities that exist within the universities themselves. Internal management is responsible for budget approval, general discipline, staff

development, internal policy formulation goal setting, administration, and a host of other responsibilities (Olayemi, 2011).

Tibarimbasa (2010) has stated that the management practices of staff selection and recruitment, relationships management, diversity management and financial management are critical to private universities, as this not only forms the staff's psychological contracts with the institution, but is also the one area in which private institutions can formulate their own strategies and provide them with greater degrees of flexibility than would be the case working for a public entity. On the one hand, the staff has more choice when it comes to deciding which private university they wish to work for, meaning that human resource attraction and retention issues are more important for this type of establishment than they are for public higher education institutes (Timbarimbasa, 2010). On the other hand, staff can implement strategies more individually and without complete interference from the outside, meaning that all facets of management that relate to facilitating positive working environments for employees are especially significant when it comes to private universities.

Private institutions pay a lot more attention to keeping payroll expenditure at the lowest possible level, the widespread use of accountability measures, aggressive labour relations, and an increased focus on the profitability of an institution's departments. The privatization of higher education institutions thus often entails them adopting management practices that are associated with private businesses (Johnstone, n.d.). For example, an increased emphasis on performance metrics (Deem *et al.*, 2007), and outsourcing by turning to private companies for the delivery of non-academic services including general building maintenance, bookstore operation, food services and printing (Johnstone, n.d.). This is known as 'managerialism' (Maniku, 2008).

Overall, private higher education institutions are forced to strike a balance between academic norms and business-like management practices, and they can lean in either direction. It has been argued that managerialism makes the management process more efficient (Johnstone, n.d.). However, there is a danger that they compromise academic principles in order to facilitate this efficiency (Maniku, 2008). How such principles

within privatized institutions apply to UBT's management and governance approaches will be seen below.³

3.7.2: Public ownership

An institution falls within the classification of a public institution if a public authority directly manages and controls it, or if a governing body manages and controls it that is comprised of members that a public authority has appointed (Psacharopoulos, 2004). Institutions with a public ownership possess a significant presence in Saudi Arabia. One of the reasons that so many institutions are publicly owned in Saudi Arabia is that the Gulf region's economy has traditionally been led by corporations that are partially or wholly owned by governments. These companies have accumulated solid management and technical experience, which has led to the proliferation of publicly-owned corporations and institutions within the region. Research indicates that government owned companies in Saudi Arabia outperform companies that are privately owned. However, many large oil companies are owned by the state, meaning that this may not apply to universities (Eljelly, 2009), as they are wholly different from other commercial entities. Another reason is that there are centralized, top-down decision-making structures in the country that could be argued not to favour a more decentralized nature of management and governance.

At the same time, there have been increased calls by businessmen, professionals and academics to privatize many of the public entities. This has led to the opening of new private institutions as well as decreasing government ownership. Examples of institutions in which government control has decreased include oil companies, which are allowed greater amounts of autonomy than they used to have (Hertog, 2008), and some hospitals, which have been given greater independence in the hope of improving their managerial and medical efficiency (AlYami and Watson, 2014).

Public higher education institutions in Saudi Arabia certainly lack effective mechanisms for generating profits as compared to their private counterparts (Al-Eisa and Smith, 2013). This is simply because there is no need or an active incentive for public

³ In addition to these points, the management of private universities can sometimes be geared towards 'enrolment management', which refers to the practice of limiting financial assistance by aiming it predominantly at students who are desirable to the university (Johnstone, n.d.). It could be argued that these are also examples of managerialism. This characteristic is controversial; some hold that it ensures that high quality education is delivered, whereas others hold that it is a move away from the focus on academia that has traditionally characterized higher education institutions (Maniku, 2008).

institutions to raise financing since this is already provided by the government. In addition, public institutions are currently not allowed to participate in activities that are deemed to be aimed at generating additional income. Only recently have some changes been proposed that involve a shift in governance strategies in order to permit public entities to undertake fundraising activities while at the same time maintaining adherence to their academic goals and values.

The Ministry of Higher Education in Saudi Arabia currently has direct control over every aspect of public university governance. Some have argued that this restricts these institutions' ability to appropriately and adequately cater to the diverse, emerging requirements of their stakeholders and uphold the needs of Saudi Arabia's job market and economy (Al-Eisa and Smith, 2013). Resource allocation and the promotion of learning and teaching are also heavily controlled by the government within these institutions, which has led to calls for greater levels of autonomy for the nation's universities.

Public universities in Saudi Arabia further adhere to a governance hierarchy. Different aspects of governance are controlled by bodies at different levels. The Council of Higher Education is responsible for governing public universities. However, public university presidents sit on their board, which means that the individual institutions still have a degree of control over the way in which they are governed. University councils run the institutions on a day-to-day basis. The Ministry of Higher Education directly presides over all of these councils (Al-Eisa and Smith, 2013).

Research indicates that one of the main differences in the management styles of public and private institutions is that the former relies more heavily on budgeting decisions that stem from discussions with staff as opposed to detailed analysis (Nutt, 2005). Public institutions place more of an emphasis on networking and bargaining than their private counterparts. The decision-making culture that is associated with the management of public institutions means that public institution managers are often less sensitive to business risks. They attempt to mitigate risks by bargaining with subordinates and peers (Nutt, 2005).

Public universities also tend to focus less on management perspectives that increase efficiency and the diversity of ideas when compared to their private counterparts (Espy,

2006). Their management techniques are often less efficient. In addition, they do not need to incorporate as many measures aimed at combating the types of conflicts of interest that private ownership can bring about. This is due to the fact that there is less room for the conflicting interests of research sponsors to come into play in publicly funded institutions.

Research by Ofori (2012) indicates that the management at public universities is often charged with the task of strategic planning. Other stakeholders, such as government policy makers and academics, often leave this matter to the management staff. The term ‘strategic planning’ refers to the evaluative and analytical processes that formulate intended strategies and the ways in which they will be implemented in a competitive manner (Ofori, 2012). Ofori’s research indicates that this is a duty that public university management staff has to focus on to a greater extent than the management at private universities.

According to Martin and Varghese (2013), there has been a marked shift in public universities of numerous different nations from public management to state supervision. The fact that public universities are becoming less autonomous and private universities are becoming more autonomous means that the line between public and private is now being blurred. This is due to a commonly held belief that public management is less effective than private management when it comes to higher education institutions as a whole. This is in line with Ofori (2012), Espy (2006) and Nutt’s findings, highlighting that public universities are less analytical in their management approaches (Nutt, 2005), involve management staff taking on additional duties (Ofori, 2012), and are less efficient and poorer at putting management techniques in place that facilitate a range of diverse ideas being devised and utilized (Espy, 2006). All of the above would indicate that public universities possess a number of management deficiencies when compared to private institutions.

3.7.3: Non-Profit

Non-profit higher education institutions depend on private gifts and endowments, government grants and student fees for their operating costs. They are usually unable to exist without the provision of government grants and loans to their students. Non-profit universities in Saudi Arabia operate within a mixed private-public environment in that they are private but rely on government subsidies with regards to tuition fees, loans and

land rental. This means that they cannot be classed as being totally independent. Nevertheless, this a structure that many universities around the world have begun to follow as it seen as having been highly successful and allowing institutions to flourish (Al-Dali *et al.*, 2013).

According to Dundon, non-profit universities have a different emphasis from their for-profit counterparts. They are more focused on providing education that stresses citizenship, spirituality, cultural heritage, communication skills and critical thinking, as opposed to merely being geared towards preparing students for entry into their chosen professions or careers. They also place a great deal of importance on higher education's position as societal critics.

There are also managerial differences between non-profit and for-profit organizations. Dundon (2008) has stated that course scheduling and curriculum setting tend to be managed by the institution in for-profit universities, whereas in non-profit institutions, they are usually the responsibility of faculty members. Non-profits tend to allow tutors a greater degree of freedom over what they teach, and the staff at for-profit universities tend to display lower levels of enthusiasm (Dundon, 2008), requiring management techniques to be implemented that are geared towards employee motivation.

According to Gwyn and Handy (2012), managing non-profit higher education institutions requires the additional consideration of a balance between resource management and commitment to social enterprise. These institutions have both commercial and social objectives, meaning that it is necessary to strike a happy medium between these two concerns in order to maintain organizational stability. This can often be difficult to achieve (Gwyn and Handy, 2012) given that just because they are not focused on generating a profit, does not mean that they have no commercial obligations. The more funds they generate, the better the resources they can put in place.

In summary, non-profit organizations in Saudi Arabia are effectively a middle ground between public and private higher education institutions. Examples of these institutions are Effat University (King Faisal Foundation, 2013), Prince Sultan University (Al Yahya, 2014), and Al-Faisal University (Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia, n.d.). They are frequently focused on instilling a number of positive academic attributes in their students to a greater extent than for-profit universities. They also allow greater freedom

to staff members, which in turn boosts employee morale. However, it is sometimes difficult to strike a balance between managerial techniques that benefit the wider community and those that generate funding.

3.7.4: The role of religion

Religiously controlled universities are those that are controlled partly or wholly by a religious group. According to Hertog (2011), the budget for Islamic universities in Saudi Arabia has expanded hugely since the 1960s; for example, that of the Islamic University of Medina, which went up from 9m riyal to 400m riyal within the space of a decade. A unique characteristic of Saudi Arabia is the fact that it can be argued that all universities within the nation are religiously controlled to an extent, meaning that ownership is in fact across a broader spectrum than simply one particular aspect of higher education. All universities in Saudi Arabia are strongly influenced by Islam, with even supposedly secular subjects being taught with the Islamic perspective related to it. One clear example of the religious influence is the fact that it is necessary for students in many of these institutions to memorize large portions of the Koran as a criterion for graduation. During the 1960s, religious universities were established in order to provide an even more Islamic foundation to education within the nation. They drew large numbers of Saudi and international Muslim students alike to come to the kingdom and attend these facilities (Shahi, 2013). In addition, the religious establishment inside the kingdom has always seen it as part of their mandate to exert control over the educational system as a whole so as to ensure that the foundations of Islam are implemented according to their understanding, and are not diluted through the impact of other societal forces.

According to Arthur (2006), the religious nature of these institutions can often inform their value systems. The authorities responsible for overseeing higher education possess a clear religious agenda (Hertog, 2011). As such, the value system reinforces the virtues that ought to be associated with universities' academic endeavours. Arthur (2006) has pointed out that religion can also play a role in the governance of these institutions, and can play a role in the organization of the curriculum. It can also ensure that the management ethos is in accordance with the ethics of the religion with which institutions are affiliated. Governments frequently exact a high level of control over Islamic universities. However, their administrative procedures are still often based on

those of secular, Western higher education institutions. The leadership structure of these universities is often extremely hierarchical and derives strength from stability. They tend to have rigid rules in place and do not exhibit a great degree of flexibility (Arthur, 2006).

3.8. Limitations of Kaplan's Institutional Framework

The above discussion underlines that governance and organizational approaches used by higher education institutions impact universities due to both the economic conditions and the political climate of a given country. In Saudi Arabia, the economic resources that the government has at its disposal have impacted the structure of the higher education system and directly influence their governance structures, their market power and their ownership forms, the governance norms, institutional rules, and decision-making procedures. In this context, Kaplan's approach provides a necessary framework.

Although Kaplan's framework provides for a comprehensive listing of factors that impact governance structures, the framework itself does little to provide for a proper weighing of each of these factors in terms of their relevance and impact in individual case studies. The framework is therefore of general utility in outlining the various factors that play a role in higher education governance, but it also has its limitations when it comes to evaluating the degree to which each of the components plays a decisive role. Moreover, given the fact that Kaplan's framework was developed within the context of looking at Western higher education institutions, factors that play a role within other systems are not adequately considered.

When looking at the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the role of religion, family and overall personal relationships among key constituents are elements that cannot be ignored. With the level of institutionalization not being as developed throughout the governing institutions inside Saudi Arabia compared with Western political systems, the role that individuals or family ties play in all aspects of life within the kingdom is of central importance. However, this is not reflected in Kaplan's framework.

There is another limitation that Kaplan himself explores in another article in which he focusses on decision implementation as a factor in higher education governance. Kaplan (2004) comes to the conclusion that there is, in fact, little relationship between the decision-making authority that exists within a particular institution and the actual

decision being made or implemented. As a result, the factors that Kaplan outlines are useful in identifying the role that each of them plays within the governance debates. Such listings, however, provide only limited insight into how governance is indeed practiced. As such, the reason for changes in governance and management approaches over a certain time period cannot be adequately explained if solely relying on Kaplan's framework. In the context of this thesis, the special characteristics that define the higher education environment within Saudi Arabia must therefore be kept closely in mind.

3.9: Conclusions

A number of different themes have emerged from the literature review. The first is the close connection between the government and universities within Saudi Arabia. It is clear that even private institutions do not have complete independence and are heavily controlled by the state. However, given that is evidenced that there is an increasing emphasis being placed on privatization, the focus of this research is to ascertain the precise nature of the effect of management approaches on UBT's governmental relationship.

It is also clear that Saudi Arabia is a very distinctive environment with regards to higher education. Universities within the nation are shaped by factors that are not prevalent elsewhere, for example, the wealth generated by the oil industry, the strict religious controls, and the large donations by government that are given out to institutions. This indicates that questions need to be asked about the way in which the local KSA conditions affect UBT's management approach. This allows one to distinguish UBT's approach from much of what has been covered in the literature on management and governance.

Another issue that the literature review has brought to light are the different managerial techniques that are associated with private and public higher education institutions. Therefore, attention should be paid to ascertaining the views of staff at UBT' of the advantages and disadvantages of each of these forms of university. To what degree do certain management techniques apply, and are they being considered by UBT's staff. The research also indicates that a number of state-level regulations govern the management and governance of higher education institutions within Saudi Arabia. This

suggests that UBT management's opinions of these regulations have to be explored as well, especially in relation to their impact on how management is conducted at UBT.

Finally, the literature review has illuminated the large variety of different factors that have an influence on management approaches in Saudi universities. Therefore, the precise reasons for UBT's management approach can be examined. The nature of the techniques that the management staff within the institutions uses to implement those techniques can be ascertained, and an attempt can be made to deduce their relationship with the other factors that will be investigated throughout the course of the study. All of the above will be examined through the lens of Kaplan's (2006) institutional framework for higher education.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

This chapter discusses the methodology and design of the study, beginning with a consideration of the researcher's own role in the research process and how this impinges on the interpretive approach. It then analyses the rationale for a case study methodology and the tools for data collection. The key topic of whether a single case study can yield general stable conclusions is considered in depth, followed by a statement of the research questions in relation to the literature review. The chapter concludes by highlighting the study's limitations and ethical considerations.

4.1: Researcher's Philosophical Stance

This study adopts an interpretive approach as it examines the management style of higher education in Saudi Arabia. As with any research, the researcher's task is to elicit as much data as possible to address the research problem, but to do so objectively, without bias. This immediately raises difficulties in that the philosophical tenets of interpretivism are based on the notion that reality is never objectively determined but is socially constructed. The underlying assumption is that people's perceptions of their activities can only be understood in their own social contexts (Husserl, 1965, in Kelliher, 2005).

For the current researcher, the social context is that of a Saudi male, who has: graduated from a private high school in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, gained a BSc in International Business Administration from King Abdul Aziz University, Saudi Arabia, and completed an MSc in Advanced Management Practice at Bath University, UK. While attending Bath University, he held a 6-month placement with the UK Tribal Group (focusing on educational administration). A brief work period followed as an international education development advisor in the Gulf region.

4.2: Ontological and Epistemological Framework

Clearly, it would not be difficult to show that a researcher with such a background cannot be relied on to maintain an 'objectivity' out of which will emerge the 'truth' about education reform in Saudi Arabia. For example, studying UBT requires careful analysis of both primary and secondary sources, many of them official documents and

surveys. Gottschalk (1950, pp.278-279) was an early ‘cynic’ who warned that all historical sources are biased according to the viewpoint of the author and what the researcher must do is to:

‘get as close an approximation to the truth about the past as constant correction of the mental images will allow, at the same time recognising that truth has in fact eluded him forever’ (Gottschalk, 1950, p.47).

Arbitrary construction and/or selection remain a challenge for anyone contemplating research involving the collation of qualitative material. Interpretivism emphasizes the researcher’s subjectivity so that both the study’s content and the means by which it is pursued reveal the researcher’s intention. Selectivity over what is being observed makes it observer-orientated, although some form of categorization is needed to make sense of the topic. Field studies and surveys would complement data findings, although, as in this study, the scale of the task would impose limited case studies and stratified sampling to ensure a full overview of all groups within a defined area (Allison *et al.*, 1996). So, the researcher must heed the warnings of Gottschalk on the existence of pre-conceived source bias and subjective analysis to fit the imposed models.

More recent authors also urge caution; for example, Sayer (2010, p.175) refutes many stereotypical notions about positivism. However, the complexities of the argument still make practical application problematic for a study based on political and social interaction in the field of higher education with so many multi-dimensional factors such as geography, history, demography, economics, even mythology, and ethnic customs that bear on the subject as much as administrative or social science.

As Babbie (2009, p.47) highlights in his analysis of post-positivism, there is some doubt on whether social life abides by rational social principles at all. The difficulty with positivism is that the criterion must be broad enough to include all aspects of social and political research. This raises the question of falsifiable evidence outlined by Popper (1970) that, briefly stated, argues that any theory of social life has to be based, not only on empirical evidence, but also must be capable of being falsified by that same evidence. As May (2011, p.32) suggests, Popper’s ideas are attractive in that they sustain *social theory only in so far as it is corroborated by empirical evidence.*

However, May (2011) again rightly raises the question ...*if our empirical evidence falsifies a theory, is this a sufficient reason for rejecting it?* Can we explain variation or contradiction in terms of ‘deviant’ evidence that should not detract from the general theory? And is it realistic to expect a researcher to abandon ‘existing’ theories until new ones can be categorically proven? Of course, Popper’s theories of falsification can force the observer to be critical and ‘question everything’, in which case ‘falsification’ is no more valid than ‘verification’; some degree of confirmation or disconfirmation is all that can be expected.

However idealistic the social scientist, he or she cannot avoid an element of selectivity and subjectivity, whichever methodology is adopted. Misrepresentation or exaggeration of lesser data may well distort the work of the researcher. Taking a theoretical position, illustrated with empirical analysis, seems to be the most practical and manageable way of developing the thesis on management approaches in Saudi higher education institutions.

While taking note of Sayer’s (2010, pp.165-9) strong criticism of empirical research, the point made above might be re-iterated, that Positivism and Interpretivism share the view that there are facts and data that are valuable for the practice of social enquiry. As the work of Denzin and Lincoln (2007) suggests, there are complexities and confusions in the verification of data based on Positivist and Interpretivist ‘canons’. As they write: *In the disorderly world of empirical research...independent measures never converge fully* (p.199).

Objectivity can be defined as the researcher’s detachment from sources and the ability to evaluate them independently of people’s interpretation of the world or circumstances under scrutiny (May, 2011, p.11). Hypotheses or theoretical constructs are valuable as ‘sounding boards’ for constructive research and to provide focus or direction for a research design, not an immutable formula to which all data must conform. Some compromise seems essential although the Interpretivist method adopted by many social scientists appears preferable.

The Interpretive position of this research is seen in the fact that, in evaluating the management style of private higher education in Saudi Arabia through a case study of UBT, it is important to obtain the insights and perceptions of people directly

experiencing this phenomenon. The nature of this approach enables the promotion of the value of qualitative data in generating knowledge of a particular idea. It is essentially centred on the uniqueness of a particular situation, given that it is based on the idea of social construction. In this way, the research questions for this study reflect the nature of Interpretivism. The questions focus on asking managers and academic staff about their understanding and experience of the management approach at UBT, as well as placing this in context by analysing the relationship between UBT and the government.

The necessity of establishing reliability pushes the interpretive research to pursue triangulation, a combination of methodologies within a given study. Establishing a systematic data collection thus begins from a broad set of research questions whereby case access is ensured in implementing strong triangulated measures. The interpretive approach posits that a single case can have a combination of interviews, participant observations, documentary sources, and the like, in its task of strengthening qualitative research findings with the use of the interpretive philosophy (Kelliher, 2005).

4.3: The Case Study Approach

According to Cassell and Symon (2004), a case study is not actually a method but rather a strategy. Single or multiple cases together with numerous levels of analysis can be involved in the case study approach (Eisenhardt, 1989, p.534). Case studies are used across the field of social science as well as, amongst others, in organizational studies, sociology, anthropology, organizational psychology, political science, and public management. Case study research involves detailed investigation, with data gathered over a period of time, aiming to provide an analysis of a phenomenon, processes, or context in order to shed light on the theoretical concepts being studied.

Tellis (1997) notes that case study research figured prominently in sociological research until around 1935 when it gave way to quantitative methods as the subject wished to appear more ‘scientific’. Critiques of case study methodology centre on five main objections or, as Flyvbjerg (2006) refers to them, ‘five misunderstandings’. His classification is a useful framework for analysing the method in relation to the current thesis. These misunderstandings are laid out in the subsequent subsections.

4.3.1: Non-Generalizability

The principal criticism of the method was, and remains, the presumed impossibility of generalizing from a single case to cover a wider class of phenomena. Since the current study relies on a single case (UBT), this criticism (i.e. ‘non-generalizability’) is particularly relevant. Flyvbjerg (2006) counters the objection, first, by downplaying the importance of generalizability in knowledge acquisition. Of course, a generalized theory is vital to scientific progress, but ‘isolated’ truths should not be dismissed as having no value. Even in the ‘hard’ sciences, a single result can provide insight long before it is generalized to other classes of phenomena (e.g. the discovery of electricity before it was known that this is but one type of electromagnetic energy). Yin’s (1980) concept of ‘analytic generalization’ is relevant here, i.e. not generalizing to a sampled population but to a theory of whatever is being studied. Stake (1978; in Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p.120) also justifies case study generalizability as being ‘naturalistic’, i.e. informing the reader’s personal experience or intuition and thereby enhancing understanding.

Flyvbjerg (2006) also cites Popper’s Falsifiability example of just one black swan being enough to overturn the theory that all swans are white. The case study can often provide that single example, provided the case is chosen wisely. In his own words: *It depends upon the case one is speaking of, and how it is chosen (ibid, p.423)*. In the current research, the case study involves only one organization, specifically that of UBT as well as groups functioning within it. There is a similar overall approach in case studies; they are generally inductive and focus on processes in a social context. Multiple methods may also be employed in the definition of case study research (Cassell and Symon, 2004, p.323).

The use of single cases of deliberately selected samples is employed in interpretive research (Lester, 1999); the ‘cases’ embodied in this study are also single and deliberately selected, determined through the combined methods mentioned above. The data thus collected are understood based on their contextual depths, also a feature of the interpretive approach.

4.3.2: Non-Summarizability

Critics of the case study methodology often see the case study as a ‘narrative’ – or even a ‘dense narrative’ – that is difficult or impossible to summarize (Flyvbjerg, 2006). As

such, it is claimed that it does not lend itself to any learning typology, such as formulae or theories. However, this is to ignore the value of an ‘unsummarized’ narrative and the way it can often bring truths to our attention through details deliberately left exposed. It forces us to track reality itself rather than a map of reality. As such, the case narrative itself enables us to make sense of our experiences, and if some part of the study remains ‘unsummarized’, this should not be cause for concern.

4.3.3: Problematic construct validity

Construct validity, the absence of the author’s own theories in designing and conducting the investigation, is seen as ‘problematic’ in case study research given the significant probability of subjectivity by the researcher (Yin, 2003). Thus, the case study may ultimately serve as a ‘verification’ tool, merely confirming the author’s preconceived notions.

Flyvbjerg (2006) deals with this criticism by noting that subjectivity is a danger in all forms of research, including quantitative work. In the latter, the researcher must, for example, choose which variables to select for testing in a questionnaire survey. In fact, the case study method is a better defence against preconceived notions since these, if mistaken, are shown to be so immediately with the questioning of individuals in close proximity. Hence, *the case study contains a greater bias towards falsification of preconceived notions than towards verification (ibid, p.429)*. Yin (1994) proposed using multiple sources of evidence as a ‘remedy’ against this ‘defect’ (details on the interviewing samples are given in Section 4.4 below).

4.3.4: Theoretical vs. practical knowledge

Flyvbjerg (2006) questions the assumption that context-independent knowledge (i.e. knowledge acquired ‘theoretically’ using ‘rules’) is superior to context-dependent knowledge (i.e. knowledge acquired practically or ‘in the field’ through, for example, case study research). He allows that rule-based learning is acceptable for beginners but that expertise is only achieved through contact with a large number of ‘real’ situations (as, in fact, happens in disciplines such as law or medicine). It is also important to distinguish between learning and prediction. The latter may not even be possible in the social sciences but the former certainly is, and case studies are an effective vehicle for

doing so (the proposed study will use a case study approach that favours depth over coverage).

4.3.5: Hypothesis generation vs. hypothesis testing

The final ‘misunderstanding’ of the case study approach is the view that it may be useful for generating hypotheses, but not for testing hypotheses or constructing theories where other methods are preferable. Eckstein (1975) has expressed this reservation but Flyvbjerg (2006) sees this as an extension of the ‘non-generalizability’ objection. The key to this issue is the type of case study that is pursued. Eisenhardt (1989) also makes the point that case studies can be used to achieve a number of objectives, such as providing description, testing a theory, or generating a theory. The process of building a case study involves extensive data collection followed by the construction of a theoretical framework to be used in the context of comparative analysis (Merriam, 1994). According to Cohen *et al.* (2007) there are several types of case studies evident in the literature:

- *Illustrative Case Studies* These are mainly descriptive case studies that describe a certain event or situation for illustration purposes.
- *Exploratory Case Studies* These are condensed case studies performed before implementing a large scale investigation.
- *Cumulative Case Studies* Cumulative case studies are used to collect information from a number of places and sites at different times for a general view on a given issue or topic.
- *Critical Instance Case Studies* These case studies evaluate and examine one or more sites for the purpose of evaluating a situation of specific interest without any real focus on generalisability. They are also useful in challenging assertions that are too wide in scope, and for addressing questions of cause and effect.

‘Critical Instance Case Studies’ can be identified with those termed ‘Critical Cases’ by Flyvbjerg (2006). These are the types of case study that facilitate theory-building since they allow for deductions of the type, *If this is (not) valid for this case, then it applies to all (no) cases* (ibid, p.426). The UBT case study is best considered a Critical Instance case study but demonstrating this is not straightforward, as Flyvbjerg (2006, p.426) admits: *There are no universal methodological principles exist by which one can with certainty identify a critical case.* One simply looks for cases likely to confirm or falsify

our hypotheses. The uniqueness of UBT in Saudi Arabia, chiefly the on-campus suspension of several aspects of Shariah law and the decentralized administration, suggests that it truly is a ‘Critical Instance Case Study’.

4.3.6: Applying Flyvbjerg’s framework to UBT

When applying Flyvbjerg’s framework to the case of UBT, it is clear that the aim should be to gain an insight into this specific case study rather than using it in order to try and discover concepts that apply to all higher education institutes. However, it should be examined together with other case studies that have been uncovered in the literature review, which will then enable generalizations to be made based on the findings. The results can be used to falsify previous hypotheses about higher education management in Saudi Arabia, or to verify, at least to a degree, other assumptions. Attention should be paid to ensuring that the study follows rigorous methods and any areas of ambiguity that arise should form the basis for suggestions for future studies.

4.4: Sampling

Therese Baker (1999, p.279) argues that the work of the field researcher is not directed towards isolating a *narrow research topic, a hypothesis to test ... [but] to put together a multiplicity of contexts, to search for a whole set of reasons why an event occurred*. The macro-level study can then result from, or be complemented by, the micro-level views, mitigating to some extent the more rigid positivist objections to case studies.

This is precisely the approach of the current research where Purposive Sampling figures prominently. Purposive sampling determines the participants in the interviews, ensuring that those invited for interview are people who can provide substantial information on the management approaches at UBT. Hence, the UBT case study includes a number of administrative and academic units that are examined as part of the current study, the main academic ones being Chemical and Life Sciences and Engineering, Mathematical and Computer Sciences and Engineering, and Physical Sciences and Engineering.

General administrative divisions are also examined as part of the study: the Administration Division, the Finance Division, and UBT’s Executive Committee (the committee responsible for the executive management of UBT, comprised of six members chaired by the university’s president). Some of the university’s faculty

members are also interviewed to get their views on the management techniques adopted. This is important in order to get the angle from several sides, including from those deciding on techniques or processes to be implemented as well as from the perspective of those charged with actual implementation. The sample for interviewing is classified according to their role and responsibilities within the university. This is depicted in Appendix 1 (see Appendices).

Sampling is usually associated with survey approaches to research, however, Blaxter *et al.* (1996) argue that there will be elements of sampling and selection in whatever approach to research is chosen. It is rare that investigators are able to study whole populations, which would be defined in the present context as all UBT stakeholders.

In order to obtain a representative sample it is useful to identify and use a sampling frame, which, in theory, should be a list of the entire population from which the sample is to be taken. Easily identifiable sampling frames will not always exist and ways must be found to build the necessary ‘frames’, based on the investigator’s knowledge of the population and time and budget limitations. Within the context of the current study, the sampling frame is restricted to three stakeholder groups: upper and lower management as well as faculty members. Higher management (Deans, Heads of Departments, and Members of the Executive Committee) provide insights that bridge the divide between the external, socio-political world and the internal UBT environment. Lower Management (administrative and clerical staff) are more focused on the internal UBT environment. Faculty members are on the ‘front line’ delivering the UBT ‘product’; students are the ultimate ‘consumers’ of that product.

Furthermore, both faculty and students are also there to realize the fundamental aim of UBT – the output of world-class teaching and research. The interviews try to cover as many aspects of the research questions as possible, as summarized in Appendix 2 (see Appendices). The three main research questions provide the framework under which the interview questions were developed.

Interviews were held over a period of time allowing for the initial data to be gathered and analysed, and then allowing for follow-up questions or clarifications to be sought in a second and third round of question and answer sessions. For the interviews, all senior level managers at UBT were interviewed in addition to faculty represented by the heads

of the main departments as well as lecturers within the department. Outside of UBT, officials from the Ministry of Higher Education were interviewed in order to gain insights about the role of the ministry in terms of governance and influence over UBT. Taken together, the interviews held are seen as being an adequate sample from which relevant conclusions can be drawn.

4.5: Data Collection

Data in this study are mainly derived from documentary evidence (supported by personal observation) and discussions (interviews) with individuals.

4.5.1: Documentary data

There are numerous different advantages to using documentary data; firstly, it adds to the richness of data and documented information that has been generated about a subject, without any relevant individuals having to be questioned about it by the researcher (Silverman, n.d.). This means that in the context of this research, it will supplement the interview questions and allow sources that have no possibility of being influenced by researcher bias to be used in conjunction with it. Documentary evidence is also readily available and can be gathered quickly (Silverman, n.d.), meaning that it is highly practical to use.

Despite the importance of its use, documentary data should not be taken at face value. Instead, it is important to establish the validity of each of the sources that are utilized (Denscome, 2010). Therefore, attention will be paid to choosing sources from established experts in the field who are unlikely to possess a significant bias. This will ensure that the data selected has the highest possible chance of being valid. Selecting a variety of different data will help to mitigate against the risk of any individual source being inaccurate or biased.

The secondary research includes data gathered from existing published sources, such as books, academic journals, endogenous UBT data, government census and statistics, relevant online sources, etc. UBT university policies form a large part of the documentary data, and are shown below grouped into eight categories (A to H): Academic Affairs, Business Practices, Facilities Management, Governance, Human Resources Management, Information Technology, Research, and Student Affairs.

Documents are located by a variety of means including, of course, consulting local libraries, but also by conducting key word searches on Google Scholar, which is a search engine that contains only academic texts. Through this use, it allows one to retrieve documents from journals, academic databases and other similar sources (Vine, 2006). Ahmed (2010) stated that in order to qualitatively analyse documentary data, the data must first be reduced. The parts that are relevant to the scope of the study should be isolated, and categories, themes and patterns should be identified. Relationships between concepts that are present within different sources can then be established (Ahmed, 2006). In this case, sources will be selected that are relevant to the following topics, which will also form the focus for the sections that are isolated:

A. Academic Affairs

- i. *Relating to Academic Staff* – Academic Integrity, Attendance, Probation, Warning, Dismissal, Sabbaticals and Other Leave, Freedom of Expression, Intellectual Property, Non-discrimination Policy, Proposals for New Academic Programmes, Syllabus Rubrics;
- ii. *Relating to Students* – Graduate Academic Requirements and Regulations, Registration Policies, Course Repeat Policy, Privacy Rights of Student Records;
- iii. *Library* – Library Policies and Guidelines;

B. Business Practices

- i. *Financial Policies* (including Cash Advances and Down Payments, Depreciation, Externally Funded Grants, Fundraising & Gift Acceptance Policy, Student Financial Affairs, Petty Cash);
- ii. *Risk Management* (including Planning and Budgeting);
- iii. *Supply Chain Management*;

C. Facilities Management

- i. *Health & Safety* First Aid Policy, Elevator Safety, No-Smoking Policy, Visitors;
- ii. *Visitors* Invitations to Government Officials or Trustees, Meeting Facilities Policy, Conference and Visitor Centre Policies;
- iii. *Campus* Student Housing Policy, Parking Regulations, Bus Policies, Campus Filming Policy;

D. Governance

Certificate of Incorporation, University Constitution, Campus By-Laws, Grievance Procedures, Student Governance, University Senate Resolutions, Whistleblower Policy.

E. Human Resources Management

- i. *Benefits* Compensation Policies, Staff Medical, Pensions & Insurance Plans, Day care Centre Benefits, Dependents' Scholarships;
- ii. *Hiring & Conditions* Hiring Guidelines for Grants, Hiring of Casual Staff, Hiring of Relatives, Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Policies, Drugs Policy, Remote Working;

F. Information Technology

Internet Access, Peer-to-Peer File Sharing Policy, Data Protection

G. Research

Research Proposal Development and Review Policy, Use of Human Subjects in Research, Research Conflict of Interest Policy, Other Research Policies;

H. Student Affairs

Academic Probation, Warning, Dismissal, Complaints Procedures on Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Policies, Student Visas, Student Conduct, Student Governance, Student Trips Regulations, Tuition and Fees.

Together with the primary data, the secondary data formed a viable research undertaking that enabled the research problem, as well as the aims and objectives of the study, to be addressed. At the same time, it was impossible at the outset to know if all these policy documents would be necessary. The deciding factor was whether any of the interviewees could link any one of them, favourably or unfavourably, with the UBT management style. In this context, secondary research also identified misalignments between stated policy and actual management practice. This is a key reason showing the importance of including documentary data as part of the data collection approach.

4.5.2: Interviews

Kvale (1996, p.14) defines interviews as:

‘An interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest, sees the centrality of human interaction for knowledge production, and emphasizes the social situatedness of research data.’

There are certain characteristics of qualitative research interviews as identified by Bryman and Bell (2007, p.313) as opposed to quantitative research interviews that tend to be more rigidly structured. These characteristics are:

- a high level of interest in the interviewee’s point of view;
- interviewers can depart from any schedule if necessary;
- they are able to adjust to the interviewee’s answers;
- detailed answers are always sought after in qualitative research interviews; and
- The same interviewee may be interviewed again in the same research endeavour.

At the same time, there are several ways by which an interview can be structured as identified by Kajornboon (2004):

- *Structured Interviews* In this format, the same questions are asked of all respondents;
- *Semi-structured Interviews* are non-standardized and the questions are devised according to the key themes and issues that the researcher wishes to cover;
- *Unstructured Interviews* are a flexible technique as interviewees are usually encouraged to speak openly about their thoughts on the subject being studied;
- *Non-directive Interviews* have no pre-set topic to pursue, and questions are not pre-planned. The interviewee is encouraged to talk freely on the research subject.

The use of the interview method, commonly used in qualitative and interpretive research, is justified by the fact that it focuses both on the higher education management style in Saudi Arabia, thus requiring in-depth interviews with ‘experts’ on these issues. Semi-structured interviews were therefore conducted with the staff of UBT. As explained, this allowed the interviewer, who is aware of the possibility of asking supplementary questions should these be necessary, to develop the interview in depth in a particular direction as suggested by the moment.

The interviews were structured in order to follow a set list of questions. In addition, spontaneously developed follow-up questions were posed to the subjects as deemed relevant to the managerial approaches at UBT. The scripted questions were asked in the same order each time: this avoided influencing the responses of the staff by asking them in an order that in any way displays bias on the part of the researcher.

The following is a list of the interview questions that were posed:

1. What are the main advantages of the current administration at UBT?
2. How would you describe the administrative style at UBT?
3. What is the significance and importance of the administration applied at UBT?
4. What is your personal philosophy in administration?
5. Could you tell us how the university is managed academically, being a private and independent institution?
6. How does centralism affect the higher education sector?
7. How would you describe the administrative style at UBT?
8. What is the importance of applying decentralism at private institutions?
9. What is your view concerning the policy of decentralism in the higher education sector in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia? Is it useful for the owners?
10. In your view, how does decentralization of the higher education sector affect the independence of the university?
11. How would you describe decentralization and privatization in relation to a university?
12. What are the benefits of decentralization that the students and teachers could reap?
13. What are the advantages of the decentralization of management at your university?
14. As I understand it, there is no centralization in the normal sense; if it exists, what are benefits of such for the owner who aims for profit? Do you think the owners were responsible for such, and what the investors are making out of such a style?
15. In general, what are the benefits of the systems applied in private universities?
16. How would you describe the relationship between you and Ministry of Higher Education?

17. Describe the relationship between (UBT) and the official authorities concerning the educational policy?
18. My question is about your relationship, positive or negative, with higher education. For example, does it impose a specific number of classes that you have to attend?
19. With regard to the internal processes and transactions, are departmental heads equipped with necessary powers? As I understand it, there is independence, but there is also a sort of control by the ministry and yourself?
20. What are the main advantages of the current administration at UBT?
21. What are customs and traditions that have an impact on the system?
22. What are the local characteristics that should be observed in applying the administrative style at UBT?
23. What modifications need to be introduced with observing local characteristics?
24. What traditions must be observed when you apply the administrative style?
25. Are there any traditions or customs imposed on you?
26. Do you observe the customs and traditions that our Saudi society has known for centuries and decades?

The above represent the *core* questions. In addition, other questions were asked following on from the above depending on the specific answers provided in each interview.

Pilot interviews are sometimes carried out in order to ensure that suitable questions are asked. Interviewees who possess similar attributes to the subjects are usually used in these interviews (Fox, 2009). However, in this case, interviewing other members of the university staff would risk exposing the nature of the questions to the subjects before they had been interviewed, which could potentially bias the results. As it was felt that the questions selected were chosen carefully, it was therefore decided that no pilot interviews were to be carried out.

The interviewees that were selected were a mixture of males and females in order to reflect the diverse nature of the staff at UBT. They were contacted through the university and none of them declined to participate. The subjects consented verbally to being interviewed, and representatives of the institution also expressed verbal consent.

Each interview schedule began with an introduction in order to provide the context of the study and to make participants feel comfortable. The purpose of the interview was clearly explained in order for participants to understand the reasons for the interview. The benefits that the research could potentially bring about were explained, and the time line for the interview was provided to the subject. The questions were then asked, followed by a transitional statement leading into the closing section of the interview. The transition consisted of thanking the subject for his time and explaining that a summary of the interview would be sent to them in due course. The points that were made throughout the course of the interview were then reiterated (University of Hawaii, n.d.). This provided room for elaboration and ensured that the interviewer was aware of the information that he had disclosed.

For the conduct of the interviews, a series of questions was developed that were then administered at UBT as well as to staff members at the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE). The questions for the Ministry of Higher Education were different from those for the staff and management at UBT. This was because in the MOHE's case the objective was to gain an insight into the influence of the MOHE on the management and governance at UBT. These questions were as follows:

1. Are you aware of any decentralization programme in UBT?
2. What are your thoughts regarding the privatization tendency in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia?
3. Does privatization improve management styles?
4. How have different views between government and the management been resolved?
5. What are the differences between the way in which private universities are run and managed, compared with state universities within Saudi Arabia?
6. What type of impact do government regulations have on private institutions?
7. How does the government's regulation of private universities impact on decision-making within the institution, and how does it impact on its autonomy?
8. What policies have the government pursued when it comes to private education in the kingdom?

Taken together, the answers provide allowed for an insight into the extent to which the techniques utilized are in fact shaped by the Ministry, and to uncover the degree to

which MOHE officials believe that universities are permitted to operate independently within Saudi Arabia without the Ministry dictating their actions. The questions further allowed comparisons to be drawn between the university staff members' views on the MOHE's role in the governance and management of UBT, and the Ministry's official position with regards to this matter.

While the interviews were conducted using the same procedure, the questions were framed differently with the interview subject in mind. As such, from the questions listed above, some questions were asked of the management at UBT, others were used in the session with UBT staff, while other questions were directly used for government officials. It was important to frame the questions according to the interviewed subject in order to allow for proper answers and provide a comparative basis on which the main research questions could be evaluated.

Interview questions were preferred to a more structured questionnaire in order to overcome some of the limitations that questionnaires pose. One disadvantage is that the individual who formulated the questions is not necessarily present in order to explain any ambiguities when the respondent answers them. This can lead to questions being misinterpreted (University of Portsmouth, n.d.), which can harm the validity of the responses. Questionnaires also fail to uncover the meaning and context behind the subject's responses (University of Portsmouth, n.d.). Moreover, when posing questions to somebody via a questionnaire, there is a risk that the respondent will deliberately provide answers that he or she believes to be socially desirable rather than answering honestly (University of Portsmouth, n.d.): this is known as 'social desirability bias'. Research indicates that this form of bias is also present to a certain extent when an interviewer is present, more than it is when respondents are left to self-complete a questionnaire (Ipsos MORI, 2012).

In order to avoid social desirability bias, attention was given to avoiding the wording of questions in a way that was likely to make the subject feel that they were likely to be judged for their response. In this way, a higher likelihood of unbiased answers being given was provided. Careful wording can increase the chance of a truthful answer being given. At the same time, it is not possible to completely eliminate social desirability bias (Ipsos MORI, 2012).

Throughout the interview, the aim of the questionnaire was thoroughly explained to each of the respondents (Open University, 2013). In the case of one high-ranking MOHE staff member, the person was made fully aware of why she was being asked to answer the questions, which provided complete transparency and ensured that the person knew for what reasons she was participating in the research. This approach also made it more likely for her to cooperate in the work as it was explained that the study focused on shedding light on an issue that was in need of further illumination.

Attention was paid to ensuring that each of the interview questions was directly relevant to the area being researched. The questions used academic or technical language only in situations when the respondent was certain to understand the words and phrases that were utilized (Open University, 2013). In this situation, the subject working with the Ministry of Higher Education, being fully immersed within the academic world, was judged to understand standard academic jargon. She was also seen as likely to understand technical language related to education. The questions themselves avoided the use of other technical language outside of the field of expertise so as to eliminate the possibility of failing to fully comprehend the meaning of the question.

In addition, it is important to avoid including leading questions that are administered for research purposes. This is because questions of this nature can cause the subject to provide answers that are not entirely honest (Open University, 2013). In order to avoid this pitfall, the language that was used in the questions was kept as neutral as possible. Attention was given to ensuring that it did not lead the respondent towards answering in a specific manner.

Choi and Pak (2005) have identified a number of different sources of bias that might be included in sample questions that have the potential to lead the subjects to answer in a particular way. Overly short questions sometimes create grounds for participants to give answers that do not represent their actual views. This is due to the fact that their abruptness causes the person who is answering the questions to formulate a response in a similar short manner, rather than taking the time required for them to come up with an answer that better reflects their actual opinion.

Through the use of interview questions, forced choices are also avoided. A forced choice is when the subject is provided with a list of potential answers, none of which

actually represents his or her point of view. This means that participants have to choose a response in spite of the fact that none of the options are actually what they believe to be true. This can lead to dishonest answers to questions, which in the end is bound to skew the results of the research.

Overly intrusive questions should also be avoided, as they can result in the subject suppressing information. If the participant is asked a question about a topic that he or she does not want to talk about, this compromises the results of the questions (Choi and Pak, 2005). As the scope of this study is management at higher education institutions in Saudi Arabia, there was no need for personal questions to be included in the interview process.

Attention was paid to making sure that the questions were not too long, as this can lead to participants either providing inaccurate answers to some questions or answering some questions in a very short manner due to lack of time, thus leading to incomplete answers or responses that fail to adequately address the questions. It can also lead to the person failing to answer some of the questions, or to what is commonly referred to as ‘response fatigue’: this is when inaccurate, uniform answers are provided due to the fact that the respondent has grown mentally fatigued because they have answered too many questions (Choi and Pak, 2005). In order to avoid this, care was taken to opt for a sensible number of questions. Only queries that were deemed as directly relevant to the study and essential for uncovering useful information from which conclusions could be drawn were included in the set of questions.

4.6: Data Analysis

This investigation uses documentary data as a validating mechanism for in-depth interviews, i.e. documentary data is used to analyse the interview data, thereby enabling the construction of a theory derived from the case study (Cassell and Symon, 2004).

4.6.1: Analysis of documents

The first step in subjecting the documentary evidence to data analysis is to undertake a preliminary ‘quality check’ using Scott’s (1990, p.6) four criteria for handling documentary sources. These are:

- i. *Authenticity* Is the evidence genuine and from a reliable source?

Achieved by listing, using name and title, the UBT official who wrote and/or approved the policy and the date of the approval; the location on the university's website or the manual/handbook where the policy is located. Also supply the Last Amended Date, and the Next Review Date.

ii. *Credibility* Is the evidence typical of its kind?

To an extent, this criterion is subjective. Is the document well-presented and free from spelling errors? Does it show signs of having been prepared with care and diligence?

iii. *Representativeness* Are the documents representative of all the relevant documents?

Government statistics can be assumed to be representative in that they are prepared by qualified statisticians using standard procedures such as random sampling. Policy documents are harder to judge objectively, but there will be a conscious effort to include only 'representative' documents.

iv. *Meaning* Is the evidence clear and understandable?

The factual content of documents is established by briefly stating the policy's intent, when it applies, and any stipulated actions or constraints. With regard to a UBT policy addressing a value or mission, the reasons for the policy are given, together with any legal or regulatory requirement that the policy aims to meet.

Finally, the interpretive meaning of the documents is established through the interviews. However, documents are 'prepared' for that stage by tagging them with the main 'themes' of the interview questions (these are found in the appendices). These themes are Current Management Style, Decentralization, Financial Aspects of Management, Student Affairs, and Governance.

The conduct of documentary data analysis must also be permeated by more 'philosophical' methodological considerations. As Denzin and Lincoln (2007, p.162) point out: *The field text may be more or less collaboratively constructed, may be more or less interpretive, and may be more or less researcher influenced. It depends.* There is a need for caution if the field texts we rely on have been constructed by other researchers, but knowledge of how the participants were questioned, the degree of random sampling, and the geographical and social extent of the surveys helps to ascertain their reliability and usefulness.

One interesting variation on the interpretative theme is the ‘ethno methodological’ approach (Cohen *et al.*, 2007, pp.22-26). This was addressed by Garfinkel (1967) who rejected the ‘conformist’ model of society and asserted that social order is in fact attained through the practical activities of ordinary people, who are not like ‘robots’ in the workplace or anywhere else. In effect, people know that social norms help maintain stability and freely enter into demanding social and economic obligations and seek group security, conscious of the benefits in contrast to the dangers of random behaviour. Garfinkel’s ideas about rules and meanings are useful tools in examining the documentary data in this study.

Finally, the secondary sources come from a variety of academic traditions. It is essential to analyse the information and ideas carefully, paying particular attention to the provenance of the work and the cultural viewpoint of the author. It is an interesting experience to use both Western and Arabic sources, almost as counterweights, evidenced in the personal account of Saudi society by writers such as Sandra Mackey (1987), and the opinions of Dr Ali Abdel-Wahid Wafi (1998) on his NAASS study of Human Rights in Islam.

4.6.2: Analysis of interviews

Interview data is analysed based on the literature review, i.e. the existing literature serves as a ‘measure’ of the assertions made in the primary data. The researcher wrote a Daily Interpretive Analysis (DIA) report to analyse the daily results of the interview process. The objective of a DIA is to analyse the collected information in terms of the research questions and objectives (Wood, 2000), and therefore serves as an important data analysis tool.

The notes taken during the interviews form the raw material for the analysis, and information is analysed and interpreted in a way that aligns it to the research questions and the objectives of the study. The interview data analysis provides more details although, as Cohen *et al.* (2007, p.286) point out, the researcher should never forget that he/she is but a ‘data collection instrument’.

The full list of persons interviewed is shown in Appendix 3 (see Appendices). These codes were used in order to summarize the position and department of each interviewee when presenting responses so they are immediately apparent. This allowed for any

correlations that exist between the rank and department of staff and the views that they express to the researcher.

A coding system for content analysis was set up, as shown in Appendix 5 (see Appendices). The coded sections allow the responses that are directly relevant to the area of research to be immediately identified, which facilitates their analysis. The coding system was based on key word repetition; several trial runs were made to standardize the coding system. Hence, the selections were made, by and large, on the basis of a standardized procedure. Themes within an interview response can be identified by looking at the number of times that specific words are repeated: this is one of the easiest ways of identifying them (Bernard and Ryan, 2003). It is suited to researchers who possess no specific expertise in language analysis, which means that it was ideal for this study.

Appendix 2 (see Appendices) lists the interview questions alongside the corresponding purposive sample and the interview length. In addition, Appendix 6 (see Appendices) contains the transcripts of some of the interviews that were conducted at UBT.

The qualitative data that is presented in these tables is contrasted with the secondary sources, and similarities and differences are identified. Kaplan's (2006) theory on HE governance is utilized in order to provide context to the responses. Primary and secondary data have a different set of strengths and weaknesses from each other. Primary data can provide a more realistic insight into the topic that is being researched and has a high degree of accuracy and reliability. However, there is less control over data collection and some questions may go unanswered due to the nature of the subjects' responses. Secondary data can be used in order to gain an insight into expert opinions. However, it is context- and time-specific, and may not be as accurate or reliable as primary research (INFLIBNET Centre, n.d.). Therefore, by using these two forms of data in conjunction with one another, each will mitigate the deficiencies that are present in the other.

It is important to note that this research does not use any qualitative data analysis software for analysing the data, but relies on manual analysis based on interview data. That is, the tagged documentary data is evaluated against respondents' answers in a search for disparity. The research study relies on the results of the interview process and

the documentary data that can be gathered by the researcher. The qualitative stance of this study allows the researcher to embrace a much more thorough and detailed analysis of the primary data gathered to answer the research questions that pose ‘how’ and ‘why’ certain management styles have occurred, rather than producing a purely statistical response from the participants on the study. This would only lead to a superficial understanding of the subject, and is why quantitative methods such as the questionnaire have been rejected.

The responses gathered from the interview questions administered to the Ministry of Higher Education staff provide a further insight into the issues that are touched on in the interviews. What this allows is for the MOHE’s perspective to be compared to that of the staff at UBT. One of the steps utilized was the establishment of themes in order to facilitate the categorization of the data (University of Wisconsin, 2011). The themes utilized included ‘centralization’, ‘managerialism’, ‘increased power to private universities’, and ‘marketization’, as these are all concepts that came up in the literature review that relate to aspects of the management and governance of Saudi Arabian universities, and could potentially be influenced by the Ministry of Higher Education.

Different sections of each response will be ‘coded’, which involves assigning them to a theme. The categories that have significant amounts of text in them can then be deemed to be major themes and analysed in further detail. The findings will be written up as descriptive text (University of Wisconsin, 2011), and the combination of data from the MOHE staff member and UBT staff members will allow for potential corroboration.

4.7: Procedure

The research conducted for this thesis proceeded in a step-by-step manner. Following the identification and selection of the topic, an outline was put together that covered the various necessary steps to be undertaken. At the outset, and as a first step, secondary literature was collected on the subject matter: it was first thought to be essential to be able to collect and analyse the various theoretical underpinnings that form the basis for this thesis. This in turn allowed the researcher to put much of the thinking into its proper context and proceed to the next steps. Following the collection of the literature, the material was thoroughly read and analysed. An important element is that some reading of the literature led to the discovery and/or reference to other source material not

initially identified. In addition, some concepts that were not very clear in an initial reading were then supplemented with further readings in order to clarify exactly what was meant or referred to in a specific concept.

A second sub-stage of the literature collection and review relates to material on the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and specifically to education development and policies within the country. An important element in this regard is the fact that not all concepts developed in the theoretical literature have direct applications for Saudi Arabia. Thus while at the initial stage, the literature review allowed for a better understanding of the listing of all the relevant concepts to be included. The subsequent study of education development in Saudi Arabia provided a means by which certain concepts could be eliminated (because of their non-relevance to the Saudi Arabian case study) and other concepts could be highlighted (as these had not been examined in a specific Saudi context and therefore could lead to specific insights). Just because a certain aspect has not been used within a Saudi Arabian context does not therefore mean it is not relevant. Both parts of the literature review allowed the researcher to better understand such a distinction.

Following the literature review, the next task was to design the interview process and the field work stages. In conjunction with this, relevant literature about UBT as an institution was also collected. The field work was divided into several stages, the first was to identify the person to be interviewed and why. The second phase was to design and work out the interview questions. This was done with the literature review where relevant concepts to be researched further had been identified. Third, once put together, the questions were passed to both the supervisors and some other people in order to ensure the questions did not include any bias or subjectivity, and to check that questions were likely to receive the answers one would expect. For each question, notes were made to allow for a contingency situation, or in case the interview had clarifications he or she might asked for.

The interview questions were not the same for all people to be interviewed given that the research objectives in each case were different. Thus, the questions for the Ministry of Higher Education were different from those for the staff and management at UBT. Thus, in the case of the Ministry of Higher Education, the emphasis was on a better understanding of the role of government when it came to higher education privatization,

while in terms of the management and staff at UBT, the objective was to better understand their perspective and the internal processes at UBT. The questions were therefore framed differently with the interview subject in mind. This provided the comparative basis on which the main research questions could be evaluated. At the same time, particular attention was given to the fact that each interview question was directly relevant to the area being researched.

Following the completion of the questions to be asked, each identified person to be interviewed was contacted and then the interview was arranged. As already explained above, the interview itself began with an introduction to explain the purpose and objective of the study, and to ensure that there were no issues that remained unclear. The interview questions were then asked. Afterwards, each individual was thanked for their time and informed that a summary of the interview would be sent to them. The interview was then properly transcribed and checked for accuracy. All interviewees were given the opportunity to review their sessions and provide clarification as needed. As stated above, such a process provided room for elaboration and ensured that the interviewee was aware of the information that he had disclosed.

In the next step, all interviews were evaluated and linked to the concepts from the literature review. This is where the documentary data revealed from the interview session were linked to the concepts uncovered. They were also found to be relevant in the literature review in order to evaluate what concepts could be identified within the fieldwork. Where answers could be linked to specific aspects of the literature, those answers were highlighted and grouped together. In this context, a thorough comparative analysis was undertaken that compared the research material collected from the field work with the research material analysed and gathered from the literature review. This, in turn, allowed the author to begin extrapolating the information received from the interviews and expand on sections that form the core of the analysis in the thesis. Throughout this process, the analysis was reviewed and strengthened, in part through discussions with the supervisors as well as in comments from other third-party readers. This ensured that the analysis remained objective rather than subjective.

The role of the documentary data was essential to give the thesis its content and to put the overall discussion into its proper context. In the light of the considerations of this fact, data collection would not have been possible without extensive fieldwork.

Therefore, without any prior information, it would not have been possible to highlight and evaluate the degree of correctness of the concepts and the management. In addition, the collected data also aid the appropriate addressing of the need for evaluation of the privatization of the educational institutes. The documentary data were gathered in several stages, including the initial interviews and the necessary follow-up session that allowed for necessary clarifications. Taken together, this can be considered the most important aspect of the procedural aspect discussed here.

At times, a further review of the literature became necessary in order to make sure that concepts were understood correctly in terms of how they were reflected in the interviews. Interview subjects were also contacted again to provide clarifications as necessary. With the main fieldwork on both the practical and theoretical level complete, the writing of the substantial chapters of the thesis commenced. In these chapters, the researcher applied his own analysis as validated from the data collected. At several stages, several conclusions were revised depending on feedback received through supervisors or third parties. Finally, however, the thesis could subsequently be completed. The entire process concluded with the technical details of finishing the bibliography and ensuring the entire manuscript was adequately proofread.

4.8: Reliability and Validity

The concept of reliability is often associated with testing or evaluating quantitative research, but it is relevant to all kinds of research (Denzin, 1984). Validity and reliability are important considerations in designing a qualitative study, analysing the results, and judging the quality of the study (Cohen *et al.*, 2007). In qualitative research like this, reliability uses dependability, in which data consistency is achieved by verifying steps and examining raw data, process notes, etc. (Golafshani, 2003). In this case, the raw data that will be analysed are the responses from the participants. Attention is paid to assuring that it is not altered in any way so that it remains in a raw state.

Validity, on the other hand, is often used in quantitative studies but is also applied to qualitative research. In the concept of validity, common terms include quality, rigour, and trustworthiness. Constant comparison can be utilized in order to preserve the validity of qualitative research (Anderson, 2010). This involves comparing each finding

and interpretation with all other findings as they emerge. Therefore, each interviewee's response will be compared with that of others, and will also be placed within the context of the secondary data (Parry, 2004).

According to Cohen *et al.* (2007), triangulation can be used in order to preserve both the validity and the reliability of an item of research. This is where two or more methods of data collection are used to study a specific issue in order to ensure validity and reliability of data. Following Mathison (1988), triangulation in this study is based on data source triangulation, where the opinions of members of the same group (management and faculty) are expected to be consistent in relation to the question being asked and the concepts being examined (although it would be wise to also anticipate differences).

4.9: Ethical Considerations

There are two areas for ethical consideration in this study: the conduct of primary data collection and secondary data collection. For primary data collection, a key aspect is ensuring the anonymity of participants. Confidentiality of data is an important aspect that the researcher has observed, which means that the participants' identities must not be divulged to third parties in any way.

Also, coercion has not been used to obtain the consent of target participants/respondents to participate in the interviews. It is important that the investigator initially clarified the aims and objectives of the study to the target participants, and the potential help that they could extend to the research by agreeing to be a participant.

Moreover, the investigator recorded all the data without editing to distort meaning. In terms of language issues, the interviews were conducted in Arabic, with English translation where necessary, to ensure that the individuals understood the questions being asked. Confirmation of this understanding was sought by the interviewer if the interviewee appeared to have answered a variation of the question, or if they looked quizzical at the question given to them.

Shades of meaning can sometimes be lost when data is translated into another language. This can harm the validity of research. Therefore, it is important that translations are kept as close to the original wording as possible for the scripted questions. Subtle

differences in meaning should be avoided, as should the translation of metaphors when possible (Abma *et al.*, 2010).

It is also important to understand that the participants need to remain anonymous through fear of possible reprisal for participating in this study. Although the content matter does not endanger anyone, it is still thought that it is important to ensure confidentiality and anonymity because the participants are discussing management styles of a large university, and their responses could have an impact on the way the university is perceived in the wider and more general context. In addition to making every effort to ensure respondents' confidentiality and anonymity, permission to record and transcribe interviews was sought. Respondents were given the right to withdraw from the research at any point, and respondents and gatekeepers were aware of the possibility of reviewing initial findings.

Permission was sought from gatekeepers by drafting a formal letter signed by the researcher himself, the research moderator, and the dean of studies; this stated the purpose of the study and the need to conduct a series of interviews on the topic with target respondents in the institution. The researcher ensured that all secondary sources were properly rephrased and referenced in order to avoid the conscious or unconscious commission of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Finally, the research for this proposal has been reviewed and approved by the University of Sussex Social Sciences ethical committee. They were satisfied that prior written consent would always be sought before accessing confidential third-party information. Keepers of confidential records must safeguard the privacy of individuals and rightly require that access is gained only through a process that protects their rights. In general, the study adheres to all standards for the ethical treatment of research subjects, including informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, and anonymity.

4.10: Translation Techniques

One unique aspect of the thesis work is that it is written in English while some of the field work material was collected in Arabic. Given that almost all of the literature pertaining to the thesis subject is in the English language, the questions for the interviews were originally formulated in English to ensure that they adequately reflected the concepts as explained in the literature. The questions were then translated into Arabic for use in the field work. While some of the interview subjects would have been able to understand English and answer the questions in English, this was not possible for all subjects. In addition, the native language of all individuals that were interviewed was Arabic and it was important to get as clear answers as possible from them. As a result, it was determined that asking the questions in Arabic would lead to more reliable and accurate answers.

Following the conclusions of the interviews, transcripts were first drawn up in Arabic then translated into English. Both versions were then compared to ensure for accuracy. Also, both versions were given to the interview subjects in those cases where the individual could assess them in their respective language. Both the translation of the question from English into Arabic, and the translation of the answer of the interview from Arabic into English, were done by the same person so that a similar translation technique was applied. This ensured that different meanings as a result of applied cross-translation techniques would be kept to a minimum. Finally, the researcher felt confident that the translation process followed was accurate, that all interview subjects clearly understood what they were being asked, and that all transcribed and translated answers reflected the intention of the interview subject.

4.11: Limitations

The study naturally carries with it some limitations. Some of these are related to the conducting of research inside the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Due to the conservative nature of the society, carrying out primary research, and at times asking questions that may appear sensitive to the respondent, resulted in vague information being provided or, in some cases, limited the ability of collecting the necessary information. Individuals also tend not to be critical of the restrictions that might be imposed as there is a fear of potential consequences if that criticism reaches other officials. In this context, the nature

of governance in Saudi Arabia in general, where political and cultural ‘red lines’ may prevent retrieval of accurate information from the interviewees, is one factor that must be acknowledged. At the same time, the researcher has tried to use his personal relationships and understanding of Saudi culture to limit the effects of the aforementioned local limitations, and explain as best as possible the purpose and objective of the study. It was found that if the interviews were conducted in an open and transparent manner, the respondents engaged in a forthcoming approach.

Another limitation is the fact that only one private institution was used in the analysis here. Given that privatized higher institutions are still a new field in Saudi Arabia, it is not possible at this stage to carry out a broader study that involves a broad array of institutions. As a result, this study is seen as providing a first insight into the thinking about management and governance, and it is hoped that the results provided here can be used for further examinations in the near future. In addition, it is felt that the number of interviews held and the different people that responded to the questions are sufficient in order to draw conclusions in line with the research questions posed by this work.

4.12: Summary

This thesis takes a case study approach in order to gain an insight into the role being played by one specific institution of UBT, rather than trying to discover concepts and applying them in a comparative manner. The idea is that such a thesis can then be used with other similar case studies to enable generalizations to be made based on the findings provided. Purposive sampling was used to obtain the data as this ensured that those interviewed would be able to give the substantial information needed for answering the three research questions that this thesis poses.

Semi-structured interviews were held over a period of time. This allowed for the initial data from the interviews to be gathered and analysed, and then allowing for follow-up questions or clarifications to be sought. In addition, spontaneously developed follow-up questions were posed to the subjects if they were deemed to be relevant to the research questions at hand. Overall, the interviews are seen as providing an adequate sample from which relevant conclusion can be drawn.

Chapter 5: Management Approaches and Governance Models at UBT

Having set the stage in terms of the characteristics of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the emergence of private education in the country, the debates within the literature about the privatization of education and the impact of globalization, as well as the methodological approach being applied in this work, the study now turns to analyse the collected data in order to look at the management approaches and governance models being applied at UBT. This chapter presents the results from the interview data that was gathered and collected using the methods outlined in the previous chapter. The interview data itself is analysed largely through the lens of Kaplan's (2006) Institutional Framework for Higher Education.

In this chapter, the first two of the three major research questions on the subject of management approaches at UBT are addressed (see Chapter 1, Section 1.4 for more details about the research questions). This includes an analysis of the understanding and approaches to management of senior managers at a private university (UBT) as well as the understanding and experiences of academic staff of the management approach followed at UBT. In addition, the chapter evaluates UBT's governance model. The third main research question, referring to the nature of the relationship between UBT as a private university and the government through the Ministry of Higher Education, is addressed in the next chapter.

Three main themes can be outlined here at the outset with reference to the analysis of the data:

- i. The combination of Faculty Governance combined with Trustee Governance provides for a Mixed Governance model at UBT. Within the governance aspect, decentralization is a major aspect but its implementation and understanding of the concept is uneven from a management and faculty perspective;
- ii. The Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) treats private universities like public ones, meaning that the ability of UBT decision-makers to be flexible in their application of management styles is limited. This, in turn, blocks efficiency measures that could be gained from decentralization efforts. Furthermore, 'state control', as opposed to 'state supervision', blocks the entry of new actors to

UBT's governance and management. While the specific role played by the state is dealt with in Chapter 6, the references to management and governance are explained in more depth in this chapter.

- iii. The unresolved issue of co-ed tuition is creating what could be referred to as 'dynamic tension' between the state and UBT. Here, main aspects of social traditions of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia remain prevalent, which in turn have a significant impact on the management techniques being applied at UBT. This issue will also be looked at in more detail in Chapter 6.

Globalization is a factor that has led Saudi Arabia to undertake privatization efforts in order to diversify their economy and reduce their dependency on foreign labour. In this context, education reform has received a lot of emphasis given that a quality education is seen as a key component to allowing qualified Saudi nationals to enter the labour market. This, in turn, promotes efforts to reduce overall unemployment, especially among the large youth element of the society. However, while the emphasis on education reform has led to selected moves to privatize education, the data collected for this work indicate that the concept of privatization is not well understood within the kingdom. This, in turn, leads to the application of so-called mixed models in which privatization steps and efforts are put forward within the context of the existing system of state and heavy bureaucratic control. This process is explained in more detail below.

5.1: Governance Approaches at UBT

The analysis in this chapter is based on the interview data and relating the responses received to the review of the literature and its main themes. The focus here is on the first two research question and their sub-questions as outlined in the introduction and explained in the methodology. This includes the management approach followed by UBT's leadership, their general understanding of management and its role within the university, and the relationship between management and governance. The term 'Governance' will be used as an encompassing concept that covers different managerial aspects in UBT (see Chapter 3, Section 3.6 for a more detailed discussion about the distinction between 'Governance' and 'Management'). The chapter also looks at the perspectives and views of the academic teaching staff at UBT and how they experience the management approach being adopted. The objective here is to get a sense in the methods being applied at the university, to see what the obstacles are in terms of

application of various techniques, and to evaluate how, from the point of both management and staff, the management approaches are viewed.

To begin with, a look at the governance models under which UBT falls is useful. As discussed in Section 3.6.2 on governance models, Trakman (2008) provides a governance typology that suggests that there can be five kinds of higher education governance:

- Faculty Governance (power held by academic staff);
- Corporate Governance (small Boards of Governors or Trustees, and a CEO with financial/managerial power);
- Trustee Governance (puts trust in a governing board);
- Stakeholder Governance (co-opts interest groups in Higher Education); and
- Mixed Governance (combinations of the above).

The above typology can also be used to address the particular situation in UBT as it encompasses the management trends/approaches that were identified from the interview data as highlighted below. Based on the responses, a closer analysis of the interview data suggests that in the case of UBT, the answer to what model is being used is not so straight forward, especially when looked at from the perspective of decentralization and relations of the institution with the Ministry of Higher Education.

Using Trakman's classification, both Corporate Governance and Stakeholder Governance can be eliminated as models that would adequately describe the governance situation at UBT. A dominant CEO is absent from the picture, as is the existence of stakeholders to any significant extent. The transcript data portrays Deans, Professors, Administrators, and other academic staff unanimously describing an environment that is on the one hand flexible, delegator, participatory, and, significantly, one where administrative posts are filled by academics. This finding is evidenced by HE/BT's (see Appendix 1 in the Appendix for the full list of the interviewees' abbreviations) references to the distribution of powers and flexibility, as well as his statement that 'resolutions are not taken or made individually'. This assertion is also evident in DE/BA's references to flexibility and delegation and his assertion that the university is 'free from the.... restrictions of bureaucracy'. Other supporting statements include the following: 'My office door is always open/important to delegate power' (DE/BA); to

‘we don’t have a hierarchy/rather an open door policy’ (DI/AE); to ‘powers are not vested in only a few hands’ (DH/BA) and ‘freedom in decision making process’ (LE/FI). In support of this argument, DE/CO clearly states: ‘I can say I am lucky by being here, as we have full authority to run the division and other matters smoothly and effectively’.

On the other hand, while some of the statements point to a prevalence of Faculty Governance, there are also elements of Trustee Governance given that a Trustee Board exists and the Trustees deal directly with the Ministry of Higher Education on major policy issues, especially financial matters as further explained below. As HE/BT states:

‘We as a private university have a board of trustees. We distribute powers on an even ground ... The council of trustees is the supervisory and legislative body. The director of the university and the board of directors have the executive powers. The most important advantage of the applied system is that resolutions are not taken or made individually or single handily but unanimously. The process of decision making is now systemic and passes through a number of boards. Decisions can be made by individuals but before execution or taking action, they must be approved by university board.’

In this context, trustee governance has to be considered as one particular area of a more complex decision-making structure. This is because trustees do not appear to have full control of managerial matters at UBT, yet their influence is rather significant, in particular in terms of ensuring that governmental regulations are being properly implemented and followed. Trustee governance can thus be seen as a framework or umbrella under which day-to-day operations within UBT take place.

Throughout the course of the interviews, the view was repeatedly expressed that management power within UBT is evenly distributed as opposed to being concentrated within the hands of an elite set of individuals. This is evident from DE/BA’s interview, in which he said that it is ‘important to delegate power’, and PR/LA’s interview, in which he mentioned the ‘participation of all’. DI/AE’s interview, in which he said, ‘We don’t have hierarchy’ also supports this. Each of these quotes is centred on the fact that aspects of power and day-to-day management are spread throughout the institution. This characterization ties in with the assignments of power dimension of Kaplan’s (2006) framework, and indicate that a mutualistic power structure is in place. The university

thus possesses symmetrical power according to Boser and Taylor's (2006) constructs for understanding assignments of power. What exists is, in essence, a dual system where efforts to implement more decentralized decision-making by the current management and from the point of view of being a privatized university is being restricted and influenced by a larger governmental structure in place from which the management at UBT cannot separate itself.

There is also evidence that the leaders at UBT display the three characteristics for effective decision-making that Timberlake (2004) identified. DI/AE's statement that 'We don't have a hierarchy', and DE/EN's assertion that power is granted to others, suggests that there is a high capacity for collaborative decision-making. The fact that there are comments indicating that autonomy is given and that external requirements govern management approaches, indicate that the leaders have an ability to deal with polarities and paradoxes. The ability to establish governance norms in best practices as outlined by Caruso and Yanosky (2008) is also a given. However, no evidence from the interviews was found that aspects such as scepticism, communalism or dis-interestness, as described by Gosling and Gower (2011), played a role.

The issue of avoiding a conflict of interest as suggested by Matthews (2011) is less clear. DE/SA noted: 'We adopt a clear empowerment in terms of authority that involves the Head of Trustees and every Faculty Dean as dictated by the bylaws of the university, which in turn serves improvement of performance in the Student's Affairs'. He went on to state:

'By giving me authority you enable me to act. Among the Academic Accreditation Commission recommendations is decentralization. Therefore, the board of trustees and the chairman does not interfere. The authority is given to every officer and department as dictated by the bylaw including for you as a client. Clear management and authority system enables you and others to act effectively and the students are better served.'

Such statements are, however, contradicted by what DE/EN stated when he said: 'Most of the powers of the director are given to the university council; therefore he cannot approve a matter without the consent of the council. The ministry has the right for access to our records, data, performance results and even the results of any student'.

Given what is outlined above, UBT can be said to use a Mixed Governance model, being that it combines different factors from the models provided by Trakman (2008). While the faculty at UBT do have a degree of influence over the institution's governance, their role is limited by both the trustees that have been put in place and by other stakeholders, primarily the government. Being that UBT perceives itself as somewhat falling outside of strict government control, because they are a privatized entity that is supposed to provide a prepared student body ready for the job market, there are also elements of corporate governance that are present here. However, with none of these models being exclusive when it comes to UBT's governance, a mixed governance model best describes the situation on the ground.

In order to explore this classification further, the issues of centralism vs. decentralization have to be examined, especially with regard to the view of UBT as a private institution. A key question to consider is whether there is a linkage that exists between efforts to de-centralize decision-making and bureaucracy, and the managerial approaches being adopted.

From the point of view of the managers at UBT, a consistent view was that moving towards greater degrees of decentralization was important. DE/BA stated:

‘Universities are supposed to be independent entities, financially, administratively academically. The decentralization manifests itself in private universities like our (UBT). Our administration is not subject to government rules and regulations like Ministry of Finance. So, we are free from the shackles and restrictions of bureaucracy. Of course, Ministry of Higher Education is the supervisory body; we are committed to apply all the ministry rules and regulations in this respect.’

DE/BA went on to state that: ‘I myself like decentralization, especially in relation to running a private university with this size. It is so important to delegate powers. Delegating powers means more responsibility and accountability’. DE/EN seconded this view that ‘the decentralization concept means granting powers to each one of the staff to carry out his duties in professional and proper manner’. For him, decentralization ‘is an important element for our university to work more efficiently’. DI/EA noted that a positive aspect in terms of management was that UBT does not ‘have hierarchy in the administration. It is easy to be in reach with top officials at the university. We have the open door policy in dealing with other departments. We are open to suggestions. The

officials are ready to help at any time'. PR/ENG noted: 'Direct and indirect communication is outstanding and helps a lot with the processes'.

Another positive aspect that was mentioned was that the time duration of the implementation of any request or process at UBT was seen as being quicker than in government institutions. DE/CO stated:

'Decentralization means you have full control over your division hence you are operating in line with the general strategy of the university; moreover, you can put your proposal or concerns up front during meetings with faculty members and in turn such proposals or concerns are directed to the upper management for deliberation. This is among other things we are happy with here in the university'.

PR/LA stated that as decentralization was 'one of the most crucial assets and merits of the private universities', it allowed UBT to:

'Easily appoint the teaching and administrative staff. Private university can address any problem on the spot. This makes decision making process so easy. Unlike government universities, the process of decision making is more effective and positive because the participation of all involved in making it'.

DH/BA seconded such a notion by stating: 'The powers are not vested in only a few hands'.

LE/HR noted that UBT was:

'not directly under the supervision of the Ministry of Higher Education, which means we are free to set up our plans that suit students and homeland; moreover, we can study the market and formulate budgets the way we see fit for our operations as well as quality criteria. In short, we are in full control of the university's economics so there is not an outside entity that may amend or later such plans and programmes'.

DE/SA stated: 'We take decisions collectively and centralization does not exist within my department'.

All of these views underline Keehley and Abercrombie's (2008) assertion that decentralization is seen as a positive development that helps in the provision of better performance and service delivery. DH/BA provides the view that: 'As a private university, decentralization plays a major and an effective role in administration that affects the whole teaching staff from deputies to the president of UBT'. He went on to state that: 'I think that decentralization is part of the academic work. I think flexibility plays an important part of decision making process. Lack of decentralization can cause a lot of troubles and problems'. From both the perspective of the management as well as of the staff, the ability to delegate power and operate in a more decentralized environment is seen as a critical element in allowing the university to achieve its objectives and fulfil its stated mission. The responses received also indicate that management views it as its duty or mandate to strive for greater decentralization as a means of achieving success and delivering on its responsibilities. There is thus a clear sense that, in its role as a privatized institution, UBT has opportunities of which it needs to take advantage, and that do not exist with public educational institutions.

DE/EN went a step further to argue for a degree of clear separation from governmental authorities: 'Decentralization is one of the most important pillars of private education. The university should have its independent board of directors'. Such a statement underlines that there is a clear desire by management authorities at UBT to have a greater degree of independence in the running of the institution. At the same time, DE/EN highlighted that a working relationship with government was necessary: 'The common interest that governs our relationship is the development of private universities'. This indicates that government still plays a central role from which UBT cannot separate itself. Management therefore accepts the framework structure in place while also trying to carve itself out some freedom to operate underneath this framework.

From the interview data, a number of different attitudes could be discerned in terms of whether decentralized structures were actually applied and how effective they were. The fact that it was considered that decentralization was limited in its possibilities came out more directly when looked at from the perspective of the faculty. LE/LC stated:

'I will describe how I run the activities of my department because it sheds light on my relation with centralism. Of course, I have direct relationship with centralism from the academic, administrative aspects. Of course I revise and supervise the

courses they instruct like Islamic courses and English courses. We have a fixed system to start the semester with. I have some rules that I must abide by and compel others to stick to. First of all, we must put clear goals. I have to describe the powers they have. I meet with the instructors to acquaint them with rules, powers and the instructions that they have to abide by and stick to during the whole semester. For the newcomers of female instructor, I introduce and make them acquaint with syllabus they are going to deal them.'

He further stated clearly that: 'we try do strike some balance between what is needed and what it should be'. LE/FI noted: 'I think we have a small amount of decentralization. We often face difficulty with resolutions ... and have to wait long time until these resolutions arrive'. Such a view was only mentioned by one member of the management. DI/EA stated that he did not think that decentralization was being applied and made the point that: 'we have a crisis because the system of centralism. ... Centralism affects us badly'. Meanwhile, PR/ENG noted the positive aspects of decentralization when he stated: 'There is a fast reaction time for implementation; overall, it is a great and friendly environment for operation. Purchases in general are made almost direct and much quicker'. He also noted that 'new ideas are dynamically discussed and, if found feasible, are speedily implemented ... overall, it is an excellent environment for discussions of processes, needs, etc.'

What can be concluded from these answers is that while there was a general consensus that decentralization was largely seen as a positive step to be taken, there were also clear references to the fact that such facets were not always implemented effectively, and that clear limitations remained in place.

In addition, there was the feeling that under a more decentralized system, the ability to deliver on what is expected had increased at UBT. While a prevailing attitude was that: 'The services rendered by the private universities are much more than those delivered by the government universities' as LE/EC stated, it was also suggested that there was pressure on the university to show relevant results in its output of qualified graduates. These results would justify UBT being given certain leeway in its administration, and therefore suggests that decentralized approaches should continue.

The statement above emphasizes the ability to deliver services as a way of distinguishing an institution such as UBT from those under governmental control. This

goes beyond the simple distinction between the ability of UBT to run their daily affairs and the broader guidelines applied by the Ministry of Higher Education.

A further difference also has to be drawn here between the impact of decentralization on the administration of the university and the work of the academic staff. Those at the administrative level are more directly responsible for ensuring that government directives, as well as decisions by the trustee council, are followed and implemented. The fact that many at the management level provided strong statements of support for decentralization efforts indicate both a desire to see such approaches being implemented, while at the same time implicitly acknowledging that a completely decentralized system does not exist.

There was also the distinction voiced by BA/DE who stated that: ‘I myself like decentralization, especially in relation to running a private university. All the related academic matters, however, should be left to the specialist’. In this context, decentralization in academic matters is needed; at the same time, guidelines for academic standards as issued by the government should remain. The result is that the academic staffs operates in a more restrictive environment given that the parameters for their work are defined by the government, while the management is allowed some flexibility when it comes to day-to-day management and operations.

From a management point of view therefore, there was a clear sense that a decentralized system of administration was preferred and that efforts were being undertaken that attempted to limit the influence of external actors on the internal management approach. Similarly, from the faculty point of view, there were distinct advantages identified with a decentralized system. These included an excellent environment for discussion of processes and needs, a fast reaction time for implementation, and the great and friendly environment for operation. That decentralization did not always translate effectively on the ground was, however, also evident from the interview data.

The degree to which this inhibits the actual running of the university is addressed in more detail in the next chapter when discussing the role of the Ministry of Higher Education. To continue the discussion here, the next section will look at how views on decentralization and governance impact the management approach at UBT. The above discussion has already underlined the distinction between decentralization efforts at the

administrative and the academic teaching level. Such distinction becomes even more evident when looked at from the concept of managerialism, which is seen as being applied at UBT.

5.2: Understanding UBT's Management Approach

In addition to the type of governance being applied, it is thus necessary and important to look at the more general management approach being utilized at UBT. This will allow one to further understand to what degree UBT can be considered a private institution, or whether the state still maintains such a degree of control that the terms of privatization have to be applied in a different way.

As far as the interview data is concerned, the argument can be made that the private status of UBT has led to a form of managerialism being applied at UBT (see Chapter 3, Section 3.7.1. on the concept of managerialism). This includes a greater emphasis on concepts such as accountability and performance metrics as well as controlling expenditures. PR/LA, for example, stated that 'The main goal of the private sector is to make a product and sell it and make profit'. LE/HR said 'We can study the market and formulate budgets the way we see fit for our operations and quality criteria'. The reference to 'the market' suggests that the university is viewed as a business; the emphasis is therefore on management to run the university as a business.

Within the managerial approach, there is also a lot of emphasis being placed on output. Clearly, there are pressures in place in terms of having to deliver better education as opposed to the output being created by public institutions in Saudi Arabia simply in order to justify UBT's existence and continuity. PR/LA stated that: 'We pay much attention to academic affairs to cope with the market needs. When we develop a syllabus, we take into our considerations that this syllabus meets the requirements of the market and satisfy the students' aspiration for becoming an effective tool in the future'. For DE/BA, the fact that ownership was in the hands of people with an academic background was essential: 'Fortunately, the owners (of UBT) are academicians. This makes our mission so easy. Apart from the financial matters which of course are also in the hands of the owners, all the related academic matters are left to the specialists'.

PR/LA's statement is in line with Johnstone's (n.d.) statement that private higher education institutions can either strike a balance between academic norms and business-

like management practices or lean in either direction. Here, academic norms and business-like management practices are not necessarily diametrically opposed to one another. Yonezawa (2014) similarly states that the emergence of the knowledge economy has resulted in higher education being a commercial service in addition to a platform for the formation of skills. It is no longer the case that education is only being looked at as a public good; with globalization breaking down boundaries, education has become a global good that does not necessarily belong only under the supervision of the state for example. This is where privatization comes in. The private sector sees both opportunities as well as a necessity to enter the education business. The opportunity arises because education as such has a value in which people are willing to invest. However, it is also a necessity because the private sector wants to have a qualified pool of individuals from which to choose when they enter the labour market. This has also been recognized in Saudi Arabia where universities are slowly arriving at a position where they can deploy managerial techniques that are aimed not only at generating earnings, but that are also simultaneously dedicated to providing students with the highest possible standard of educational attainment.

Motivation thus appears to play an important role here, similar to the way it was described in the case study of El Salvador in Chapter 3. It is not simply monetary incentives or ideological convictions that are factors in managerial techniques being applied; it is the motivation of the management that their university provides a unique service from which the country can directly benefit that determines their approach. LE/LC pointed to motivation as a factor when he stated that: ‘The main difference is that we render services to the students that the government university does not’. He thus refers to a unique characteristic of UBT.

Closely related to the discussion about managerialism here is the concept of the pursuit of prestige. This is an element important not only in terms of producing high-quality output, but also when it comes to distinguishing UBT from governmental institutions of higher education. Kaplan (2003) identified prestige as a major component of university management and governance. The sense of prestige that the management tries to accomplish is an important indicator of how the university intends to attract future students and elevate its overall standing within society. The higher the prestige, the easier it is to attract high quality students and the more recognition the university is

likely to receive from government leaders. From such a perspective, there is no doubt that prestige is an aspect that has always had its implications on the Saudi higher education institutions. Bhattacharjee (2012) reports on the extent to which Saudi universities are willing to go for the perusal of prestige among their local counterparts. Moreover, Smith and Abouammoh (2013) indicate that Saudi universities allocate significant funds for their research programmes in an attempt to raise their prestige. Within the approach of managerialism, where the emphasis is on output and performance, prestige is an aspect that has to be considered when assessing Saudi higher education institutions.

Some of the approaches used by UBT are aimed at enhancing the prestige of the university. For instance, DE/EN stated that quality teaching is aimed at creating ‘qualified manpower for the work market’, thereby underlining the output that UBT produces. DE/BAG voiced a similar opinion as he noted that: ‘The vision of any national college is to attract qualified students in order to maintain quality education, and also to pump qualified students for the work market. Therefore, I say proudly that our objective is “quality teaching to produce qualified” manpower for the work market’. He added: ‘UBT ranks second after the King Fahd University for Petroleum & Minerals in terms of educational output and supplying the market with qualified students. In other words, this is a proof that we live up to our objectives. Most of our students get hired by interested organizations’.

Emphasis on quality outlook linked to the prestige of the organization was also highlighted by the responses received from faculty. PR/CE stated that he did not see a contradiction between providing strong academic services and still having a centralized system in place. For him, one of the advantages is ‘to see UBT as a pioneer in the field of technology and information technology. Of course, the deputy of UBT has some specific powers related to the nature of work and we have a manual for the description of the responsibilities and duties. Our administration is an academic one which is totally committed with rules and regulations of the Ministry of Higher Education’. The emphasis on information technology was a deliberate choice, however, as this highlights the progress the university is making; this, in turn, adds to its prestige. PR/FI highlighted the fact that UBT offers media as a unique study course, and went on emphasize that UBT ‘seeks on a regular basis to update the curricula. We pay much

attention to the content of such curricula'. LE/HR mentioned that the level of student quality was in fact a clear advantage that distinguished UBT from a state university.

Such statements clearly express pride in the university's achievements, indicating that the institution should be viewed as a university that is contributing to employment within the nation. Given the importance that is placed on the need for employability of graduates by the Saudi government, there is an obvious need here to show that a privatized institution like UBT is making every effort to fulfil the mandate they feel they have been given.

It is in the above context that some of the faculty responses about state control must be understood. Several respondents indicated that they saw no contradiction between strong academic output and state supervision. PR/LA implied that due to the fact that the Ministry of Higher Education imposes a 'strict regime on academic output', the 'academic level and standard [at UBT] are excellent and they have improved a lot'. He specifically referred to the fact that UBT has in place an international accreditation and certification system. Within those responses, the emphasis on output and prestige are evident as they elevate the position of UBT within the context of Saudi higher education.

In the discussion of these issues, UBT is caught between two purposes. On the one hand, the managerialism practised at UBT stresses the need to serve economic ends. At the same time, respondents to the survey also put the status of UBT as a privatized institution within the context of its need to serve a higher national purpose in terms of producing the right output. There was thus a clear effort to differentiate itself from governmental institutions and to show that an institution such as UBT can deliver better services and output.

At the same time, there is also a degree of dissatisfaction that exists when it comes to the role of fees in terms of providing profitability for the institution, a phenomenon that reflects to some degree the same dissatisfaction outlined in the case example of Chile in Chapter 3. DE/EN pointed to the relationship between being a profitable institution in the long-term when he mentioned: 'to make our (UBT) able to make a profit, we must create some kind of sustainability'. Several respondents also highlighted that it was on the profit basis that one distinguishes between public and private universities. DI/AE

stated: ‘Unlike the government universities that have huge budgets, private universities have fixed budgets’.

What can be seen is that the private sector does exert a degree of influence over decisions within UBT along the lines as described by Clarysse *et al.* (2012), meaning that there is an emphasis on producing new knowledge that is aimed at solving societal and industry-based problems as opposed to simply conducting research for the sake of research. While on the one hand, there appears to be both a push by the private sector alongside a willingness by the faculty at UBT to produce such new knowledge, the influence that is exerted as a result of having research funded by outsiders is not necessarily seen as positive. DE/BAG spoke extensively about investors in the university. He said, ‘it really suffocates the investment, and at the same time it gives a bad example to other investors to ever think of engaging with such investment in education’. The fact that he places such a strong emphasis on the money-making side of the university supports the notion that its management and governance have been influenced by managerialism and that a key focus of UBT is on generating a profit. He complained about the Ministry of Higher Education’s effect on UBT’s ability to gain investors, therefore indicating that managerialism has come about as a result of privatization. The fact that a state authority still has an influence over the extent to which this phenomenon can take hold suggests that it would not be witnessed to as great an extent if UBT was a public higher education institution.

The answers received from the high-ranking MOHE staff members also support the notion that managerialism has emerged as a key element within private universities in Saudi Arabia. The staff members made reference to the ‘constant analysis of quality of deliverables, benchmarking with top layer International Universities’. Therefore, there exists a significant emphasis on performance metrics, which Deem *et al.* (2007) identified as being a component of managerialism. In the case of UBT, the emphasis on output also appears to be an aspect that is pushed by state authorities.

In the responses, the term managerialism was not explicitly mentioned as a specific theme. What this points to is that as far as UBT is concerned, the process of globalization, and the management techniques that are being applied as a result, is not completed processes so far. Management at UBT appears to understand the need for flexibility, and appreciate being given the chance to try out managerial techniques that

do not have a chance of being practiced with the country's public higher education institutions. There is definitely an awareness that a degree of flexibility is needed if privatized institutions like UBT are to be able to cope with, and take advantage of, globalization, specifically within the context of a conservative society such as Saudi Arabia.

When asked whether or not he has noticed any major differences that have been brought about by the fact that UBT is a private university, PR/ENG expressed the view that 'Direct and indirect communication is outstanding and helps a lot with the processes'. While it is clear that fewer restrictions on communication improves the internal processes, it is unclear whether the meaning here is to convey that the quality of direct and indirect communication at UBT has helped the university management staff to cope with privatization, as opposed to saying that this is a result of privatization. The statement could also refer to the relationship with the state, thereby underlining that, internally; the practice of managerialism has led to concrete results. Still, it is clear that privatization has not resulted in full autonomy for the university: this has been expressed by a multitude of different staff members. It can thus be concluded that privatization in Saudi Arabia has so far only led to a slight improvement in the levels of independence that universities have, rather than freeing them largely from governmental control.

Furthermore, the idea that marketization is taking place at UBT ties in with the concept that was expressed in the literature review that greater autonomy can lead to marketization. This concept was expressed by Chege *et al.* (2008). It is possible that the fact that the university is privatized, and is being slowly granted more independence, is leading to this phenomenon taking hold.

The idea that the general management approach at UBT being shaped by marketization is a result of globalization is evident in some of the responses from academic staff. PR/ENG said that the government affects the management at UBT by impacting on curriculum design, and stated that curriculum design is an important area as the curriculum needs to be catered to market needs. This indicates that this is a point of contention between UBT and the government, as the former is concerned with catering its services to market needs but the latter is not. This suggests that one of the main priorities of the university is tailoring its educational approach to the market, which

indicates a degree of commercialization, a facet of marketization. Academic staff members believe that marketization is taking place at UBT.

In the end, just like the mixed governance model applied in terms of governance of the institution, so can two approaches to decision-making be identified when it comes to the management approach: that of using market-driven data to engage in a profit oriented approach to privatized higher education, and that of the sensible use of data in terms of the quality of education being provided. Both of those approaches were outlined by Gilbert (2010), as discussed in Section 3.6.5.

5.3: Summary

From examining the interview responses, the governance norms in UBT mean that it can be identified as an institute that employs a Mixed Governance model. At the same time, it is clear that a difference must be drawn between governance and the rules by which UBT operates and the type of management being followed at UBT in terms of the actual implementation of the rules. When it comes to governance, it is clear that the state continues to exert a high degree of authority over the institution, and while UBT has adopted a form of trustee governance, those trustees directly report back to the Ministry of Higher Education.

In terms of management, a higher degree of flexibility is available and the role of the state is somewhat limited in the day-to-day running of UBT. While the management largely believes that it has some degree of flexibility when it comes to following decentralization efforts, the view from the faculty is more sceptical. Although the faculty is also supportive of the efforts by management, they are willing to be more direct in stating that decentralization efforts are still not fully implemented. Both management and faculty in the meantime understand the need to maintain high academic standards in order to attract students and make their business model succeed.

As such, there is this emphasis on managerialism as a management approach. At times, this creates a high degree of pressure on profitability, which can lead to tensions between management and faculty. However, the fact that both sides see themselves as pursuing a worthwhile cause also means that common efforts prevail, and efforts to ensure that a privatized institution like UBT can succeed in an environment like Saudi Arabia also prevail.

Chapter 6: UBT and Government: The role of privatization and decentralization

Having analysed and looked into how management techniques are applied internally at UBT, it is next necessary to look into factors that act as a constraint for the university to operate as a private institution in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. While there are many factors that impact how management approaches are being utilized and implemented, the thesis will focus here on the particularly important aspect of the role of government when it comes to a privatized institution in Saudi Arabia. Without a doubt, in a centralized system as it exists in the kingdom, the role of government is ever present and cannot be ignored. In addition, there are Islamic traditions and social norms that need to be considered.

The key question to be addressed in this chapter is the third main research question that is concerned with the influence being exerted by the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) on governance within UBT, and higher education governance as a whole. As discussed in the literature review, it was Enders (2004) who postulated eight possible “actors” that can exert relevant influence on the internal governance structures of an academic institution. These actors included what he referred to as the academic heartland, students, the central administration, and the head of the university, the university board, other stakeholders, agencies and the government.⁴ The previous chapter already discussed groups such as the central administration, the head of the university and the university board.

In this chapter, the actor to be focused on is the government and its role. Kaplan’s (2006) framework, as described earlier, mentions that external conditions and influences tie into internal governance structures adopted by higher education. From this perspective, government plays a key role here. The key aspects to be examined here include:

- the relationship between UBT and the government by way of the Ministry of Higher Education, with a specific focus on the policies that the government pursued when it comes to private education;

⁴ Students can be viewed as independent actors, as highlighted by some of the interview responses such as ‘we have some things that are not subject to centralism, like the students’ union’, or ‘the students’ union plays the same role of preserving the rights of the students and fosters their activities’.

- how senior managers and academics at UBT evaluate the advantages and disadvantages; the effect of the regulations governing private higher education; and
- Finally, how, from the view of UBT, the government's regulation of private universities impact on decision-making within the institution and its autonomy.

Given that the role played by the government in higher education is heavily influenced by the traditions and the prevalent conservative nature of the kingdom, the second section in this chapter focuses on the Islamic tradition and social norms and how they impact on privatized higher education. Combined with globalization, the social condition certainly has an influence on the higher education system, as has been shown in this work. This section will therefore also deal with the sub-question posed in research question 1 on domestic conditions within Saudi Arabia and how this impacts on the role being played by management at UBT.

6.1: The Role of the Government in Privatized Higher Education in Saudi Arabia

By examining the interview responses, the governance norms at UBT can be identified as implementing measures aimed at upholding Islamic traditions, strict adherence to guidelines, and complying with Saudi traditions. Throughout the interviews and in this context, the influence of the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) was categorically highlighted as the most central actor impacting those norms. From this perspective, it can be argued that the influence and subsequent control of MoHE within UBT is substantial as it was an issue reflected throughout all of the interviews conducted.

Drawing on the studies of Friedman (2004) on managerial efficiency, it was found that overall, there was a very high degree of awareness among all respondents that UBT is a private higher education institution, and that this sets it apart from public universities in the kingdom. For many of those questioned, the fact that UBT is a private institution implies a greater deal of flexibility to deliver on services that many government-run institutions either do not deliver or have a hard time doing so due to bureaucratic obstacles. LE/FI, for example, states that: 'We render services to the students that the government university does not'. He went on to say that privatization has clear advantages by arguing in fact that, 'We have a better system than the official one'.

Statements such as these suggest that UBT, through its nature of a private university, is able to follow a management approach whereby control of the university is placed more in the hands of the management staff and less in the hands of a centralized institution such as the government. However, as the interviews also reflect, and in addition to the restrictions placed on management internally as outlined in Chapter 5, the current role of government remains so ever present that one is unable to speak of autonomous management as suggested by the literature on privatized higher education.

Throughout the course of the interviews, the view was, for example, frequently expressed that UBT is not allowed to enjoy the full range of benefits that can be gained from being a private university. Despite the overall appreciation that a privatized model is intended to concede a high degree of autonomous decision-making, there is in fact a high degree of disappointment (in some cases bordering on resentment) that MoHE, as the deciding agent of the government does not allow the educational system to function as freely as it should. Most interviewees expressed clear and emphatic views on the role of MoHE, and how the autonomy often cited as an advantage of private universities is, in fact, merely rhetorical.

Before highlighting MoHE's influence on UBT's decision-making and overall governance, it should be stated that, at the very basic level, the need for MoHE to have a role within the running of a private institution like UBT was acknowledged by the interview respondents. However, it remained unclear to what degree this was seen as a necessary factor to be dealt with or a genuine obstacle to how the university could operate to fulfil its mandate. DE/EN, for example, noted that:

‘We, as a private university, work under the umbrella of the MoHE. We do our best to upgrade the systems based on the available resources to us. The common interest that governs our relationship is the development of private universities’.

PR/CE stressed that as far as UBT was concerned: ‘We have a balanced relationship with MoHE’, while DH/BA noted that:

‘We cannot name them as pressures, but rather procedures and measures uniformly applied on all universities. The ministry put such procedures in practice to ensure quality of education offered by universities whether they are government or private. I think the ministry has a responsibility to shoulder and a duty to do

through introduction some of flexibility for private universities to give them an edge for competitiveness’.

At the same time, PR/FI’s emphasis on the word ‘approval’ in his statement that: ‘All private universities must obtain the approval of the Higher Education Ministry first before any act on their part’, indicates that feelings also exist that the ministry’s regulations are overbearing and could at times be seen as hindering the ability to deliver a level of quality of higher education as suggested by DH/BA. This point becomes clearer when looking at some of the other responses received. These responses indicate that there is a clear level of resistance as to the degree to which control by the Ministry was being exerted. HE/BT states: ‘The MoHE still supervises everything, we do. We cannot take any action or measures without the approval of the ministry’.

As an example, he argued that the President of a university can only be appointed after having received the approval of the ministry. Similarly, DE/BAG argues that the government has a ‘very close grip on private universities’, and that ‘this is not an area where we can be independent’. In addition to the government having control over appointments at the university, another area that DE/BAG pointed to was the issue of tuition where he stated that ‘we have to refer to the ministry as to pricing and increase in pricing’. DE/EN also noted that while ‘the university has its own budget and programmes; these are still under the umbrella of the MoHE. We thought at the beginning it was going to be a relationship between a daughter and a surrogate mother and not a natural mother’. The implication being here that the relationship between UBT and the Ministry is much closer than many anticipated.

Such a statement not only reflects the frustration with the extended control being exerted, but at the same time acknowledges that the university does have some form of permanent ties with MoHE under any circumstances. It further indicates that, in spite of its private nature, much of the management and all of the governance of UBT effectively falls under MoHE, meaning that UBT is to a degree state-run. The notion that privatization within the Saudi Arabian higher education system cannot be equated with high degrees of autonomy thus appears validated given that private universities have the majority of their actions dictated to them by the Ministry of Higher Education.

The degree to which such centralized control and dominance is practiced is highlighted by the fact that such oversight is not simply limited to certain guidelines and

administrative procedures that the government tries to implement. Instead, the degree of control goes much deeper, with the government actively impacting the very philosophy under which the institution operates. This is underlined by PR/LA when he argues that: ‘MOHE tries to make the private universities recruit professors who have worked for government universities’. By pushing specific recruitment strategies on UBT, the government can exert its control through individuals who come from a government background and understand the procedures. At the same time, PR/LA attempted to put a somewhat more positive spin on this action by arguing that the Ministry supports such recruitment techniques, ‘in order to exploit their knowledge and experience and use it for knowledge sharing’. This suggests that UBT was also benefitting from such an approach.

Several other responses, however, suggest a more conscious ‘trend’ in MOHE’s actions as directed (intentionally or otherwise) towards making private universities very similar to public ones. DE/BAG put this point succinctly when he stated:

‘The Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) really interferes with everything we do, and they force us to follow the template that they follow in the public universities. They do not allow you to deviate from whatever they are doing - they want you to do exactly the same thing. They oblige you to have university council, to have a college council, to have a department council so you really have to follow those to the letter. Also, they force you to create the top management in the same fashion that they are following in their universities. If you force me because you want to centralize me and want me to follow your rules and regulations and never stray from them, you are turning me into a public university and by nature I am not.’

As Head of the Board of Trustees, HE/BT seconded this view when he stated:

‘The main problem we face today is the Ministry of Higher Education. The ministry makes policies, executes them and punishes those who contravene them. The Ministry of Higher Education still supervises everything we do. We cannot take any action or measures without the approval of the ministry.’

What this points to is the fact that the both the day-to-day management of UBT and its overall governance is very much in the hands of MoHE.

This is further exemplified by the lack of the university's freedom to determine its own curricula. PR/ENG has said that differences of opinion between the management at UBT and the government concerning curricula design have impacted the university. PR/FI states that while UBT 'seeks on a regular basis to update the curricula', 'private universities shall not add to or delete any part of the curricula without the approval of MoHE'. As a result, UBT has to 'stick to what MoHE determines. In case of any change, we return to MoHE. There is no flexibility in the matter'. PR/LA similarly stated that 'the government compels the private universities to be committed to the curricula as outlined by MoHE. No changes can be introduced to these curricula unless approved by MoHE'. DE/BA noted that: 'Introducing or changing any subject without having the permission of the Ministry of Higher Education represents a problem. For example, I introduced mathematics subject into the curricula, but I had to get the approval of the Ministry of Higher Education'.

This suggests that the government significantly impacts on the university with regards to the content of the lessons that are taught. Overall when it comes to curricula, it would appear that UBT has no degree of independence from which to operate. It also indicates that in situations when MoHE has a different opinion from the management staff at UBT, the opinion of MoHE takes precedence. This implies a high level of centralization, which in turn reduces the autonomy of the UBT management.

That such position creates tensions is self-evident. PR/ENG stated that: 'To move higher in the education scale, one needs to re-design the curricula to better fit the education system, market needs, and student needs. However, the process to follow with MoHE does not allow dynamic changes in this regard'. His view is one marked by frustration, and he clearly sees the directives that UBT has to operate under as impeding the university's ambition to reach the same standard as institutions in other parts of the world. This is reflected in his statement that UBT is 'currently running average compared to colleges and universities in USA'. PR/ENG also stated that the government impacts the timescale for establishing new majors. When asked about the extent to which government regulations impact his role at UBT, he said, 'New majors would not be put in place in a reasonable timeframe. The current process takes over a year to complete'. This statement indicates that the process of following governmental rules and procedures necessarily delays the establishment of new majors. It implies that there

is excessive bureaucracy in this area and that a higher degree of decentralization is required in order for universities, in particular private ones that are established in order to have a degree of flexibility, to be able to introduce new majors without excessive time delays.

Equally important is the fact that oversight by the MoHE is not limited to recruitment, curricula or overall governance, but goes in fact much deeper. HE/BT states that: ‘The Ministry of Higher Education still imposes some strict rules. For example, we cannot hold a forum or a conference without having the permission of the ministry. We cannot delegate our teaching staff to attend a meeting or conference before securing the approval of the ministry’. This would indicate a much deeper and more structural involvement that reaches into the daily activities of an institution, and therefore is likely to impact on day-to-day management decisions as well. This, in turn, questions the concept of privatization within higher education as a whole.

Thus, while there is a differentiation being made between private universities and public higher education institutions in Saudi Arabia, this does not mean that such differentiation is also applied to approaches to management or governance. Rather, when focused on privatization, the emphasis is placed on the different range of services being offered compared to those that are available to attendees at public universities. The overall sense is that similar managerial techniques are utilized to deliver these services despite the possible variation of the nature of the services being delivered.

Consequently, in terms of management styles and concepts as detailed in Chapter 3, it was found that these were of limited application at UBT because an essential precondition for these to operate remains lacking. Internal issues or problems that arise can only be dealt with within the policies or rules as set out by the MoHE. This also applies to cases that occur ‘infrequently with a great deal of uncertainty surrounding the outcome’, meaning there might not be a procedure in the existing guidelines that management could refer back to. Thus, in instances where a manager is required ‘to develop and evaluate alternatives each time these problems arise’, MoHE guidelines and supervision remain dominating. DE/BA stresses that UBT is ‘fully obliged to apply what MoHE sees fit’, while PR/LA complained that ‘following their rules to the letter, any deviation we get denied.’ HE/BT put it the following way: ‘MoHE supervises everything we do. We cannot take any action or measures without the approval of the

ministry'. DE/BAG even went so far as to see the role of management as implementing governmental rules. He further stated: 'We ensure proper adherence to the system including my monitoring of such compliance'.

In the above context, the day-to-day management at UBT operates under limitations. The same can be said to apply to governance issues. DE/EN highlights that: 'Most of the powers of the director are given to the university council; therefore he cannot approve a matter without the consent of the council'. Here, it should be remembered that the university council is headed by the Minister of Higher Education. Furthermore, 'the ministry has the right to access our records, data, performance results and even the result of any student'. HE/BT again highlighted that: 'the President of the University shall be appointed only after the approval of the ministry'.

Overall, the control exerted by MoHE was viewed by respondents as having an overall discouraging effect. DE/BAG stated that: 'It really suffocates the investment, and at the same time it gives a bad example for other investors who might think about considering investing into education. Overall, we lack trust'. DE/BAG went so far as to state that 'the ministry undermines our duties towards delivering the educational mission'.

There were only a few areas highlighted in which the actions of MoHE were viewed as less stringent. PR/CE pointed out that while UBT was 'totally committed to rules and regulations of MOHE ... we have some things that are not subject to centralism like a students' union and a labour association, which is mainly interested in labour affairs. The students' union plays the same role of preserving the rights of the students and fosters their activities'. Here, however, it should be mentioned that the students' union and labour association are unlikely to play a major role in the overall running of UBT. LE/HR also sought to downplay this issue, noting that 'as the director of the university, there are no problems between the dean and deputies with the government authorities'. Instead, he argued that the main problem was the 'red-tape' as one 'has to wait for 3-5 months in order to get transactions completed'. The close oversight being practiced by the government thus necessarily means a delay in getting things approved and seeing directives being implemented.

Given the extensive control as practiced by MoHE, some respondents suggested that reforms were necessary if the system of private education is to succeed in its intentions.

HE/BT expresses the view that power should be provided to an intermediate authority as opposed to being transferred directly to the university. He argued that ‘there should be a union for the private universities that can ... supervise the activities and performance of such universities. MoHE shall be there for policymaking’. HE/BT also underscored this notion when he mentioned that:

‘There should be a union for the private universities that can protect and supervise the activities and performance of such universities. The Ministry of Higher Education shall be there for policymaking. The Ministry of Higher Education cannot, technically speaking, supervise all universities all over the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. We have about thirty or forty universities, including hundreds of faculties and colleges, where thousands of students, male and female, study. Consequently, it is hard and difficult for the ministry to supervise such a huge process’.

DH/BA stated that: ‘I think MoHE has a responsibility ... and a duty to introduce some flexibility for private universities to give them an edge for competitiveness’. As DE/BAG argued: ‘All we ask for is adequate freedom’. Being monitored by the government is okay, ‘but within a limited scope of authority, not total control or supervision’. LE/HR stated: ‘I believe the ministry imposes harsh provisions which need to be mitigated taking into consideration that we are doing better than others in the area of social responsibility’. What this could indicate is that there exists an acceptance that some form of centralization with regards to the formation of policies is seen as given, but that such restrictions should not go as far as impacting negatively on aspects of university management and, in part, also its governance. The suggestion that the union should supervise, as opposed to dictate, how universities are run could also be seen to suggest that more power should be placed in the hands of higher education institutions.

Overall, one is led to the conclusion that the impact on the relationship between UBT and the government creates an environment very similar to that described by Pusser (2003), where the state recognizes that there are markets and institutional interests, but never loses sight of its own goals. In addition, one can clearly discern from the data that there is the beginning of ‘dynamic tension’ between the state and a private university, as the former attempts to initiate a model of ‘state supervision’ that appears, however,

increasingly to perpetuate ‘state control’ (Van Vught, 1993). This tendency is also evident in the following section on decentralization.

6.2: Government and the Impact on Decentralization

Given that there is a strong emphasis on centralized control in Saudi Arabia, the issue of decentralization with regard to the management approach at UBT is a dominant theme present in the interview data. When, for example, assessing the view of Friedman (2004), who argues that managerial efficiency, will result from decentralization because higher education institutions in competition are superior to state institutions in meeting consumer demands, several respondents showed that they are in agreement with this point of view. DE/EN stresses that: ‘Decentralization is ... the most important pillar of private education. Decentralization means ... more powers ... for more responsibilities’. DH/BA notes that: ‘Decentralization plays a major and an effective role in administration, while the lack of decentralization can cause a lot of trouble and problems. Decentralization helps to expedite procedures’. LE/EC also argued that: ‘The services rendered by the private universities are much more than those delivered by the government universities. We try to strike some balance between what is needed and what it should be’.

DE/BAG’s view that ‘we need decentralization’ could suggest not only that the process of decentralization would reflect positively on the institution, but also that changes in the governance structures are required in order to achieve an effective degree of decentralization. Here, it would be important to distinguish between management approaches and governance structures. Given the argument above that Ministry control over all aspects of UBT is all too prevalent throughout the institution, it would be difficult to imagine a readiness by the government to allow for significant changes in the governance structures to be implemented that would satisfy DE/BAG’s argument that such a step is necessary to provide for effective decentralization. Many on the UBT staff, however, simply believe that decentralization would put them in control of the institution’s management, in turn improving the manner in which the institution was run. In this manner, not only would members of the staff have greater autonomy but they also believe that less control will increase the efficiency of their work and outcome. As such, the emphasis should therefore be on creating the conditions for decentralization within day-to-day management rather than at the governance level. In

particular, this would be true in the early stages of privatization through which the kingdom is presently going when it comes to higher education. It is important to highlight in this context the fact that, even if decentralized methods are applied in a broad manner within an institution such as UBT, government itself remains a powerful actor with its own interests. Decentralization should therefore not be equated with eliminating governmental influence.

HE/BT stated that ‘lack of decentralization can cause a lot of trouble and problems’. He expressed the notion that the government has a responsibility to exert control over elements of university management and governance for the purpose of ensuring that they deliver education that is of the highest possible quality. However, he also acknowledged that a greater degree of flexibility could be granted to private universities with regards to this issue, indicating that he is perhaps not completely satisfied with the level of decentralization that exists and believes that more autonomy could be granted to UBT. He links this flexibility to the competitiveness of these universities and implies that the greater the amount of freedom they are provided with, the higher the ability they will possess to compete with other universities. It is also possible that the expectation at private higher education institutions is greater than at public ones, as the students have to pay for education, whereas it is more or less free when they receive it from the government, meaning that they expect more for their money at private institutions. There was further agreement that in order for the institution to deliver a ‘superior’ product, market mechanisms must be free to operate.

To what degree decentralization is being applied when it comes to UBT is therefore a subject for debate. LE/FI claimed that UBT has freedom in the decision-making process, suggesting that the university does have a degree of autonomy. While on the surface such a statement could contradict the notion that further decentralization is required, it can also be seen as pointing towards a process in place that is slowly being pursued and implemented in stages. HE/BT also believes that the university enjoys a satisfactory degree of decentralization. He stated that ‘five years ago, we depended heavily on centralism’, indicating that the situation has progressed since then and that the university now enjoys a higher level of decentralization. For him, the fact that a policy of centralism exists, or has existed, does not mean this should be viewed as an insurmountable obstacle in the way of education development and process. DH/BA also

stated that ‘Decentralization plays a major and effective role in administration’, and that ‘Decentralization helps to expedite procedures’. Such a statement could indicate that there is a sense that steps have been taken to move the institution into a more decentralized direction when it comes to management at UBT.

That a differentiation in decentralization when it comes to management and governance is relevant, also became evident in some of the responses that differentiated between the administration of the institution and its academic component. As DE/BA stated that: ‘I myself like decentralization, especially in relation to running a private university, but all the related academic matters should be left to the specialists’. PR/LA argued that, while ‘UBT has become a private university; MoHE imposes a strict regime on the academic output’. As such, he restricted the objective of institutions such as UBT when he stated that: ‘The main goal of the private sector is to make a product and sell it and makes profit’. When looked at from such a perspective, strong centralization is not necessarily seen as an impediment. DE/BAG also drew a distinction when stating that: ‘Our own approval says we are private; by default, this immediately defines the word profit. So I have profit in mind; in public universities this does not exist’. LE/HR meanwhile drew a distinction in terms of academic control and profit-making. He stated that: ‘We are in full control of the university’s economics, while the decision-making system is one dictated by MoHE’. This implies an understanding that decentralization efforts should not be understood as eliminating the role of government as a whole.

Still the overwhelming sense in the responses received was that management staff is perceived to have less autonomy than would be expected from a privatized institution, despite the fact that some form of autonomy exists at the management level. The same cannot be said when it comes to governance structures. At the same time, this distinction was not clearly drawn by the respondents. DI/AE’s comment that ‘Centralism affects us badly’, or DH/BA stressing that he was unhappy with the fact that the government essentially has extended control over the institution, leaving UBT with a very low amount of actual autonomy, indicates a less than clear distinction between where management approaches apply and where governance structures are prevalent. This is further underlined by DH/BA stating that: ‘We have to refer to the ministry as to pricing and increase of pricing’, and ‘the ministry controls the number of students and acceptance’. By listing these points, he appears to be conveying the

message that he believes that the current system entails both aspects of university management and governance being controlled by MoHE.

The result is that, while there is general agreement that decentralization is seen as key to improving the running of the university, and that for the moment government interference is restricting the freedom of the institution to an unacceptable extent, there is still no clear sense on what areas the necessary decentralization efforts should be focused. Instead, the focus appears to be solely on the fact that MoHE needed to be more flexible. DE/BA stressed his hope that ‘the ministry will be less strict in these matters’.

There is a further additional important differentiation to be made here with regard to the notion that centralized control of UBT merely pertains to the control of external authorities and not that within the institution itself. PR/ENG, for example, thinks that the control and authority of the government over the institution should be reduced. He made the case for a greater degree of internal centralization when it comes to recruitment. He stated that: ‘A centralized faculty recruiting department would help speed up the process and raise the quality of education’. Despite the fact that he stated elsewhere that excessive government control is a negative thing and slows down the functioning of the university, he appears to hold the view that the creation of a single department centred on recruiting faculty staff would be beneficial to UBT. Such a statement could be seen as suggesting that appropriate human resource management has not been implemented within UBT. However, the statement could also be related to the fact that, as it stands, universities do not have full power over their own human resources with this process falling squarely under government control.

For the time being, there is little evidence to support the argument that the fact that UBT is a private university has resulted in centralized control of the institution having actually decreased. PR/ENG stated that: ‘The time duration of implementation of any request or process at UBT is much higher than in government institutions’. On the one hand, this suggests that the government actually scrutinizes the actions of private universities in Saudi, Arabia which can be deemed a result of the emphasis on government control. On the other hand, this also points to a high degree of bureaucracy within UBT itself, meaning that some aspects of centralization occur whether there is an external force demanding this or not.

Overall, the interviewees' answers rarely referred to the term 'bureaucracy'. One would expect it to be much higher given the accepted view that 'red tape' deters efficiency in the private sector, although there are vague references to procedures 'taking a long time'. One can surmise that 'bureaucracy' is present everywhere in Saudi Arabia; its elimination is, therefore, not seen as a pressing matter. This supports the views of Alamri (2011), Baghat (1999) and Alkhazim (2003) mentioned earlier in the literature review that excessive bureaucracy features prominently within the kingdom.

From the responses received, the high-ranking MoHE staff member confirms many of the above arguments for greater decentralization, as well as the fact that a strong degree of centralization exists with regards to the running of higher education institutions in Saudi Arabia. The staff member said that: 'the rules and regulations stipulate the current relationship between the private universities and higher education, maintaining central overseeing of selected items, and allowing for internal management in others'. The use of the term 'selected items' would indicate that the governance and management of Saudi universities cannot be said to be fully decentralized. However, the rules and regulations that govern this matter have, in fact, been established by the government, indicating that it maintains immense power over whichever aspects of the nation's universities it sees fit to control. This notion is indicative of a significant degree of centralization.

The MoHE staff member said that the 'government must ensure that the governing bodies... put the interest of the country before their own'. This statement not only highlights the fact that, when it comes to governance structures, the Ministry continues to exert a strong degree of control, but also indicates that private universities in the nation are not viewed as being independent of the system that governs the nation as a whole. When asked about the tendency to increasingly move towards privatization, the MoHE staff member responded: 'the concept is valid if undertaken in the correct fashion and the private universities are capable ... the tendency is to allow them to gain experience, their presence by all measures is still in its early phases'. However, 'commercialization or profit superseding quality must be guarded against'. This suggests that while the government takes its role as an oversight institution very seriously, there is also still room for debate when it comes to how the quality level is defined. The fact that as part of her response the Ministry official emphasizes the

concept of centralization extensively, could be viewed as indicating that this is a major theme that the MoHE staff member wished to emphasize explicitly.

When asked whether privatization improves the overall management style and whether or not this suggests a greater need for decentralization, the response was:

‘Privatization can in the future improve the management style if they have experience and can ensure putting the right leaders in the right places; having a steady flow of all resources required to maintain International levels of Higher Educational Excellence (i.e. quality superseding financial gain); undertaking a constant analysis of quality of deliverables, benchmarking with top layer international universities; and having the flexibility and continuous upgrading to meet the requirements of society they will serve.’

The degree to which autonomy was granted was seen as being the responsibility of the institution as:

‘the impact of government regulation on decision making within a private higher education entity and its autonomy depends ultimately on their internal ability to govern and capacity to grow, while taking into account the general higher education excellence in deliverables requirements, whether these are international norms, national and international accreditation bodies requirements, or government regulations’.

The MoHE indicated a greater degree of control than assumed by some of the UBT staff members when she mentioned that: ‘The present status is that proper allocation of funds is monitored by the Ministry, as is the quality of deliverables’. This, in fact, confirms that these are two other areas that are directly controlled by MoHE, providing further evidence of a high level of centralization with regards to the running of private universities within Saudi Arabia. It could further suggest that MoHE is constantly assessing the degree to which higher education institutions conform to criteria that it has set for them. However, this also highlights that the ministry is willing to be flexible when it comes to aspects of management, and less than accommodating when it comes to governance issues.

The issue of funding is an important one given that, as a privatized institution, UBT would have a greater degree of control over how to spend money internally. DE/EN, for

example, underlined his belief that UBT has a degree of financial independence from the government by saying that ‘the university has its own budget and programmes.’ As a private university, UBT gets its money from non-governmental sources, such as fees, meaning that it is not dependent on the government for funding. However, it is still dependent on the economic conditions of the nation, as it stands to reason that the stronger Saudi Arabia’s economy is, the more money students will have available to spend on education. Therefore, UBT cannot be separated from the environment in which it operates, and is still indirectly inextricably linked to the Saudi government. UBT has experienced significant expansion in recent years (*Arab News*, 2012), indicating an improving financial position. However, if the economy was to take a turn for the worse, this progress could also be reversed. By stressing that even as far as the allocation of funds is concerned, MoHE maintains a degree of oversight, means that the university’s management approach is partially dependent on that of Saudi Arabia as a whole.

The MoHE staff member acknowledged that while the movement toward some degree of privatization is important, privatized institutions can only operate under procedures and processes that are defined and laid out by the government. She states:

‘To the best of my knowledge, the policies pursued by the government were to ascertain that both the private and public sectors play a pivotal role in preparedness of our future generations for the requirements of the next millennium. The practical experience inherent in the private sector is encouraged by the government to expose the students to the real world requirements early on. Diversity of specialization, ideal student to faculty ratio, and streamlining of regulations are policies that are pursued by the government to give the private higher education an edge. In general, the private sector has a role to play in the advancement of the country as a whole; however, government must ensure that the governing bodies are ready, equipped, capable, and put the interest of the country before their own.

When such a statement is evaluated against the views expressed by numerous UBT staff members that the university requires a greater degree of autonomy, and that they are dissatisfied with the levels of independence that the university has, a clear difference of opinion between the management and the government over the extent to which the university is private and the means by which it can function more independently is highlighted. What it underlines is that the line between private and public within the

nation remains blurred, with government continuing to exert basic control. What one has in a sense is the kind of controlled decentralization as practiced in China, as discussed already in Chapter 3.

A contradiction became evident when the MoHE staff member stated that: ‘Private universities must be able to exhibit the capacity of self-governance and sustainable resources’. This could be seen to mean that the attitude of the MoHE is that these universities should be able to run themselves, although there was no clear suggestion that the government would be willing to grant privatized institutions a greater amount of autonomy in those cases where it could show instances of greater capacity at self-government. The MoHE staff member also spoke of ‘flexibility in implementing change’ being a key characteristic of private universities. While this could be taken to indicate that private universities in Saudi Arabia will be granted a greater degree of power to make institutional changes throughout the years to come, more relevant would be the assertion that the government does not want to be involved in all levels of internal decision-making as it simply does not have the capacity and resources to do so.

Rather than relying on the government, private institutions need to take charge of their own administration within an accepted level of oversight provided by the government. The key is on instituting management practices that can take advantage of this opening and through which the process of privatization can be advanced. However, that this is still an ambiguous field of inquiry was made clear by the differences of opinion provided by the respondents.

6.3: Islamic Traditions and Social Norms

The role played by government has a distinct impact when it comes to issues of governance and decentralization as applied to the case of privatized education. In addition to these two areas, local conditions within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia also impact on the management approach at UBT, therefore the conditions must also be considered. The source within the literature review is Winkler’s (1989) assertion that some factors influence the implementation of educational decentralization, including the political context, the government structures, the system of public finance, and cultural and historical contexts. While government structures have already been discussed, this

section will look more at the interplay between social norms, globalization and the current state of higher education in the kingdom.

It was already noted that, in the context of Saudi Arabia, ‘it is neither surprising nor illogical that Islam and politics are deeply intertwined in Saudi Arabia’. The data obtained for this research area thus confirms Winkler’s (1989) assertion, especially with regard to the cultural and historical context. In the responses received from female academics at UBT, one can see three different sets of answers. First, there is the absolutely conformist view as expressed by:

We live in an environment known for its specific value and its treasured century–honoured traditions. The teachings of our Islamic religion always come first, however noble the goals and objectives of the university are’.

Second, there are mildly critical views that are masked beneath a cloak of expediency:

‘We must not mix with male peers. So, we find it difficult to run or do some courses at hotels because it is banned to mix with males’.

Last, there is a response expressing outspoken opposition to such practices as male/female separation based both on arguments for expediency (in this case, cost savings), and opposition to certain social practices in principle:

‘If we were given the choice, we could house 2,000 female students with 3,000 male students in one complex at Dhaban, and in that way we save costs. Opposing co-education takes us back to ancient ages. Moreover, males and females mingle together at airports, hospitals, Arafa and Makkah – why such is denied for universities?’

Several different interviewees spoke of adherence to local traditions and stated that Islam is the dominant ideology that governs the university’s management approach. The conformist view provided above is one such example. The response has an emphasis on not altering traditions in order to fit in with the rest of the world. She also indicated that the religious beliefs associated with Saudi Arabia have priority over all other factors.

Overall, the conservative political climate has a major effect on the university, as emphasized by its strict policies on segregation and female dress and its emphasis on religious values. Temple (2012) is thus correct when he emphasizes the role of social

attitudes being prevalent in implementing managerial techniques. DE/EN argued that there were key factors that impact on the development of the education system in Saudi Arabia. He noted: ‘We must abide by and stick to our Islamic values and customs and traditions, and protect our academic environment from being influenced by foreign elements that could have adverse impact on our values and traditions’. This statement underlines the strong belief that Saudi universities should not feel subject to any pressure in terms of following the example of the rest of the world or such as the demands of globalization. DE/BA also supports such notions that tradition takes precedence over global influences by saying: ‘Of course, we work in an environment known for its deep-rooted traditions and Islamic system’.

At the same time, DE/BA’s went somewhat further when he asserted that Islamic law should be followed to the letter. He stated: ‘We must abide by Islamic Shariah law. We apply strict dress code to all students’. His response could be seen as an argument that the quality of a nation is characterized by its religious conservatism and how it conforms to the existing social norms. PR/CE’s statement emphasizes that UBT has ‘a different campus for girls and boys’, also highlighting the prevalence of conservative values with regards to the mixing of genders. This in turn supports Arthur’s (2006) argument for the influence of religion on management.

The interview data itself revealed many more references to the male/female divide than to Islam. This suggests that there is no religious opposition to Sharia, but simply a plea for a practical solution that will be Sharia-compliant. Clearly, on the issue of co-ed tuition we have a situation of ‘dynamic tension’ between the state and university as described by Pusser (2003). The data bears this out with the statement that, ‘we were pioneers in involving women in teaching staff and administration side-by-side with men according to Islamic Sharia Law. As we do not have a sufficient number of women for teaching staff, we tried to fill this vacuum with men for teaching and instructing at female colleges’ (ASD/HE/BT). When questioned on the subject, DE/BA stressed that:

‘First of all, we do not have a mixed system that combines male and female students. The campus of male students is in Dhaban while the female one is in Sari. We do not have female teachers or professors for male students. Of course, we work in environment known for its deep-rooted traditions and Islamic system. We must abide by Islamic Sharia law. We apply strict a dress code to all students’.

Other comments suggested that the male-female divide should not be seen as being an obstacle to providing good education. PR/CE stressed that ‘we have a different campus for girls and boys. We have some female workers at the boys’ campus. The female students have their full freedom in their performance’. Such assertions show some level of unawareness of some the education-specific effects of globalization (Knowledge Economy, for example, see Chapter 3, Section 3.3). The views of some of the academic staff in the university on globalization given here do not differ significantly from the views expressed by members of the public in terms of seeing globalization is a threat to traditional values.

At the same time, a level of opposition can also be observed, and there were arguments for the progression of education from the point of view that Saudi Arabian education does not need to remain traditional. These voices mainly base their argument on the fact that traditions sometimes do not have anything to do with religion and that they impose unnecessary restrictions, for example, in terms of the segregation between male and female campuses in the university. Furthermore, some staff members expressed the view that strict adherence to Saudi traditions is something that has been imposed on them. DE/BAG’s comments above about the ability to save costs if male and female students were housed together, expresses a level of frustration at the way in which he perceives tradition to be holding the university back. He further notices that: ‘Of course, we pay dearly for such tradition. For example, co-education exists in King Abdullah University for Science and Technology and the medical college of King Abdulaziz University. When it comes to us we were asked to erect a smaller compound for the girls’.

In the literature review, the theory was put across that there is a standard institutional value of organized scepticism at higher education institutions. The strict religious nature of UBT means that it cannot be said to comply with this value. This is demonstrated by the ‘we were pioneers’ statement of HE/BT. This suggests that the university staff would not implement measures that were contrary to Islamic law, indicating that it cannot be challenged. HE/BT’s assertion also indicates that such aspirations and policies are at least partially motivated by the pursuit of prestige. It indicates that he is proud of the university’s reputation as a leader in this area, which suggests that moves

of this nature are partly aimed at creating the image of the institution as breaking new ground.

A point that is worth mentioning is that adhering to local traditions did not prevent UBT from upholding modern technology innovations. This notion is in contradiction to Al-Ghreimil and Colbran's (2013) assertion that Saudi Arabian universities are not taking the necessary measures required to make optimum use of IT in their country. According to LE/FI, an attempt has been made to 'enable our university to be computerized'.

The control that the government exerts over all aspects of management at UBT cannot be taken out of the context of the restrictive political climate of Saudi Arabia that exists in the kingdom, which has a direct influence on the management of UBT. The rules and overall mission of UBT appear to reflect those of Saudi Arabian society as a whole. They are dictated by MOHE so they have no choice but to do this. According to LE/EC: 'We ... abide by the rules and regulations instituted by MOHE for private universities'. This is backed up by DE/BA's assertion that 'MOHE is the supervisory body; we are committed to apply all the ministry rules'. In addition, the emphasis placed on overseeing the curricula is a result of the highly religious nature of Saudi Arabia. Here, MoHE as a governmental organ does not want to create a situation in which the potential exists for universities to teach material that is in opposition to the guidelines that have always existed in the nation, and that are mandated by tradition. This is also supported by the argument that the aim of the nation's Ministry of Education is to educate as many people as possible in a manner that strongly emphasizes religious development and adherence to the Islamic faith. The nation's educational authorities hold the view that education is strongly linked to religious betterment.

The fact that the current political system in Saudi Arabia is based on the concept of neo-patriarchy is another factor that must be considered. This manifests itself in the management approaches at UBT in the form of strict views about gender, examples of which have been provided within the previous sub-sections. The system is also based on neo-patrimony. This is reflected in comments relating to the influence that the princes have over higher education institutions, for example LE/HR's statement that 'HRH Prince Khalid Al Faisal is a major supporter of national universities, thus is deputy president of the board of trustees for Effat University and Dar Alhekma being non-profit organizations'.

The conservative nature of the ruling elite is also reflected in the emphasis on gender segregation and appropriate clothing for women that have been expressed by the interviewees. Overall, Boser and Taylor's (2006) argument that power structures at the university will reflect those of society as a whole would appear to be accurate.

6.4: Summary

The data indicates that UBT staff across the board felt that the 'free market' advantages of decentralization and privatization are not being realized because of continuing excessive central state control. The dominant opinion is that MoHE retains a high degree of power over the setting of rules and regulations at UBT, and that they effectively run the institution with regards to this matter. Rules are placed on students and academics alike and there is little choice but to follow them. However, while on the surface this suggests that there is very little scope for staff to have an independent input, the differentiation between management and governance is one that needs to be emphasized. For the management staff at UBT there is a need to understand this differentiation and to concentrate on aspects of management approaches in which they can better institute and implement decentralized themes. That there will continue to be a conflict with governance aspects is clear simply because the governance structures are the umbrella under which day-to-day management is practiced. Nevertheless, this would appear to be one path forward that would allow an institution such as UBT to be more effective than some of its staff members believe to be the case at the moment.

Several themes have arisen throughout the course of this analysis. One is that centralization in terms of existing procedures and processes as provided for by the government is stifling the autonomy and efficiency of the management at UBT: it is preventing spontaneous, independent decision-making from taking place. There is a widespread belief that MoHE is overly strict with regards to controlling the management of UBT. There is also a belief that the MoHE does not grant private universities enough autonomy in Saudi Arabia.

A second theme that has emerged is that privatization is not enabling UBT to have the level of freedom that the majority of academic staff would like it to have. The stifling effect of centralized control is clearly restricting the freedom that should come with being a private university. Staff members believe that it is in opposition to the way that

a private university should be governed and managed. However, it looks as if privatization is still resulting in marketization. This may be influencing the management approaches that are utilized.

A third theme is the strong role being played by religion and tradition in determining both the management approaches and the role being played by government as overseeing UBT's activities. The conservative political climate is visible in UBT's strict policies on segregation and female dress, and its emphasis on religious values. In addition, the mandate followed by the Ministry of Higher Education is to educate as many people as possible, while strongly emphasizing religious development and adherence to the Islamic faith. Although some staff members would argue for a degree of flexibility when it comes to how religion and tradition are applied in day-to-day situations, it is clear that university staff would not implement measures that were contrary to Islamic law.

Both these themes centre on the issue of autonomy. It is clear that there is an overriding belief amongst the staff at UBT that the MoHE is extremely restrictive and controlling. The general view appears to be that the institution should be allowed a greater degree of freedom when it comes to its management. What can be concluded from this assessment is that an enabling environment whereby the central government allows for sufficient institutional capacity building and achieving a balanced performance measurement system, does not at this stage exist in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Chapter 7: Conclusions

This thesis set out to examine and gain a better understanding of the management practices used within the University of Business and Technology (UBT), a privatized higher education institution in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In order to do this, it focused on three core areas: approaches to management by senior management at UBT, the view and experience of the academic staff in how such approaches are applied, and UBT's relationship with the government of Saudi Arabia and the broader social environment that exists in the country.

Based on the data reviewed and analysed within the context of this work, three main themes that characterize UBT as a private higher education institution in Saudi Arabia can be identified. The three themes are as follows:

1. Efforts at privatization at UBT remain incomplete. While management states that it is in favour of implementing decentralization techniques that would allow UBT to operate in a privatized capacity, management has either been unwilling or unable to follow this path. There also exists a difference of opinion between management and staff, with the staff expressing a wish to see further reform steps implemented. While UBT cannot be considered a completely privatized institution, however, a degree of marketization is taking place. There is evidence that education is being treated as a commodity and that this influences the management approach taken. This leads to a difference of opinion between management and academic staff in terms of what UBT's priorities should be, and how best to pursue the institution's objectives, also in terms of providing a quality level of education. Privatization is thus seen, at least to some degree, within the lens of commercialization.
2. In light of the above, it is clear that the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) has a significant amount of control over the management of UBT, leading to differences of opinion among management and staff over the degree of autonomy that exists when it comes to decision-making in the university. The role of the MOHE is ever-present and, despite pronouncements by the government to implement decentralized administrative practices, the case study

of UBT underlines that the Ministry does not feel bound by such guidelines. Instead, the bureaucratic practices in place are proving to be highly resistant to any attempt at changes being introduced. As a result, and despite the pronouncement of the government to allow for privatized higher education within the kingdom, such a system is not being fully practiced or implemented in the kingdom.

3. Religion and tradition continue to play a major role in the approaches that senior managers at UBT take to management. This is due to the culture of Saudi Arabia and the religious nature of the society. There are mixed opinions amongst staff members about whether the role of religion and tradition enhances the role being played by UBT within the Saudi education system. Some believe that the religious nature of the kingdom is essential to preserve the cohesion of the country's society, and therefore such religious and cultural norms and guidelines must be strictly adhered to. The proponents of such a course do not see religion or tradition as impacting on the nature of management within UBT. Others hold the view that the centralized nature of the state, and its strict adherence to religious dictates, is in fact detrimental to the university's overall functioning as it prevents proper decentralization taking place. As a result, UBT cannot fulfil its mandate of a privatized institution as understood by this group.

The three main themes outlined here crystallized out of the three research questions posed at the outset. These were: what approaches do senior managers at UBT take to management, and what is their current understanding of the issue?; what are academic staff members' experiences of the management approach at UBT, and what is their current understanding of these experiences?; and what is the relationship between UBT and the government by way of the Ministry of Higher Education?

7.1: Analysis of Findings

The discussion revealed a complex environment in which the elements of Kaplan's framework, ranging from economic conditions, political climate, external market forces and leadership issues, were all seen to play a role in the governance of higher education in Saudi Arabia. While globalization has certainly led to an increase in competition for better quality output and the pursuit of the knowledge economy, there are also continuing debates on the social returns of education and a difference of opinion when it

comes to the extent that decentralization, and therefore also privatization, mechanisms should be applied.

Among senior managers at UBT, for example, there exists a differentiated view with regard to how privatized education at UBT should be practiced and implemented. Even the understanding of the concept appears to be uneven among management. There also exist different perspectives about privatization and decentralization between management and staff. Both sides would agree with the assertion in the literature of decentralization as a positive development that supports better performance and service delivery. Both would further agree that the ability to delegate power and operate in a more decentralized environment is seen as essential for a university such as UBT to achieve its own objectives. However, how this is implemented in practice differs with staff wanting to see more consistent moves towards privatization while management took the role of government into consideration.

There is a further degree of discord over the fact that marketization appears to have taken hold within UBT. A key dichotomy thus exists between the view of UBT as a business enterprise when it comes to being a privatized institution, and one where UBT should emphasize decentralization in order to ensure that it can deliver high quality education programmes instead. While there was a lot of emphasis within the management side on concepts such as education output and controlling expenditures, from the staff side the key elements that were highlighted were those of accountability and performance. What this shows is a degree of pressure on management to deliver a higher level of quality education as opposed to the type of education being delivered by the public institutions in the kingdom. This appears essential in order to justify UBT's existence and continuity.

The thinking within management further extends to the view that by advancing a university's academic status, its earnings can also be significantly increased. Such a tendency goes against Maniku's (2008) assertion that managerialism is in opposition to focussing on academia, given that academic principles can be compromised in exchange for better efficiency. In this context, however, there is an indication that business interests and academic interests can be seen as inextricably interlinked within higher education institutions in this context, and that by advancing a university's academic

status, its earnings can also be significantly increased. Here, the emphasis on academic principles can actually enhance business prospects.

On the other hand, it is possible that the motivating force behind the management and governance approach at UBT is primarily educational excellence, with the pursuit of profit being a secondary consideration. The two motivations are not necessarily mutually exclusive. However, there were suggestions that marketization priorities had taken on a more dominant role, and that educational output was relegated to the financial position of the university. The fact that different views were presented on this issue, even within management itself, suggests that even individuals within the institution have different priorities.

Within the framework of commercialization and marketization, there exists a degree of confusion as to the importance of concepts such as accountability, performance metrics and cost efficiency. While some managers at UBT emphasized the role of the institution as being primarily delivering education at an affordable cost, others understood the privatized mandate as meaning that UBT had greater room for manoeuvrability, under which it could offer a flexible academic programme that would be able to meet Saudi labour market requirements. The interview data revealed the fact that most respondents viewed UBT as a private institution that had a greater deal of flexibility to deliver on services than government-run institutions. Whether this also results in the kind of graduates that would be required by the Saudi labour market was less clear.

The approach of managerialism as practised at UBT, therefore, is not fully understood, with some managers stressing the need for the institution to serve primarily economic ends, while others clearly argued for UBT to focus on the higher national purpose in terms of producing the right output in terms of a qualified student body. Business interests and academic interests are not necessarily seen as inextricably interlinked within the higher education system, and it remains unclear whether such a linkage is understood by the individuals managing the educational institutions.

What the above indicates, however, is that education is no longer being seen only as a public good. Instead, it has become a global good whose development and success is furthered by the privatization process. On the one hand, given that education has attained a value in which people are willing to invest, the business aspects of education

have taken on a more prominent role. On the other hand, there is an emphasis on privatized institution producing a qualified student body where public institutions have so far failed. In this context, and as stated earlier, UBT is seen as being caught between two purposes. On the one hand, the managerialism practised at UBT stresses the need, at least to some extent, for UBT to serve economic ends. At the same time, the status of UBT as a privatized institution is also being seen as being dedicated to a higher national purpose in terms of producing both a public and a private good.

There was less of a differentiation when it came to the perspective of UBT's staff whose members largely argued that the emphasis in terms of managerial approaches has to be on the institution's academic standing and its academic output. Several staff indicated their preference of working within UBT's environment, and related this experience to the fact that, at times, they felt less controlled than would be the case at a public institution. Moreover, there was also an emphasis on the quality output of the institution being linked to the prestige of UBT. In the debate about advantages and disadvantages of working at UBT, the responses favoured the former while arguing that many of the disadvantages were due as a result of the role that government played in terms of the regulations that were still imposed on UBT.

Many staff members believe that further decentralization could be beneficial to the university, as it would grant a greater degree of autonomy with regards to management and governance. The assertion provided by Keehley and Abercrombie (2008) appears therefore to be verified. Within the overall social context, however, such autonomy is not clearly visible. For example, the royal family currently has a great deal of power over the way that the university is run, which is typical of neo-patrimony. Governance norms include adhering to Islamic law, following the will of MOHE, and an emphasis on IT. The value of disinterestedness is upheld within the governance of the university, and the rules and overall mission of the institution are dictated by MOHE, as is the decision-making process. There is an emphasis on enhancing the prestige of the university, and mitigating the fact that it does not have a high level of selectivity, by focussing on quality teaching.

The fact that attempts at decentralization are being supported while overall governance control remains largely in hands of individuals, and institutions are unwilling to challenge basic state control, would support Bjork's argument (2006) that increased

autonomy in the context of decentralization is actually a myth. Instead, by allowing some decentralization to occur, the state is merely able to transfer management and fiscal responsibility to subordinate stakeholders without having to grant them any real power.

The results of this study indicate that power is widely distributed within UBT, but that MOHE exerts a substantial amount of power over the institution from the outside and has essential control over its management and governance. The small degree of independence that UBT managers have is likely to stem from the government's recognition that the knowledge economy means that private universities can improve Saudi Arabia's financial situation, as well as produce graduates that are able to compete on the domestic as well as globalized labour market. However, globalization does not seem to have affected UBT to the same extent as other privatized universities outside the kingdom; this is emphasized by the strict adherence to Islamic regulations and traditional cultural practices within the management and governance of the university. Government itself appears to be somewhat torn in this regard given that the kingdom's decision-makers are fully aware of the need to modernize the educational system that can provide sufficient opportunities for its significant young population. The perceived lack of progress by some staff members, and therefore the entire process of privatization, remains controversial. Some staff believe that positive developments and changes have been achieved, and others believe that a further process of decentralization is not conducive to the smooth management of the institution.

The impact of the role of government is, therefore, one of much debate. As far as management is concerned, there was certainly an effort to differentiate one from governmental institutions and to show that an institution such as UBT could deliver better services and output. This remains an important differentiation in order to be able to attract a student body that is otherwise used to free public education. At the same time, there was an argument that the role played by government remained relevant as it provided clear guidelines and necessary oversight to ensure that UBT's programmes met a required standard. On the one hand, the role played by the Ministry of Higher Education was seen as necessary and important by some, while on the other, the functions practiced by the Ministry were characterized as bureaucratic and limiting the institution's performance. The net result is a dual system alluded to earlier in the

literature review, where efforts to implement more decentralized decision-making by the current management, and from the point of view of being a privatized university, is being restricted and influenced by a larger governmental structure, from which the management at UBT cannot separate itself. In terms of governance, this leads to the application of a mixed governance model as outlined by the literature.

The stamp of approval provided by the government remains essential, and without it an institution such as UBT could not succeed in the achievement of its objectives. In general, while the respondents argued for a continued process of decentralization and greater leeway being provided by government to implement a more innovative education programme, the consensus was that such decentralization would take time and should not be pushed for too hard at once.

All of the above points to the fact that the management techniques that are being applied at UBT, and the governance structures that have been put in place as a result, remain incomplete or, stated differently, are ongoing processes. As mentioned in Chapter 5, at the moment UBT practices a mixed governance model with the faculty having a degree of influence over the running of day-to-day affairs, while governance is controlled by trustees that have been put in place and by other stakeholders, primarily the government. UBT is perceived to fall outside of strict government control, but this only applies in a very limited sense.

Still, there is a general understanding of the need for flexibility alongside an appreciation for the opportunity to try out new techniques that, so far, have not been practiced in the country's public higher education institutions. There exists an awareness that privatized institutions such as UBT are needed, even for a conservative country like Saudi Arabia, to be able to take advantage and compete in a globalized environment.

This is also reflected in the general consensus that decentralization efforts were not being implemented completely due to clear limitations that remain in place. Privatization has thus not resulted in full autonomy for the university but, at this stage, has only led to some improvement in the levels of flexibility under which such institutions are allowed to operate. This results in a degree of frustration given that the government does not allow its educational system to function as freely as it should. At

the same time, there is also an acceptance that some form of centralization is still needed, although such centralization should not be allowed to go as far as impacting negatively on aspects of university management and its governance.

One conclusion is that while the state recognizes that there are market and institutional interests, it never loses sight of its own goals. What exists as a result is a state of ‘dynamic tension’ between the state and a private university, as the former attempts to initiate a model of ‘state supervision’ that appears, however, increasingly to perpetuate ‘state control’ as shown in the literature. This stands in contrast to Stephensen’s (2008) assertion of the need for higher education systems to adapt to the changing overall political climate, by which he refers to conditions being produced by the process of globalization rather than the conditions within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in particular. Rather than seeing the ability and flexibility to respond to changing circumstances as a necessary tool for privatized institutions to have, the Ministry of Higher Education in Saudi Arabia maintains a distinct effort to exert existing rules and insist on their enforcement.

The fact that the Ministry of Higher Education has such a great deal of control over Saudi universities means that there has not been a significant movement towards decentralization in the kingdom, or of granting institutions greater degrees of autonomy, whether in terms of governance structures or management techniques. In those instances where private institutions can have autonomy as outlined by Tibarimbasa (2010), i.e. staff selection, relationship management as well as financial management, the case of UBT shows only very limited applicability. It also suggests that a model of state control rather than simply state supervision as described by Van Vught (1993) is in place. Jiang’s (2005) assertion that regulations will successively be removed in order to facilitate easier production of knowledge, given that universities are used by governments to capitalize on the knowledge economy, is not fulfilled either. All of this indicates that there is still a long way to go before private universities within the nation can be classed as anything resembling independent with regards to both their management and governance.

Despite UBT being privatized, the institution therefore has many of the characteristics of a public university, for example in the high level of control that the government retains over all aspects of its day-to-day operations. At the same time, by improving the

application and implementation of decentralization efforts, there is a belief among UBT staff that some of these restrictions could be dealt with or even overcome. There is a recognition that changes and reforms in the education sector in the kingdom will not happen overnight. It will take a prolonged period before the necessary consensus has been established between management and administrators that will allow for further decentralization steps to be taken. At the same time, there is also the argument that Saudi Arabia does not have the luxury of extended time if it wants its educational system to produce the calibre of individuals that can succeed in an ever-demanding labour market. Here, the system in place appears to play some form of catching up with developments on the ground rather than paving the way ahead with comprehensive institutional reforms.

When it comes to the issue of reform, the culture of Saudi Arabia is an important factor. The focus on tradition and the central role that religion plays in the kingdom means that prevailing attitudes suggest a strong role for the government as an oversight mechanism for the entire educational sector, including privatized institutions. As a result, MOHE keeps a firm hold on power at the institution in order to ensure that it does not stray from the country's religious and traditional values. In addition, government could also be seen as taking on such a central role in response to marketization and to prevent education from being treated in a purely commercialized manner. This has clear implications for the way the concept of decentralization is being applied and practised. Overall, the control exerted by the government over UBT cannot be taken out of the context of the political and social climate of the kingdom. Here, the rules and overall mission of UBT appear to reflect those of Saudi Arabian society as a whole.

What is clear is that even though UBT is a privatized institution, its management approach must be understood within the societal context in which it operates. While the theoretical explanations put forward in the literature go some way to explain internal management approaches, or allow one to classify the system in place at UBT according to pre-defined categories, there are also limitations in place that must be recognized when it comes to determining to what degree privatized higher education in Saudi Arabia is being pursued. While management might favour one or other approach to their work, the system in the kingdom itself imposes restrictions that are not easily circumvented or altered. In that sense, higher education management in Saudi Arabia

must be seen as an on-going process, where existing structures of government and bureaucratic control have to adjust to new realities in order to produce the desired results that privatized higher education is to deliver.

Within the context of the above discussion and by focusing on the three research questions as outlined in the first chapter, this thesis has allowed for a better understanding of the approaches to management taken by senior managers at UBT, how the academic staff viewed those approaches, and how they felt these impacted on the educational output at UBT. In addition, the discussion also highlighted the kind of relationship that is in place between UBT and the government through the Ministry of Higher Education. While, at least to some degree, there exists a determination to apply new management techniques at UBT, this has not so far not resulted in any significant relaxation of the system of close centralized control as being practiced by the government.

7.2: Thesis Contribution

Focusing on the role of UBT as a privatized higher education institution within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is an important step in better comprehending the role that higher education plays within current societal debates. As outlined earlier, Saudi Arabia is undergoing a significant process of transition where there has been a growing recognition that a widespread reform of the education sector is important in order to meet societal demands and ensure that the Saudi economy can accommodate an essential process of economic diversification in order to stay competitive. Even at the government level, there is a recognition that the kingdom can simply not shield itself from an ever globalized world, despite its very conservative and traditional nature where change only occurs at a measured pace. The discrepancy between educational output and labour market performance has become too great to be ignored, and government has been forced to adjust its strategy as a means for closing this gap. The focus on UBT as part of this thesis has underscored the increased awareness of the need for adjustment at almost every level of Saudi society.

While reforms within the education sector are being pursued, in addition to 25% of the 2015 state budget being allocated to education, Saudi Arabia also has a very young demographic profile with 60% of its population below the age of 25 years. Within this

context, education reform is not only necessary but also very urgent with hundreds of thousands of young people both entering higher education and graduating from higher education and entering the labour market annually. The result is that from both a globalization as well from a domestic educational perspective, the kingdom is looking to undertake reform that keeps pace with societal developments. Reform in this sense must be both speedy and deep, as it will be insufficient to expect that the public sector alone will be able to provide the necessary answers.

It is in the above context that the move towards privatization in higher education must be understood, and why this study provides some insights as the kingdom continues down the road of reform. This study is one of the first attempts to look in detail at how a privatized higher education institution in the kingdom functions and the type of obstacles that it faces. UBT is one of the first institutions in the kingdom to be allowed to operate on a privatized basis; thus it is seen very much as a test case to evaluate if the pursuing of a more decentralized approach is one that can be considered on a larger scale when it comes to reforms introduced in the higher education segment. While the opportunity given to UBT is unique within the overall societal context of Saudi Arabia, this study makes it clear that UBT still very much operates in the mind-set of previous rules. Many concepts that are seen as central in being able to classify an institution as being truly privatized, are still not applied in their full sense and therefore limit the autonomy and flexibility that UBT enjoys.

The study further highlights that some aspects of privatization are still not properly understood, even by those in charge of managing the day-to-day affairs of UBT. The inability of management to properly translate concepts of privatization into the day-to-day running of the university suggests that the path to privatized higher education in Saudi Arabia is still in its infancy. While the kingdom has recognized that a varied and differentiated higher education segment is needed in order to prepare the Saudi population for the challenges posed by globalization, the study makes clear that the path from theory into practise remains a difficult one. In addition, bureaucratic inertia and the resistance to change are prevalent given the role that government plays and the way religion and tradition still influence daily decisions. The thesis therefore highlights that at both the government level as well as within UBT itself, there are still several obstacles to overcome if UBT is to be able to fulfil its mandate as originally envisioned.

With privatization in higher education being in its infancy in the kingdom, there are no in-depth studies that exist at this point that put the privatization effort into the wider theoretical framework of higher education management. Where a theoretical framework is applied, the research does not specifically involve an Arab Gulf country, with the result that a connection between theory and practice is not looked into. The study here thus takes a more comprehensive approach at higher education management than any other study that has been conducted before. The degree of relevance in the approach is shown by the fact that management, staff, or government representatives often do not have a full understanding of the concept underpinning the privatization debate. The study here thus opens a new door for a better explanation and application of the relevant concepts in an environment in which those elements have not so far been applied.

The thesis also brings in interview data that so far remains missing from any similar research being conducted on higher education management in the kingdom. The key to this study is its effort to combine on-the-ground primary data with theoretical concepts developed in a different context. It is often the case that Saudi Arabia imports ideas and concepts and then attempts to apply these concepts with a local context. While evidence exists that such a combination is difficult to maintain in the economic field, for example, where outside experts and consultants are often brought in to develop five-year economic plans, little research has so far looked at the impact of this approach to the social field. With the higher education field only opening up to in-depth research in recent years, this thesis makes a contribution to further examine the interplay that exists between outside ideas and internal reform necessities.

The study further underscores the dichotomy that is in place when it comes to the role that government plays in overseeing the affairs of UBT. As it stands, UBT does operate in a restrictive environment where all aspects of decentralization are not fully applied. The perspectives of many of the individuals, either in a management or academic staff function, have been highlighted. In turn, this suggests that further analysis and thought must be given to how the central notion of privatization within the current context of Saudi Arabia should be pursued, and whether additional reforms are necessary in order for the system as a whole to function better. Furthermore, the element of leadership in driving change also needs to be further explored. The study underlines that some management at UBT was willing to push for greater flexibility while others thought it

better to operate within the given environment. As this study points out, at this stage there is still a great deal of hesitancy among management to actually push for the change that is needed.

As the kingdom of Saudi Arabia attempts to cope with a young demographic profile that will put tremendous strains on the ability of government to respond to demands as well as maintain the kingdom's societal balance, it is clear that reforms and new approaches to governance are necessary. The step into privatized higher education is one reform step that has been launched, but as this study clearly points out, this reform step has, so far, not been implemented sufficiently and further steps will be required.

7.3: Implications for Future Research

Having undertaken a preliminary view into a new field, i.e. the role of privatized higher education institutions in Saudi Arabia, it is suggested that further investigation into many of the issues outlined above should be undertaken. Potential areas for future research include the extent to which the views that were expressed by the interviewees reflect the reality of the institution, the progression towards autonomy over a set period of time, and the conflict between tradition and globalization at the university. This will help to shed light on issues that arose throughout the course of the research. It is clear that UBT enjoys a degree of independence; however, it still cannot be said that it possesses the management and governance autonomy present in the majority of Western universities.

Another potential area for research is the extent to which marketization is causing academic standards to be lowered. There was contention as to the precise effect and extent of this phenomenon at UBT. This creates the need for a study aimed at quantitatively assessing the way in which profit-orientated measures lower or raise the achievement levels of the students who attend the university. If marketization is having a detrimental effect on the institution, or if it exists to an excessive extent, then a study of this nature will bring the situation to light so that attention can be paid to putting measures in place that are aimed at remedying it. Measuring this in a quantitative manner would mean that the perception of the staff could be compared to the reality of marketization at UBT and its effects. It could provide an insight into how aware the employees at the institution are of the true impact of this phenomenon. A wider study

could also be conducted in order to ascertain the effect of marketization on higher education institutions in general. This would shed light on whether or not the supposed negative effects of globalization are actually as detrimental as they have been presumed to be.

Finally, additional research must be undertaken when it comes to the educational strategy as a whole as required for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Instead of just looking at one privatized institution, more comparative analysis would be useful, both among a number of private universities as well as between the private and the public sector in terms of output and performance. By looking at numerous private universities in Saudi Arabia, the comparative approach would allow for opportunities to see if the conclusions reached in this study are also similar to the experiences at other institutions. It would potentially highlight other approaches being pursued and how effective those approaches are, and could suggest that UBT undertake further reform to improve both its standing as well as its output.

In general, more quantitative data is needed in order to assess whether the move towards privatization is having the desired effect as envisioned both by the policy officials and the practitioners. In addition, comparative analysis is also required between the private and the public sectors, also from the point of view of reform being implemented in state institutions as a possible result of privatization. All of this work could lead to a better sense of the type of educational reform that Saudi Arabia must continue to undergo if it is to meet growing societal expectations.

7.4: Implications for Policy and Practice

Given that this study sees privatization in higher education being pursued in the kingdom because of the awareness that educational output has so far been insufficient to produce quality output and meet labour market demands, the implications for policy and practice are not too distant. There clearly exists a correlation in the educational reforms being pursued by the Saudi government and the need for restructuring the labour market to allow for greater Saudi national employment. The move towards allowing privatized higher education institutions to open their doors is directly related to the expectation that such institutions will produce a high calibre of Saudi professionals that can

effectively compete in the private sector, instead of simply expecting and hoping for public sector employment.

By highlighting the fact that the move into privatization remains incomplete, this study suggests that the government must continue to evaluate not only the outcome being produced by those institutions but also the broader framework under which privatization is being implemented. Within the centralized bureaucracy of Saudi Arabia, an institution such as UBT continues to face restrictions as imposed by government regulations: this in turn impacts the way management and governance is conducted. For quality assurance purposes, there is agreement among the participants that an oversight mechanism is required, and that there exists a role for government within the privatized framework. However, the relationship between the state and that of privatized institutions charged with working with a public good like education is one that constantly needs to be re-evaluated in order to ensure that both sides are meeting the expectations of the other. Clearly it is not possible to separate the two sides from one another, especially given the characteristics that define the governing system of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. However, it is also the case that a more decentralized approach that favours more innovation, and which contains a greater degree of flexibility through which one can respond to change within the overall society and the labour market in particular, is needed.

The government of Saudi Arabia will have an interest to continue to explore the benefits and potential pitfalls of privatized higher education. It cannot continue to simply carry the burden of providing all aspects of the educational field; costs are rising and the kingdom itself is experiencing economic challenges that demand greater cost efficiency and reform measures. This study has underscored that a private university such as UBT is an important element in the broader field of education provision. Policymakers and officials will have to constantly evaluate the progress that is being made in this field and introduce changes that meet the requirements as stipulated.

UBT is still a new institution within the broader framework of education inside Saudi Arabia. Its management and academic staff are grappling with a new environment where all sides appear unsure how past rules apply and where new rules can be tested. What this study has shown is that in terms of the management approaches being applied in practise and their respective effectiveness in day-to-day operations, UBT cannot be

considered a fully privatized institution with all of its respective freedom and independence. In that context, the religious nature of Saudi society, its traditions, and the overarching role being played by the Ministry of Higher Education as the representative of the government, continues to place significant restrictions on how privatization is implemented on the ground. It will likely be a contentious relationship in the future as Saudi Arabia continues with its educational reform process.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: UBT Interview Sample Groups

Class	Definition
Higher Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deans • Heads of Departments • Members of the Executive Committee
Lower Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative and Clerical Staff
Faculty Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecturers • Teaching Assistants

Appendix 2: Interview Questions

Questions	Purposive Sample (for interviews)	Interview Length
<p>1. What are the understanding and approaches to management of senior managers at a private university UBT?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do senior managers explain their approach at UBT? 2. What theories and ideas influence the senior manager's approach to managing staff and resources at UBT? 3. What has been the effect of their management approach on UBT, and on their relationships with government? 4. To what extent are local KSA conditions reflected in their understanding and approach to management? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of Board of Trustees • 3 Faculty Deans (Business (Male & Female Divisions, & Engineering)) • 3 Professors (Finance, Law, & Chem Engineering) • 2 Higher Management staff (Members of the Executive Committee) • 3 academic staff (lecturers in finance, economics, and HRM) 	30-45 min
<p>2. What is the understanding and experiences of academic staff of the management approach at a private university UBT?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do academics in selected departments understand the management approach of UBT? 2. What are the experiences of academics in selected departments on the management approach of UBT? 3. What do academics in selected departments see as the advantages and disadvantages of working in a private university such as UBT in KSA? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5-10 lecturers and academics from different departments • 4-8 lower management staff from different departments 	30-45 minutes

- | | | |
|--|---|----------------------|
| <p>3. What is the relationship between UBT as a private university and the government through the Ministry of Higher Education?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What policies have the government pursued when it comes to private education in the kingdom? 2. What do senior managers and academics in selected departments of UBT see as the advantages and disadvantages of the regulations governing private higher education such as UBT? 3. What do senior managers and academics in selected department see as the effects of the regulations set for private universities such as UBT? 4. How does the government's regulation of private universities impact on decision-making within the institution and on its autonomy? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 top management staff • 2 from the Administrative Division • 2 from the Financial Division • 2 Executive Committee Members • 3 lower management staff from the Administrative and Financial Divisions. | <p>30-45 minutes</p> |
|--|---|----------------------|

Appendix 3: UBT Interviewees

No.	CODE	RANK	DEPARTMENT
1	DE/SA	Dean	Students Affairs, Faculty of Business & Technology
2	DE/CO	Dean	Faculty of Communication
3	PR/FI	Professor of Finance	General Directorate Officer for Quality and Development
4	PR/LA	Assistant Professor of Law	General Director of Legal Affairs at UBT
5	DE/BA	Dean	Faculty of Business Administration UBT
6	DE/EN	Dean	Faculty of Engineering UBT
7	DI/AE	Director	Regional Academic Excellence, (Girls Division, UBT)
8	LE/FI	Lecturer	Finance Department
9	DH/BA	Deputy Head	Faculty of Business Administration UBT
10	HE/BT	Head	Board of Trustees of UBT
11	PR/CE	Deputy Head of UBT Academic Affairs/& Professor	Chemical Engineering and Materials
12	LE/EC	Lecturer	Economics, Faculty of Business Administration UBT
13	LE/HR	Lecturer	Human Resources Division & HR Deputy Director, UBT
14	DE/BAG	Dean	Business Administration College (Girls Division, UBT)
15	PR/ENG	Professor	Engineering Department

Appendix 4: Ethical Clearance Letter to Use the Name of UBT and Ethical Review Form




31 September 2015

To Whom It May Concern

This is to certify that the University of Business and Technology (UBT) has no objection to use its name in its full or abbreviated form in the PhD thesis presented by Mr. Ahmed A. Sager entitled **"Higher Education Management in Saudi Arabia: A Case Study of the University for Business and Technology (UBT)"**.

Should you have any enquiries, please do not hesitate to contact us.


31/12/2015



Mohanad A. Dahlan
COO, CFO
Director General, Financial & Admin. Affairs
University of Business & Technology (UBT)
Tel: +966-2-215-9333
Fax: +966-2-215-9010
Mobile: +966-55-60-68-688
Email: dahlanm@ubt.edu.sa



www.cba.edu.sa
P.O. Box 110200 Jeddah 21361 Saudi Arabia • Tel: +966 2 2159009 Fax: +966 2 2159010 • E-mail: info@cba.edu.sa
ص.ب ١١٠٢٠٠ جدة ٢١٣٦١ المملكة العربية السعودية • هاتف +٩٦٦ ٢ ٢١٥٩٠٠٩ فاكس +٩٦٦ ٢ ٢١٥٩٠١٠ البريد الإلكتروني: info@cba.edu.sa



University of Sussex

Application Form for Projects which Require Ethical Review

Who should complete this form?

This application form is to be used by all staff and students whose project requires some form of ethical review. (Note: If your project is externally funded, you will not normally need to apply for ethical approval until an award has been notified.)

If you are not sure whether your project requires ethical review, complete the [5 question checklist](#) on the research governance website.

Please note: A different application form and process will apply to certain projects (e.g. NHS, BSMS, CISC & Social Care projects). If you are unsure whether you should complete this form, please see guidance on the [research governance website](#).

How does this form work?

This form is in three sections.

- You need to begin by completing **SECTION A**, to provide basic information about your project, and to determine whether your project is low risk or higher risk.
- If your project is low risk, please complete **SECTION B**. You should then submit the application form, with **both SECTIONS A & B** completed:
 - **UG & PGT students** submit your application for review through your School ethical review process
 - **Staff & PGR students** submit your form to your School Cluster-based Research Ethics Committee (C-REC) for expedited review.
- If your project is **higher risk** please complete **SECTION C**, and then submit the application form with both **SECTIONS A & C** completed.
 - **All staff and students** submit **higher risk** project applications to their **School Cluster-based Research Ethics Committee (C-REC)** for full review.

PLEASE NOTE: This form must be completed by following the guidance notes on the [research governance website](#)

SECTION A (All Projects):

A.1 Identifying Information

TITLE OF THE PROJECT:	Examining Higher Education Management in Saudi Arabia - A Case Study of KAUST
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (PI) / STUDENT RESEARCHER:	
Name:	Ahmed Sager
Department:	School of Education and Social Work
Student ID Number (if applicable)	
Email:	ahmed@grc.net
Contact Address:	3 Oakhill Avenue, MW3 7RD
Telephone no:	
Status:	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PGR <input type="checkbox"/> PGT <input type="checkbox"/> UG

PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR'S DETAILS (STUDENT PROJECTS):

Name:	Yusuf Sayed
Department:	School of Education and Social Work
Email:	y.sayed@sussex.ac.uk
Contact Address:	School of Education and Social Work, University of Sussex, Falmer, Brighton BN1 9QQ, UK
Telephone no:	T: +44 1273 872876

A.2 Project Details

Expected Start Date of Project:	February 2012
Expected Completion Date of Project:	June 2012
Funding: Is the project externally funded? If yes, please provide the name of the funding organisation and the US bid number.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Name of Funder: Bid Number:
Will the project include collaborators from outside the University of Sussex?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

About my Research Project.

Please provide a brief outline of your study in lay terms (plain English), with particular focus on the parts of your study which involve human participants. This should include a description of what you will be asking participants to do as part of your project and your methods for gathering information / data (e.g. interviews, focus groups etc.) *Approximately 300 words*

The main objective of this study is to examine the management style of higher education in

the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia while specifically focusing on changes in government and management approaches. The example of KAUST will serve as a case study.

The study will address the following questions:

1. What are the characteristics of the management style being followed in KAUST?
 - 1.1. What is the management philosophy being followed in KAUST? How does this philosophy reflect the broader new approaches within higher education?
 - 1.2. What changes has the management style witnessed since the establishment of the university till now? How effective has the management been in implementing their philosophy?
 - 1.3. How does decentralization relate to the management style followed in KAUST?
 - 1.5. What local specific characteristics had to be considered in the implementation of the university's management style or what adjustments had to be made to accommodate local characteristics?
 2. What are the experiences of stakeholders within the University about the Management Style?
 - 2.1. How is the management style experienced by the faculty members?
 - 2.2 How is the management style experienced by the student body?
 - 2.3. How is the management style experienced by members of staff?
 - 2.4 How does the management style impact government policy or the approach taken by government toward higher education governance? How have different notion between government and the management been resolved?
 3. What is the impact of decentralization on the overall style of management in KAUST?
 - 3.1. How does it impact financials and budgeting?
 - 3.2. How does it impact decision making?
 - 3.3. How does it impact the relationship with the government?
 - 3.4. How does it impact short and long term planning?
- The research methodology will include a case study approach accompanied with interviews to gather the information related to the research topic.

A.3 CHECKLIST - Is Your Project Low Risk?	
<i>If the following statements apply to your proposed research project, please cross inside the box:</i>	TRUE
My study does not involve participants who are particularly vulnerable or unable to give informed consent or in a dependent position (e.g. people under 18, people with learning difficulties, over-researched groups or people in care facilities).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Participants will not be asked to take part in the study without their consent or knowledge at the time (e.g. covert observation of people in non-public places), and no deception of any sort will be used.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
All the data gathered in this study will be anonymised and remain strictly confidential. It will not be possible to link information back to an individual participant in any way.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The study will not induce psychological stress or anxiety, or produce humiliation or cause harm or negative consequences beyond the risks encountered in the everyday life of the participants.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No drugs, placebos or other substances (such as food substances or vitamins) will be administered as part of this study and no invasive or potentially harmful procedures of any kind will be used.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
My project will not involve working with any substances and / or equipment which may be considered hazardous.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No financial inducements (other than expenses) will be offered to participants.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p><i>If you have answered 'true' to all the above statements, the application will be processed through expedited review (see guidelines). GO TO PART B.</i></p> <p><i>If you cannot answer 'true' to all the above statements, your application will normally be processed through full review (see guidelines). GO TO PART C.</i></p> <p><i>If you cannot answer 'true' to all the above statements, but think your project is low risk, please make the case under A.4 below and complete PART B. More detailed guidelines are available on the research governance website.</i></p>	

A.4 Case for Project to be Considered Low Risk

ONLY to be used where one or more of the statements in Section A.3 checklist is not marked 'true'.

Please make your case below for why your project should be considered low risk and then complete SECTION B of the application form.

- UG and PGT students: please submit your form through the School review system (for review by Supervisor and SREO). If your Supervisor or SREO do not agree that your project is low risk, it will need to be reviewed by a C-REC under the full review process.

- Staff and PGR students: please send your completed form to your School C-REC for expedited review.

The project is considered to be low risk as it will not involve participants who are particularly vulnerable (all interviewees will be adults interviewed within the KAUST's premises and prior consent will be required). Furthermore, the interview process will not involve any experimentation or the use of any harmful tools or equipment.

SECTION B (Application For Low Risk Projects)

Please select appropriate box:

☐ SCHOOL LEVEL REVIEW (UG & PGT STUDENTS)

or

☒ C-REC EXPEDITED REVIEW (STAFF & PGR STUDENTS)

Staff or PGR Students - Please select the C-REC you are applying to:

☐ Arts C-REC

☒ Social Sciences C-REC

☐ Informatics / Engineering & Design / Maths & Phys. Sciences C-REC

☐ Life Sciences and Psychology C-REC

PLEASE NOTE:

If you wish to apply to the **Brighton & Sussex Medical School (BSMS) ethics committee** you need to complete a **different form** – available on the [BSMS website](#).

B.1 Confidentiality and Anonymity

Please answer YES, NO or NOT APPLICABLE (NA) to each of the following

	YES	NO	NA
Questionnaires will be completed anonymously and returned indirectly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Questionnaires and/or interview transcripts will only be identifiable by a unique identifier (e.g. code/pseudonym)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Lists of identity numbers or pseudonyms linked to names and/or addresses will be stored securely and separately from the research data	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
All place names and institutions which could lead to the identification of individuals or organisations will be changed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
All personal information gathered will be treated in strict confidence and will not be disclosed to any third parties.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I confirm that my research records will be held in accordance with the data protection guidelines (see guidelines on research governance website).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	-
I confirm that I will not use the research data for any other purpose	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you answered NO to any of the above (or think more information could be useful to the reviewer) please explain here:

B.2 Informed Consent and Recruitment of Participants			
Please answer YES, NO or NOT APPLICABLE (NA) to each of the following	YES	NO	NA
All respondents will be given an Information Sheet and be given adequate time to read it before being asked to agree to participate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
All participants taking part in an interview, focus group, observation (or other activity which is not questionnaire based) will be asked to sign a consent form	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
All participants completing a questionnaire will be informed on the Information Sheet that returning the completed questionnaire implies consent to participate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
All participants asked to provide personal data will have the following statement on the consent form or on the bottom of their questionnaire 'I consent to the processing of my personal information for the purposes of this research study. I understand that such information will be treated as strictly confidential and handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998'	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
All respondents will be told that they can withdraw at any time, ask for their interview tape to be destroyed and/or their data removed from the project until it is no longer practical to do so	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you answered NO to any of the above (or think more information could be useful to the reviewer) please explain.			
This study will not use questionnaire for collecting data			

B.3 Context		
	YES	NO
<p>Does the research involve any fieldwork – overseas or in the UK? See the UCEA/USHA Safety in Fieldwork in the UK and Overseas guidance for further advice about safety measures in fieldwork. If yes, where will the fieldwork take place? King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST), Jeddah, KSA</p> <p><u>OVERSEAS FIELDWORK</u> If you are intending to carry out research outside of the UK, you must complete the Overseas Travel Safety and Security Risk Assessment form available from Health & Safety website, and attach to this form.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Will any researchers be in a lone working situation? (The Health & Safety Lone Working Policy provides further guidance.)</p> <p>If yes, briefly describe the location, time of day and duration of lone working. What precautionary measures will be taken to ensure safety of the researcher(s)? The location of the study will be in King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST), Jeddah, KSA which is one of the well-known universities in KSA. The researcher is a resident of the region, and thus is familiar with the context to ensure his safety.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

B.4 Any further concerns

Do you have any concerns about your research project which have not been covered above?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>If yes, please explain</i>	

B.5 Appendices and Supporting Documents

NOTE: SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS SHOULD BE CUT AND PASTED INTO THE SPACE PROVIDED BELOW. THEY SHOULD **NOT** BE APPENDED AS SEPARATE DOCUMENTS

Please tick which supporting documents are included in your application:

- ☒ All applications should normally include an **Information Sheet** (If you have different participant groups and different activities you will normally need more than one Information Sheet). If you are not providing an Information Sheet, please ensure you have outlined your reasons in Section B.2.
- ☒ All applications should normally include a **Consent Form**, unless it is a self-completion questionnaire based study, or the reason for not requiring a Consent Form is outlined in Section B.2.
- ☐ **Recruitment materials** (e.g. poster, letter, recruitment email)
- ☒ **Letter/ email seeking permission from host/gatekeeper organisations** (e.g. school, company. If this is relevant to your study copies **must** be submitted with this application).
- ☐ **Questionnaire/ topic guide/ interview questions (as applicable)**
- ☐ **Fieldwork risk assessment (if applicable)**
- ☐ **Any other approvals or permissions that are relevant**

(This list is not exhaustive but may help you to identify which supporting documents you may need to submit.)

INSERT (CUT AND PASTE) YOUR SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS HERE:

(Note: Do not be concerned if formatting is lost on some of these documents)

Information Sheet

Examining Higher Education Management in Saudi Arabia - A Case Study of KAUST

[For interviewees]

Hello, I am Ahmed Sager research student of University of Sussex, UK researching higher education management in Saudi Arabia while taking KAUST as a case study. For this purpose, I would collect relevant information from students, lecturers and KAUST staff. intend to do interviews to the selected research participants to obtain in-depth understanding about their opinion about the management style in KAUST.

Please understand that your participation is voluntary and the choice of whether to participate or not, is yours alone. However, I would really appreciate it if you do share your thoughts, ideas, and experiences with me. If you choose not to take a part in answering any question or in providing any access to some documents, you will not be affected in anyway whatsoever. If you agree to participate, you may stop me at anytime and tell me that you do not want to go on, and you will NOT be prejudiced nor penalized in ANY way.

Please note that I may need to record your name initially to allow me to link the information from the research participants from different levels (e.g., the same school, department, etc). However, I would remove any identifying details at the earliest possible point from records and datasets and undertake not to identify any individuals or schools/departments in the report and other presentations. To ensure that there is no data lost or distorted, I will use unique identification numbers in the datasets and any code-lists or keys to them will be stored separately. If it is necessary to illustrate certain points through small example in my report, appropriate 'pseudonyms' (false names) will be used for respondents. I assure that all completed instruments and linkage lists will be treated as confidential and dealt with accordingly. Likewise, the eventual datasets will be treated the same.

For students, the interview will take about one hour to complete. The research participants other than students will have interview for approximately one and half hour. In providing any answer or information, I kindly request you to be as open and honest as possible. Please note that very few questions or pieces of information may be of a personal and/or sensitive nature.

I very much look forward to hearing from you. If you would like to have more information concerning this research, please do not hesitate to contact me via email (details below).

Best wishes,

Mobile. : +447766761828

Email: ahmed@grc.net

Research Participant Consent Form

Title of Study: Management style of higher education in KSA: KAUST as a case study

Name of Participant :

Address :

Please tick to confirm

1 I confirm that I have read and understood the project's information sheet

2 I have been given full information regarding the aims of the research and have been given the researcher's name, a contact number, and address if I require further information.

3 I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason.

4 All personal information provided by myself will remain confidential and no information that identifies me will be made publicly available

5 I agree to participate in this research on the basis of my own free will.

Signed
(by Participant)

Date:

Print Name

LETTER TO KAUST

King Abdullah University of Science and Technology
Jeddah
Saudi Arabia

Dear Professor Choon Fong Shih,
President - KAUST

I am Ahmed Sager research student of University of Sussex, UK researching the concept of decentralization in higher education in Saudi Arabia. KAUST will be the case study on which my findings will be based.

I intend to kindly request permission to carry out research at your university. I would be grateful if you agree to provide me access. I would like to assure that this research project is personal and purely educational. All information will be kept confidential and the identity of the research participants will not be revealed in the report or other presentations.

I very much look forward to hearing from you. If you would like to have more information about this research project, please contact me via telephone or email (details below).

For further details, please refer to the attached information sheet.

Best wishes,

Ahmed Sager

Mobile. : +447766761828
Email: ahmed@grc.net

B.6 Declaration:

- The information in this form is accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief, and I take full responsibility for it.
- I have read and understand the University's Research Governance Code of Practice.
- I have read the guidelines accompanying this application form and understand that failure to follow these and my approved protocol constitutes academic misconduct and can lead to severe penalties.
- I understand that I am responsible for monitoring the research at all times and

recording any unexpected events

- If any serious adverse events arise in relation to the research, I understand that I am responsible for immediately stopping the research and alerting the C-REC Chair with 24 hours of the occurrence.
- I am aware of my responsibility to be up to date with and to comply with the requirements of the law and relevant guidelines relating to security and confidentiality of personal data.
- I understand that research records / data may be subject to inspection for audit purposes if required in future.
- I understand that I may not commence this research until I have been notified that the project has ethical approval.
- **FOR STUDENT RESEARCHERS:** I understand my responsibilities to work within a set of safety, ethical and other guidelines as agreed in advance with my supervisor. I also understand that I must comply with the University's regulations and any other applicable code of ethics at all times.

Signature of Principal Investigator / Student Researcher

Print Name: Ahmed Sager

Date: 18-12-2011

B.7 Approvals – School Level Review: Low Risk Projects UG & PGT STUDENTS

Course Unit title or Department name	
<i>Supervisor Authorisation – UG & PGT Students</i>	
I have scrutinised this application and I understand my responsibilities as supervisor. I will ensure, to the best of my abilities, that the student researcher abides by the University's regulations and any other applicable code of ethics at all times.	
Supervisor's name	Yusuf Sayed
Supervisor's email address	y.sayed@sussex.ac.uk
Supervisor's Signature	
Date of supervisor authorisation	December 2011

***Second Reviewer – School Research Ethics Officer (SREO)
Authorisation****

I have scrutinised this application and confirm that in my judgement the project is low risk and that the ethical issues have been adequately addressed.	
SREO name	
SREO email address	
SREO Signature	
Date of SREO authorisation	

***Note: In some Schools, the SREO may only mediate a percentage of projects rather than signing off each individual project.**

B.8 Supervisor Authorisation - C-REC Review: Low Risk Projects PGR STUDENTS

Supervisor Authorisation - PGR Students

I have scrutinised this application and I understand my responsibilities as supervisor. I will ensure, to the best of my abilities, that the student researcher abides by the University's regulations and any other applicable code of ethics at all times.

Supervisor's name	
Supervisor's email address	
Supervisor's Signature	
Date of supervisor authorisation	

WHERE DO I SEND MY FORM?

LOW RISK Projects

UG and PGT Students:

Submit through School Ethical Review process (review by Supervisor and School Research Ethics Officer).

Staff and PGR Students:

Submit to your School C-REC for expedited review (email addresses below).

C-REC	Email
Arts	c-recarts@sussex.ac.uk
Social Sciences	c-recss@sussex.ac.uk
Psychology and Life Sciences	c-recpsysci@sussex.ac.uk
Informatics, Engineering & Design, and Mathematics & Physical Sciences	c-reciem@sussex.ac.uk

SECTION C (Application For Higher Risk Projects)

Please select the C-REC you are applying to:

- ☐ **Arts C-REC**
- ☐ **Social Sciences C-REC**
- ☐ **Informatics / Engineering & Design / Maths & Physical Sciences C-REC**

	<input type="checkbox"/> Life Sciences & Psychology C-REC PLEASE NOTE: If you wish to apply to the Brighton & Sussex Medical School (BSMS) ethics committee you need to complete a different form – available on the BSMS website .
--	---

C.1 Risk Checklist - Participants		
	YES	NO
Does the study involve participants who are particularly vulnerable, or unable to give informed consent, or in a dependent position (e.g. children (under 18), people with learning difficulties, over-researched groups or people in care facilities, including prisons)? Please note: Special considerations relate to research projects involving children and vulnerable people. Further guidance is available on the Research Governance website. <i>If yes, you will need to address this appropriately in Section C5 (below).</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If Criminal Records Bureau clearance is necessary for this project, have you undergone this? Further guidance is available on the Research Governance website.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will participants be asked to take part in the study without their consent or knowledge at the time (this might, for example, be covert observation of people) or will deception of any sort be involved? Please refer to the British Psychological Society Guidelines for further information. <i>If yes, you will need to address this appropriately in Section C5 (below).</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Could the study induce psychological stress or anxiety, or produce humiliation, or cause harm or negative consequences beyond the risks encountered in normal life? <i>If yes, you will need to address this appropriately in Section C5 (below)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are alcoholic drinks, drugs, placebos or other substances (such as food substances or vitamins) to be administered to the study participants? <i>If yes, you will need to address this appropriately in Section C5 (below)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can you think of anything else that might be potentially harmful to participants in this research? <i>If yes, you will need to address this appropriately in Section C5 (below)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

C.2 Risk Checklist – Researcher(s) Safety and Wellbeing		
	YES	NO
<p>Does the project involve working with any substances and / or equipment which may be considered hazardous? <i>(Please refer to the University's Control of Hazardous Substances Policy.)</i></p> <p><i>If yes, complete the appropriate Health & Safety Assessment Form including signature of approval by appropriate person in your School and attach to the end of this application (Section C.7).</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Could the nature or subject of the research potentially have an emotionally disturbing impact on the researcher(s)?</p> <p><i>If yes, briefly describe what measures will be taken to help the researcher(s) to manage this.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Could the nature or subject of the research potentially expose the researcher(s) to threats of physical violence and / or verbal abuse?</p> <p><i>If yes, briefly describe what measures will be taken to mitigate this.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Does the research involve any fieldwork – overseas or in the UK? See the UCEA/USHA Safety in Fieldwork in the UK and Overseas guidance for further advice about safety measures in fieldwork. If yes, where will the fieldwork take place?</p> <p><u>OVERSEAS FIELDWORK</u> <i>If you are intending to carry out research outside of the UK, you must complete the Overseas Travel Safety and Security Risk Assessment form available from Health & Safety website, and attach to this form.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Will any researchers be in a lone working situation? <i>(The Health & Safety Lone Working Policy provides further guidance.)</i></p> <p><i>If yes, briefly describe the location, time of day and duration of lone working. What precautionary measures will be taken to ensure safety of the researcher(s)?</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Can you think of anything else that might be potentially harmful to the researcher(s) in this research?</p> <p><i>If yes, please explain here.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

C.3 Data Collection and Analysis (Please provide full details)

PARTICIPANTS (How many people do you envisage will participate, who they are, and how will they be selected?)

RECRUITMENT (How will participants be approached and recruited?)

METHOD (What research method(s) do you plan to use; e.g. interview, questionnaire/self-completion questionnaire, field observation, audio/audio-visual recording?)

LOCATION (Where will the project be carried out e.g. public place, in researcher's office, in private office at organisation?)

C.4 Ethical Considerations (Please provide full details)

INFORMED CONSENT

Please describe the process you will use to ensure your participants are freely giving fully informed consent to participate. This will usually include the provision of an Information Sheet and will normally require a Consent Form unless it is a purely self-completion questionnaire based study or there is justification for not doing so (this must be clearly stated).

*If you are **not** using an Information Sheet or seeking written consent, please provide an explanation for this.*

RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL

Participants should be able to withdraw from the research at any time. Participants should also be able to withdraw their data if it is linked to them and should be told when this will no longer be possible (e.g. once it has been included in the final report). Please describe the exact arrangements for withdrawal from participation and withdrawal of data depending on your study design.

OTHER ETHICAL ISSUES

If you answered YES to anything in C1 you must specifically address this here. Please also consider whether there are other ethical issues you should be covering here. Please also make reference to the professional code of conduct you intend to follow in your research.

C.5 Data Protection, Confidentiality, and Records Management		
	YES	NO
<p>Will you ensure that the processing of personal information related to the study will be in full compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA)? (Read the guidelines for further information about processing of personal information)</p> <p><i>If you are processing any personal information outside of the European Economic Area (EEA) you must explain how compliance with the DPA will be ensured.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Will you take steps to ensure the confidentiality of personal information?</p> <p><i>Please provide details of anonymisation procedures and of physical and technical security measures here:</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Will all personal information related to this study be retained and shared in a form that is fully anonymised?</p> <p>NOTE: <i>If you tick 'no' you must ensure that these arrangements are detailed in the Information Sheet and that participant consent will be in place. If relevant, please outline arrangements here:</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Will the Principal Investigator take full responsibility during the study, for ensuring appropriate storage and security of information (including research data, consent forms and administrative records) and, where appropriate, will the necessary arrangements be made in order to process copyright material lawfully?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Who will have access to personal information relating to this study?</p> <p><i>Please outline how any necessary wider disclosures of personal information (for instance to colleagues beyond the study team, translators, transcribers, auditors, or, in the case of disclosure of serious crimes, to the authorities) have been properly explained to study participants.)</i></p>		
<p>Data management responsibilities after the study.</p> <p><i>State how long study information including research data, consent forms and administrative records will be retained, in what format(s) and where the information will be kept.</i></p>		

C.6 Other Ethical Clearances and Permissions		
	YES	NO
<p>Are any other ethical clearances or permissions required?</p> <p><i>If yes, please give further details including the name and address of the organisation. If other ethical approval has already been received please attach evidence of approval, otherwise you will need to supply it when ready.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

C.7 Appendices and Supporting Documents
<p>NOTE: SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS SHOULD BE CUT AND PASTED INTO THE SPACE PROVIDED BELOW. THEY SHOULD NOT BE APPENDED AS SEPARATE DOCUMENTS</p> <p>Please tick which supporting documents are included in your application:</p>

- ☐ All applications should normally include an **Information Sheet** (If you have different participant groups and different activities you will normally need more than one Information Sheet). If you are not providing an Information Sheet, please ensure you have outlined your reasons in Section C.4.
- ☐ All applications should normally include a **Consent Form**, unless it is a self-completion questionnaire based study, or the reason for not requiring a Consent Form is outlined in Section C.4.
- ☐ **Recruitment materials** (e.g. poster, letter, recruitment email)
- ☐ **Letter/ email seeking permission from host/gatekeeper organisations** (e.g. school, company. If this is relevant to your study copies **must** be submitted with this application).
- ☐ **Questionnaire/ topic guide/ interview questions (as applicable)**
- ☐ **Chemicals or other hazardous substances risk assessment from H&S (if applicable)**
- ☐ **Overseas risk assessment from H&S office (if applicable)**
- ☐ **Any other approvals or permissions that are relevant**

(This list is not exhaustive but may help you to identify which supporting documents you may need to submit.)

INSERT (CUT AND PASTE) YOUR SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS HERE:

(Note: Do not be concerned if formatting is lost on some of these documents)

C.8 Declaration:

- The information in this form is accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief, and I take full responsibility for it.
- I have read and understand the University's Research Governance Code of Practice.
- I have read the guidelines accompanying this application form and understand that failure to follow these and my approved protocol constitutes academic misconduct and can lead to severe penalties.
- I understand that I am responsible for monitoring the research at all times and recording any unexpected events
- If any serious adverse events arise in relation to the research, I understand that I am responsible for immediately stopping the research and alerting the C-REC Chair with 24 hours of the occurrence.
- I am aware of my responsibility to be up to date with and to comply with the requirements of the law and relevant guidelines relating to security and confidentiality of personal data.

- I understand that research records / data may be subject to inspection for audit purposes if required in future.
- I understand that I may not commence this research until I have been notified that the project has ethical approval.
- **FOR STUDENT RESEARCHERS:** I understand my responsibilities to work within a set of safety, ethical and other guidelines as agreed in advance with my supervisor. I also understand that I must comply with the University's regulations and any other applicable code of ethics at all times.

Signature of Principal Investigator / Student Researcher

Print Name:

Date:

C.9 HIGHER RISK STUDENT PROJECTS ONLY – SUPERVISOR'S AUTHORISATION

To be completed by the supervisor for all student research – please tick

The student has the appropriate skills to undertake the research	<input type="checkbox"/>
The student has read an appropriate professional code of ethical practice	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand my responsibilities as supervisor, and will ensure, to the best of my abilities, that the student researcher abides by the University's regulations and any other applicable code of ethics at all times.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supervisor's email address	
Supervisor's Signature	
Date of supervisor authorisation	

WHERE DO I SEND MY FORM?

HIGHER RISK PROJECTS

Staff and all students (UG, PGT and PGR):

Submit to your School C-REC for full review (email addresses below).

C-REC	Email
Arts	c-recarts@sussex.ac.uk
Social Sciences	c-recss@sussex.ac.uk
Psychology and Life Sciences	c-recpsysci@sussex.ac.uk
Informatics, Engineering & Design, and Mathematics & Physical Sciences	c-rciem@sussex.ac.uk

Acknowledgements:

King's College London; University of Liverpool; University of Birmingham

Appendix 5: Examples of Coding

‘General management approach’ identified in the interviewee sample transcripts:

CODE	CODED COMMENTS
ASD/HE/BT	We distribute powers / flexibility / resolutions are not taken or made individually ...
MOB/DE/BA	flexibility / delegation ... of powers / free from the ... restrictions of bureaucracy / My office door is always open / important to delegate powers.
MD/DE/EN	grant more powers to others
NB/DE/BAG	We need decentralisation.
AAM/PR/FI	Do our best for the best
MHM/PR/LA	decision making process so easy. / participation of all
FIE/PR/CE	annual targets, and the monthly
MOT/DI/AE	We don't have hierarchy / open door policy
AMS/DH/BA	flexibility / policy of open door / powers are not vested in only a few hands
GON/LE/FI	freedom in decision making process / good feedback from others
HT/LE/EC	put clear goals
MAD/LE/HR	Youth talent represent the majority within our management structure

‘Link to theories and/or concepts’ identified in the interviewee sample transcripts:

CODE	CODED COMMENTS
ASD/HE/BT	Centralism / Five years ago, we depended heavily on centralism
MOB/DE/BA	decentralisation / fully obliged to apply what the Ministry of Higher Education sees fit / I hope that the ministry will be less strict in this matter / I myself like decentralisation, especially in relation to running a private university / all the related academic matters are left to the specialists
MD/DE/EN	Decentralisation is ...most important pillars of private education. / decentralisation means ... more powers ... for more responsibilities
NB/DE/BAG	Quality teaching to produce qualified" manpower for the work market. / most of our students get hired during such period by interested organisations. / (MOHE) really interviews about everything we do ... and they don't allow you to deviate from wherever they doing, they want you to do exactly the same thing. They really oblige you to have

	university council, ... college council, ... department council so you really have to follow those to the letter. / you turning me into a public university and by nature I am not. / very close grip on a private universities / this is not an area we can be independent./ they considered themselves to belong to their umbrella following their rules to the letter any deviation we get denied. / We have to refer to the ministry as to pricing and increase of pricing / the ministry controls the number of students and acceptance. / All we ask for is adequate freedom thus monitored by the government, namely the Ministry of Higher Education but within a limited scope of authority not total control or supervision.
AAM/PR/FI	All private universities must obtain the approval of Higher Education Ministry first before any act on their part.
MHM/PR/LA	UBT has become a private university. / MOHE imposes strict regime on the academic output. / The main goal of the private sector is to make a product and sell it and makes profit. / The Ministry of Higher Education tries to make the private universities recruit professors who have worked for government universities in order to exploit their knowledge and experience and use it for knowledge sharing.
FIE/PR/CE	Our administration is an academic one / We have a strategic plan for five or ten years.
MOT/DI/AE	Centralism affects us badly.
AMS/DH/BA	Decentralisation plays a major and an effective role in administration / Lack of decentralisation can cause a lot of troubles and problems. / Decentralisation helps to expedite procedures / The ministry put such procedures in practice to ensure quality
GON/LE/FI	we have a better system than the official one
HT/LE/EC	The services rendered by the private universities are much more than those delivered by the government universities. /. We try do strike some balance between what is needed and what it should be.
MAD/LE/HR	We are in full control of the university's economics / decision-making system is as dictated by the Ministry of Higher Education.

‘Impact of management approach on UBT’ identified in the interviewee sample transcripts:

CODE	CODED COMMENTS
ASD/HE/BT	We as a private university have a board of trustees. / The council of trustees is the supervisory and legislative body. The director of the university and the board of directors have the executive powers. / Decisions can be made by individuals but before execution or taking action, they must be approved by university board.
MOB/DE/BA	There is a huge tendency to computerise all UBT communications and correspondence. / Delegating powers means more responsibility and accountability
MD/DE/EN	The university has its own budget and programmes but still under the umbrella of the Ministry of Higher Education. /We thought at the beginning that it was going to be relationship between the daughter and a surrogate mother and not a natural mother. / Most of the powers of the director are given to the university council, therefore he cannot approve

	a matter without the consent of the council, / the ministry has the right for access to our records, data, performance results and even the results of any student.
NB/DE/BAG	We thought at the beginning it was going to be relationship between the daughter and a surrogate mother and not a natural mother. / Most of the powers of the director are given to the university council, therefore he cannot approve a matter without the consent of the council, / the ministry has the right to access to our records, data, performance results and even the results of any student.
AAM/PR/FI	We seek on a regular basis to update the curricula. / Private universities shall not add or delete any part to the curricula without the approval of the Ministry of Higher Education.
MHM/PR/LA	We pay much attention to academic affairs to cope with the market needs. / Now we have international accreditation and certification system. / Private university can address any problem on the spot.
FIE/PR/CE	There are some strict procedures that we have to meet such as we have to have dean, deputy, head for each department and division, board of the colleague, university board.
MOT/DI/AE	Private universities have fixed budgets.
AMS/DH/BA	I think the decentralisation is part of the academic work.
GON/LE/FI	I have coped with the pressure of instructing and doing administrative work / The only problem, we face is the work pressure. / to turn our university to be computerised. / Working for a private university represents a rare opportunity to learn from others and gain new experience.
HT/LE/EC	We render services to the students that the government university does not. / We may have workload but we try to cope with it.
MAD/LE/HR	We can study the market and formulate budgets the way we see fit for our operations and quality criteria. / most managers are under 30 years of age

‘Impact of management approach on government’ identified in the interviewee sample transcripts:

CODE	CODED COMMENTS
ASD/HE/BT	MOHE still supervises everything, we do. We cannot take any action or measures without the approval of the ministry. For example, the President of University shall be appointed after the approval of the ministry./ There should be a union for the private universities that can ... supervise the activities and performance of such universities. MOHE shall be there for policymaking.
MOB/DE/BA	MOHE is the supervisory body; we are committed to apply all the ministry rules ... in this respect. / does not enjoy being fully independent institution.

MD/DE/EN	We, as a private university, work under the umbrella of the Ministry of Higher Education. We do our best to upgrade the systems based on the available resources to us. The common interest that governs our relationship is the development of private universities.
NB/DE/BAG	it really suffocates the investment and at the same time it gives the bad example for other investors so ever things of interring into such investment in education / the university council is headed by the Minister/ True, we lack such trust, as we are seen as supporting branches to the educational process owned by them from the stand point of regulatory aspect
AAM/PR/FI	Concerning the curricula we stick to what MOHE determines. In case of any change, we return to MOHE. There is no complexity in the matter.
MHM/PR/LA	The government compels the private universities to be committed to curricula by MOHE. No bigger change is introduced to these curricula as long as they are approved by MOHE. The only change that could be made that could meet the needs of the market.
FIE/PR/CE	totally committed with rules and regulations of MOHE / we have some things that are not subject to centralism like students' union and labour association which is mainly interested in labour affairs Similarly, the students' union plays the same role of preserving the rights of the students and fosters their activities. / we have a balanced relationship with MOHE
MOT/DI/AE	We have some rules and traditions imposed on us.
AMS/DH/BA	I think MOHE has a responsibility ... and a duty to introduce some of flexibility for private universities to give them an edge for competitiveness.
GON/LE/FI	I think we have a small amount of decentralisation / We often face difficulty with resolutions from Dhaban / we have to wait long time until they arrive.
HT/LE/EC	We, ..., abide by the rules and regulations instituted by MOHE for private universities. We have a fixed syllabus that we have to instruct as a university of business and technology. If we introduced any modification ..., we have to get the approval of MOHE first before application.
MAD/LE/HR	as the director of the university, there is not problems between the dean and deputies with government authorities/ the head of the board of trustees is the liaison officer with the Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Higher Education, the Emirate etc., including permits and licenses. / We are required to present an equal guarantee for the financing amount from the Ministry of Finance. As to the Ministry of Higher Education, red tape is the main problem as we have to wait for 3 to 5 months in order to get transactions done.

‘Impact of local KSA conditions on management approach’ identified in the interviewee sample transcripts:

CODE	CODED COMMENTS
ASD/HE/BT	We were pioneers in involving women in teaching staff and administration side by side with men according to Islamic Sharia Law. As we do not have a sufficient of women for teaching staff, we tried to fill this vacuum with men for teaching and instructing at female colleges.
MOB/DE/BA	First of all, we do not have a mixed system combines male and female students. The campus of male students is in Dhaban while the female one is in Sari. We do not have female teachers or professors for male students. / Of course, we work in environment known for its deep - rooted traditions and Islamic system. We must abide by Islamic Sharia law. We apply strict dress code to all students.
MD/DE/EN	We must abide by and stick to our Islamic values and customs and traditions and protect our academic environment from being influenced by foreign elements that could have adverse impact on our values and traditions.
NB/DE/BAG	If we were given the choice we could of house 2000 female students with 3000 male students in one complex at Dhaban and in that way we save costs. Opposing co-education takes us back to ancient ages. Moreover, males and females mingle together at airports, hospitals, Arafa and Makka – why such is denied for universities?
AAM/PR/FI	satisfy the students' aspiration for becoming an effective tool in the future.
FIE/PR/CE	We have different campus for girls and boys. We have some female workers at the campus of boys. The female students have their full freedom in their performance.
MOT/DI/AE	We mustn't mix with male peers. So, we find it difficult to run or do some courses at hotels because it is banned to mix with males.
AMS/DH/BA	We live in an environment known for its specific value and its treasured –century –honoured traditions. The teachings of our Islamic religion always come first however noble the goals and objectives of the university are.
GON/LE/FI	Thanks are due to Allah
MAD/LE/HR	HRH Prince Khalid Al Faisal is the major supporter of national universities thus is deputy president of the board of trustees for Effat University and Dar Alhekmah being non-profit organisations. As to our university as well as the Albatterjee's the situation is different.

Appendix 6: Interview Transcripts

DR. A. S. D.

Head of Board of Trustees of UBT

Could you please tell me something about your background?

I was a professor at university then I became a general secretary for chambers of commerce and industry in Jeddah for twenty years. Then I elected as a member at The Shoura Council, a member of labour organisation. Now I am an investor, the first one at the educational sector.

What are the main advantages of the current administration UBT?

An international consultant bodies have shaped this kind of administrative style. The same style is applied in many a university around the world. We adopted this style here in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. As you know that royal regime is the political system in kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The king himself is chairman of the cabinet. Most countries, in the third world, depend on the centralism in ruling. But we introduced a new system that is totally different the current system. This system is against the centralism. We as a private university have a board of trustees. We distribute powers on an even ground.

How does centralism affect the sector of higher education?

Unfortunately, we ask the researchers like you to touch this problem and try through study and search find solution to these problems. The main problem, we face today is the Ministry of Higher Education. Ministry of Higher Education is supposed to make these policies. But now, the ministry makes these policies and executes them and punishes those who contravene them. The Ministry of Higher Education still supervises everything, we do. We cannot take any action or measures without the approval of the ministry. For example, the President of university shall be appointed after the approval of the ministry.

How would you describe the administrative style at UBT?

The council of trustees is the supervisory and legislative body. The director of the university and the board of directors have the executive powers. We have a system that has flexibility. Concerning the financial matters, and human resources department, we have a supervisory body to monitor these departments.

How can you describe the relationship between you and Ministry of Higher Education?

Once more, as I told you before, the Ministry of Higher Education follows and adopts traditional system in administration: centralism. There should be a union for the private universities that can protect and supervise the activities and performance such universities. The Ministry of Higher Education shall be there for policymaking. The Ministry of Higher Education cannot, technically speaking, supervise all universities all over the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. We have about thirty or forty universities including hundreds of faculties and colleges where thousands of students, male and female study. Consequently, it is hard and difficult for the ministry to supervise such huge process. We have strong relationship with the ministry. As we belong to this Ministry of Higher Education.

What is the significance and importance of the applied administrative at UBT?

The most important advantage of the applied system is that resolutions are not taken or made individually or single handed but unanimously. The process of decision-making is now systemic and passes through a number of boards. Decisions can be made by individuals but before execution or taking action, they must be approved by university board.

What is the importance of applying decentralism at private institutions?

At small institutions, centralism is perquisite as they have a few numbers of staff and their abilities are limited. Concerning the huge institutions, centralism is considered equivalence to backwardness. Five years ago, we depended heavily on centralism in decision-making process.

What is your view concerning the policy of decentralism at the sector of higher education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia? Is it useful for the owners?

First of all, the policy of centralism represents a surmountable obstacle in the way of education development and process. Ministry of Higher Education still imposes some strict rules. For example, we can hold a forum or a conference with having the permission of the ministry. We cannot delegate our teaching staff to attend a meeting or conference before securing the approval of the ministry.

What is your personal philosophy in administration?

I do not like to talk about myself, but I think I have some successful experiences in the administration whether in the chamber of commerce or in my private own business. From my own experience, I can say, small size institutions and companies are in bad need for centralism in the process of decision making, especially when the owner has clear vision. But the matter is totally different with medium and large size companies and institutions as centralism has tremendous bad effect on them.

As you know professor, we are, in kingdom of Saudi Arabia, a conservative society. We have our own traditions that must be kept and observed when a decision is made?

We were pioneers in involving women in teaching staff and administration side by side with men according to Islamic Sharia Law. As we do not have a sufficient of women for teaching staff, we tried to fill this vacuum with men for teaching and instructing at female colleges.

Dr. M. O. B.

Dean of faculty of Business Administration - The University of Business And Technology (UBT).

What are the objectives of the applied administrative style at (UBT)?

The main objectives are to apply the most up-to-date administrative approaches to upgrade the (UBT) administrative style. There is some kind flexibility in running the activities of (UBT) including delegation and distribution of powers to deans and deputies. There is a huge tendency to computerise all UBT communications and correspondence.

In your view, how does decentralisation of the higher education sector affect the independence of the university?

Universities are supposed to be independent entities, financially, administratively academically. The decentralisation manifests itself in private universities like our

(UBT). Our administration is not subject to government rules and regulations like Ministry of Finance. So, we are free from the shackles and restrictions of bureaucracy. Of course, Ministry of Higher Education is the supervisory body; we are committed to apply all the ministry rules and regulations in this respect.

How can you explain to the applied administrative style (UBT)?

I, personally, follow a mixed style of old and modern one. It is the open door policy. I have followed this style even before I join the faculty. I prefer to be always in touch with all of my staff and my students. My office door is always open for any of my staff or students. I hold periodical meetings with my staff to discuss all urgent cases that need to be tackled immediately.

Describe the relationship between (UBT) and the official authorities concerning the educational policy?

In this particular subject, our (UBT) does not enjoy being fully independent institution. We are fully obliged to apply what the Ministry of Higher Education sees fit. Introducing or change any subject without having the permission of Ministry of Higher Education represents a problem. For example, I introduced mathematics subject into the curricula, but I have to get the approval of Ministry of Higher Education. I hope that the ministry will be less strict in this matter.

How can you describe decentralisation and privatisation in relation to a university?

I myself like decentralisation, especially in relation to running a private university with this size. It is so important to delegate powers. Delegating powers means more responsibility and accountability.

Is it useful for the owner and for the development of the administrative style applied at private university?

Fortunately, the owners (of UBT) are academicians. This makes our mission so easy. Apart from the financial matters which of course are in the hands of the owners, all the related academic matters are left to the specialists.

What are the local characteristics that should be observed in applying the administrative style at (UBT)? What are the modifications needed to be introduced with observing local characteristics?

First of all, we do not have a mixed system combines male and female students. The campus of male students is in Dhaban while the female one is in Sari. We do not have female teachers or professors for male students.

To what extent the unique nature of the kingdom is reflected on (UBT)?

Of course, we work in environment known for its deep -rooted traditions and Islamic system. We must abide by Islamic Sharia law. We apply strict dress code to all students.

Dr. M. D.

Dean of faculty of engineering - The University of Business and Technology (UBT)

What are the objectives of the applied administrative style at (UBT)?

The main objective is to see the university as a private one offering good opportunities to the society. I hope that the university could offer sound education to the students of

the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. To make our (UBT) able to make profits, we must create some kind of sustainability.

In your point of view, how does decentralisation at higher education sector affect the independence of the university?

Decentralisation is one of the most important pillars of private education. The university should have its independent board of directors. The university has its own budget and programmes but still under the umbrella of the Ministry of Higher Education.

How can you explain the applied administrative style (UBT)?

It is based on the applied administrative system at Ministry of Higher Education. Of course, as a private university, we must apply additional standards to ensure the quality of education. Our main interest lies in the quality of education.

Describe the relationship between (UBT) and the official authorities concerning the educational policy?

We, as a private university, work under the umbrella of the Ministry of Higher Education. We do our best to upgrade the systems based on the available resources to us. The common interest that governs our relationship is the development of private universities.

What are the benefits of decentralisation that the students and teachers could reap?

There is an international charter that shapes the relationship between the student and the instructor. The decentralisation concept means granting powers to each one of the staff to carry out his duties in professional and proper manner.

What are the benefits of decentralisation for investors and owners?

We know that decentralisation means to grant more powers to others in return for more responsibilities and obligations. This is an important element for our university to work more efficiently.

What are customs and traditions that have an impact on the system?

We must abide by and stick to our Islamic values and customs and traditions and protect our academic environment from being influenced by foreign elements that could have adverse impact on our values and traditions.

N. B., PhD

Dean, Business Administration College – Girls Division Business & Technology University

What are the vision and objectives of your management style?

The vision of any national college is to attract qualified students in order to maintain quality education and also to pump qualified students for the work market. Therefore, I say proudly that our objective is "quality teaching to produce qualified" manpower for the work market.

BTU ranks second after CBA in terms of educational output and supplying the market with qualified students who are employed falling after King Fahd Petroleum & Minerals University. In other words, this is a proof that we live up to our objectives.

For instance, BTU was assessed for the past 12 years as to labour market and employment of graduates, and due to the mandatory (co-up) program that the students must take as a practical training up to 6 months at 3-4 days a week, where they chose an

organisation as an example (such as firm, company, bank, hospital ... etc) in direct relation to their individual researches. In such program, the students have the opportunity to demonstrate real life management and job-related solutions at the presence of their families, friends and lecturers. As a result, most of our students get hired during such period by interested organisations.

From a personal point of view, how centralisation decentralisation impacts higher education?

Very effective, its important factor that I don't think any private college or university can survive without it. We need the decentralisation. The Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) really interviews about everything we do and they forces to follow the template of the Parents that they following in the public universities and they don't allow you to deviate from wherever they doing, they want you to do exactly the same thing. They really oblige you to have university council, to have a college council, to have a department council so you really have to follow those to the letter. Also they force you to create the top management in the same fashion that they are following in their universities. In respective of your size in respective of your ages compare to the ages of the public universities so there is no way you can compare UBT to King Abdulaziz University.

If you force me because you want to centralise me and want me to follows your rules and regulations and never delayed from them you turning me into a public universities and by nature I am not. Our own approval says we are private immediately by default defines the word profit. So I have profit in mind and in public universities doesn't even exist, how could we been modelling them with this factors so I either satisfy this or satisfy that but if you keep forcing me as MOHE as the official umbrella that I follow that interface just about practice and every actor we do and they really do that whit very close grip on a private universities and colleges it really suffocates the investment and at the same time it gives the bad example for other investors so ever things of interring into such investment in education since this is not an area we can be independent.

What is the relationship between your university and the Ministry of Higher Education, especially to imposing certain requirements?

We thought at the beginning it's going to be relationship between the daughter and a surrogate mother and not a natural mother. However, I adopt a sequence that is represent "how", who, what, when and where". This is the whole the a sense of decentralisation is to allow me to get to the results that you want me want following my own way without having to following your footsteps without having to dictate to me what to do what not to do. The do and don'ts and should and should not be concerning the "how" but we can agree on the "what". This is not the situation, my surrogate mother is actually be natural mother by birth and they considered themselves to belong to their umbrella following their rules (a to z) to the letter any deviation we get denied.

What are the advantages of the decentralisation of management at your university?

There is no centralisation, but the same style adopted by King Abdulaziz University and King Saud University ... etc, as dictated by the Ministry of Higher Education. The authorities were withdrawn from the deans of faculties and handed over to the college's council, as dictated by the Ministry. Also, most of the powers of the director are given to the university council, therefore he cannot approve a matter without the consent of the council, just as customary at King Abdulaziz, noting that the university council is

headed by the Minister; moreover, such system may be enforced upon the private sector's universities.

As to the internal processes and transactions, are departmental heads equipped with necessary powers? As I understood there is independence but there is a sort of control by the ministry and yourself?

We ensure proper adherence to the system including my monitoring of such compliance. However, the ministry has the right for access to our records, data, performance results and even the results of any student.

Does this mean there is not adequate trust?

True, we lack such trust, as we are seen as supporting branches to the educational process owned by them from the standpoint of regulatory aspect not financially or physically.

Did not you made your point that private universities are profitable organisations with expansion objectives and that must have different system from those applied for Governmental universities?

We know this point of view is not acceptable.

As I understood there is not centralisation in the normal sense, and if it exists what are benefits of such for the owner who aims for profit? Do you think the owners were responsible for such and what the investors are making out of such style?

We have to refer to the ministry as to pricing and increase of pricing and approvals especially after we expanded remarkably. At that time, the minister requested Dr. Abdullah to come to his office where the minister questioned the reason for price increasing and finally he signed an undertaking that bind him not to increase the prices further at the time where there were neither scholarships nor support from the ministry. However, we learnt a lesson at a later stage when we converted into a university so we coordinated with the ministry for approval for the price increase and other issues. Moreover, the ministry controls the number of students and acceptance. For instance if the second terms starts on 26 January, their circulars say only 2 weeks and this hinders us from accepting any late student and if we accept more students we get reprimanded and sometimes intimidated. As we are not entrepreneurs, we invest in such honourable field – education, and we play a vital role in supporting the government endeavours in education taking into account that the government is not able to accommodate all students. For instance only level (A) is accepted by King Abdulaziz university, so the remaining 90% where they go? That means national university is confronting such shortage especially for girls. In spite we represent a supporter to the government endeavours we lack financial support. Those who get internal scholarships through us should get the same benefits including money for textbooks similar to those travelling abroad who get air tickets, medical coverage, dependants support, where internal students get only tuition fees only. As a result, the ministry undermines our duties towards delivering the educational mission.

As you know we are a conservative society, is such impacted your management style in relation to co-education?

Of course, we paid direly for such tradition. For example, co-education exists in King Abdullah University for Science and Technology and the medical college of King Abdulaziz University. When it comes to us we were asked to erect smaller compound

for the girls. If we were given the choice we could of house 2000 female students with 3000 male students in one complex at Dhaban and in that way we save costs. Opposing co-education takes us back to ancient ages. Moreover, males and females mingle together at airports, hospitals, Arafa and Makka – why such is denied for universities?

Do you think it is a good idea for an association that acts as an umbrella for the private universities so you be independent? Also, I understood that a doctor graduated from a government university gets promoted where the one graduated from a national university stalls in terms of accepting his/her research and carrier-wise?

This is not a solution, because associations and guilds are not recognised by the ruling system and the constitution. All we ask for is adequate freedom thus monitored by the government, namely the Ministry of Higher Education but within a limited scope of authority not total control or supervision.

I sensed from your answer that you lack privacy in the university, is such privacy was taken away due to internal scholarships or it dates back to earlier time?

No, in fact this is their habit, for instance the scholarship matter, they send us students thus asking us to accept them because they were accepted by them but we do not have such specialisations, even those who scored 95% or 98% they lack English language capability and they lack transportation means (both genders) and they lack money to buy books, in spite of such fact we have to accept them, and most of the time I play the role of the intermediary through emails communication.

As you maintain high standards, are you affected by those students who fail to meet such standards?

Yes, even behaviour-wise. You know a wealthy girl behaves differently from that poor girl students in addition to conflicting thoughts, cultural and social differences. Therefore, we find ourselves in a position to alter or modify our system in order to accommodate such students.

A. A. M.

Professor of Finance, General Directorate Officer for Quality and Development

Do you know the main characteristics of your educational institution as a private one?

As far as the educational perspective is concerned, we have some distinctive characteristics. If you we speak about the university as general, we have a field of specialisation that does not exist anywhere - media. We seek on a regular basis to update the curricula. We pay much attention to the content of such curricula. I think we have made some progress that is reflected in the huge turnover of the students.

How can you classify the academic qualification that the students receive at the university? Why?

I don't much information about other universities, but for our university- with any flattery, our academic qualification is very good. Yet, we seek and do our best for the best.

Does the difference in opinions between the board of the university and the government have any impact on you?

We as, a private university, are committed to apply special rules. Similarly, all private universities must obtain the approval of Higher Education Ministry first before any act on their part. Private universities shall not add or delete any part to the curricula without the approval of the Ministry of Higher Education.

My question is about you relation, positive or negative with higher education. For example, it imposes some specific number of classes that you have to stick to?

I don't have any idea about the number of classes but concerning the curricula we stick to what the Ministry of Higher Education determines. In case of any change, we return to The Ministry of Higher Education. There is no complexity in the matter.

Dr. M. H. M.

Assistant professor of law - general director of legal affairs at UBT

Do you know the main characteristics of your educational institution as a private one? Of course, (UBT) started as a private college but over time, it attracted a large number of students and academics until it reached the status of a university. Now UBT attracts students from all over the kingdom. UBT has become a private university.

How are academic affairs managed?

We pay much attention to academic affairs to cope with the market needs. When we develop a syllabus, we take into our considerations that this syllabus meets the requirements of the market and satisfy the students' aspiration for becoming an effective tool in the future.

How can you classify the academic qualification that the students receive at the university?

Indeed, the academic level and standard are excellent and they have improved a lot. Now we have international accreditation and certification system. The MOHE imposes strict regime on the academic output.

In your opinion, what are the most needed improvements that must be introduced into the current administrative system at UBT?

I think the most crucial point to raise the efficiency of (UBT) is to attract more and more professors and academics from all over the kingdom. I think the new young generation of academia can play a great role in the development of UBT.

Are there any problems between (UBT) and the government?

Of course, the competition is so high in the private sector. The main goal of the private sector is to make a product and sell it and makes profit. The public sector is governed by standards. What I mean is that the public universities are funded by the government. They are non-profitable institutions. This is totally different as far the private sector is concerned, they must be in a constant process of development. They must tackle and address all problems (financial, administrative)

How do the rules imposed by the government affect your work?

The government compels the private universities to be committed to curricula by the Ministry of Higher Education. No bigger change is introduced to these curricula as long as they are approved by the Ministry of Higher Education. The only change that could

be made that could meet the needs of the market. The Ministry of Higher Education tries to make the private universities recruit professors who have worked for government universities in order to exploit their knowledge and experience and use it for knowledge sharing.

In general, what are the benefits of the systems applied in private universities?

Of course, non-centralism is one of the most crucial assets and merits of the private universities. As a result, they can easily appoint the teaching and administrative staff. Private university can address any problem on the spot. This makes decision-making process so easy. Unlike government universities, the process of decision-making is more effective and positive because the participation of all involved in making it.

DR. F. I. E.

Deputy of UBT for academic affairs/Professor of chemical engineering and materials/Associate professor/ Started his deputy since September/Started to work for UBT since 5/1433AH

What are the main advantages of the current administration at UBT?

For me, it is to see UBT as a pioneer in the field of technology and information technology. Of course, the deputy of UBT has some specific powers related to the nature of work. Now we have a manual for the description of the responsibilities and duties. Of course, our administration is an academic one which is totally committed with rules and regulations of the Ministry of Higher Education.

In your own opinion, how does centralism affect the sector of higher education?

Our UBT works according to the followed systems of the private universities. Yet, we have some things that are not subject to centralism like students' union and labour association which is mainly interested in labour affairs from the lowest rank worker to the seniors. This association defends for the rights of workers and stand by them in crises. It provides them with full support. Similarly, the students' union plays the same role of preserving the rights of the students and fosters their activities.

How can you describe the administrative style at UBT?

As far as my administration is concerned, we have annual targets, and the monthly targets help us achieve the annual targets. Our system does not depend on the daily routine target. Our agency has its own IT system and language centre.

To what extent you have achieved your targets?

I cannot say for sure how much we have achieved because we are still in the process of development. We have nearly completed our strategic plan. We have had a private company aiding in drawing and shaping this plan. We have a strategic plan for five or ten years. We have already completed 13 or 14 targets. The last four months were for preparation period, we will put the plan into motion as of the first of January.

How can you describe the relationship between you and Ministry of Higher Education?

I can say, we have a balanced relationship with the Ministry of Higher Education. During the few past months, the ministry started to apply a uniform system in their requests. The ministry has a lot of branches. The ministry has a lot of consultant bodies and commissions that the ministry has delegated powers to them.

What are the benefits of the decentralism?

The most important investment is that one in human resources to service his fellow citizens. This is my main concern since I became a consultant to UBT. This university was created to meet the needs of the students. We need to create and establish new colleagues to accommodate the huge number of students. We have prepared the feasibility for such colleagues.

What are the traditions the must be observed when you apply the administrative style?

We have different campus for girls and boys. We have some female workers at the campus of boys. The female students have their full freedom in their performance.

Are there any conditions imposed on you by Ministry of Higher Education and you must meet?

Of course the curricula have to approve by the Ministry of Higher Education. We cannot dispatch scholarship if you are not accredited by Ministry of Higher Education. There are some strict procedures that we have to meet such as we have to have dean, deputy, head for each department and division, board of the colleague, university board.

Dr. M. O. T.

Regional Academic Excellence Director

What are the most distinctive characteristics of private universities?

Unlike the government universities that have huge budgets, private universities have fixed budgets.

In your view, how are the administrative affairs of a private university run?

Our faculty for female students has its own dean, separate department of human resources, deanship of admission & registration. The same is applied to the purchases and other sectors, students' affairs.

How can you classify the educational standards and levels?

The inner nature of female students is totally different from the inner nature of the male students. We have a sound educational system. Everything is in the process of constant development. Thanks to the main qualities of women that they always seek to achieve success, so they can make good progress in education.

How does the administrative system affect you personally?

We have a crisis because the system of centralism. We have to follow up with the faculty of male students. The centralism affects us badly.

What are the kinds of improvements that are needed to be introduced?

There is the need to provide representatives with powers in the section of female students. Now, we have a responsible for human resource department so we had to depend on the deanship.

From you answer, we can guess that it has a bad effect.

For me as a manager, I face some problems related to the budget. We do some courses at the hotels I have to pay to the hotels. It takes much time until money comes from the headquarters.

Do you have any problems with the Ministry of Higher Education?

No we have no problems at all.

Are there any traditions or customs imposed on you?

Yes, indeed. We have some rules and traditions imposed on us. We mustn't mix with male peers. So, we find it difficult to run or do some courses at hotels because it is banned to mix with males.

In your view, what are the advantages of the applied administrative style?

We don't have hierarchy in the administration. So, it is easy to be in reach with top officials at the university. We have the open door policy in dealing with other departments. We are open to suggestions. The officials are ready to help at any time.

DR. A. M. S.

Deputy of Faculty of Business Administration at UBT

What are the objectives and goals of the UBT administration?

As a private university, decentralisation plays a major and an effective role in administration that affects the whole teaching staff from deputies to the president of UBT.

In your view, how does decentralisation affect the higher education section?

I think the decentralisation is part of the academic work. I think flexibility plays an important part of decision-making process. Lack of decentralisation can cause a lot of troubles and problems.

What is the administration theory that you apply at university? Is it the policy of open door?

As an experienced academician who worked in the administration and academic work, I have the ability to mix them both to ensure some kind of the desired quality. I know for sure that, this matter is complex and takes a lot of procedures. We apply the policy of open door. This policy is not born today but has existed for a long time. Decentralisation helps to expedite procedures. The powers are not vested in only a few hands.

How can you describe the relationship between UBT and the Ministry of Higher Education? Are there any pressures exercised on you?

We cannot name them pressures but rather procedures and measures uniformly applied on all universities. The ministry put such procedures in practice to ensure quality of education offered by universities whether they are government or private. I think the ministry has a responsibility to shoulder and a duty to do through introduction some of flexibility for private universities to give them an edge for competitiveness.

Do you observe our customs and traditions that our Saudi society known for centuries?

We live in an environment known for its specific value and its treasured -century - honoured traditions. The teachings of our Islamic religion always come first however noble the goals and objectives of the university are.

DR. G. O. N.

Lecturer in the Finance Department

Are you aware of any programs related to decentralisation?

I think we have a small amount of decentralisation. We often face difficulty with resolutions come from Dhaban. Because we have to wait long time until these resolution arrive.

According to your answer how does this affect your work?

We have an academic work and administrative work. We take all relative decisions. We take all relative decisions and procedures to deliver such paper to Dhaban.

In brief, what is the difference between your own system and the government system?

In my view, we have a better system than the official one. We have freedom in decision-making process.

How can you describe your experience at the university?

Really, I have learnt a lot. I have coped with the pressure of instructing and doing administrative work.

What are the difficulties that face you in achieving your goals? Are they due to being a private university?

Due to proper communication channels, we do not have many problems. The only problem, we face is the work pressure.

What are the kinds of improvements that can be introduced into your system?

All we seek is to turn our university to be computerised. We have a lot of branches now with new specialisation such as: engineering, Mass Media College. We have online service that could save time, money, and effort. Now it is easy to archive and maintain our documents.

What are the advantages of working for a private university?

Working for a private university represents a rare opportunity to learn from others and gain new experience. There is a good system of communication on personal and work level among the staff. We can get a good feedback from others concerning the decisions making process.

DR. H. T.

Are you aware of the centralism related programmes at UBT?

I will describe how I run the activities of my department because it sheds light on my relation with centralism. Of course, I have direct relationship with centralism from the academic, administrative aspects. Of course I revise and supervise the courses they instruct like Islamic courses and English courses. We have a fixed system to start the semester with. I have some rules that I must abide by and compel others to stick to. First of all, we must put clear goals. I have to describe the powers they have. I meet with the instructors to acquaint them with rules, powers and the instructions that they have to abide by and stick to during the whole semester. For the newcomers of female instructor, I introduce and make them acquaint with syllabus they are going to deal them.

What is the effect of this on your work and performance?

Of course, talents remain and we do our best to develop such talents. In our colleague, I feel that we represent a link. as the new female student comes to our department to study English so we facilitate the process for them and develop their language skills to be more effective and efficient.

Did you work for a government university before?

Of course, in Egypt

Could you tell us the difference between a private university and a government one?

The main difference is that we render services to the students that the government university does not. The number of students we have is different from the number of students at the government universities. Our relationship is like a mother with her children. This thing I cannot do at government universities due to the huge number of students. For the resources and abilities, they are available for government universities. But in my point of view the services rendered by the private universities are much more than those delivered by the government universities.

What is your own experience in administration?

Thanks are due to Allah, I think it is very successful. My current position has added a lot to me. As I am in the process of teaching and repeating the same information again and again, so I retain such information in my mind for a long time.

What are the obstacles that you face in carrying out your administrative duties? And if there are, is it because you are at a private university?

Maybe, they are normal obstacles. Sometimes, we have to go round the rules to teach or do something. We try to strike some balance between what is needed and what it should be. We have also some problems with the female students because they don't take matters seriously like their peers at the government universities but we do our best to tackle this problem

What are the improvements that you think suitable in administrative style at UBT?

I think there are some initiatives that the government should take to make it easy for female students to study four or five subjects.

What is the nature of the relationship between you and Ministry of Higher Education?

We, as a private university, abide by the rules and regulations instituted by the Ministry of Higher Education for private universities. We have some fixed syllabus that we have to instruct as a university of business and technology. If we introduced any modification to such syllabus, we have to get the approval of the ministry first before application.

What are the advantages of working for a private university?

I have learnt a lot for working for a private university. It has enhanced my own experience and broadened and expanded my background. Concerning demerits and drawbacks, I think we have a lot of them. We may have workload but we try to cope with it. I think vacation can relieve the stress and the load we experience during the semester then we can start over again with full energy and enthusiasm.

M. A. D.

Lecturer, Human Resources Division HR Deputy Director, Business & Technology University

What distinguishes your university being a private educational institution?

Firstly, it is not directly under the supervision of the Ministry of Higher Education, which means we are free to set up our plans that suit students and homeland; moreover, we can study the market and formulate budgets the way we see fit for our operations as well as quality criteria. In short, we are in full control of the university's economics so there is not an outside entity that may amend or later such plans and programs. The only requirement that we should comply with is the rules enforced by the Ministry of Higher Education, e.g. each faculty must occupy 40,000 square meters of land 60% of which footpaths embedded in it 60% classes and 30% for faculty members which means we have to struggle to meet such requirement. However, once the first college is erected the remaining colleges shall follow.

Could you tell us how the university is managed academically being a private and independent institution?

The dean, the university council and the legal body are responsible for academic decisions; however, such decisions must be in line with the Ministry of Higher Education requirements. For this purpose, the dean is supported by deputies of every branch of the university.

As to non-centralisation, the management here starts with the dean and his deputy, the director and his deputy then departmental heads etc, and accordingly each of whom has a line of authority as well as a supervisory reference; moreover, there are councils, rules and regulations and academic scope that is assigned qualified faculty staff. However, such decision-making system is as dictated by the Ministry of Higher Education.

What are the criteria for the education extended by the university?

In general, I can say we are quality in both curriculum and education; moreover, we extend courses that are not given by any other university in the Middle East except in international prominent universities. For instance, the subjects designed for the engineering and business administration or media has no parallel worldwide. In addition, we have qualified faculty staff, excellent inputs and scholarships that represent 40% of the university's capacity as well as an outstanding English language centre and we require passing the TOFEL or EILS requirements for the master degree program.

What are the differences between your university as a private institution and other universities?

We are distinguished by an outstanding faculty staff as well as the structures and educational facilities. The students here, for instance, have the freedom to exercise various activities; furthermore, there is a fact-finding committee responsible for investigating complaints, re-exam committee in case of protest by student(s) to the marks, board of directors members who engage heavily in major social events in-country and abroad.

As you know, CBA is known to be the first college that accommodates students instead of traveling to the USA and as a result it is well known.

On your relationship with the government, are there any opinion differences, and if so, what is their impact?

As far as I am concerned as the director of the university, there is not problems between the dean and deputies with government authorities; however, the head of the board of trustees is the liaison officer with the Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Higher Education, the Emirate etc, including permits and licenses. Nonetheless, I believe the municipality imposes harsh provisions which needs to be mitigated taking into consideration that we are doing better than others in the area of social responsibility. In addition, we are required to present an equal guarantee for the financing amount we seek from the Ministry of Finance. As to the Ministry of Higher Education, red tape is the main problem as we have to wait for 3 to 5 months in order to get transactions done. As to the intensive to commence a project such as this and the intensive to continue that is different matter. To be honest, HRH Prince Khalid Al Faisal is the major supporter of national universities thus is deputy president of the board of trustees for Effat University and Dar Alhekmah being non-profit organisations. As to our university as well as the Albatterjee's the situation is different.

As to the management style in your university, would you like to say something? Youth talent represent the majority within our management structure, technical officers are students and most managers are within 30 years of age who acquired the experience; moreover, we, in collaboration with Panda and Emmar King Abdullah Economic City, large numbers of students, in addition most of the departmental heads here are trained and qualified through this organisation.

L. B. T., PhD

Dean, Students Affairs, Faculty of Business & Technology

What is the university's vision, objective and administrative style?

We adopt a clear empowerment in terms of authority that involves the Head of Trustees and every Faculty Dean as *dictated* by the bylaws of the university which in turn serves improvement of performance in the Student's Affairs; moreover, we adopt division of work and specifying the roles of each individuals.

How Decentralisation Impacts the University's Independence?

Centralisation is a system that hinders development and advancement as the decision is restricted to a given person. Modern management concepts rely on teamwork, allocation of duties and responsibilities. However, centralisation does not exist in the Higher Education Systems, where is its tangible in governmental universities. As to national universities, I have no idea how they are managed.

What is the relationship between the University and the Government as to Educational Policies?

The Ministry of Education is a major supporter and encourages the national sector, therefore most of its decisions are in the favour of the national sector. Therefore, we are notified about all decisions taken by the ministry.

What are the benefits of privatisation in the university and the importance of decentralisation?

We adopt the open door system; therefore I welcome anyone to say whatever he/she wants. As to decisions, we take decisions collectively and centralisation does not exist within my department.

Does the owners benefit from decentralisation in higher education?

By giving me authority you enable me to act. Among the Academic Accreditation Commission recommendations is decentralisation. Therefore, the board of trustees and the chairman does not interfere. The authority is given to every officer and department as dictated by the bylaw including for you as a client. Clear management and authority system enables you and others to act effectively and the students are better served.

What administrative aspects matter to the university?

These days we are working on the Profession Day, thus we intend to make it 2 days instead of 1, meaning one day for boys and one day for girls. We are a national educational institution thus we don't permit boys and girls mixing. Even our female staff are interacting with males by phone or face-to-face only during meetings. There are other universities which allow mixing but this does not apply here in our university.

How special terms go along with your administrative system?

We concentrate on time management; therefore, a good institution needs qualified manpower, speed in implementing transactions, rehabilitation, and seminars. Delay is what we face in executing transactions.

A. M. N., PhD

Are you aware of any decentralisation program within your division?

Not at all

Do you have past working experience with governmental universities? And what is the difference between governmental universities and the Management & Business University?

In fact I was the Dean of the Faculty of Communication for 8 years but such faculty belongs to the Ministry of Telegraph, Post & Telephone.

Is the administrative system there differs from that exists here?

Absolutely, completely different

How do you describe such experience after moving to here?

I can say I am lucky by being here, as we have full authority to run the division and other matters smoothly and effectively.

What administrative obstacles that you face in daily basis?

Being a head of a division is fine but to assume sometimes additional tasks above to your responsibilities that makes life difficult somehow.

Is such difficulties connected with the existing system in spite of the university's efforts to mitigate the divisions' heads duties?

Yes, it depends on the general policy, however I believe that the Dean and faculty members are aware of such fact, therefore they tend to mitigate such duties in order to enable the division head to play his role and educational tasks so to be engaged in other activities.

Can we say the management style may affect your productivity?

True, smooth and clear management enables you to run your department and also to interact effectively with other divisions.

What are the advantages of decentralisation in this university?

Decentralisation means you have full control over your division hence you are operating in line with the general strategy of the university; moreover, you can put your proposal or concerns up front during meetings with faculty members and in turn such proposals or concerns are directed to the upper management for deliberation. This is among other things we are happy with here in the university.

Do you see other areas that require development?

The budget is set up for each division's activities thus the division head as absolute authority to dispose such budget the way it deemed appropriate; not only that, departmental heads participate in the decision making for their staff, selection of faculty members and teachers and of course with close coordination with the dean of the faculty.

What exactly you think that needs development?

There are many areas that require attention; however, you hold 2-3 meetings during each term where we discuss various matters and point of views. Such meetings allow us to get together thus act collectively in terms of decision making.