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Sustainability of International Branch Campuses: A Case Study of Management Practices in the Arabian Gulf

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Sustainability of International Branch Campuses: A Case Study of Management Practices in the
Arabian Gulf

by

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A THESIS

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Abstract

The purpose of this case study was to gain a thorough understanding of how an international branch campus (IBC) in the Arabian Gulf plans to achieve sustainability. My rationale for examining this topic was to help educational administrators in the region gain a better understanding of the factors contributing to the sustainability of IBCs. Drawing on current practices and international higher education literature, this research revealed important considerations for educational administrators currently managing or interested in establishing IBCs. The study used qualitative case-study methodology involving in-depth semi-structured interviews with eight senior administrators from an international branch campus in the Arabian Gulf. The study generated twelve findings, four for each of the research questions. The first four findings identified practices implemented to achieve the IBC sustainability: (1) maintaining the brand and integrity of academic programs; (2) uniqueness of local context and implications for the branch campus' operations; (3) relevance of product delivery to stakeholders through teaching, research, and service; and (4) a funding model centered on the educational mission of the branch campus. The interface between management practices and research informed concepts and processes of sustainability also revealed a second set of findings: (5) alignment of branch campus' goals and practices with national priorities; (6) adaptation of practices to fit with local laws and cultural context; (7) multifaceted governance process; and (8) resources efficiency. This inquiry also disclosed how the interdependence between the international branch campus and the home institution shapes these management practices unveiling a third set of findings: (9) Responding to anticipated challenges; (10) strong ties with the main campus; (11) balancing autonomous and interdependent decision making; and (12) recognizing the specificity of roles, benefits, and functions. From these findings, conclusions and recommendations for policy, practice, and operational changes were developed.

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It is called a terminal degree because it forces you to confront unrewarded anxieties, weirdest fears, complexities of balancing darkest hours of writing with temptations of social life while going from a graveyard to another. I am happy to be called an EdD survivor.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my late father Georges, my mom Salwa, my sisters in law May and Isabelle, my brothers Ghassan, Hassoun, and Jihad, and the youngest members in the Karam family Georgie, and Joy who continually support my dreams and ambitions.

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List of Abbreviations

CEO	Chief Executive Officer
COO	Chief Operating Officer
DIAC	Dubai International Academic City
HEI	Higher Education Institution
IBC	International Branch Campus
JAB	Joint Advisory Board
QUAG	Qnat University at the Arabian Gulf
QNAT	The home campus of Qnat University
STEM	Science, technology, engineering and mathematics
U.S.	United States of America

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Introduction

During the last twenty years, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates have led the educational efforts in the Arabian Gulf by investing billions of dollars to expand the educational strengths of their citizens through the establishment of higher education hubs. These hubs attract a large number of universities from across the globe to set up international branch campuses, which operate under the auspices of foreign higher education institutions. Dubai International Academic City in the United Arab Emirates and Education City in Doha, Qatar are by far the most successful hubs in attracting the majority of international branch campuses in the Middle East and hosting jointly close to 40 institutions (Krieger, 2008). For the purpose of this study, a hub consists of a number of branch campuses sharing campus facilities and within proximity to each other and engaging with each other based on a certain level of coordination (Lane & Kinser, 2011a). The creation of these hubs aims to improve their respective hosting systems by providing access to a large number of national and expatriate students. The main intent of the governments is to transform the hosting countries into knowledge-based economies by using research, ideas, innovations, and technical skills to generate high-impact economic benefits (Lane & Kinser, 2011a). What is considered an international branch campus in this study is an entity established by a foreign higher education institution outside the national borders of its main campus, offering academic programs, and granting degrees and diplomas based on some face-to-face teaching and learning (Lane, 2011). Regardless of these successes, recent failures of three universities in the region including George Mason University in Ras Al Khaimah, University of New South Wales in Singapore, and Dubai Aerospace University raised a lot of

skepticism about the presence of international branch campuses as the best way for Qatar and the United Arab Emirates to improve their education systems (Mills, 2009).

To achieve the objectives both Qatar and the United Arab Emirates have set for themselves, they must establish sustainable institutions. The concept of sustainability includes, but is not limited to steady enrollment, a balanced budget, a strong connection with the main campuses and a good fit with the local culture (Lane, 2011). This research study explores the relationships between management practices and the concepts and processes of sustainability, as defined by Lane (2011). Whereas much of the focus of branch campuses is directed towards funding of their operations, the focus on sustainability must be broader. While acknowledging the existence of a variety of factors leading to a promising and sustainable future, this research study describes how management practices related to policy development, human capital, and student experience interface with an institution's adaptability to the local context, efficiency of governance, and interdependence with the main campus. Moreover, this study identifies the challenges of an international branch campus operating in Qatar. In addition, the goal of this study is to explore future limitations of international branch campuses in an effort to both anticipate and to offer recommendations for policy, practice, and operational changes.

Research Problem

A continuous challenge for Qatar's Education City is to provide quality education for the student population in this country. The need for quality education is triggered by the inability of existing educational institutions in Qatar to produce highly trained workers who are ready to address both the theoretical and applied research questions demanded by Qatar's economy and the international labor market (Donn & Al Manthri, 2012; Herrera, 2007). Very little information is available about what branch campuses offer in this regard despite the impressive investment in

the management of educational hubs. A review of existing literature reveals that establishing a branch campus overseas may be partially triggered by a university's interest in generating additional revenues (Becker, 2009). However, decision-makers in these universities may not have considered the long-term implications of the establishment of a branch campus on its operations, its reputation, and, therefore, its future. Sustainability in all of its aspects should be the main focus when establishing a branch campus, but there is little critical reflection and less research on such a concept (Altbach, 2010). In addition, the recent closing of three universities in the Arabian Gulf has drawn attention to the future of foreign higher education institutions in the region and whether current management practices will ensure the sustainability of these institutions for the long term. This research study attempts to reflect and provide further thinking about this still under-researched phenomenon. In addition, as an educator and administrator who worked in the higher education sectors in the Arabian Gulf, I attempt to clarify the uniqueness of "education cities" and the cultural context within which they operate.

Research Purposes

The overall purpose of this study was to gain a thorough understanding of how an international branch campus in the Arabian Gulf defines and then plans to achieve sustainability. This study investigated the management and operations of an international branch campus in order to (a) identify the practices that educational administrators of an international branch campus are implementing to achieve its sustainability, (b) explain how management practices interface with research informed concepts and processes of sustainability, and (c) understand how an international branch campus operates in different organizational and cultural contexts from that of the main campus. This study was not an evaluation of the financial position of an international branch campus, but rather it focused on its sustainability.

Research Questions

This case study responded to the following three research questions:

1. What practices are educational administrators implementing to achieve the sustainability of an international branch campus in Qatar?
2. How do these management practices interface with concepts and processes of sustainability as found in the post-secondary research literature?
3. Does the interdependence between the international branch campus and the home institution shape these management practices? If so, how?

Overview of Methodology

To address the research questions, I used case study research methodology, which has been adopted by social and human scientists for many years (Creswell, 2012). Yin (1984), defined a case study as “an empirical inquiry that: investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when, the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which, multiple sources of evidence are used” (p. 23). By the same token, Creswell (2012) further defined case study research as, “an in-depth exploration of a bounded system (e.g., activity, event, process, or individuals) based on extensive data collection. “Bounded means that the case is separated for research in terms of time, place or some physical boundaries” (p. 465). Within the context of an international branch campus located in the Arabian Gulf during 2016, the intention of this case study is to extend the understanding of its sustainability by exploring the perspectives of a small group of educational administrators on management practices they implement to attempt to achieve sustainability.

The choice of single case study was purposeful for the following reasons. First, the case study took place on site in the international branch campus under research and offered the

opportunity to gather data from educational administrators that can lead to unique, heavily contextual outcomes and results related to these countries. Second, I had limited leverage on the international branch campus under research, which is a contemporary phenomenon within the real context of the Arabian Gulf. Third, in my previous job on the same site, I had developed inquiry skills and acquired deep knowledge related to the local culture, identified information sources, and conducted open-ended interviews and observations of many management practices. These skills and knowledge strengthened my ability to conduct this genre of research.

Careful attention was given to ethical and human subject considerations throughout the research process. I was equally committed to protecting the rights of participants, abiding by legal restrictions related to accessing institutions and data management and analysis, as per existing guidelines and policies provided in the Code of Conduct adopted by the American Psychological Association (Gay et al., 2009).

The qualitative interviews, documents review, and analysis that are the characteristics of case study research have provided more in-depth examination of the case. These multiple sources of evidence connected data to the conclusions and recommendations. By conducting this case study research, I was able to better comprehend the complexity situated in analyzing management practices and their delivery approach (Flyvbjerg, 2006). The research also follows and respects existing field guidelines, going through a pilot testing process of the interview questions, preparing related correspondence, and the selection of participants, and conducting the study. Further details on the choice of the proposed research method that best fits this study and the appropriate theoretical framework is given in Chapter Three.

Rationale

Education City is in a unique position in academia with the number of branch campuses it hosts and the programs the branch campuses offer, positioning itself as a good model for the study of branch campuses and educational hubs. The results of the study have the potential to help educational administrators in the region gain a better understanding of the factors contributing to the sustainability of international branch campuses. In addition, and since there has not been a thorough review of universities' motivations to establish international branch campuses overseas, this research study sheds light on the most common reasons cited in respect of this important question. This study also responds to the need for sharing information about the characteristics and challenges of international branch campuses which until now remains either unpublished or inaccessible.

Significance of the Study

With so many universities now exporting their academic programs to the Arabian Gulf, the results of this study are of interest to a variety of constituents. The list of constituents includes policy makers, leaders who undertake these initiatives, administrators involved in establishing and managing branch campuses or supporting international partnerships in the region, and institutional leaders engaged in planning and carrying out their respective organizations' internationalization efforts. Because student learning represents one of the primary foci of an institution of higher learning, the results of this study have the potential to extract new knowledge to help universities assure that international branch campuses are able to fulfill their mission of providing access to higher education in countries where academic opportunities are quite limited. On a grand scale, this study is important because it provides analysis of one of the ways a growing number of countries in the Middle East, Asia, and Africa

are attempting to expand access to quality higher education; it is important that this grand scheme be evaluated so that, indeed, quality and access to higher education is enhanced around the globe and it is done in ways that are as efficient and sustainable as possible.

Definitions of Key Terms

It should be noted that there are several working definitions of the terms stated below in the literature. Therefore, the following terms are being defined to clarify the specific way in which they are being used in this study. Where appropriate, the source of the definitions will also be cited.

Cross-border education. This term is one part of the internationalization process and will be used to refer to the mobility of people, transfer of knowledge, academic program offerings, exchange and development of policy and curriculum, and provision of research and services beyond the national borders of countries.

Education hub. An education hub is a designated region that represents the purposeful efforts of a country, state, city or authority to build its higher education sector by forging strategic partnerships with multiple local and international stakeholders that will strengthen its position as a key player in the field of training, knowledge creation, and education (Lane & Kinser, 2011a).

International branch campus. For the purpose of this study, this term refers to an entity established by a foreign higher education institution in a location outside the national borders of its main campus, operating and granting degrees in its name and offering academic programs, based on some face-to-face teaching and learning (Lane, 2011).

Internationalization. Internationalization consists of two interdependent pillars, cross-border and campus-based education, and refers to the efforts at home and abroad to incorporate

an international component in the learning process and targeting the curriculum, access to higher education, recruitment of students, human resources, policy, services, and research (Knight, 2012).

Sustainable institution. A sustainable institution is an efficient university capable of adapting its practices to fit the local context, engaging with and being responsive to its stakeholders, supporting its core mission and functions while employing people, and improving the community through its social responsibility with minimal effect on the environment and resources.

Organization of the Dissertation

This first chapter contains an introduction, statement of the research problem, purposes, and questions. It also conveys the rationale and significance of the study while defining key terminology used across this document. The second chapter provides a comprehensive and critical review of relevant literature and specifies the conceptual framework used in this study. Chapter Three describes the research design and methodology. It includes an explanation of and the rationale for the approach to the utilized case study research. Details of the data collection and analysis procedures are described. The role of the researcher is also provided. The last three chapters from four through six address the data collected as part of this research study. A synopsis of the case, a summary of the coding process, and research findings are presented in chapter four. Chapter five consists of the analysis, interpretations, and synthesis of the findings and therefore offering a holistic understanding of the case study. A listing of recommendations based on the research findings and personal reflections conclude the study in chapter six.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter presents a critical review of the educational literature pertinent to the three research questions that guide this case study. I first discuss global trends in post-secondary education, before examining the higher education sector in the Middle East. The establishment of educational hubs in this region with an emphasis on Qatar and the United Arab Emirates is then traced. Commonalities and differences between Dubai International Academic City and Education City in Doha are then identified, followed by a comparison of the political and managerial approaches Qatar and the United Arab Emirates are taking to develop themselves as educational hubs. In addition, this chapter sheds light on international branch campuses and identifies the factors leading to the potential sustainability of these institutions and explains the level of control that an institution actually has in this matter of sustainability. Before concluding with the conceptual framework that guides this study, the chapter also explores the relationships between management practices and the concepts and processes of sustainability.

Global Trends in Post-Secondary Education

To better understand the concept of sustainability and its applicability to international branch campuses, it is essential to comprehend the global trends in higher education and the developments leading to the establishment of the international branch campuses. International initiatives of higher education institutions increased in size and scope during the last two decades as a result of a variety of factors. The continuously changing nature of trade, the ease of international travel, decreasing public financial support for higher education in many industrial nations, the emergence of new markets and knowledge economies, and the development of

information technologies have played a role in reshaping the international nature of higher education. These initiatives range from traditional partnerships through study abroad and student exchange programs to providing access to higher education in developing countries. Additional benefits come from enhancing the quality of teaching and research to improving cultural understanding and nurturing peaceful coexistence (Altbach & Knight, 2007). These initiatives also include: recruitment, enrolment, and retention of international students; exporting academic programs overseas; promoting greater visibility on the international scene; and, the development of global citizenship among students (Hser, 2005). Counting on, but not limited to the above-mentioned initiatives, the higher education field strengthened the international dimension it has had for decades. These initiatives were also supported throughout the past years by the exchange of professors who travelled to teach overseas, and the establishment of networks consisting of universities from across the globe (Knight, 2012).

There are very few publications on the internationalizing efforts of universities and those that do exist are limited in scope. The main drivers that motivate universities to open a branch campus overseas and the reasons that cause the host countries and organizations to depend on foreign institutions to meet their higher education needs remain under-researched. Altbach and Knight (2007) provided a listing of motives behind the internationalization efforts of higher education institutions and stated that financial gain by for-profit and nonprofit institutions that are facing financial challenges is one key motive. A second reason cited is the enhancement of research and knowledge, which is considered a non-monetary motive. A third motive is to increase access to higher education for a large proportion of students, especially in countries where existing higher education institutions have capacity or quality limitations (Sidhu et al., 2011). Bridging capacity and quality gaps is often done through various forms of partnerships:

branch campuses, exported academic programs or franchises, and ‘twinning’ or alliances. A branch campus is an entity established by a foreign higher education institution in a different country while granting degrees in the name of the home institution. An exported academic program or franchise is an arrangement whereby an institution in the home country allows an education provider in another country to deliver their programs and curricula in that country while degrees are awarded by the home institution and teaching practices, management, and curriculum are customized based on the requirements of the host country. Twinning is a form of partnership based on collaborations between two institutions from different countries allowing students of each institution to take courses at both campuses while being awarded a degree from the home institution (Knight, 2012). Internationalization of the host country represents a fourth important motive. The provision of quality education involves attracting a large number of international students to add to the diversity of the student population and campus experience. In addition, internationalization generates supplementary revenues through higher tuition fees that international students pay in comparison with local residents.

Despite the increasing attention worldwide to internationalization efforts among higher education institutions, it is important to note that there are many obstacles and variables that have slowed down the pace of internationalization. The list of obstacles includes budget cuts in governmental funding, lack of faculty incentives and rewards to teach abroad, and negative perspectives on study abroad programs (Hser, 2005). The list extends to cover the closure of universities shortly after their opening in developing countries such as the United Arab Emirates and Singapore (Mills, 2009; Lim, 2009), restrictive governmental policies related to immigration and visa requirements (Altbach & Knight, 2007), and failure to identifying quality assurance measures internationally (Lim, 2009).

Post-Secondary Education in the Middle East

The Middle East is in the center of the academic boom that is taking place in the Asian continent and worldwide. The higher education field has gone through a drastic transition as the number of higher education institutions operating in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) has grown rapidly, surging to 260 in 2007 while the number in the 1940s was only ten. Despite having the financial resources to build quality higher education sectors, countries like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates, forming the Gulf Cooperation Council, were the last to react and take part in the academic boom (Romani, 2009) as they did not inherit universities and higher education systems from the colonial powers. Rather, after their independence these nations sought support from other Arab nations and the western world to build their higher education systems (Burden-Leahy, 2009). Having a relatively young population and with the influx of highly educated migrant workers and their families to the Arabian Gulf during the oil exploitation era, the Gulf Cooperation Council's states acknowledged the significance of investing in higher education by providing funding, infrastructure, staffing, and curriculum to address the growing needs of their work force (Nicks-McCaleb, 2005). Qatar and the United Arab Emirates combined currently host close to 40 branches of western postsecondary institutions.

The countries forming the Gulf Cooperation Council have used different approaches to build their higher education systems in the past few decades. Modernizing the curriculum, offering new academic programs to meet the needs of the job market, and collaborating on research projects through the recruitment of researchers and graduate assistants are examples of these approaches. The higher education sector across these countries is diverse and relatively young as most of the universities were established during or after the independence of the Gulf

Cooperation Council's countries in the 60s and 70s. The Gulf Cooperation Council's higher education systems consist of a number of federally or state funded institutions, semi-private, or privately owned institutions. Qatar is an example of a country with only one public institution, yet it hosts a large number of private and public branch campuses of renowned institutions to meet the demand for quality education.

Other members of the Gulf Cooperation Council, like the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, have many institutions funded by the federal government in addition to a few universities financially supported by the local government of the state or emirate. A wide range of partnerships with western institutions also provide different formats of private higher education. For example, the University of Groningen in the Netherlands has signed an agreement with the higher education authorities in Saudi Arabia to share its curriculum with King Faisal University (Lindsey, 2011). The University of Wollongong in Dubai, with its home campus in Australia, is another example of a fully autonomous and financially sustainable institution. It is considered to be the oldest private university in the United Arab Emirates established in 1995.

The internationalization efforts of higher education in the region were significant and lead to increased access to higher education, strategic partnerships and collaborations between countries, the creation of new knowledge through academic and industry connections, and contribution to the capacity building efforts of respective countries (Donn & Al Manthari, 2012). However, the regional higher education sector was also marked by imported educational reforms that often delivered poor results and limitless challenges. Covering a wide range of practices including management, structure, curriculum design, and development, these ready-made policy reforms were deemed unsuccessful because they were not adjusted to fit the cultural and

organizational contexts of the host countries and the unique characteristics of respective higher education sectors (Donn & Al Manthari, 2012).

The dependence on foreign expertise in building the higher education sector through different forms of partnerships also raised a number of challenges. These challenges included building and sustaining relationships with the main campus overseas, the credibility of local accreditation and quality assurance measures, and understanding of the local educational and political culture (Smith, 2009). These challenges in addition to others will be considered in the subsequent sections of this study.

Educational Hubs

This section of the review focuses on literature pertaining to the management and sustainability of educational hubs. The background and context of educational hubs is addressed first, followed by an examination of the educational hubs in the Middle East. Attention then turns to two specific examples in the region.

Educational hubs – background and context. Knight (2012) defines educational hubs as the latest development in internationalization efforts and “a third generation of cross-border education initiatives” (p. 188). The primary focus of the first generation was the movement of people to study or to teach at a foreign country. The second generation was based on the movement of institutions beyond the home borders to deliver educational programs through different formats including twinning, franchising, distance and online modes, or joints degrees (Knight, 2012).

Education hubs, of which different types, models, and sizes exist, can be described as the “market place of universities.” Due to the diversity of models and types, and for the purpose of

this study, it is suggested that the following working definition is applicable to the two hubs being reviewed in Qatar and the United Arab Emirates:

An education hub is a designated region that represents the purposeful efforts of a country, state, city or authority to build its higher education sector by forging strategic partnerships with multiple local and international stakeholders that will strengthen its position as a key player in the field of training, knowledge creation, and education. (Lane & Kinser, 2011a)

With the mobility of higher education institutions across national borders, institutions are often challenged to find a balance between the host governments' educational regulations as well as the home governments' and home institutions' policies. A universal educational policy framework governing all aspects of operations is yet to be developed (Lane & Kinser, 2011a). In the absence of such a framework, and despite the efforts of neighboring countries to operate under a common educational regulatory umbrella, the frameworks still differ from one country to another in which foreign institutions have a presence. Therefore, the host governments or organizations still continue to practice a high level of control over the operations taking place within their borders (Lane & Kinser, 2011a).

Various desires, goals, and beliefs often drive a nation, a city or organization to become an educational hub. These include increasing access to higher education, improving the quality of education, and offering new academic programs and services that are not available in the local market (Lane & Kinser, 2011b). When Singapore was trying to establish itself as an educational hub based on its internationalization strategy, the local authorities built partnerships with local and renowned foreign universities to offer academic programs and research and development activities (Sidhu, Ho & Yeoh, 2011). Singapore's main motivations were to develop quality

higher education and fulfill the demand for education resulting from the growing population that could not be met by existing public universities (Lim, 2009).

In its quest to become an educational hub, Hong Kong was driven by the need to develop the global competencies and skills of its people in order to sustain Hong Kong's competitiveness as a knowledge-based economy (Chan & Ng, 2008).

Because every country uses a different approach or strategy to build an educational hub, knowing the reasons and expectations of stakeholders of a particular educational hub including foreign institutions, host governments, and students is critical and influential when drafting policies, strategies, and identifying indicators and assessing outcomes. The following table provides a listing of reasons and expectations of different stakeholders groups that show some commonalities and differences.

Table 1

Rationales and expectations of different stakeholders groups

Stakeholder group	Rationales and expectations
Student (local and international)	Access to higher and further education opportunities Foreign academic credential Specialized programme not offered domestically Employment and career path International outlook
Foreign institutions and providers	Status building and increased competitiveness Income generation New research partnerships with private and public bodies Recruit faculty and students for home campus Contribute to capacity-building efforts in host country
Sponsor and host government	Prepare and recruit skills workforce Support knowledge-based industries Attract foreign direct investment Establish geo-political status and soft power in region Modernize domestic higher-education sector

Knight J. (2012). Crossborder education in the gulf countries: changes and challenges. **In G. Donn & Y. Al Manthari (Ed.)**, *Education in the Broader Middle East: borrowing a baroque arsenal* (pp. 171-201). Oxford, UK: Symposium Books.

In order to better understand the context of the above-mentioned rationales and expectations, it is essential to identify the type of hubs where institutions from across the globe share campus facilities and resources. Based on the work of Knight (2011), there are three types of hubs: (a) the student hub, (b) the talent hub, and (c) the knowledge and innovation hub.

The student hub is based on educating local and foreign students by attracting foreign universities to offer franchised or twinning programs or by establishing branch campuses in order to increase access to higher education. The primary objective of student hubs is generating revenues from international student fees. The other objectives of such a hub include increasing access, modernizing the domestic higher education sector, and increasing competitiveness within the regional field (Knight, 2011).

The talent hub has a main focus on developing a skilled workforce through a variety of education and training opportunities. The main goals of a talent hub are to train students to be skilled labor in order to remain in the host country and to join the workforce and support the country's efforts to establish a geo-political status in the region (Knight, 2011).

The knowledge/innovation hub's mandate aims to create knowledge and innovation. Such hubs involve more than educating and training students. By hosting research centers, diverse incentives are offered to collaborate with local partners to produce applied research. The main objectives of this type of hub are to build knowledge economies, and to increase regional competitiveness (Knight, 2011).

Educational hubs can also be of different models as defined by Lane and Kinser (2011a): The "archipelago" model, in which "international branch campuses do not all operate in one location" or an "acropolis" hub in which institutions usually share physical space and "are in close proximity of each other" (p. 83).

Educational hubs in the Middle East. Knight (2012) stated that Qatar and the United Arab Emirates were the only two countries in the Middle East seriously aiming to position themselves as educational hubs. While Bahrain announced its ambition to become a hub as well, its investment and plan are in development at this time and therefore can only be considered as an emerging hub. This investment in higher education came partially in response to the poor condition of higher education throughout the region as reported in the *Arab Human Development Report* (2003). It was also part of a wider context of establishing a globalized market for higher education that supports the gap closing efforts between the West and the Middle East and knowledge creation (Romani, 2009). Although the presence of foreign universities in the region did not begin until the 1980s, issues in the higher education system were well known before then. Romani (2009) concluded that the inadequacy of the higher education systems in the region was caused by the “overevaluation of the general teaching university; poor research; redundancy of the most attractive disciplines, resulting in the demonetization of these disciplines; the related increase in graduate unemployment; the brain drain of the most skilled” (p. 2). Although the investment in quality education came in response to the inadequacy and limitations of existing higher education systems, it is still unknown if the establishment of education hubs and hosting international branch campuses managed to resolve these challenges or they still remain intact.

To respond to the above challenges, the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council have invested billions of dollars on higher education infrastructure and programs over the past few decades. High levels of funding continue to respond to the increasing youth population in the region, the rapid growth of higher education, and the emergence of few countries like Qatar and the United Arab Emirates as academic actors in the region (Romani, 2009). One important aspect of this academic boom is the dependence on privatization. More than 50 institutions established

in the region since 1993 are private. While there is a lack of accurate information of student enrolment in each of the United Arab Emirates' Dubai International Academic City and Doha's Education City, their financial investments have confirmed the desire of these two countries to become major centers grouping the largest number of international branch campuses worldwide (Krieger, 2008). This desire came in response to an increasing number of students in higher education as per the Gulf Cooperation Council Education Industry report, produced by investment bank Alpen Capital stating that the total number of students in higher education will grow at Arabian Gulf countries from 12% to 13.4% between 2011 and 2016 (Sawahel, 2012).

To respond to this need for higher education growth, Dubai and Doha invited reputable foreign universities to open campuses in their countries and entered into partnerships with international institutions. Through the affiliation with a large number of universities, these two capitals in the Arabian Gulf became education hubs consisting of a number of institutions operating in a designated geographical area, with common services provided to partner institutions. In the following two sections, detailed information on each of the specified educational hubs will be presented in order to identify the characteristics of each hub.

Characteristics of Dubai International Academic City. Despite being the most economically advanced of the emirates and states in the region, Dubai's dependence on oil revenues is limited, while construction and real estate constitute more than half of its economy (Donn & Al Manthri, 2012). The United Arab Emirates 2020 vision, published in 1999 and aiming to trigger a transformation towards a knowledge economy, is one of the main influencers behind Dubai's investment in education. In addition, following on the recommendations of the World Economic Forum Global Competiveness Report for the year 2006-2007, finding solutions to a shortage of highly trained workers and theoretical and applied research became a priority.

Education became recognized as a key force for modernization and development in Dubai and a tool to bridge the gap. Despite the commitment to higher education as an agent for economic change, the United Arab Emirates funding for higher education did not keep pace with the inflation and increasing cost of learning (Donn & Al Manthri, 2012). The United Arab Emirates's national institutions faced obstacles in providing quality education, research, and service and therefore preventing the nation and its economy from advancing. This funding problem may have affected student access, investment in infrastructure, and departure of qualified staff (Donn & Al Manthri, 2012). Wilkins (2010) observed that "the United Arab Emirates government's pledge that every United Arab Emirates national school leaver who satisfies the entry requirements of the three federal HEIs will be guaranteed a place, has put tremendous pressure on these institutions to expand capacity" (p. 392).

To respond to such obstacles in trying to increase access not only for nationals but for expatriates as well, Tecom Investment established in 2003 the Dubai International Academic City (DIAC) which is "the world's only free zone dedicated to international higher education" (Krieger, 2007, p. 3). At the early stage of its establishment, DIAC offered a line of credit to a selected number of organizations while still believing that foreign institutions shall be responsible for their own financial sustainability.

In the view of Ayoub Kazim, DIAC's Executive Director, the partnership is based on a shared model allowing partner institutions to benefit from a profit-making plan where institutions can keep the revenues generated from tuitions while covering all operations and set-up costs (Krieger, 2007). DIAC is struggling to attract a large number of American institutions but has committed itself to meet the educational needs of United Arab Emirates nationals and expatriates by hosting foreign institutions including branch campuses from England, Australia, India, and

other countries. The breadth of countries represented is in response to a rising number of students who highly value international degrees. DIAC officials believe that this initiative is a “true internationalization of academic programs” (Krieger, 2007) attracting 25 branch campuses, the largest number of foreign branch campuses worldwide, with an estimated 15,000 students, a relatively small average enrollment per university (Knight, 2012). As any institution may basically enter the DIAC market if it meets the regulatory requirements, foreign universities are surprisingly being recruited as business partners to educate the future work force of a knowledge economy with limited focus on research. Benefits for DIAC university partners include 100% foreign ownership, 100% tax free, 100% repatriation of profits. DIAC, generating revenues through the leasing of space in its Knowledge Village and Ruwwayya campuses, has built basic physical infrastructure and established a set of regulations for all partner institutions which is applicable to the location of campuses, negotiation of leases, and visa sponsorship for students, faculty, and staff. DIAC imposes no minimum capital requirements and allows interested universities that meet the requirements of partnership to offer competing academic programs. For example, many universities offer business and computer engineering programs. In addition, DIAC provides neither loans nor financial aid for students or any type of funding to student employment jobs.

In 2007, the Knowledge and Human Development Authority developed a new approach to quality insurance. It was based on validating the equivalency of institutions and programs in Dubai with their place of origin, rather than on assessing these programs against local standards. This step was supported by the establishment of a quality assurance board consisting of field and cross-border education experts (Rawazik & Carroll, 2009).

Characteristics of Education City in Doha. As part of its plan to shift towards a knowledge-based economy by using research, innovation, and technical skills to generate high-impact economic benefits, Qatar has transformed the nature of its higher education system, research and learning. This small country in terms of size, population, and the number of job opportunities compared to other countries in the Arabian Gulf, and known for its high per capita-incomes worldwide, is developing at a fast pace due to its national revenues from gas and oil industries (Donn & Al Manthri, 2012). Acting upon the 2030 National Vision, which is a development plan launched by the State of Qatar in order to transform the country into an advanced society capable of achieving sustainable development, and specifically the priority given to human resource development, Qatar was the first country in the Middle East to establish an educational hub and to utilize education as a means to build economic capacity (Lane & Kinser, 2011b).

According to Rostron (2009) “education has been a vital part of these transformations, starting with the creation of the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development in 1995” (p. 219). Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Al Missned who believed that higher education must play a central role in such a transformation, created Education City knowing that the road to future academic success will not be an easy one. Grouping a consortium of different branch campuses under one roof in Education City wasn't the first choice of Qatar Foundation's Board of Directors. “According to Fathi Saud, the president of the Qatar Foundation, the country had initially tried to attract a single university that had top programs in many fields” and the University of Virginia was a serious prospect (Krieger 2008). After discovering how difficult that is and due to inconsistent ranking criteria, the current system consisting of attracting the best universities in each field superseded the single university option.

Education City is now a host for eight international branch campuses offering academic programs that complement its needs and do not compete with each other. The selection of universities is rigorous. It is based on the reputation of the programs in home countries (Lane & Kinser, 2011b), an internationally focused curriculum and academic fields diversifying the range of higher education programs offered in Qatar (Knight, 2012).

As part of the Qatar Foundation's commitment to the provision of world class education it covered all the construction cost of state-of-the-art facilities from classrooms, to laboratories, and from the student center to the student housing complex. As it owns the campus facilities and shared services, the foundation also covers operational expenses of all partner universities including salaries for faculty and staff, facilities management, research funding and student programming (Knight, 2012; Lane & Kinser, 2011b). The branch campuses or partner universities exercise full control and autonomy over the management of academic programs offered in Education City, while the Foundation holds responsibility over the budget, which is negotiated annually between the two parties. The relationship between the foundation and the branch campuses is governed by an agreement jointly signed by the foundation and the institution offering programs in Education City.

The government of Qatar, through the Higher Education Institute, covers full tuition for national students, who make up more than half of the total student enrollment (Krieger, 2008). As of 2010, the percentage of Qatari students had reached 55% of those from 80 nationalities studying at Education City (Donn & Al Manthri, 2010). The Qatar Foundation also offers different forms of financial aid through academic scholarships for eligible students registering at any partner university, loans for families with financial need, and stipends for work-study programs. These varied forms of financial aid strengthen the Qatar Foundation's commitment to

increase access to higher education by helping students to cover fully or partially the total educational costs including tuition and fees (Lane & Kinser, 2011b). Funds generated by fee-paying students are funneled back to the foundation.

It is important to note that Qatar Foundation also launched the Qatar Science and Technology Park in 2009 with a focus on conducting research in collaboration with corporate organizations like Microsoft and Shell and different branch campuses and respective researchers in Education City. The billions of dollars in educational investments illustrate Qatar's interest in positioning itself as an educational hub in the region and growing the knowledge economy (Knight, 2012).

Comparing the characteristics of each hub, and despite having some similarities in their visions and rationales, it appears that Dubai and Doha are adopting different strategies based on their different socio-economic circumstances to sustain each of their educational hubs. While the literature review has provided useful information on each hub, research is required to foster a better understanding of the characteristics of each hub. Research on student demographics, level of engagement among different universities that are part of the same hubs, benefits of institutions engaging in a common geographical area, alignment of hubs goals with national needs, diversification of revenue streams, and faculty and staff retention are a few areas that require further review.

International Branch Campuses

The number of international branch campuses has grown rapidly in the recent past reaching 183 in different continents during 2011 (C-Bert, 2011; Lane, 2011). Johns Hopkins University is considered to be the first international branch campus to open a campus in Italy in the 1950s, offering degrees in international relations (Lane, 2011). While there seems to be no

uniform or standard definition for an international branch campus due to the different ways of interpreting the movement of programs, providers, and individuals, for the purpose of this study, an international branch campus refers to *an entity established by a foreign higher education institution in a location outside the national borders of its main campus, operating and granting degrees in its name and offering academic programs, based on face-to-face teaching and learning* (Lane, 2011). The Middle East hosts close to 30 percent of the total number of international branch campuses worldwide. While the United Kingdom, Australia and the United States of America are the main exporters of international branch campuses, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates are home to the majority of these institutions. It is important to note that because of definition problems of international branch campuses and different methods of learning used by these institutions, there are a lack of data for this study to consider.

Management practices. There is no definite agreement in the literature about the motivation to open an international branch campus overseas. Lane (2011) found, based on a study on the United Arab Emirates and Malaysia, that international branch campuses develop to 1) “provide something different from what is already provided; 2) provide something better than is provided; 3) or absorb excess demand in the system” (p. 8). Despite the limited number of prestigious universities opening an international branch campus overseas, there is no doubt that these institutions play a successful role in retaining local students inside the host countries and even attracting international students. Another aspect of crossborder education that is questioned through the international branch campus phenomenon is the changing role and mission of few private universities, opening a campus overseas that acts as a public entity in the host country, and accepting funding from local governments to provide access to local students and services to the community (Lane & Kinser, 2011b).

The management practices that leaders of international branch campuses consider when they establish a campus overseas are diverse. These practices consist of having an understanding of the local environment, good governance that balances host and home campus issues, operational considerations and regulatory framework while functioning in two different countries (Harding & Lammey, 2011). In the following, these practices and challenges imposed on educational leaders and international branch campuses will be discussed in detail.

Acknowledging the differences between the local environment and the home campus is likely one of the motives to adapt existing policies and practices to fit the new environment while respecting the standards of the main campus. For example, the student recruitment process depicts drastic differences between western and Middle Eastern standards. While the college selection process for a student in the United States or Canada is often based on prior planning that may happen a few months or a year in advance, in the Middle East the process does not usually start until a few weeks before the fall semester with an expectation among late applicants to be admitted (Lane, 2011). The admissions process presents another example of differences in standards that requires an adaptation to fit the Middle Eastern context. Many students in this region are unprepared to meet English language and mathematics requirements. Applying the same admission standards, developed and controlled by the main campus, to the branch campus will negatively affect its operations on different levels. Not only do these requirements have a negative impact on the branch campus' enrolment growth plans, but they also weaken its position to compete against other international branch campuses that provide a conditional acceptance for students to join foundation programs to improve their qualifications. If the main campus does not give authority to its international branch campus to make changes to existing policies in order to protect the quality of programs and the reputation of the institution, the

international branch campus staff believe that these stringent measures affect the international branch campus' objectives and therefore its success and sustainability (Lane, 2011).

Understanding of the local environment extends (a) the review of pedagogical practices aimed at promoting critical thinking among students who often find the questioning of religious beliefs intolerable (Rostron, 2009); (b) the design of the residence halls based on a single-gender approach despite the co-educational western practices on the main campus; (c) the recruitment guidelines of faculty and staff that should take into consideration the prevailing traditions of what is acceptable and appropriate and what is not, and; (d) the performance appraisal process in cultures that does not accept a formal feedback process (Harding & Lammey, 2011).

Governance is another matter that imposes certain challenges for leaders of international branch campuses. The challenges are not only caused by the geographical divide between the two campuses. They are due sometimes to the disagreement among administrators of the international branch campus' ability to provide a comparable education to that of the main campus and its varying degree of importance among the home campus administrators as well. Failure to establish such agreements on different levels may lead to mistrust and ineffective communication and, therefore, a possible deterioration of the international branch campus (Hefferman & Pool, 2004). Replicating the organizational structure of the home campus overseas and forcing the international branch campus departments to report back to the main campus raises concerns of creating similar silos at the international branch campus and therefore making it difficult to run the international branch campus' operations properly (Lane 2011). In order to fit the local environment, the required modifications can vary from a little in areas related to travel and human resources management to considerable in areas of immigration practices, health, safety, and donations (Harding & Lammey, 2011).

Lane (2011) as well as Harding and Lammey (2011) listed a few other operational practices that are essential to the establishment of the international branch campus and successful achievements of its objectives: (a) the incorporation of cultural traditions in campus planning and new buildings design, for example, providing an open access to campus activities venues to facilitate gender interaction and locations of the prayer rooms close to the classrooms in Islamic countries; (b) the impact of different time zones and work schedules on the decision making process related to scheduling of cyber-meetings and upgrades to software or information systems on both campuses, and; (c) the frequency of task management ranging from a one-time format for evacuation plans, bank selections, and campus development to an on-going process for the development of annual budget, the delivery of student services, and the review of research guidelines (Harding & Lammey, 2011; Lane, 2011).

The regulatory framework in the home and host countries can impact wide ranges of international branch campus functions, from legal matters to tax issues, from health and insurance to human subject research compliance, and from employee compensation packages to dismissal and severance pay. Therefore, building relationships with key officials in the local and municipal authorities is an essential part of establishing an international branch campus. Tax regulations in home countries could force an institution to report the financial transactions of its international branch campus and often cause challenges because of the discrepancies between local and home financial restrictions. The salary structure, types of contracts and end of service benefits, and civil rights protections of employees differ between the home campus and its international branch campus. These differences are triggered by the guidelines on the main campus and existing practices in the host country. For example, at certain international branch campuses, salary packages and allowances are sometimes different based on gender of the

candidates or whether the recruitment was internationally or locally based. Termination practices for local employees may not follow proper procedures and often cause major problems to the institutions if not handled properly (Harding & Lammey, 2011).

The practices of leaders of international branch campuses, whether adopted before or after its establishment, constitute opportunities for improvement if considered in a timely and proactive manner. Despite the fact that the international branch campuses existed since the 1950s, the failure and closing of many international branch campuses in the last three decades still raise a concern about the sustainability of international branch campuses, an issue that will be taken up at in the coming sections.

The selection of management practices in this research study is based on their representativeness of common practices among international branch campuses, the outcomes of the literature review and the researcher's experience with the topic. It is important to note that some practices cannot be considered because of transparency challenges, access to information, and irrelevance to the cultural context of the Arabian Gulf. For the purpose of this study, the management practices will be grouped according to the following categories; policy development, human factor, and the student experience. Sub-categories will follow to provide a thorough description of each practice to be researched.

Policy development. The establishment of an international branch campus requires the development of policies covering different aspects of its operations. These aspects include mission and objectives, curriculum and academics, access and enrolment, and regulations. Moreover, to operate the international branch campus, administrators are guided by these policies while balancing the stakeholders' requirements with the ambiguities and challenges of establishing a branch campus overseas.

The mission and objectives comprise intentions, expectations and motives for:

- Exporting academic programs overseas;
- Benefits of gaining visibility on the international scene;
- Establishment of networks consisting of universities from across the globe;
- Enhancement of research and knowledge;
- Alignment of international branch campuses goals with national needs, and;
- Changing role and status of universities (private vs. public).

The curriculum and academics involve the exercise of control and autonomy over:

- Curriculum design and content;
- Adoption of teaching approaches and technologies;
- Choice of academic disciplines to meet the needs of the job market, and;
- Learning outcomes and incorporated values that an international branch campus would want to see in its graduates.

The access and enrolment cover:

- Student recruitment strategies;
- Enrolment targets set to meet excess demand for higher education;
- Transfer of students between the international branch campus and main campus, and international mobility of students, and;
- Balancing academic qualifications of applicants and university admissions requirements.

Regulations consist of:

- Compliance with immigration and employment laws and customs of foreign jurisdictions;
- Regulatory framework while functioning in two different countries, and;
- Student recruitment, admissions, and staff hiring and performance appraisals.

Human capital. Staff and faculty are essential contributors to the delivery of teaching and administrative and educational duties of an international branch campus. To better understand their role within the organization, a special consideration will be given to their diversity and qualifications, recruitment and retention strategies, labor nationalization efforts and implications, and the organizational structure of an international branch campus.

Staff diversity and qualifications designate:

- Demographics of teaching and administrative staff and representation of student population;
- Dependence on local talents in teaching and provision of student services;
- Academic and professional qualifications of faculty/staff to work in unfamiliar settings, and;
- Integration of faculty and staff with local and home campuses.

Staff recruitment and retention consist of:

- Faculty and staff mobility, exchange, and incentives to work abroad;
- Controls and responsibility over the hiring of local talents;
- Staff and faculty involvement in committees and governing bodies of an international branch campus, and;
- Performance evaluation and promotion.

Labor nationalization refers to:

- Governmental initiatives to employ its citizens in all sectors;
- Short and long-term planning and capacity building efforts;
- Recruitment and training of nationals to take leadership positions in the international branch campus, and;

- Nationalization ratios and targets.

Organization and structure include:

- Type of governance and management implemented in the international branch campus;
- Complexity of the decision making process;
- Reporting structure to the home campus and immediate supervisors;
- Stakeholder involvement in the decision making processes, and;
- Staff and faculty dynamics impacted by the presence of a university in two geographical areas.

Student experience. The creation of a vibrant campus life based on learning and student engagement depends on the creation of support services that respond to student needs, on a commitment to student leadership, on a series of activities to promote skills development, on a behavioral code that govern student attitudes and university expectations, and on a set of traditions that help build a university identity.

Support services involve:

- Creation of a student affairs department and range of services;
- Diversity of the student population and campus experience, and;
- Impact of tutoring, counseling, and financial aid on student success.

Leadership development contains:

- Types of formal preparation programs to cultivate student leadership;
- Learning outcomes and advancement of global citizenship among students, and;
- Participation level in leadership opportunities at college level and in student focused initiatives.

Activities and conduct include:

- Offering a wide range of student and university run programs and events;
- Promoting student participation and engagement, and;
- Behavioral code and attitudes.

Campus Traditions encompass:

- Alteration of home campus rituals to preserve local values, and;
- Creation of a university identity among students, alumni, parents, and graduates.

What Constitutes a Sustainable Institution?

There is much ambiguity attached to the meaning of a sustainable institution. The range of definitions found in the literature is very broad ranging from green standards to aspects of financial sustainability. As reported in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (2006) and based on a United Nations report, a “sustainable university” is one “that promotes the concept of meeting present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” According to other references, a sustainable institution is based on holistic approach, recognizing the campus as a “model sustainable community” (Adomssent et al., 2007; Beringer & Adomssent, 2008). Striving for sustainability of the university often plays a uniting role bringing competing university functions together. For an institution to be sustainable it must preserve the environment and its resources, stimulate economic growth through the employment of people to provide teaching and services, and improve society by helping people through its social responsibility. For the purpose of this study, the term *sustainable institution* refers to an efficient university capable of adapting its practices to fit the local context, engaging with and being responsive to its stakeholders, supporting its core mission and functions while employing people, and improving the community through its social responsibility with minimal effect on the environment and resources.

Thus, the process of achieving sustainability should target the institution as a whole and cover its core functions including but not limited to research, knowledge creation, teaching, community service, academic, financial, and administrative operations, and systemic, technical and paradigmatic matters (Beringer & Adomssent, 2008; Universities UK Sustainable Development Task Group, 2011). However, there is little agreement among administrators of higher education institutions about the types and the series of steps that higher education institutions must select and implement to become sustainable.

Despite the fact that institutions have made major commitments to be sustainable, through cost saving measures, employment of sustainability education graduates, partnerships and collaboration with businesses on research and knowledge exchange, there is little evidence that these steps will actually produce lasting changes. “Central to collaboration are trust-building, leadership, decision-making, communication, and conflict management skills – competencies that form the basis for positive social interaction” (Lopez, 2013). Therefore, higher education administrators and leaders should acknowledge that finding solutions to sustainability problems requires a thorough review of core functions while engaging through dialogue with different stakeholders on their campus and in the community and agreeing on a shared vision (Lopez, 2013).

To share information on universities’ financial conditions, a recent study of public and private non-profit institutions showed that one third of the 1700 participating institutions follow an unsustainable financial track (Blumenstyk, 2012). A growing percentage of universities are facing financial challenges, caused not only by the growth in debt, but also due to the cost of administration and student affairs rising at a faster pace than instructional expenses. To create a

more financially sustainable institution, innovative college and university presidents are doing four things:

1. Developing a clear strategy, focused on the core;
2. Reducing support and administrative cost;
3. Freeing up capital in non-core assets;
4. Strategically investing in innovative models. (Denneen & Dretler, 2012, p. 4)

Denneen and Dretler (2012) concluded that the core task of a start-up institution, just like a Fortune 500 company, is to invest the most in specific areas that differentiate the organization and strengthen its identity. In addition, their findings suggested that the budget cuts should start with administrative and support costs as these costs are growing faster than teaching and research. The increase in such costs is due to offering more programs, conducting research, increasing faculty and student needs and demanding compliance requirements. One way to reduce cost in the fragmentation on campus is by creating a central data center for information technology management instead of decentralized data centers at the departmental level. Another way is to avoid redundancy of services, such as having a procurement office in place at each of the departmental or unit level. Another approach that can boost efficiency is reducing the number of middle managers and having more people reporting to them eliminating unneeded hierarchy (Denneen & Dretler, 2012).

While managing real estate or physical assets may not be applicable to international branch campuses, investing in innovative models such as online education can trigger enrollment increases and therefore generate more revenues to the institution. The study also reveals that it is essential to bring different stakeholders to the table in the process of achieving sustainability in order to explore campus wide effective change measures. Such measures may include the

improvement of classroom utilization by standardizing class schedules among different departments, thus accommodating more students without needing to construct new buildings and teaching space. To respond to the sustainability challenges, universities are encouraged to adopting “building scale operations with the right expertise, process and tools” (Denneen & Dretler, 2012, p. 10) and therefore reducing the number of staff and improving the quality of service. Another measure is based on reducing the faculty / student ratio in each department to be aligned with field benchmarks and essential teaching and research needs. An additional measure is looking at the consolidation of small departments spread across the university and therefore eliminating unnecessary positions and triggering an overall cost saving. These measures are good examples of the balancing exercise of efficiency and sustainability.

Factors contributing to sustainability. With the education hub and international branch campuses concepts being new to the Middle East, there is little evidence on which to judge if they can be sustainable. I could find no long-term evaluation research of the phenomenon of international branch campuses. With a few branch campuses closing, such as the University of New South Wales campus in Singapore in 2007 and George Mason University campus in Ras Al Khaimah (United Arab Emirates) in 2009, there is no doubt that the international branch campus concept is still at a very early stage of its development. Therefore, careful assessment of major risks and challenges and responding to questions of sustainability are key for a green and safe future (Wilkins, 2010; Lim, 2009).

The sustainability factors mentioned in the last section are general key measures to ensure the sustainability of institutions. However, there are unique sustainability factors for the institutions in the Middle East and specifically to Qatar. that need to be addressed in order to advance sustainability in complex organizations such as the international branch campuses. Due

to the lack of peer-reviewed literature on this topic, I will use reports mentioned in electronic journals and newsletters published by education departments on different universities. Common factors contributing to the sustainability of institutions that will be addressed include human capital and resources, enrollment and access, funding, program offerings, student experience, and unpredictable circumstances. By responding to the research questions, I hope that the study generates useful information that administrators can use to advance sustainability in international branch campuses.

Enrolment and access. Steady enrollment and access of Qatari students primarily at the undergraduate level to fulfill the demand for higher education are key to sustainability of institutions. Despite the fact that reliable data on enrollment is unavailable (Knight, 2012), literature confirms that most branch campuses in the region and in Education City and Dubai International Academic City in particular are operating under capacity (Wilkins, 2010). The current size of the market can be a limiting factor that prevents the enrolment increase at branch campuses (Knight, 2012). The countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council have a total population of 47,000,000 (GCC, 2014), a number that is comparable to the population of Spain. Other influencers on enrollment are the absence of foundation programs that can better prepare students to meet the admissions requirements (Wilkins, 2010) and low English language skills and poor high school preparation for nationals (Altbach, 2011a). The enrolment targets for nationals set by branch campuses or directed by the funding agencies are often unmet because of the reasons mentioned above (Witte, 2010). What makes this more challenging is the fact that institutions cannot rely anymore on the Indian subcontinent as a feeder channel to increase enrolment. A recent survey indicated that the preference of students is to go to the United States of America for their studies (Altbach, 2011a). The quality of education at the branch campus is

often questionable especially if the diversity and qualifications of the student body is not the same at the branch and main campuses (Altbach, 2010). As enrollment and profits are often connected, and with the inaccessibility of enrolment data and a fierce competition among different branch campuses for a limited pool of eligible students, branch campuses should identify alternative strategies to boost enrolment and provide an education at the same quality and format of the home campus.

Human capital and resources. To protect the reputation of quality education offered at the branch campus, many institutions augment local talent who hold doctorate degrees with faculty from the main campus to ensure consistency of teaching delivery methods. However, the ability of branch campuses to provide financial and non-monetary incentives for faculty and student affairs staff to travel overseas and replicate the academic and campus experience and traditions is questioned (Altbach, 2011a). Will faculty feel reluctant to travel overseas and put their research projects and governance involvement on hold? What is the impact of travel on their promotion and tenure? Another human factor that affects the sustainability of branch campuses is the impact of labor nationalization on the institutions' recruitment efforts. For example, while most of faculty and staff at international branch campuses in the United Arab Emirates are expatriates, the nationalization efforts obligate universities to hire nationals by prescribed quotas. Whether or not the local talent with doctoral degrees can offer the same teaching and university experience as the main campus is another disputed issue to explore further in this study (Wilkins, 2010).

Funding. Whether publicly funded or through fee-paying students, the diversification of funding presents more challenges to the branch campuses. To be sustainable, an international branch campus needs to maintain a reasonably diversified revenue structure counting not only on

tuition and student contributions, but also on fundraising, research and services, and endowment. With minimum investment from the home university, the start-up operations are usually funded by the host countries as in the case of Education City. However, identifying the full cost of branch campuses operations is a first step to assess the level of cost coverage by the funding agency (Estermann & Pruvot, 2011) and avoid putting both parties under considerable pressure to secure funding for many years to come. Establishing a branch campus requires a thorough financial planning process, especially since the start-up costs, enrolment and profit projections may not be easily identified due to the inadequacy of data. With limited data available, it is quite ironic “that the most financially successful branch campuses are those sponsored by less prestigious universities” (Altbach, 2010, p. 2). With the pressure to break even, branch campuses are expected to explore a wide array of revenue streams and mainly offer affordable programs supported by a basic yet efficient administrative structure if they want to be sustainable.

Student experience. In a global higher education field that is witnessing a cost increase worldwide, students are looking for a quality student experience, especially if the cost of education is almost the same at the branch campus compared to the home institution. If the cost of education is similar to the home campus, the international branch campus is obliged to replicate the student experience to make it at least comparable to the main campus by offering state-of-the art facilities and services (Wilkins & Balakrishnan, 2012). However, replicating the student experience should take into consideration the home campus traditions without ignoring the local culture, contexts and issue. Texas A & M University at Qatar is a good example of a branch campus that is not only replicating the traditions of the home campus but tweaking them to preserve the cultural values of the host country. This is implemented through the organization of purposeful events aiming at educating students on the traditions of the main campus while

respecting the local culture as well (Wood, 2011). However, replicating the student experience has yet to prove itself as being a sustainable model taking into consideration student enrolment, investment in campus facilities and cost of implementation of a student affairs department.

To date, there has been no critical examination of whether there is a gap between the application of these factors on the main campus compared to the international branch campus when they are considered under the light of sustainability. Therefore, the conformity of the branch campuses with the above factors will be explored through this research study to learn more about the strategies that each branch campus is adopting on the way to achieving sustainability.

Institution efficiency. Efficiency is one of the key challenges facing a given organization's governance in addition to effectiveness, participation, leadership, and responsiveness to the environment (Schuster et al., 1994). The value of efficiency is "all the more compelling under conditions of financial constraint, of obtaining greater outputs (results) with fewer inputs (resources) and doing so with dispatch, avoiding the delays and quagmire of endless committees and meetings that are often viewed as the curse of traditional academic governance" (Schuster et al., 1994, p. 195; Kezar & Eckel, 2004, p. 384-385). Kezar and Eckel (2004) observed that "efficiency has been a primary focus because management processes are constantly being scrutinized for their speed and organization" (p. 385).

1. Studies have shown that efficiency of the decision making process is influenced by the size of the governance structures and processes and their complexity. The larger the size, the more time is consumed to reach a decision especially as complex decisions will usually require a thorough review.

2. Another major factor impacting efficiency is the composition and role of governance bodies. If the composition of the governance body includes key individuals and expertise that are necessary, then the process becomes more efficient. Furthermore, if the governance body has a clear understanding about its role, less time is spent clarifying purpose and moving toward accomplishing the task.
3. Providing inadequate institutional support (secretarial/administrative and financial) has been related to lower efficiency. Basic tasks, such as minutes from meetings, mailings, etc., are hindered if institutional support is missing. Technology has most likely helped to overcome some of these issues, but this remains an area of concern related to efficiency. (Kezar & Eckel, 2004, p. 385)

While Kezar and Eckel (2004) define efficiency as one of the main challenges facing the governance of organizations, they do not emphasize the link that efficiency has with sustainability. Management practices of international branch campuses often depend on decisions made by a wide range of stakeholders. In addition, practices are also based on finding a way to form governing bodies of the right size and engaging the right people while balancing expertise and knowledge of the local context, and offering institutional support to sustain operations. Therefore, it becomes apparent that efficiency is an important factor in achieving sustainability.

For the purpose of this study, adaptability to the local context, the interdependence with the main campus, and efficiency will be the main factors of sustainability that will be applied to explore the links and relationships with management practices. The sustainability concepts are sorted based on the following categories and sub-categories.

Adaptability to the local context. Adapting practices to the local context requires international branch campuses administrators to be familiar with the national vision (with such components as political and environmental strategies), local laws and regulations, and cultural norms. It is equally essential to involve the stakeholders in order to build the foundation of international branch campuses on solid grounds that represent the surrounding community, instill local and global values in its graduates, meets its expectations, and ensure its long-term existence (Harding & Lammey, 2011).

Familiarity with the national vision entails:

- Knowledge of the host country before establishing the international branch campus, and;
- Understanding of the four pillars of the vision – economic, social, human, and environmental developments and their implications on the international branch campus.

Acquaintance with laws and culture include:

- Understanding legal impacts on practical decisions and their long-term outcomes, and;
- Conforming decisions and procedures to local norms, social customs and expected individual behavior.

Stakeholders Engagement consists of:

- Communication and trust building between the international branch campus administrators and other stakeholders, and;
- Level and frequency of engagement with stakeholders.

Interdependence with main campus. Managing interdependent entities in separate geographical locations require collaboration and agreement on different managerial levels of an international branch campuses and the main campus including standards of practices, level of authority, and anticipation. Having agreements and clarifying expectations on the above will

enable the management of international branch campuses and the main campus to ensure smooth operations of the international branch campuses and a way to regulate conflicts when they occur.

The geographical separation between home and local campuses creates an unavoidable need to define, shape, and inform authority delegation and power exercise (Lane, 2011).

Standards of practice cover:

- Preservation of consistency, fairness, quality, reputation;
- Quality assurance and accreditation of academic programs, and;
- Influence of geographical distance on operations and mainly time, space, and service.

Level of authority includes:

- Good governance that balances host and home campus issues;
- Procedures to build and sustain relationships with the main campus overseas, and;
- Autonomy, control, and approval of management processes.

Anticipation relates to the future challenges that an international branch campus may face including:

- Short and long term changes of the local environment;
- Competition caused by the expansion of local higher education, and;
- Institutional memory and transfer of knowledge.

Efficiency. Based on the findings of the literature, the efficiency of international branch campuses will be reviewed based on its governance scale, composition, and institutional support. These main categories, in addition to the size of the structure, role of governing bodies, and use of technology will provide information on how the international branch campuses views efficiency when dealing with the constraints imposed by the local context and main campus.

Governance scale involves:

- Size of the governance structure, and;
- Complexity of the governance process (time, levels).

Governance composition comprises:

- Identification and role of governance bodies, and;
- Self-understanding about its role.

Institutional support necessitates:

- Adequate staffing to sustain university operations, and;
- Conform the use of technology to objectives and expected outcomes.

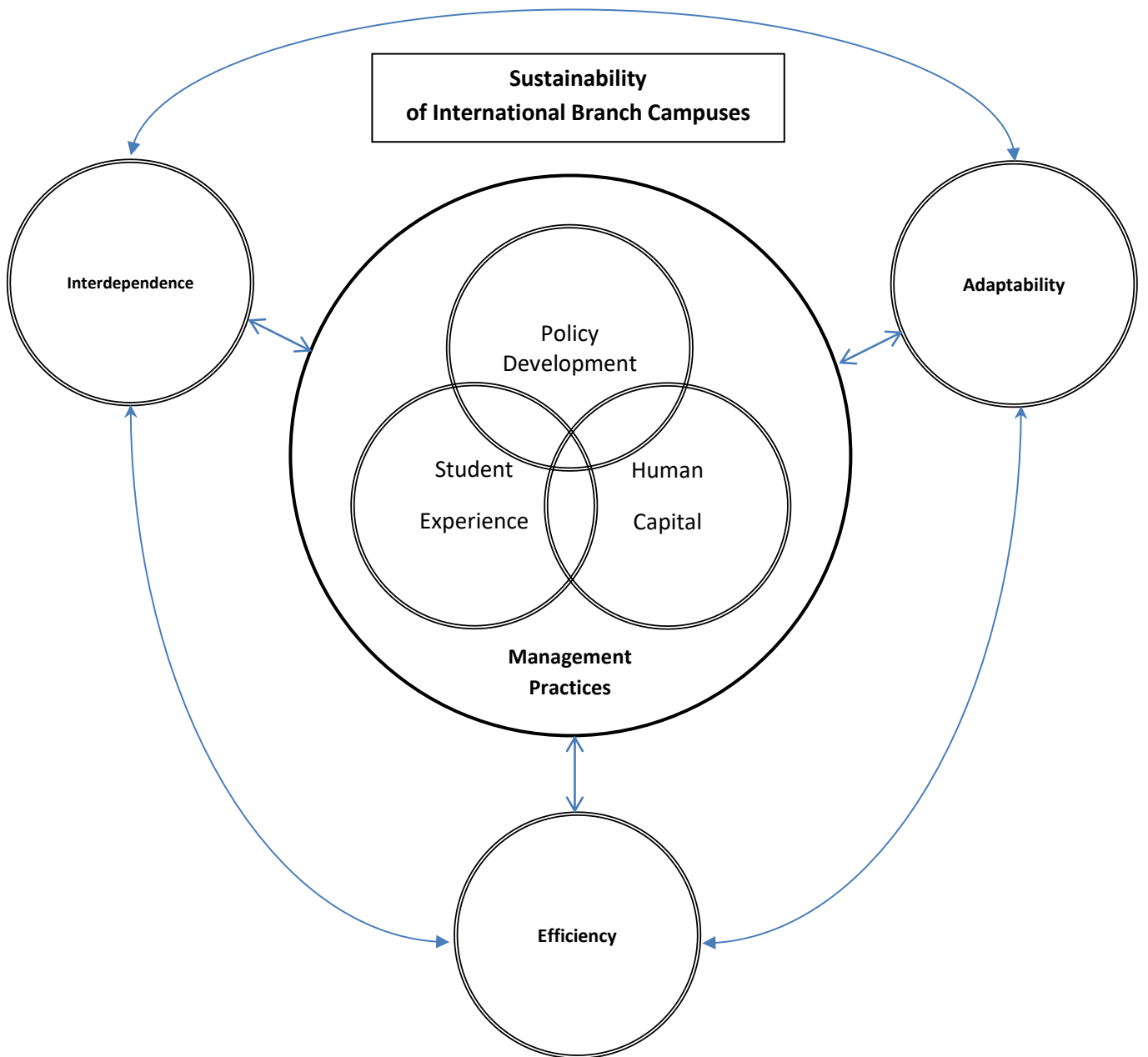
In the previous sections of this chapter, I identified the management practices that will interface with sustainability concepts to produce knowledge about the international branch campus under research. Based on the perspectives of other researchers, I developed the conceptual framework and analytical diagram of conceptual categories to represent my own synthesis of the literature on how to explain the phenomenon of sustainability of an international branch campus. Listed in Figure 1, management practices and sustainability concepts are grouped based on two levels ranging from the general to the specific. The grouping of factors was done in order to facilitate the collection and analysis of data taking into consideration the information emerging from the literature review, the relevance and level of importance of certain practices and concepts related to the Arabian Gulf.

Figure 1. Analytical Diagram of Conceptual Categories Used in the Case Study

			Sustainability								
			Adaptability (Local Context)			Interdependence (Main Campus)			Efficiency		
			National Vision	Laws & Culture	Stakeholders Engagement	Standards of practice	Level of Authority	Anticipations	Governance Scale	Governance Composition	Institutional Support
Management Practices	Policy Development	Regulations									
		Curriculum									
		Mission & Objectives									
		Access & Enrolment									
	Human Capital	Staff Diversity & Qualifications									
		Staff Recruitment & Retention									
		Labor Nationalization									
		Organization & Structure									
	Student Experience	Leadership Development									
		Student Activities									
		Campus Traditions									
		Support Services									

Karam, J. (2018)

Figure 2. Conceptual Framework



Conceptual Framework

As depicted in Figure 2, the literature review extracted many categories and themes, which circumscribe, explain, and operationalize both central themes of the thesis. On one hand,

management practices at an international branch campus will exclusively cover policy development, the human capital, and the student experience. On the other hand, the sustainability of an international branch campus will be described through the adaptability to the local culture, interdependence with the home campus, and efficiency. The scope of management practices and sustainability components selected for the purpose of this study took into consideration its relevance to the Arabian Gulf context, an adequate level of complexity circumscription of the case, and access to information by the international branch campus under research and limited literature. Sub-categories of each of the management practices and sustainability components were explained in detail in the preceding sections.

Summary

In this chapter, I have reviewed relevant literature on the higher education sector in the Middle East. I also provided an examination of the establishment of educational hubs in Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. In addition, the text defined the factors leading to the sustainability of international branch campuses as well as identifying the management practices under research and crafted an analytical diagram of conceptual categories to be used in the description of the case. An outline of the research paradigm of social constructivism that was used in the study is included in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The overall purpose of this study is to gain a thorough understanding of how an international branch campus in the Arabian Gulf plans to achieve sustainability. This study investigates the management and operations of international branch campuses in order to (a) identify the practices that educational administrators of an international branch campus are implementing to achieve its sustainability, (b) explain how management practices interface with research informed concepts and processes of sustainability, and (c) understand how an international branch campus operates in different organizational and cultural contexts from that of the main campus. This chapter provides details of the methodology and the method that were used in this case study. In addition, it offers information on the research sample, the selection procedures that were adopted to identify participants and to explore ways to correspond with them. Then it describes data collection and analysis, followed by the limitations of the study, the identification of potential weaknesses as well as delimitations. Ethical considerations and issues of trustworthiness are explored as well.

Research Design Overview

This study is conceptualized using the research paradigm of social constructivism to explore the management practices that educational administrators implement to achieve sustainability of an international branch campus. In the preceding chapter, a synopsis of the framework used in this case study was provided. It is utilized to help organize and interpret how management practices interface with concepts of sustainability; to identify key subjects that administrators need to consider in order to ensure that policy development is adapted to the local

context; to understand how interdependence between an international branch campus and home institution shape the management of the human capital; and to clarify the implications of efficiency as a component of sustainability on the provision of quality student experience.

Berger and Luckman (1966) were among the first to introduce the idea of the social construction of reality that highlights how people shape reality through communication, practice, and social interactions. For social constructivism to exist, certain characteristics must be present, such as exploration of other worldviews, understanding of historical and cultural contexts of the case, and establishing meaning of the contexts by communicating and interacting with people (Burr, 1995; Creswell, 2009).

In addition, social constructivism posits the inexistence of objective facts (Burr, 1995) since all people see the world differently. Some social constructivists highlight that nothing in the world is unchanging or inevitable (Hacking, 2001), so there are different ways for groups of people to collectively construct the meaning of knowledge and foresee reality (Burr, 1995). Therefore, individuals are encouraged to seek understanding of the world they live in by being active participants and by taking into consideration the historical and cultural contexts that reflect the changing nature of issues based on the advancement of society. In doing so, individuals must be prepared to adopt a critical stance concerning their existing assumptions and look for the complexity of views and accept that more than one truth exists (Burr, 1995).

The second social constructivist assumption is about encouraging people to analyze the world in which they live through the consideration of historical and cultural contexts that reflect past and present matters (Burr, 1995). Contexts evolve over time based on the changes that arise from the advancement of society. Crotty (1998) states that “what is said to be ‘the way things are’ is really just ‘the sense we make of them’”. Once this standpoint is embraced, we will

obviously hold our understandings much more lightly and tentatively and far less dogmatically, seeing them as historically and cultural effected interpretations rather than eternal truths of some kind” (p. 64).

The third social constructivist assumption postulates that people must define and describe, through the language they use, their own understanding of the world (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) and social interactions, how they construct the collective meaning of reality (Burr, 1995). Moreover, Burr (1995) reveals that “it is through the daily interactions between people in the course of social life that our versions of knowledge become fabricated. Therefore social interaction of all kinds, and particularly language, is of great interest to social constructionists. The goings-on between people in the course of their everyday lives are seen as the practices during which our shared versions of knowledge are constructed. Therefore, what we regard as ‘truth’ (which of course varies historically and cross-culturally), i.e. our current accepted ways of understanding the world, is a product not of objective observation of the world, but of the social processes and interactions in which people are constantly engaged with each other” (p. 4).

In this study, I follow a social constructivist approach in order to attain a deeper understanding of different viewpoints of administrators to manage the international branch campus under research and provide insight into how they have shaped their practices and explored new ways of management within cultural and social conditions. In addition, I aim to create meaning by exploring how the viewpoints of educational administrators of international branch campuses act together to achieve the sustainability of international branch campuses. Crotty (1998) notes that, “when we describe something, we are, in the normal course of events, reporting how something is seen and reacted to, and thereby meaningfully constructed, within a

given community or set of communities” (p. 64). So, it is expected when following a social constructivist approach to recognize that not all individuals within the group have the same initial assumptions of social reality or the same action in response to a situation (Burr, 1995). And regardless of the different perspectives prevailing among the members of one group, looking at common meaning is essential (Burr, 1995).

This study used qualitative research methodology to describe and interpret practices that educational administrators implemented to achieve sustainability of an international branch campus. Several reasons with no specific order of importance lie behind my decision to follow a qualitative research methodology. First, little research has been done on the phenomenon of sustainability of international branch campuses, which is relatively new and was never explored from a group perspective (Creswell, 2012). Second, qualitative research is necessary to explore “processes by which social reality is constructed, managed, and sustained” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Third, I was interested in developing a deeper understanding of the topic in its natural setting by exploring the perspectives of a small group of participants to make sense of the social phenomenon (Creswell, 2012). Fourth, I was interested in creating new knowledge and investigating complex socially constructed elements (i.e. management practices). Fifth, the researcher is the person responsible for data collection and analysis, and for making interpretations of what he sees or understands based on multiple views, and consequently reporting an understanding of the phenomenon. Taking into consideration all of the above reasons, qualitative research was an appropriate choice (Creswell, 2012).

Case Study Method

A case study approach was chosen because it enables the investigation of a subject in its dynamic environment, and seeks to generate contextual results that will shape the practices of

educational administrators, in this instance, to achieve the sustainability of international branch campuses (Yin, 2003).

A single case study strategy was followed as international branch campuses are explored in detail in one setting. As Stake (1995) states, in a single case study the researcher focuses on an issue which is the sustainability of international branch campuses, and then selects one international branch campus to interpret this issue. The study depends on multiple sources of information and evidence to link the data to the conclusions that will include interviews and document analysis that are characteristics of case study research (Yin, 1984; 2003).

Despite the fact that case studies cannot be used for scientific generalizations, they still “have a general relevance and are able to generate ideas and produce theoretical conclusions” (Stake, 1995).

Research Questions

This research responded to the following questions:

1. What practices are educational administrators implementing to achieve the sustainability of an international branch campus in Qatar?
2. How do these management practices interface with concepts and processes of sustainability as found in the post-secondary research literature?
3. Does the interdependence between the international branch campus and the home institution shape these management practices? If so, how?

Selection Procedures for Setting and Participants

The research study took place in a single international branch campus setting located in an educational hub in the Arabian Gulf. As Creswell (2009) indicates, the case study approach is “a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher explores in depth a program, event, activity,

process, or one or more individuals” (p. 13). The research site was purposefully selected based on the following factors: Its uninterrupted presence in the Arabian Gulf for more than five years providing a wealth of data, history, and a close association with the local culture; the scope of its operations and the size of its student population, which offer similarities to most international branch campuses in the region; its management practices that take into account few concepts of sustainability; and the provision of a solid student experience compared to other international branch campuses in the respective hub. As part of a national research requirement in the country where the research took place, the study was subject to the approval of a local ethics review board, the ethics board of the home institution the international branch campus under research is part of, in addition to the Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board of the University of Calgary. A letter of introduction is presented as Appendix A.

The participants in this study were educational administrators of the international branch campus operating within an educational hub including: (a) the acting dean or chief executive officer, (b) the most senior official of respective academic affairs, administration, and student affairs units, (c) one subordinate representing each of the academic affairs, administration, and student affairs units of the international branch campus, and (d) members of the advisory board of the international branch campus.

The above-mentioned educational administrators are either key decision makers within the international branch campus or active participants in the initiation and implementation of management practices. A review of research methods’ literature confirms the importance to target a small, representative, and purposeful group since it supports the focus on in-depth review of the research questions and thorough interpretation (Creswell, 2009; Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

The assistant dean of the international branch campus under research was contacted through a formal letter sent via email detailing the purpose of the study and seeking permission to conduct the research and access to the site. Once permission was granted from the assistant dean, the researcher shared with the assistant dean a list of key participants who would provide the most help in understanding the problem and research questions (Creswell, 2009). Prior to getting involved in the research process, the researcher acquired the participants' consent through the signing of a written form.

The following table provides information about the study participants from QNAT University at the Arabian Gulf (pseudonym).

Table 2

Participants in the Study

ID	Name (Pseudonym)	Gender	Years at QUAG	Functional Area	Position Title
5	Alice	Female	11	Administration	Assistant Director - HR
6	Barbour	Male	1	Academic Affairs	Program Chair - PE
4	Bassam	Male	7	Dean's Office	Assistant Dean - Academic Services
3	Bob	Male	12	Academic Affairs	Assistant Dean - Research
7	Kian	Female	7	Joint Advisory Board	JAB Member - Interim Dean
8	Laith	Male	1	Joint Advisory Board	JAB Member
2	Malcom	Male	1	Student Affairs	Director - Student Affairs
1	Simon	Male	8	Student Affairs	Assistant Director - Student Affairs

Data Collection

Data were collected through two approaches common to case study research: (a) eight semi-structured interviews and (b) a review of documents related to hub and international branch campus' operations.

The one-to-one interviews followed a semi-structured path through a series of open-ended questions drawn from the research questions soliciting the opinions of the participants as

informants and allowing them to reflect on their own experiences (Yin, 1984). Each participant was given the opportunity to participate in one interview or more for a duration ranging from 60 to 90 minutes depending on needs and outcome of the discussions. The interview started with a short introduction and a series of broad questions followed by unstructured questions based on the outcomes of the discussion. This step ensured a more in-depth understanding of the participants' perceptions.

Yin (2003) stated that the interview process is an essential component of data collection because, "Well-informed interviewees can provide important insight into such affairs or events. The interviewees, also can provide shortcuts to the prior history of such situations, helping you to identify the relevant sources of evidence" (p. 108). The interviews were audio taped after getting permission from the participant and transcribed. The researcher created an interview protocol including separate sections for open ended questions and descriptive and reflective notes (Creswell, 2012). All the data were organized by subject categories for easy retrieval.

To support the in-depth examination of the phenomenon, I collected and analyzed available university publications and other documents that included annual and research reports, organizational records, policy statements, and rules and regulations (Creswell, 2009). The document review will help interpret the factors and identify patterns that affect educational policy and practices. Documents were categorized as primary or secondary to simplify the storage process (Yin, 2003).

Data Analysis

The data from the documents and interviews were examined, categorized, tabulated, and interpreted to provide a thorough understanding of the emerging themes (Yin, 2009). To conduct the case study analysis, I used an analysis strategy that relied on theoretical propositions, which

in turn were translated into the research questions. Yin (2009) stated that “the strategy will help you to treat the evidence fairly, produce compelling analytic conclusions, and rule out alternative interpretations” (p. 134). I utilized the concepts to provide an opportunity to cluster content based on the data analysis and represent both commonalities and differences in perspectives. The researcher then reviewed the concepts to identify broad themes, grouping meanings within or across clusters.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Judging the quality of qualitative research is accomplished by looking at the credibility, dependability and transferability of the research in order to provide rigorous and accurate conclusions (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012).

Many measures can be implemented to ensure the credibility of case study research. First is the acceptance of bias throughout the research. Second, the use of triangulation and member checks strategy contributes to the data credibility. Third, reporting data that are unified or conflicting with the expectations of the findings (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). I triangulated data collected from multiple sources and used member checking by getting participants’ input on the final report to determine if specific descriptions are accurate (Creswell, 2009; Yin, 2003).

Interviewees were given the chance to review their transcripts and the research findings and make changes to avoid misinterpretations and data collection errors.

My initial interest in studying the sustainability of branch campuses originates from my personal experiences as an educator in the public and post-secondary education systems in five different countries, as well as from my experiences working at each of the educational hubs in Doha and Dubai. Throughout my experiences, I have witnessed few cases of institutions closing

down for different reasons and challenges that could have been overcome, should the administrators been well informed to make sound decisions.

Over the course of my educational career, I have encountered unique situations that have helped to form my personal beliefs and convictions on how to establish sustainable institutions. In reflecting on my humble career path yet expanding over almost two decades, I have come to appreciate that my philosophy of sustainable education has matured due in part to working in diverse institutions worldwide. Thus, my past experiences have shaped me as an educator and pushed me to look beyond academics and the student affairs fields, but rather focus on learning the everyday happenings of universities as a result of the obstacles they face. These obstacles include but are not limited to recruitment and retention of faculty and staff, tweaking practices to fit with the cultural context, financial stability, and managerial model. Overall, my time spent in higher education has extended my world view of the challenges that universities face and its impact on the present and future of these universities. The result is that it has instilled within me the belief that for institutions to pass the sustainability test, strong leadership, collaboration, and creative and innovative thinking and decision making are needed.

Despite the fact that I have personal connections with the site and with some of the participants from my working experience in higher education in the region, the precision of research methodology served to reduce the likelihood of a biased interpretation due to pre-existing relationships. I was committed to being truthful with the participants about the purpose of the research study, especially in an environment in which transparency and access to information may be considered as a threat. I provided the participants with a plan in advance and kept the management team of the international branch campus under research and the

participants in the loop of what happened throughout the process and informed them of the results of my study once completed.

Dependability is based on showing consistent and stable evidence throughout a study and ensuring that data collection and analysis procedures used in the study can be tracked (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). Yin (2009) stated that “the objective is to be sure that, if a later investigator followed the same procedures as described by an earlier investigator and conducted the same case study all over again, the later investigator should arrive at the same findings and conclusions. The goal of reliability is to minimize the errors and biases in a study” (p. 43).

Although findings in case study research cannot be generalizable to other settings, they still represent a certain level of general relevance (Stake, 1995) that can be transferred to another setting with similar characteristics (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). Transferability then depends on the depth of the interpretations presented by the researcher (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012).

Limitations of the Study

By definition, a case study is delineated in a heavily contextual site. The features of the observed phenomenon (i.e. management practices in interaction with sustainable processes), stem from the uniqueness of the international branch campus and, in principle and in reality, cannot be replicated in other settings. However, the results can still be used as contextual information data that offer practical insights for other international branch campuses’ educational leaders to review their practices. A second limitation results from the wide scope of the phenomenon which, due to the timeframe of this study, imposed a selection of relevant and representative aspects of management and sustainability, instead of exhaustive ones. The domain literature created a third limitation because the international branch campus’ phenomenon is

relatively new and has started only recently to attract the attention of researchers and consequently, few publications were available to deepen the theoretical exploration.

Regarding the methods, interviews pose their own limitations. The perspectives of a few selected individuals within the international branch campus, based on the quality and duration of their personal involvement in the organization, do not necessarily guarantee a comprehensive viewpoint (Creswell, 2009). Finally, the limitations for data analysis are dependent on the researcher's experiences and opinions that will impact how the data is viewed and interpreted.

Delimitations of the Study

This study has two delimitating factors. First, not all the perspectives of international branch campus stakeholders are included, such as the voice of educational authorities in the host country or organization. Second, in certain cultural and organizational contexts, there is no transparency in sharing information, so it is possible that not all documentation are accessible, despite its existence. Third, the reports themselves may be incomplete, and censored. Regardless of these delimitations, the intention of using multiple sources of information will help with cross-checking of data and increase the validity and credibility of the study.

Ethical Considerations

The ethical issues addressed during the study included matters concerning site admission, access to information, right to privacy and confidentiality, and storage and protection of data. First, I obtained ethical approval from the Ethics Board at the University of Calgary and support from the international branch campus management to commence the research and initiate contact with the participants (Creswell, 2009). I have also received approval from a local ethics board and the ethics board of the university the branch campus is part of. These approvals were required by the research office in the international branch campus under research to comply with

guidelines involving human subjects in the country hosting the said international branch campus. It was not until post-candidacy and three ethical clearances that I become engaged with the study. Second, I established a trusting relationship with officials from the branch campus. Building trust was based on showing them a sample of interview questions, seeking advice on the data collection process so they can feel part of it, explaining the purpose of this scientific research and how data will be used, and the benefits of participation. The assistant dean of the international branch campus played a crucial role in facilitating the research and participation in the study. Third, I obtained informed consent from the participants prior to their participation by asking them to complete a consent form that acknowledges their rights and potential risks of being a participant in the study (Creswell, 2009). Finally, the researcher assured confidentiality to the participants since they represent an institution that could otherwise be identified; thus, protecting their right to privacy will be based on using pseudonyms in place of real names.

Summary

In this chapter, I described the methodology used in this study and included a discussion on the research design overview. Research questions were stated and information related to the participants, selection procedures, the rationale for the research approach used, data collection and analysis was provided. This chapter also documented ethical considerations and a discussion of measures that were taken to ensure trustworthiness were offered, followed by the study's limitations and delimitations.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this case study was to gain a thorough understanding of how an international branch campus in the Arabian Gulf plans to achieve sustainability. My rationale for examining this topic is to help educational administrators in the region gain a better understanding of the factors contributing to the sustainability of international branch campuses. In seeking to understand the research problem, three questions frame this inquiry: (1) What practices are educational administrators implementing to achieve the sustainability of an international branch campus in Qatar? (2) How do these management practices interface with concepts and processes of sustainability as found in the post-secondary research literature? (3) Does the interdependence between the international branch campus and the home institution shape these management practices? If so, how? For this case study, I conducted eight semi-structured interviews with senior administrators in one of the international branch campuses in the Arabian Gulf. Additionally, I gathered annual and research reports, organizational records, policy statements, and rules and regulations and kept a researcher's journal. Through the interviews with senior administrators I gathered data about the management and operations of international branch campuses to identify practices implemented to achieve its sustainability. I explained how management practices interface with research informed concepts and processes of sustainability, and to understand how an international branch campus operates in different organizational and cultural contexts from that of the main campus.

This chapter begins with a synopsis of the case. Then, while presenting the findings, I summarized the coding process and I explained how data were analyzed. In the summary of the

data, I discuss the research findings that I organized and categorized according to the research questions and conceptual framework. In my discussion in the summary, I ensured that data is synthesized and linked to the research problem, questions, and research design. Where deemed appropriate, I identified and discussed inconsistent or unexpected data. The analysis of the data led to the emergence of the following findings constructed from the first research question: maintaining the brand and integrity of academic programs; uniqueness of local context and implications for the branch campus' operations; relevance of product delivery to stakeholders through teaching, research, and service; and funding model centered on the educational mission of the branch campus. The findings that emerged from the second research question are: alignment of branch campus' goals and practices with national priorities of host country and agreement with sponsoring organization; adaptation of practices to fit with local laws and cultural context; multifaceted governance process; and resources efficiency influenced by agreement with the sponsoring organization. The findings that emerged from the third research question are: responding to anticipated challenges influenced by geographical distance from main campus; strong ties with main campus; balancing autonomous and interdependent decision making; and recognizing the specificity of roles, benefits, and functions. The chapter concludes by connecting the findings to the last two chapters.

The Case

Case study research is “an empirical inquiry that: investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when, the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which, multiple sources of evidence are used” (Yin, 1984, p. 23). By the same token, Creswell (2012) further defined case study research as, “an in-depth exploration of a bounded system (e.g., activity, event, process, or individuals) based on extensive

data collection” (p. 465). Therefore, case study research should involve a detailed description of the setting. In this study, the setting is an international branch campus in the Arabian Gulf during 2016 in which I studied the perspectives of a small group of educational administrators on management practices they implement to attempt to achieve sustainability. Pseudonyms replaced the names of actual participants, and the setting has been changed to protect the participants’ confidentiality. In this study, the international branch campus under research is identified by a pseudonym selected by the researcher: Qnat University at the Arabian Gulf (hereinafter referred to as QUAG). The home campus is referred as Qnat University (hereinafter referred to as QNAT). The Arabian Gulf’s nation in which the branch campus under study is established is often referred to as the “Host Country”. The funding agency that signed an agreement with QNAT to establish QUAG is referred to as the “Sponsoring Organization”. The geographical area inside the host country where the branch campus is physically located is referred to as the “Educational Hub”. The researcher first initiated contact with QUAG during spring 2016. The assistant dean for academic and student services was the primary point of contact and indicated his willingness to the researcher to conduct this case study at QUAG.

Prior to the interviews and on-site visits, and throughout the data analysis, the researcher also reviewed key institutional materials to understand the case and its context. These included annual and research reports, organizational records, policy statements, and rules and regulations that were available publicly or online: the mission and vision of QUAG; the strategic plan; the annual report; research yearbook; university catalogue; student handbook; and faculty handbook as well as the university website. The analysis of these documents provided an overview of the institution under research and descriptive statistics. The analysis also helped the researcher

understand how this institution has chosen to present its own identity and identified areas requiring further exploration during the interviews.

When I conducted the interviews, I was about to complete my tenth year working in higher education in the Arabian Gulf. QUAG, the international branch campus selected for this study, offers bachelors degrees in four academic disciplines and two graduate degrees. The curriculum offered at QUAG is identical to the one offered at the main campus. Courses are taught in a coeducational setting using English as the language of instruction. Through the offering of internationally renowned degree programs, the branch campus' mission is based on educating and developing leaders in their field not only nationally and regionally but throughout the world. Its mission extends to serve the needs of the host country and the region through broad expertise and by supplying graduates to fill the shortages in the job market. Its research activities address important issues to the host country. QUAG established a joint advisory board comprised of representatives from government and corporate sectors, the university and host organization. The advisory board has the mandate to provide advice regarding the management and operations of the branch campus and is primarily responsible for the ongoing review and evaluation of its success.

A large number of student organizations and clubs are active and represent students' diversified interests ranging from hosting lectures and art exhibitions to organizing sports activities, entertainment, and environmental awareness activities. The student leadership exchange program allows a number of students from the main campus to study at the branch campus and vice versa. The branch campus has a high placement rate of graduates, a strong connection with the corporate sector developed throughout its presence in the region, and a diverse student population including a large number of Nationals.

QUAG could be characterized as an emerging institution in its field that seeks to formalize its natural and necessary institutional evolution. Its strategic plan states the university's long-term goals and the mechanisms by which these goals can be achieved. QUAG undergoes a regular review of the strategic plan through the involvement of committees and task forces comprising faculty, staff and students from its administrative, academic, and student affairs units. The faculty and staff body is diverse and has a low ratio of students to faculty and staff. Faculty and staff are recruited from across the globe with a noticeable presence of administrators, faculty and staff employed from the main campus. The classroom size is very small allowing quality engagement between faculty and students inside the classroom and during regular office hours.

Coding

As Merriam (2001) stated, “the process of data collection and analysis is recursive and dynamic” (p. 155). Data analysis took place both during and following the interviews. The interview recordings, field notes, and documents were constantly reviewed allowing the use of this analysis to inform the next cycle of data collection. Merriam (2009) highlighted the importance of initiating the analysis during data collection, noting that “without ongoing analysis, the data can be unfocused, repetitious, and overwhelming in the sheer volume of material that needs to be processed. Data that have been analyzed while being collected are both parsimonious and illuminating” (p. 171). Each of the individual interview sessions was audio-taped permitting a thorough review of the transcripts. Moreover, audio-taping enabled the full focus of the researcher and his engagement in the interviews, without taking detailed notes of the discussions. Through the use of professional transcription services, transcribing the data included the recording of reactions of interviewees such as silence, laughter, and gestures noted at specific

moments during an interview (Brinkmann & Kvall, 2015). The transcription of interviews was finalized once the eight interviews were complete. In addition, the notes taken during the review of document materials were added to the transcribed interviews using the ‘memos’ tab in Dedoose software (Dedoose, 2016). Reading through the transcribed interviews numerous times enabled the researcher to develop an overall perspective and meaning of the entire interview before breaking the interview down into categories and themes. I also listened to the interviews several times during the interview, data transcription and analysis processes. The purpose of this step is to clarify discrepancies caused by barely audible passages.

As Brinkmann and Kvall (2015) suggested, I conducted his analysis based on “coding the interviews, developing the meanings of the interviews, bringing subject’s own understanding into the light, and providing new perspectives from the researcher” (p. 221). While reading the transcripts, the thoughts, and categories or themes were noted by adding comments or memos in the document. The memos and notes from all interviews were reviewed to develop an initial set of codes that were used on all data gathered.

Then, I initiated a systematic analysis and interpretation of all the data assembled. As Merriam (2009) observes, “data analysis is the process of making sense out of the data. And making sense out of the data involves consolidating, reducing, and interpreting what people have said and what the researcher has seen and read - it is the process of making meaning” (p. 175-176). While describing the process of qualitative data analysis, Creswell (2012) instructs, “this analysis initially consists of developing a general sense of the data, and then coding description and themes about the central phenomenon” (p. 237).

The coding began after the transcription was complete and once the researcher had become familiar with the transcripts. According to Creswell (2012), “coding is the process of

segmenting and labeling text to form descriptions and broad themes in the data” (p. 243).

Brinkmann and Kvall (2015) stated “coding involves attaching one or more keywords to a text segment in order to permit later identification of a statement” (p.237). The researcher read each transcript, and initial notes were made using Dedoose, the qualitative data analysis software; specific excerpts were marked and a code, describing the meaning of each text segment was assigned. The findings of this study came after applying First Cycle, Second Cycle, and Third Cycle coding (Saldaña, 2013). Coding, as an interpretive task, reflected the original constructs and concepts that structured this study (Figure 1 & 2). As Saldaña (2013) stated, “coding is a cyclical act. Rarely is the first cycle of coding data perfectly attempted. The second cycle (and possibly the third and fourth, and so on) of recoding further manages, filters, highlights, and focuses the salient features of the qualitative data record for generating categories, themes, and concepts, grasping meaning” (p. 8). In an endeavor to explain how management practices interface with research informed concepts and processes of sustainability, and to understand how an international branch campus operates in different organizational and cultural contexts from that of the main campus, I coded data from the eight transcribed semi-structured interviews with the administrators from the international branch campus selected for this study. Additionally, I coded parts of the document materials, my researcher journal, comments and memos to paint a triangulated representation of the case. The journal, comments, and memos merited codes as they may offer important analytical insights as I was exposed to the operations of international branch campuses over the past ten years of my career.

Using Dedoose software (Dedoose, 2016), I kept a record of my codes and respective descriptions. My First Cycle of Attribute Coding logged information about the demographic characteristics of the participants identified in the software as descriptors fields. I specifically

coded the gender of the participants, their pseudonyms to hide their identity, the functional areas under which they operate, their position title, and the number of years they had worked at the branch campus.

Again, with the help of Dedoose software, my Second Cycle of coding primarily used Structural coding as a filter for reviewing the data. As Saldaña (2013) confirmed, “Structural Coding applies a content-based or conceptual phrase representing a topic of inquiry to a segment of data to both code and categorize the data corpus. Structural Codes are generally foundation work for further detailed coding” (p. 66). In this case, since my conceptual framework was linked to the literature review and the research questions, employing this form of coding appeared to be appropriate. The analytical diagram of conceptual categories (Figure 1) provided a list of preliminary codes as a foundation. The Structural Coding technique was relevant for exploratory studies utilizing multiple participants and semi-structured protocols and more suitable for interview transcripts than any other types of data (Saldaña, 2013). However, when using this technique to analyze my data, I practiced a high level of cautiousness by making myself aware of preconceptions upon the data examination without forcing my qualitative data into a set of categories that may not respond to my research questions. To make sense of the participants’ views and understandings, additional codes were added as emergent themes became evident during this coding cycle.

In addition, the Second Cycle of coding introduced subcodes and used simultaneous coding. As Saldaña (2013) suggested, a subcode is a second level label assigned to or an extension of a parent code; in some cases, there was more than one subcode sharing the same parent code, and therefore called siblings in the hierarchy. For example, one of the parent code used was Human Capital, while a subcode used was Staff Recruitment and Retention and a

sibling to that Subcode was Labor Nationalization. Additionally, simultaneous coding is based on the application of two or more codes to a segment of qualitative data to describe its complexity or imply multiple meanings that justifies the use of more than one code. For example, I coded data as Policy Development, Human Capital and Adaptability to Local Context when I interpreted the data to infer its multiple meanings. Dedoose software lends itself well to this technique since it has the capabilities to assign, display, and manage multiple codes simultaneously.

Working through the Third Cycle of coding enabled me to develop a sense of thematic organization building on my First and Second Cycles of coding. By interpreting the data, I was seeking to gain a comprehensive viewpoint while trying to answer my research questions. Pattern coding was selected to assist in this attempt and to search for explanations in the data. Pattern codes are “explanatory or inferential codes, ones that identify an emergent theme, configuration, or explanation. They pull together a lot of material into a more meaningful and parsimonious unit of analysis. They are a sort of meta-code. ... Pattern Coding is a way of grouping those summaries into a smaller number of sets, themes, or constructs” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 69). The use of pattern coding allowed me to extract material from previous coding cycles into meaningful units of analysis. Using Dedoose, I pulled material according to the Second Cycle of coding and put them in a Word document. From there, I highlighted texts and insightful quotes from participants, or recorded observations and outliers as found and therefore representing both commonalities and differentiations. Using another Microsoft Word document, I recorded the observed patterns based on the notes created in the margins of the previous document. This document enabled me to cluster the information into meaningful patterns and develop major themes from the data that answer my research questions. Last but

not least, I also utilized member checks (Merriam, 1998) to ensure my assumptions were comprehensive. The tentative interpretations were sent back to the participants to find out if my conclusions were credible. The feedback I received on the presentation and interpretation of the findings was incorporated in the text.

Presentation of Findings

The following outlines a detailed presentation of the findings with sufficient information to support, elaborate on, and explain each finding. Findings were extracted from data analysis and built from the problem and research questions. They are presented in a narrative approach using verbatim quotations, offering an opportunity to better understand the perspectives of the study participants. Narrative data are linked and integrated through comments and explanatory statements. In order to give the participants an opportunity to speak for themselves, the researcher portrayed diverse perspectives of the participants and described through the excerpts the complexity of the subject matter and multiple meanings. Where noted, the researcher discussed not only commonalities and differentiations of views but inconsistent or unexpected data. Findings for each research question are presented separately.

Research Question One. My first research question asked what practices educational administrators are implementing to achieve the sustainability of an international branch campus in Qatar. Based on the analysis of the data, four findings emerged: maintaining the brand and integrity of academic programs; uniqueness of local context and implications for the branch campus' operations; relevance of product delivery to stakeholders through teaching, research, and service; and funding model centered on the educational mission of the branch campus.

Finding 1.1. Maintaining the Brand and Integrity of Academic Programs. Wilkins (2010) highlights the importance of brand reputation and guaranteeing quality academic

standards. Further, Knight (2011) stresses the branch campus' ability to deliver quality academic programs when addressing sustainability matters of higher education in the Middle East. During the interviews, the importance of maintaining the brand and integrity of academic programs was noted most frequently by participants from different roles. While all participants were easily able to speak about the matters within their functional areas, this was not the case when responding to the researcher's inquiries about the sustainability of an international branch campus. When asked about what is needed to ensure the long term sustainability of an international branch campus, there were a wide variety of responses:

Simon (pseudonym) communicated the importance of maintaining the brand and academic integrity. He stated "[...] we have to maintain the brand, we have to maintain the academic integrity, but we need to be able to make decisions locally when that's appropriate".

Bob (pseudonym) stressed on maintaining the quality of academic programs, funding, and focus on research while acknowledging the role of faculty in achieving this goal. He said "[...] keep the quality of our programs where they are, improve them of course if there's room for improvement, I believe there's always room for improvement".

Bassam (pseudonym) and Alice (pseudonym) summarized in their response about what the majority of participants (6 of 8 [75%]) acknowledged, which is the integrity of academic programs and maintaining the brand and standards of research through the hiring of faculty and support staff. As Bassam and Alice shared:

Continue to have the same standards within the means of course. [...] because it's a research school, it's very important to keep up with the standards of the research that we do over here. Hire the same quality of staff is important especially the support staff, everybody matters from the driver to the Dean, everybody matters. (Alice)

Probably the two most important things are maintaining the academic integrity; [...] the reason why [branch campuses] have been invited over is [...] because of the reputation of that whole campus, and it's very important that they maintain the academic integrity of the programs and continue to produce the same quality, whether they have an agreement such as here which the diplomas are coming from the home campus or if it's NYU Abu Dhabi in which their diplomas are issued locally. (Bassam)

Additionally, Alice linked maintaining the brand to recruiting quality students who will not only be leaders in their countries when they graduate, but will ensure the long term existence of the branch campus:

Continue to accept the same quality of students, that way I think we will survive. If they give us another 10 years contract, we will probably survive for sure. We will continue to produce those world-class engineers who would become the leaders of Qatar in the future and maybe the leaders in their home countries.

Interestingly, a few participants (2 of 8 [25%]) highlighted the role and visibility of the international branch campus in the region, and the outreach efforts as tools to ensure its sustainability. For example, Barbour (pseudonym) talked about managing reputational risks by enhancing visibility in the region, hiring quality faculty and staff, and running operations effectively:

Talking more broadly not simply about Qatar, I think the idea of having branch campuses are very powerful ways of providing educational support locally and also developing relationships locally and the visibility of QNAT here is enhanced by being here in place, physically in place. You know, the visibility of Heriot-Watt, and its

petroleum engineering program, is enhanced in Dubai because there is a campus in Dubai. I think these branch campuses, if they are run well, and if they are staffed in the right kind of way, and by staff, I mean faculty as well as staff, can be a great success.

(Barbour)

Laith (pseudonym) focused on outreach activities to promote the field of study while trying to convince students and parents to apply for engineering as an academic discipline especially when the pool of qualified students is not too large:

If it's QUAG I guess related to STEM where you would like to encourage the students more into applied science, more into engineering and you need to go and do a lot of outreach activities, go to the campuses to visit and convince people to apply for engineering. I mean that's from [the] QUAG perspective. Having said that, do we have enough pool, large pool that can sustain all the branch campuses, and other universities in town, I'm not sure. There is always a pool of students but I think that pool is not very large.

Finding 1.2. Uniqueness of Local Context and Implications for the Branch Campus'

Operations. Harding and Lammey (2011) suggest giving careful attention to local context and understanding laws and customs that may impact institutional activities. Lane (2011) stressed the role that culture plays in operational issues ranging from educational practice to decision making and management, and in the creation of a new demand for higher education locally. Regardless of the level of adaptation to the local context educational practices have gone through, which will be covered in upcoming sections of the findings, half of the participants (4 of 8 [50%]) acknowledged the uniqueness of working in the Arabian Gulf from philosophical, cultural, and

financial perspectives and respective implications for the branch campus to ensure its sustainability.

Simon emphasized the importance of the application of main campus traditions and teaching styles in a way that resonates with local students who come with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds:

Whereas, we're going to do our best to mirror what's being offered on the main campus, there is still our local context. From my perspective in Student Affairs, QNAT is long on traditions and history and customs and culture that is uniquely "QNATies" (referring to the students, graduates, and sports teams of QNAT University). We do our best to produce good "QNATies" and so, we bring the culture, we bring the customs, we bring those traditions and history here, but have to be applied in a way that resonates with our local students. And so it's not going to look exactly the same as it would on the main campus. [...] I think from our faculty, they would say the same, that they're teaching the same courses, they're teaching to the same level of academic rigor but because of where our students come from, because of maybe their academic background, or sort of academic expertise as they enter as students, that needs to be taken into account. And you know, faculty members need to acknowledge that.

Additionally, Malcom (pseudonym) acknowledged pre-existing host country conditions related to human rights and freedom of speech, and implications for guaranteeing actual application of these values in the university experience:

Most of these campuses are in parts of the world that have issues that don't go along with the mission of the institution or the country. For example, Asia and Middle East where

most of these branch campuses are, have issues of human rights and other issues and I think our branch campuses have to deal with that.

While acknowledging local conditions, participants shared concerns about the constraints on freedom of speech that do not align with the mission of the institution. Malcom said that “there's a lot of issues of free speech, [...] there are some guarantees from the sponsoring organization regarding free speech. But there's an issue regarding guaranteed actual practice. If there ever was a major concern, would it actually be guaranteed”?

Despite specific concerns about academic freedom and the existence of agreements regulating such matters between the branch campus and sponsoring organization, branch campuses are still perceived as successful experiments benefiting the country and the student population.

I think [the branch campus] creates a lot of great intercultural expansion for students involved whether [...] students travelling from other countries to where it's located or students taking those courses at the branch campuses locally, like the nationals. But then there's also a lot of challenges and issues that I think are not addressed. And a lot of it has to do with politics, finances, and priorities. And I think until we really get those things on the forefront we truly aren't going to make those experiments truly successful.

(Malcom)

Bob highlighted the convenience of the provision of American style education while staying at home. This step facilitates the process of keeping local students from studying abroad or even attracting foreign students who are comfortable with the campus culture:

It's a fair approach because there are many people who cannot travel for whatever reason, money, family, other, so bring the western education to them instead of asking

them to come all the way and go to the U.S. Now of course [in] China and other places there is [...] the economy of the masses because you're bringing higher education institutes to a market of few hundred million students, of course the money is an issue for those universities operating there but I think it's worth it. Cause you're giving opportunities for the local population. (Bob)

The understanding of local conditions and their implications require having a certain span of control, which allows the leaders of the branch campus to make decisions on what they are doing. Simon who has been at the branch campus long enough to witness a tightening of the decision making back to the main campus, observed:

I think there's a very delicate balance that needs to be struck there. The local staff, the local administration, the executive administration needs to feel like they have some control over what they're doing. I've always said this with my staff you know, one of my expectations from my staff is to make decisions because if every time you need to make decisions, you have to come to me, what I need you for? -- because I'm making all the decisions, so I don't need you.

Moreover, some participants felt the leaders of the branch campus should be able to make decisions because they have investigated host country conditions and to avoid demotivation issues caused by decisions taken by someone stationed thousands of miles away.

And, I think, there's a similar kind of philosophy at the dean's level. If the Dean can't make a decision without calling the Provost first, yeah – that could be actually a kind of a frustration, you know. Why am I here if I can't tie my shoes without calling you first then, I'm not going to stay. It becomes to a degree of a morale issue, it becomes a motivation

issue. If no decisions can be made locally and you're always waiting for a response back, that becomes problematic. (Simon)

The local context impacts not only the decision making, but also the unique role played by the dean, simultaneously acting as chief executive officer and agent of change.

[...] if the new dean does not see and accept the CEO type responsibility of the role, it will be to the disadvantage of QUAG. And that is particularly true because the environment is changing, the world is changing. So it needs somebody who is a great manager of change and a great understander of change. As you see the change coming, you can adapt to it and make sure you're ready rather than it is being imposed upon you. (Barbour)

Finding 1.3. Relevance of Product Delivery to Stakeholders through Teaching, Research, and Service. Tan (2016) emphasizes the “quality of education and economic relevance rather than student numbers or GDP share” (p. 10). Gacel-Ávila (2014) also stresses the transformative potential of comprehensive internationalization strategies such as innovation, quality, and relevance to the higher education sector. Knight (2014) underlines the importance of improving the relevance and quality of the curriculum and the learning process of crossborder educational initiatives to the country’s cultural and jurisdictional conditions. The most senior academic officials participating in this study (i.e. the joint advisory board member, interim dean, and assistant dean for academic services) pointed out the relevance of the product to different stakeholders. They outlined the relevance to the region, and to the culture through teaching, research and service to the wider community. They also stressed the importance of understanding why the branch campus was brought to the host country and how it responds to prevailing needs through partnership and active interaction with the wider community.

I think that QUAG compared to other branch campuses is really doing a great job in terms of making sure their programs are relevant to the host country and the type of programs they are developing as far as I can see are very good and they are very consistent with what the country needs in general. (Laith)

I think you have to be in tune and sensitive to the needs of the university, needs of the region and the culture. I mean a lot of times [officials of the sponsoring organization] don't necessarily know precisely what they need. [...] sometimes they know that they want [...] higher education institutions [...] to work, right. I mean the thing is if they had a clear roadmap and knew exactly what they want to do, [...] they wouldn't need a branch campus, but then [...] if they are already doing it, what do they need us for, right. So the thing is they know that whatever the host country is, they know they want to be here. They know they are here, how do you get here? So in essence it needs to be a partnership. Universities were brought in to assist not to dictate, not say how it's done, not to live on a hill and have no interaction and just produce diplomas. They have to engage [and] to make themselves relevant. They need to look around and say, okay, how do we – what can we do to serve the wider community? I mean, all faculty in every university in the states are evaluated on their research, teaching and their service.

(Bassam)

In addition to granting degrees for graduates, the branch campus has to take the service aspect very seriously and offer assistance to the community in areas that require support. Faculty and staff who are working at the branch campus have an interest in doing so because they will also benefit from it as their families are part of the community as well.

I think in the long-term they lose out because they don't make themselves relevant to the wider population. I think campuses that do that, I think it's more successful for them. But also I think it's more of [an] enriching experience for the people to live there. [...] at the end of the day, the faculty and staff that work at QUAG or any branch campus, they live in the community. They send their kids to the schools. It's their community too. It may only be their community for a short while but while they are here they are invested. So I think that's important to see that too and see themselves as part of it. That's my take the two things, relevance, right, local relevance and that's going be different in every country, and then I think maintaining the integrity of their academic institutions.

(Bassam)

The quality educational programs and outreach efforts offered by the branch campus need to support the development of a workforce that is useful to the community as well as the country itself.

Engineering, I think is a really great thing because there will always be need for engineers and as long as we maintain a good quality in our educational programs, that we're training people who have an interest in staying in the country, we can do that. We need to make certain that our scholarship is something that means something to the local community and help support development in the local community. And we need to make certain that our outreach programs help to develop potential workforce even though it might be several years down the line. (Kian)

To ensure their sustainability, branch campuses are required to link the motives behind their establishment to product delivery through research and the provision of world class education and graduate programs. This commitment to research and offering PhD programs were

represented as mechanisms to ensure relevance to the country's needs and service the local community and prevent the branch campus from transforming into a teaching institution.

[...] one of the challenges that we have going forward is to make sure we keep in our mind why we are here; why? What's our license to operate here; it's about serving Qatar and serving the local region both from a capability and [pause] educational perspectives, delivering capability, but also providing an educational forum that is world class, or is recognized to be potentially world class. So I think those are the two issues that we need to be very conscious of. Things are about to change, and we will need to be light on our feet and evolve to meet those changes or we will not survive effectively. And then the second one is remembering and keeping it in your mind all the time, we are here because Qatar wants us to be here to create something that's different, and do that, make sure you kind of keep that high in your mind. That plays research, this place, I am not talking about petroleum engineering, I am talking generally about QUAG and any of these branch campuses have to have graduate programs, have to have PhD programs, have to have tangible research to give them sustainability. If they don't have those, they would just eventually evolve into a teaching establishment, and the caliber of the people who do the teaching will drop off because the best people in university systems, their performance is measured on research impact, not teaching ability, that's the way it is.

(Barbour)

In addition, the continuous improvement of the curriculum was thought to be essential to match job market needs and alignment with field trends and developments. This step will ensure the incorporation of specific courses in order to better prepare the workforce to operate in the regional context while maintaining the offering of core courses related to a specific academic

discipline. The use of technology in the classroom has come a very long way in recent decades to support faculty in coming up with new courses and in creating knowledge.

If you go back twenty thirty years ago there was nothing about environmental issues in the curriculum, now we have them; if you look at our curriculum here, we added Professional Ethics for engineering. A few years ago nobody gave a course in Professional Ethics [...]. Ethics play a very major role, so we always adapt a curriculum; you know a few years down the road, [...] maybe global warming will become a much more major issue, we have to worry about that. [...] there are many things like the curriculum, that change with time and there are things that don't change like if you want to teach calculus [...]. (Bob)

To maintain the continuous flow of students into the academic programs and therefore ensuring their sustainability, two of the eight participants (2 of 8 [25%]) pointed out the role of the branch campus in attracting, retaining, and educating students who will work in the country after graduation and contribute to the growth of its economy.

I think as long as they are able to attract students, graduate students, excellent students that go into the community and work, I think that will play a very important role in terms of sustaining QUAG. (Laith)

One participant presented a unique perspective focused on understanding and meeting the needs of the branch campus itself as one of the stakeholders and highlighted the role of the sponsoring organization in this regard. To sustain itself in the long term, the branch campus must look for a sponsoring organization that values its educational work and understands the guiding principles that govern the partnership (i.e. regular communication and proper planning).

[...] I think there needs to be an understanding from the sponsoring organization for the work that's being done and valuing that work. As I mentioned before there's been decisions being done at the sponsoring organization that it makes you think do they even know what's going on? You know recently there's been a call for a student affairs committee at the sponsoring organization so we can have better communication. And the issue is we already are having those meetings. So did they even know that? So again, it's having more direct communication, knowing what's going on and valuing that. I think that goes back to the foundation of what we do. We're in education, we care about the people, so you need to be able to care about the staff and people working. (Malcom)

The same participant also underlined the implications of the lack of communication and poor planning when offering a new academic program by a partner university funded by the same sponsoring organization. Such shortcomings will lead to more tension and create challenges.

[...] That program was initially started and was told we're going to launch this program in the fall of 2017. And okay great well we'll have the whole year to really implement it, great, you know, a good timeline, make sure certain things are in place. We hire good faculty [...]. Next thing we know the partner organization has launched it in fall 2016 with no planning, not knowing what's going on and just saying QUAG we're going to be part of this and we're going to make it happen. (Malcom)

Finding 1.4. Funding model centered on the educational mission of the branch campus. Knight (2012) illustrates different rationales driving institutions to offer academic programs across borders. In addition to increased profile, universities when attracted to meet the need for higher education in a different country, possess a strong obligation to generate profit

through their branch campus. Each participant in the research study (8 of 8 [100%]) made a comment as part of his or her responses referring to funding. Surprisingly, few participants (2 of 8 [25%]) insisted on the role the sponsoring organization plays in supporting the operations of the branch campus through the provision of a funding model based on a commitment to education and not profit driven. Without such a commitment, the sustainability of the branch campus will not be secured:

I think that the sustainability piece really has to come from a model like the sponsoring organization, where it is a funding body with a focus on education, and on providing a service but it's not a profit-driven corporate sort of model of return on investment because it's not going to be a good return on your investment or the return on investment is going to have such a long time horizon that becomes unsustainable. [...] I think, that's why you've seen a lot of branch campuses that sort of started, sort of [...] operated for 3 or 5 years and then closed because the original investors asked where is our profit margins. Well, universities don't generally produce profit margins and so, you can't go into that mindset of having it be an investment. It's an investment but it's an investment in the people. It's not an investment from a financial gain. (Simon)

Addressing the needs of the community and the continued support from the sponsoring organization were found essential by Kian (pseudonym) to the branch campus' sustainability because revenue from tuition fees was not deemed sufficient based on the closure of its branch campus in a different country:

Well, certainly, the continued support from the sponsoring organization -- that's absolutely critical. QNAT had, at one point in time, a branch campus in East Asia. And that branch campus was intended to be self-funded and so that we recharge enough to --

in tuition to be able to maintain campus operations. It went broke. And so, I think that without some sort of outside support, it would be very, very difficult for us to maintain operations here and so, that -- that's the most direct thing. I think that what QNAT needs to do is to make certain that we continue to try to address the needs of the local community because that is going to be what maintains our value to the sponsoring organization. (Kian)

Simon and Kian also talked about financial incentives to recruit and retain staff through offering of perks such as housing and travel allowances. Without such incentives, it will be difficult to recruit and retain faculty and staff who will achieve the academic mission of the institution through quality teaching, research, and support. Although these financial incentives are not paid on the main campus, and offering them at the branch campus may create inequity issues, an exception to the university policy is needed at that level:

People on the main campus don't get their housing paid for, so why do I have to provide that in the Arabian Gulf? And our Human Resources office came back and said, because everyone will leave. They will not be able to afford to stay here so if you want to have staff, if you want to have faculty, this is what we have to provide. [...] We know exactly how much that costs to the penny. We sign the leases; [...] things like our travel allowance. There are questions about [...] why are we paying these people to go on vacation? I said, "We're not paying people to go on vacation, we're providing them money to be able to go back home and connect with their family." Again people in the US live -- my family's in Ohio, so even if I was living in a neighboring state, I wouldn't be close to them geographically but it's certainly much easier for me to get on a plane and fly to Ohio from that state than it is to go home from here. (Simon)

There was an acknowledgement that there is an added expense and added time factor involved with working overseas. Therefore, it becomes essential to recognize the difference of the milieu between home and branch campuses and the additional perks required to recruit and retain faculty and staff overseas:

[...] regardless of where you live or regardless of where you work, some local considerations need to be taken and that's where you have seen that things sort of tighten up over the last couple of years. It feels like a little bit of that has been lost, that our circumstance is unique -- it is different to work here than it is to work on the main campus in the United States of America. And so, that needs to be recognized both philosophically but also from a budgetary impacted perspective -- that our staff need [...] to have certain benefits that are not afforded but because it's what is necessary you know, to our local situation. (Simon)

I think, particularly where we see benefit in bringing people in from the U.S in particular, from our main campus, it's hard enough without the incentives. They're leaving their families behind, they're often leaving houses that they have lived in for you know, decades. And so, it's a real change of life and I think without having that kind of financial incentives, it would -- it would be tough. We get some people who are interested in the adventure, you know, having an opportunity to go and live in a different culture but that's not enough for most. (Kian)

Research Question Two. My second research question asked how these management practices interface with concepts and processes of sustainability as found in the post-secondary research literature. Based on the analysis of the data, four findings emerged: alignment of

branch campus' goals and practices with national priorities of host country and agreement with sponsoring organization; adaptation of practices to fit with local laws and cultural context; multifaceted governance process; and resources efficiency influenced by agreement with sponsoring organization.

Finding 2.1. Alignment of branch campus' goals and management practices with national priorities of host country and agreement with sponsoring organization. As part of the interview process, participants were asked, "What is the role that national vision, local laws and culture, and/or stakeholders play in the development of practices?" All participants (8 of 8 [100%]) shared that they see the role of national vision and sponsoring organization as central to impact practice. In addition, many participants explained the importance of aligning strategic goals of the university with the national vision of the host country. For example:

It's always sort of being a servant to two masters, right? We're a branch campus of QNAT and so we have to uphold the values, the mission, the goals of the university but then being here, we also want to support the vision of the sponsoring organization and the national vision. Easily - when you look at the broad strokes, those things match very easily. The idea of what this country is trying to accomplish with its vision is, you know, it's about education, it's about transforming human potential -- all those things that are what a university does, right? -- at the very basic [level], that's what we do. We try to advance knowledge, we try to provide education, we're trying to make better people.

(Simon)

Well, I mean the overriding thing we have is that we [have] our overall overarching agreement between QNAT and the Sponsoring Organization and so that's a substantial

agreement but it lists out our expectations on both sides and that governs a lot of what we do and it's fairly comprehensive. So whenever taking a particular action or anything like that of course we look for reference for that to make sure we are in compliance with that agreement and that agreement outlines the expectations of QNAT but also the expectations of the Sponsoring Organization. So we make sure they were aligned with that and that covers everything from curriculum practices to basically that we will offer QNAT degrees, to this sort of remuneration that we can provide employees like for example we provide our employees housing, who's eligible, who's an employee, those sorts of things and that deals with -- really by complying with that, we kind of hit on all those points. (Bassam)

My impression is that, you know, the Sponsoring Organization is setting out the context within which we work, and so it drives the priorities. It enables us to define what our strategic focus areas are together with, and that's not just the internal side of things but is looking externally both to industry partnerships but also to reaching out into schools and the public. So I think it's a core part, it sets the framework and the context within which we work, and I think that these are critical things to do because you can't operate in a vacuum, so it provides the context. (Barbour)

The National Vision is very important because it's our duty also to serve the country and that's why [...] we look at the National Vision 2030 and the National Research Strategy and we use them in our goals, we use them in our recruiting of faculty because we want our mission here, also to serve the country that's hosting us. So basically, sorry if I'm

repeating myself, it's our duty to make sure that we are contributing to the National Vision and to make sure that we are on track to [telephone rings] approach that. (Bob)

To achieve the host nation's goals, participants spoke about connecting with stakeholders including corporations, governmental agencies, schools, and the local community while ensuring that the branch campus is meeting their needs through the provision of research, services, and outreach:

I think as an institution and some of this trickles down to the department is we're looking to what are the goals of the host nation and I think this is where we go to, you know the national vision 2030 if I remember correctly. So there's different things, so for example one really key one is working and connecting with our local community. It's about enriching the host country's greatest resource which is the Qatari nationals. So we have a very good relationship with, a lot of corporations and national governments to get funding. To then support creating STEM research programs that work with, young students that are as young as, you know, elementary school to middle school where we have them come in and they get to experience. (Malcom)

While identifying the stakeholders, an interesting disclosure occurred when Bob mentioned that the stakeholders contribute to the branch campus but do not have any impact on its vision and practices:

[...] we have many stakeholders. They are government entities, they are the public sector here or they are the private sector and they contribute to us in so many events but they don't have any direct impact on our vision or practices.

There is evidence of linking the national vision to the branch campus strategic plan in the answers of the participants as well as in the university yearbook and research publications:

So, those two things match very well and our local strategic plan is based around supporting the Qatar Vision. We've taken the elements of the larger QNAT Strategic Plan that applies to us. We've taken the pieces that directly relate to the vision because we are partners here. We're partners with the Sponsoring Organization, we're partners with the State of Qatar and we want to show how the 2 -- how we are here to support the Nation's Vision. So, our strategic plan, locally, does directly reflect, you know, the different elements of that, the different elements of Sponsoring Organization's Mission. We always try to link those and tie those together as best we can as we put our strategic plan and sort what our priorities as a university are going to be. (Simon)

Beyond the strategic plan, the national vision and local laws cascade down to impact programs being launched, faculty being hired, and campus operations:

I think that the National Vision, the laws and so on play an extremely important role as far as I know in terms of how QUAG is operating. For example, it has an effect on the type of programs they develop, in terms of degrees, in terms of research focus, in terms of the type of activities they do, the type of outreach they do, the type of students they would like to recruit, the type of faculty they would like to recruit. So all in all, [...] whether it's the 2030 National Vision, whether the local context, the relevance, the type of requirement that this country needs, I believe QUAG does take that into consideration when they design their programs and manage their campus. (Laith)

In response to “What steps have you implemented to align international branch campus’ goals with national needs?”, participants referred to few other ways while also acknowledging that not every single point of the vision can be covered. First, the vision may guide the focus on

community development and engagement with community partners and industry as Simon and Bassam have mentioned:

As I've mentioned earlier, our local strategic plan for our campus is tied directly to the National Vision. We've taken each of the points of the National Vision, and looked at how our strategic plan is structured, and made all the connections across both. So there's an inner weaving of both of those two documents that -- you know, we don't necessarily hit on every point of everything, because the university focus is a little bit more narrow in some places than the broader vision is; but any place that we can touch on the vision, we're certainly doing that, and it goes beyond just our academic focus. A large part of our strategic plan -- there's a whole section around community development and community engagement, whether that's our faculty members working with industry, whether it is programs that we do outreach to the community, either in schools or we offer this sort of general interest educational opportunities for the public to come here to the university, or will go out into the community and to offer things around Engineering or different elements. (Simon)

We constantly need to show our relevance to the people in the state where the home campus is located. So the State is supporting us just because they're -- but most locals don't go to our university. How do we show our value and that's essentially what we do here too. So we tailor those efforts become geared towards what does the host country need. When we look at the vision for them and so that means that outreach is essential part of what we do in the large outreach office we do K to 12 STEM Education, not to

recruit them to QUAG, it's great if they want to or to be engineers, but just to get them excited about STEM Education to show how fun it can be. (Bassam)

Bassam also spoke about extending the outreach to high schools and teachers in order to get students excited about the academic disciplines the branch campus offers:

A couple of weeks ago during the school's break we did in one of our engineering academies which had drones, [...] and the students learn how to program and build them and then put them through a series of obstacle courses. [...] we did that in partnership [...] with Takina (pseudonym), a global leader in its field. Those are the sorts of things we do to try to get people more excited about STEM Education [...]. We do those sorts of things we work with teachers in terms of how to make the classrooms more exciting.

Second, participants reflected on the importance of ensuring that academic programs and research priorities align with country needs, supporting the development of the country by supplying the local market with well-trained individuals and providing services to constituents through applied research, while the national vision is driving the country's transformation to a knowledge base economy.

I think, especially as QUAG -- was first established, there was a strong desire to make certain that the academic programs that we delivered align with professional needs within the country and this would've been back in 2003-2006. And, I think that is one of the things that led to the formation of the Joint Advisory Board. Since then, and certainly recently, we have worked pretty diligently to maintain very strong interactions with local industries -- with some of the ministries and other individuals who have an interest in the production of engineers as young professionals, and, in the type of research that we

provide through QUAG, and who are interested in the types of outreach that we can provide to our local community here. (Kian)

So, our mission as an institution is education, is impactful research that supports development and scholarship and then service to our constituencies, and, we have carried that philosophy here to the host country. And so, even though we're funded through the Sponsoring Organization, those missions still very much apply in this context. It gives us a sense of, you know, where the host country is really trying to transform itself from being an oil-based economy to moving more towards a knowledge-based economy. We really see that engineering, which is the focus of our educational programs here, plays huge role in that. And though, even the education programs that we provide here focus largely on the energy industry, we know that those basic skills on the production of very well trained technical experts, is something that is going to be able to support this country in its long term vision. (Kian)

Certainly, our research programs here align with the national priorities for research and those are kind of managed and published by the Qatar National Research fund, and so, we work within those, in developing proposals for new grants, for our small branch campus, I think that we have been quite successful and be able to meet some of those challenges and to be productive in doing research related to energy; a lot now, related to water security as a new focus. And we have developed -- quickly developing a water program here on campus. And so, I think that, just by paying attention to the messages

that we hear from the local agencies, allows us to try to adapt and move into areas where the opportunities follow the needs, and we try to follow those opportunities. (Kian)

Third, Alice stressed the comprehensive role of all branch campus' departments, across disciplines and administrative areas, in support of the national vision by securing the students' readiness for the job market:

I would say that you know with anything that supports the National Vision of 2030, all the departments at the branch campus kind of have a role in it. But what dictates the establishment of it is, you know, the committee that is formed by the Dean's Council, like having this number of students graduating just on Thursday shows how successful the campus is and that supports the vision. I don't speak on the student level as, you know I'm just responsible for the staff, but I would consider myself and so as everybody working at the branch campus is part of that graduation. Because of the efforts between faculty, staff, and researchers those students became you know stars in their field and they are hired by big companies like Exxon and Shell and you know are we helping these big companies, so I would say that everybody here – even if you don't work directly with students or you do, plays a role in the you know, in, in, in making that vision a reality.

By the same token, Malcom provided examples on how the National Vision can integrate in various aspects of the branch campus' operations including but not limited to the student experience:

So I think the national vision is always going to play a key role. That's something that we consider in the mission of the institution and also is integrated into various aspects of different departments across campus. Because of that also, that takes into play the development of our student experience. You know, when we look at how do we develop

our students, one is there – our branch campus is not in the United States. So we have to take the national vision into consideration when looking at [sniffs] creating intercultural programming working with our student population and looking at our population percentage of locals versus nationals. So that all connects the national vision as well. [Sniffs] Then of course you could imagine when we're creating the student experience you have to then look at laws and the culture itself, you know.

Finding 2.2. Adaptation of practices to fit with local laws and cultural context. Harding and Lammey (2011) state that planning to create a branch campus overseas requires the understanding of local laws and regulations that may impact different organizational activities in the host country including but not limited to nondiscrimination laws, academic freedom expectations, relationship building with the public and private sectors, and hiring practices. De Wit and Leask (2015) highlight the influence of the local context and its social, cultural, political, and economic dimensions in providing opportunities and challenges to internationalize the curriculum.

Each study participant (8 of 8 [100%]) made a comment mentioning the adaptation of practices in his or her scope or responsibilities. To operate a branch campus in a different country, administrators at QUAG strive to balance the complexity of different regulations including those of the host country, the state where the home campus is located, the university itself, and the sponsoring organization. This balancing act is based on flexibility, respect for diversity, and having an open mind to operate within a different context. Moreover, in the interviews, each participant (8 of 8 [100%]) provided examples of how adaptation is reflected in practices related to their positions. Examples of annual leave, holidays, and salary scale were shared by Alice:

We kind of juggle between all these rules and we have to study the host country labor law; we have to study the state laws; we have to study you know all these rules and we have at the same time to respect the culture. So one of the examples is probably the annual leave that exists in the host country due to the nature of this country, that does not exist in the main campus. So, for example the holidays, the holiday schedule, we know that at the main campus we have a set of approved official 14 days of holidays, but it cannot be exactly like this you know on this campus. So, we try to respect the state holidays and the host country holidays. One of the examples is that we must celebrate three days each of Eid-al-Adha, Eid-al-Fitr, it's part of the Islamic culture. At the same time the Martin Luther King Day is not very vital probably to the host country, they probably don't know what it is, but it's an important holiday for the state. So for these two there is no – we don't compromise for these two as well as the host country National holiday. So this is how we kind of – you know we try to be flexible, we try to be – you must be flexible, you must be respecting diversity. You must be open-minded in order to survive.

By virtue of working for a state university, administrators have to be very careful and sensitive to the obligation of meeting certain employment laws and regulations and system rules and applying them through constant negotiation in the academic calendar while taking into consideration host country's mandated holidays.

So for example we take Martin Luther King Day, is a day off here, right? Because as it is mandated by a state law. So, but we have to also make sure that we take appropriate days inside Qatar, its national holidays. So one of the things that falls to me is how does the academic calendar work, so state employees are allowed to have a certain number of

holidays, mandated holidays a year, and then we try to match them up, so it's interesting. So Thanksgiving, students go to class here, we all have classes. But we have Martin Luther King's Day off and President's Day. So we had to kind of match those things up. So we – it is a constant kind of negotiation that takes place, it doesn't happen, it doesn't help that the lunar calendar that dictates times for Ramadan and Eid in Islamic calendar doesn't know necessarily match up with the solar calendar. So of course we have to take that into consideration when we start classes. I mean we obviously don't want to miss our classes to start right in the middle of the year because they, you know, they can't. By law, we have to be sensitive to that inside Qatar and, and our main campus is really sensitive to that too but it means that we plan those things out usually two years in advance.

(Bassam)

Salaries and compensations packages are additional examples of regulations the branch campus must review, along with existing base salary scales at the university level, and market range, and incentives paid to attract faculty and staff to work overseas in the form of premiums or allowances.

There is a range for all these salaries and we collaborate with the university compensation administration. Coming to know what are the ranges there too. These salaries sometimes are lower than the market, sometimes they are higher than the market. But what we do here is to also talk to the sister universities like in this Educational Hub to make sure that we are within the market. So sometimes it's a challenge, depends on what the base salaries of the position is at the main campus, which is something that we have to comply with. Especially that we have people – many people here from the main campus, so when they go back we don't want to have those kind of

exaggerated salaries. At the same time, we must comply – it's a state university. The taxpayers pay for it and they know our salaries and everything, so we – it's a challenge, to put these two in place. So we try to, you know, kind of have an agreement with the sponsoring organization on the benefits, because of the benefits people are over here. They are not at home and so we try to kind of balance it out with the benefits. That is only provided to the branch campus. (Alice)

The base salaries must remain the same. We cannot over exaggerate about the salaries. But we can offer premiums like salary premium or overseas premium that if you're working in the branch campus you get a certain amount of, you know, additional let's say incentive to come over here. (Alice)

QUAG as a state school is not only required to adhere to different policies, practices, and procedures as stated above but to mediate conflict with local Qatari law or practice. Space rental, purchasing and bidding procedures, contracts with external entities, and cross registration with other universities are a few examples of practices mandated by the state and strictly prescribed within the main university system that had to be adapted to match local practice.

Local practice and local law don't necessarily match up with them, and so in particular -- one of the examples from the main campus, if a group is going to make a reservation off campus for a ballroom, for example, the policy is -- they do not pay a deposit, they will pay after the event, whatever the contracted rate is. Locally, most venues here require some sort of deposit in order to hold the date. Well, on the main campus, the university being so big, any of the rental spaces knows that the university will pay and there's not a concern for that and they want the university's business so they don't require a deposit.

So, that was one issue that we had to work out when we started working with rental spaces locally, and we would submit an invoice for payment -- for down payment -- all of our invoices would eventually make its way through the finance office on the main campus, would say "We don't pay deposits, that's not a part of our university policy." So - well, if we don't pay the deposit, we're not going to be able to reserve the space and then we can't hold our events. And so, we had to work out between the local procedures here in terms of what we need to do and what the main campus procedures are, in terms of how purchasing is done. (Simon)

Similarly, with purchasing, there are specific vendors that are either licensed or are part of the main campus approved vendor List. Well, anytime we want to do anything locally, we had to go through a process to get that local vendor approved to supply, you know, materials or whatever for QUAG. The sponsoring organization has agreements with local vendors and since we fall under its jurisdiction, to some level, we had that business relationship with local vendors. But QUAG as an entity doesn't, so again, that was a process that had to be gone through our local finance people talking to the main campus finance people to make that work. (Simon)

Cross registration is another area that requires some sort of collaborative work. From the sponsoring organization's perspective, it should be easy for students to cross register between branch campuses that are part of the same Educational Hub. From QUAG's perspective, and although many branch campuses are stationed in one geographical location, it is no different for one of the students to walk down the street and take a class at another branch campus as it would be for students on the main campus flying to a different state to register for a course.

[...] our registrar's offices all had to work together to -- and they've since established, you know, their specific classes that are already pre-approved. [...] a student can cross register and take classes at other universities and they know the hours that transfer in. Some of the students -- there's a class at one of the other universities and they want to take it because it's of a particular interest -- there's [a] process they have to go through internally to QNAT University where the class description needs to be provided, sort of one of the criteria on those kind of things and where it's going to fit in their degree plan for QNAT University or those hours will transfer or will not transfer. And so, having to that negotiation needs to take place. (Simon)

Bassam talked about recruitment practices governed by transparency and the Freedom of Information Act including the advertising of positions, a practice that is not widely spread in the Arabian Gulf.

In terms of recruitment, we try to meet our goals and so on as outlined in our agreement but then of course we also have to follow state hiring practices. One of the nicest things of being at a state institution is that everything has to be incredibly transparent. Because it's available for Freedom of Information Act and things like that. So we have very set practices at how we score employees. We have to, if we advertise for positions, it has to be advertised in so many different places, I mean all those sorts of things to make it available. And of course whenever possible we like to see as much as possible as recruiting locally for certain positions is very much an important part of what we do.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) applicable to all colleges receiving funding from the US Department of Education, is a federal law based on the protection of the privacy of student education records. Malcom stated that QUAG as a branch campus of a

state university has to comply with it and be cautious of its dealing with parents to keep them engaged in certain aspects of university life without disclosing student academic information:

We must follow FERPA privacy laws, which means we cannot disclose any information unless the student has given us permission. So I think this is where it comes into play. So parents are involved but not to the level of what probably many other institutions that are not US connected are. Because we have different regulations we have to take into consideration. But yes, are they involved in certain aspects? Yes. Prior to being admitted, recruitment for sure, working with our high school and younger students, those kind of things I think they're always involved. And then we also have a Former Students Association which even though its former students I think parents are always involved about wanting to know what's going on as well. But I think there's always improvements to make in working with our parent population.

The views on adapting the curriculum were different among three of the participants. Bob did not see any issues when it comes to adapting laws and practices to the host country's conditions but also confirmed that the curriculum did not undergo any adaptation to respond to the requirements of the local context as well as main laws, practices, and core values that remained the same as the ones on the main campus.

Well more or less, we bring, we bring an American University to Qatar, so basically the starting point for us is bringing the educational vision, the mission and the values that QNAT University has in the U.S. and we bring them and try to apply them in the host country. It's not, I mean to answer the question very fast, I don't see any issues when it comes to adapting the regulation or laws or diversity or any other issues mentioned in the grid here, to serve Qatar and the students in Qatar. For example, the curriculum that

we have on the main campus is exactly the same as the curriculum we have here in the Arabian Gulf. The student laws, the practices, we have something called the Honor Code which dictates the student behavior in and outside the classrooms, many other things, I mean they are hundred per cent the same. The core values of QNAT University are the core values of QNAT University whether we are in the U.S. or in the Arabian Gulf. (Bob)

Barbour stated that home and branch campus programs are almost similar leaving a room for adjustments in order to meet the characteristics of the local context and business sectors' conditions while recognizing where the differences are:

So I would say that if you take the home campus program and our program, it's between 80 and 90% the same. On what the differences are, well, if you look at petroleum engineering as it is being taught today on the home campus, it's been evolving in the last five years because of the growth of unconventional resources – notable shale gas and shale oil. A lot of their program has begun to shift certainly in its latter stages facing towards the unconvensionals, because it's such a key part of North American, particularly the US resource base. By contrast, unconvensionals are not going to be key parts of the business anywhere in the Middle East for many, many, many years. So what we have been doing is evolving that 10 to 20%; that is at least Qatar and regional focus facing side of our content, so that it meets those needs. So in QUAG, you're going to get essentially all of the true high-quality content and fundamentals, but it will now have a slight difference between here and the home campus in that we're facing locally, they're facing an increasing amount of unconvensionals as they call now that piece of business.

Well, the uniqueness [sic] of the Middle East is the scale of the business, and the size of the oil and gas fields. They are some of the largest in the world, and giant and supergiant fields require their own particular way of looking at things and the way of understanding how they perform, but they are still fundamentally built upon having the technical foundation, whether it is petroleum engineering or geosciences or petrophysics, it is still the same foundation you need; and then you have to take it towards what are the challenges of the local supergiant oil and gas fields, and make sure that the context here has that kind of color to it as you're teaching it. (Barbour)

In response to a question on why books do not cover case studies or examples from the Arabian Gulf, Barbour explained that people are very protective of data and this translated in limited publications and references from the Arabian Gulf:

So one of the challenges we have is getting that local flavor, because for a whole variety of very valid geopolitical reasons and financial reasons. People are very, very protective of data here. So it's very difficult often to access hard data. What we have to do is we do have to create and develop a particular program that is meaningful for the Middle East, in an environment where there is very little published and very difficult to access the data, but we live with that and you can adapt things. You can take what are the few publications and papers and adapt things, you can take data and generically adapt it, so it's an anonymized version of the Middle East or it looks like the Middle East that means it's a good benchmark for it. So I think that's one of the differences, but I also think that the fundamental textbooks that underpin the program are exactly the same as they would be on the main campus and appropriately as well. (Barbour)

Laith highlighted the importance of taking the local culture and context into consideration so the programs launched are relevant to the region where the branch campus operates, He also talked about the need for management styles to fit within the existing work culture:

It's also important that whatever you do, it cannot just be a copycat of what you have overseas. It has to be also readjusted. For example, there are certain areas, certain fields that perhaps are more relevant overseas but they may not be relevant here. Even the type of the programs that you would like to develop, they need to be somehow relevant to the region where you are. So I think the programs are very important, they need to be relevant. Perhaps certain cultural issues need to be taken into consideration when you design your program, and perhaps even certain management styles because certain management things that you can do overseas may not necessarily be good management styles whether the culture or the region where the branch campus is operating.

As part of its mission and objectives, QUAG strives to bring a culture of excellence and accountability and international benchmarking while accommodating local context and without compromising standards and best practices.

I think the most important thing as far as the campus is concerned or the programs are concerned is the fact that they are bringing a specific culture, a culture of excellence, a culture of accountability, a culture of really getting things done and I think that's probably the most important concept is actually international benchmarking. And they are actually trying to tweak it somehow to the local context but I feel that QUAG is always sticking to its guns, sticking into their principles and making sure that certain things needs to be done according to the best practice, according to their standards,

while being a bit accommodating in terms of if this does not affect their principles, then they can actually manage to get things that are consistent with the local culture. (Laith)

In addition, QUAG is mandated to reshape what is provided for the future while balancing country needs with closer links with the industry and the home campus.

One of the reasons I've been brought here is to take what was being delivered here and reshape it for the future; we are in the middle of this reshaping for the future so that it, fundamentally, more deeply honours that sustainability and Qatar facing side of things, and also to build stronger and closer links back home with the home campus. There were links to the home campus, but we really weren't operating as a true partnership and there were not [bell] enough close links. Are they perfect? No, but it's a key part of what I'm doing now is growing those and developing them; equally on the local side we are also deepening our relationship within industry, making sure that what we are offering, for the teaching first and then for the research perspective is what industry needs for the future. (Barbour)

While acknowledging that oil and gas are among the foundations of life in this part of the world, QUAG is required by its mission and agreement with the sponsoring organization to graduate Qataris in order to reduce the dependence on expatriate teams in the industry.

I think for as long as you can be here in this country, in the Middle East, the oil and gas industry is going to be one of the core foundations of life here, even taking into account COP21 and all of the various climate initiatives, it will still be a fundamental piece of the revenue basically and therefore is so important. What I really want to talk about future is these fields are getting older, they're getting more mature. We need to be making sure

that we have capability in country to deliver the future. You can't rely on large teams of expats and things like that. (Barbour)

The access and enrolment practices include the identification of student recruitment strategies as well as enrolment targets that are set to meet the excess demand for higher education. These practices also cover the internal transfer of students between the branch and main campuses, and international mobility of students; in addition to balancing academic qualifications of applicants and university admissions requirements. Lane (2011) talks about drastic differences between western and Middle Eastern standards of student recruitment and about admission processes that require adaptation to fit the local context including outreach, planning expectations by students, varied application deadlines, dealing with late applicants, and unpreparedness of students. Kian underlined the importance of community outreach to successfully meet recruitment targets. Half of QUAG's student body is Qatari. Recruiting such a large number of Qatari students was done through outreach initiatives including identification and collaboration with feeder schools, and home visits to talk to parents. These initiatives are supported by a valued perception of the engineering field among locals:

The first, and certainly, probably the most direct is that our admissions group has a very active recruitment program. So, they go out, visit the Qatari schools that particularly have a focus on Science, Mathematics, STEM preparation. We have, over the years, been able to identify schools that we consider to be feeder schools. So, they have very active recruitment programs in those schools, once they get inquiries from students, they will make home visits, they will reach out to the prospective students' parents because particularly, in this culture, parents I think, are big part of the decision process about where to go to school and what to study. So, I think that they really do a very effective job

in trying to reach out to the community and bring people in. I think, it also helps us that, in the Qatari society, Engineering is viewed as a very high-caliber profession and so, it's a prestigious thing for students to study; and we benefit from that. We also have been working quite a bit, to try to engage, some of the local schools in STEM outreach activities and so, we've got activities that focus on students who are in the age group of 5th grade through about 9th -- well, maybe even through their junior year. So, that provides opportunities for them to get on to our campus or for us to go out and interface with them out in the community. And so, you know, the yield on that is probably not going to be very high, at least these students, now know that QNAT University is here in the country, and that we do offer these engineering programs and so, as they start to think about what they want to do for college, we might be on the radar screen. The other thing we're doing in our outreach program, is reaching out to Science and Math teachers in the local high schools, and working with them to talk about more experiential learning related to their discipline, so that they've got some ideas to take back to their classrooms. So, hopefully, where teachers often serve as mentors to students, often have an opportunity to provide students with information, ideas about continuing their education. We're hoping we're getting a little bit of positive feedback from them.

To respond to student recruitment challenges, QUAG also works with schools on math foundation programs and supplemental instruction. Although many of the local schools provide excellent education, some schools, perhaps, are not quite as thorough as others and may benefit from the extra support provided by QUAG to improve the qualifications of the pool of applicants.

We really try to target a lot of our rich activities to those schools where we know that students are getting a very sound foundation in Mathematics. We also require that students take a placement exam in Mathematics. We screen them, very much considering their standardized test placement scores in Mathematics and so their SAT score, their ATs -- SAT score in Math is a big consideration for us. And we know, that below certain thresholds and this is based not just on data from our students here in Qatar, but also from the thousands of students we have on the main campus. We know, that below certain threshold levels, the odds of the student who is going to be successful in our Engineering Program is not good. And so, we just don't offer admissions to students who don't meet that threshold. Students who are in the borderline, we often will administer - go ahead and administer the Math placement test to them to see how they do and it could be that they just didn't do well on the Standardized Test. If they come in and then do well on our placement exam, and demonstrate that they've got good Math skills, then we bring them on in. For students who are close to cut-off, not especially strong but do shall promise, we go ahead, we can either suggest that they go into the Academic Bridge Program, that is available here in the Educational Hub, where we will bring them in and try to provide them with some supplemental instruction as they go through their first year. (Kian)

The majority of participants (7 of 8 [87%]) talked about the qualifications and diversity of faculty and staff governed by non-discriminatory hiring laws and an interest from the sponsoring organization to bring faculty from the home campus ensuring quality and strong links between academic programs on both campuses. While the demographics of faculty and staff do not mirror the Qatari student body ratio, efforts are put into hiring Qataris and Arab speaking

faculty without compromising credentials over national origins or quantity over quality. In response to the hiring of the first Qatari faculty at QUAG, Simon said:

So, we're very excited to have him in our faculty ranks but there isn't -- the density of Qatari faculty to fill those positions, obviously. As we look at our hiring of our faculty in particular, we don't just hire up from the home campus, and again, there's that balance, there's an interest from the sponsoring organization that we bring a large number of faculty members from the home campus because they want to make sure that there's those direct links to academic programs, but we also recognize that for a variety of reasons, hiring faculty directly to this campus, there are benefits. (Simon)

[...] we try to as much as possible to comply with the agreement [signed with the sponsoring organization] to encourage faculty and staff to come from our main campus. So when the opportunity shows up, absolutely. [...] I have just one example based on one of our own [Qatari graduate], which is a really a pleasant thing. When he came in, in fact he was in the very first class I ever taught here but it's nice things that come full circles that's a source of great pride for us. And I've seen the number of total number of Qataris that are involved in staff positions have increased. Especially as this Educational Hub's been around a lot. So now CMUQ or Georgetown, it's the same as if they were in Georgetown, Washington DC. So now we have people coming through that system in which we are increasingly hiring people from -- with those backgrounds and that creates our pool too and I think as time goes on, we'll see a substantial increase. (Bassam)

In addition to faculty coming from the home campus, Simon also confirms that the hiring standards and credentials of faculty recruited directly to this campus are the same as they would

be if they were being hired for the same positions on the home campus. Simon also emphasizes on the benefits of hiring Arab speaking faculty and their interest in working in this part of the world:

So, we're able to recruit more Arab faculty here which, again, reflects well to our students and that's -- faculty can relate to our students in that way. All of our teaching is done in English but obviously for students to be able to come in and have a conversation with the faculty member in their first language, obviously most of our faculty and students all grew up bilingual at least, if not 3 or 4 languages. But, if Arabic is their first language, then they can have a conversation with the faculty member and there's a level of comfort there, that's great. If there's an opportunity for -- as you said for students to sort of see somebody in front of the classroom that they can relate to on the personal level, you know, there's an advantage there. (Simon)

There's not a situation where we have to lower our standards, by any means. All of our students meet the standards as the home campus. All of our faculty meet the same standards. All of our staff meet the same standards but the demographics here, I think, because of where we're located and because of, you know, there's -- to put in a very broad, I guess, terms, our Arab faculty would be more interested in working here because it keeps them in the region of where their extended family might be even then, they would be interested in moving to the main campus. (Simon)

Although the ratio of Qataris among the faculty body does not match the Qatari student ratio, the faculty body is still diverse while acknowledging the difficulties in attracting Qataris to work in academia.

We are highly diverse but of course, I mean we have fifty percent Qatari students, we don't have fifty percent Qatari faculty, again we have to look at the population, and the market needs the Qataris, so it's not that easy to find lots of Qataris who want to go to academia and they pursue their PhD. (Bob)

Few participants have shared their perspective on the obstacles preventing the hiring of Qataris including, but not limited to a small pool of qualified candidates, competition from industry, low salary scale in academia, and meeting specific hiring requirements i.e. having an American educational experience. Bassam admits that there is nothing that prevents QUAG from hiring Qataris and he sees it as a great source of pride and a long term goal to develop its human capital:

I think the -- probably the biggest obstacle of hiring Qataris into faculty positions is there are not that many Qataris who have recent PhDs or PhDs, who aren't already employed at places like Qatar University where we have a lot of competition for those people. Add to the fact that our [graduates] all want to be engineers and as you know engineers for academic positions, a competition to get them out of industry is really hard. The number of PhD holders that I meet across the country who are Qataris are overwhelmingly in industry. I mean it's tough for us to compete with the QP or SHELL salaries or anything like that. Academic salaries are traditionally less so it takes a certain sort of person who wants to do it. The other thing of course is, we heavily emphasize, it's important for our staff but also particularly faculty to have North American, an American educational experience. That can be everything from they've worked there, they did a post-doc there, they went to undergrads there and graduate students, been graduate students there and that's an important part so we can maintain particularly the "QNATie" identity.

I think it's everybody's primary objective to do this and I think the lack of availability of those kinds of people is not so much a reflection of the inability of the Qatari base to do it. It's just that at the moment, the very successful Qataris that are coming through, with degrees and higher degrees, are very quickly swallowed up by industry. (Barbour)

Another challenge that limits the hiring of Qataris who usually study at American universities is the obligation they have towards respective employers. These candidates are obliged to return and work with the said employer in lieu of the financial support and time off during the study leave.

Qatar University has sponsored people in this Educational Hub very recently, well the last few years, sponsored students to go and pursue PhDs with the idea of then coming back and were just now seeing those students finish. Well it takes time since we deal with a part of the human capital, a bit of patience to let that capital develop so that we can read through more. So we're just now seeing those students kind of finish things up so were hoping we'll able to attract them back. (Bassam)

While the universal challenge of competing with corporate sector is inevitable and applicable to campuses worldwide, there are always opportunities for getting quality people who choose academia over the private sector through a cooperative vision for educational programs. These individuals, in addition to those coming with a research background, add diversity to the team of faculty while ensuring a fair balance of locals and expatriates in the long term.

[...] it's a conundrum and the reason, a simple solution [...], there's kind of patches that you can do. [...] for example quite a few of our people in petroleum engineering, like Barbour who's our new petroleum engineering chair, has 40-plus years or 20-plus years

of experience at BP. So he is kind of semi-retired and coming into it that way. And that works for some people but, that's great to have that mix but you don't want it exclusively be industry people because we also have people who have developed substantial research careers too. And so, certainly lead throughout heavily on the industry community here that for a very cooperative vision for educational programs just as they do on our main campus. (Bassam)

One of the merits of the international expatriate faculty is, it offsets that issue and still maintains high quality. For [sic] the long term, I think the idea would be to get a better balance of local and overseas, but you should never get rid of the overseas, and you need that element of diversity. It's about guidance, it's about quality and diversity. I'm very, very much hoping that we would have our second faculty here, and I will then be the only program nominee that has one, perhaps two. But these are at the moment exceptions rather than the norm. There isn't a flood of high-end PhD's who are coming out of academia both here and overseas who want to stay in academia, when they do these are very quickly swallowed up by the companies here and become leaders. That's just the way things are, this will evolve with time and hopefully, there will be more coming forward who have academic links. I would like to see a few coming eventually after 10-15 years in industry, coming out of the industry, coming to give something back to academia as well, something that is an important part of success particularly in an applied degree such as petroleum engineering. (Barbour)

Kian insisted on strategies to recruit and retain faculty using the rolling contract as a substitute for the absence of the tenure system, while ensuring their ability to doing research:

We want them to be able to come in and we do not have the traditional tenure system here that we do on the home campus but we have a very close approximation to it, something that we call the "Rolling Contract" and so, when a new faculty member comes up for their first promotion from assistant professor to associate professor, they are considered not just for the promotion, but also to have this five-year rolling contract which really provides them with a lot more continuity in their employment. The standards for that are exactly the same here as they are on the main campus. And so, we are looking for people who are going to be able to bring in excellence in the classroom, but also the ability to develop a vibrant research program.

In addition, Kian talked about another successful strategy, which is tracking progress of Qataris in graduate schools in order to recruit them to academia:

[...] where we have, you know, ideas of where there might be Qatari students out in the PhD programs around, we're definitely keeping our finger on them and I think that's when I brought in Saleem (pseudonym). I think that was one of the things that were going on. He had been a student at QUAG and we knew where he was in graduate school, people were kind of in touch with him as he was going through his PhD program. And so, when the time came, we were able to court him and to try to bring him back. We are in the process of working on another recruit of Qataris. But, that type of approach seems to work well for us because we know the students -- more able kind of track their progress, we know how they're doing with their PhD program and so, we get a sense of whether or not we're going to bring them in and have them be successful. It works better for us, it works better for them.

Barbour also noted the importance of focusing on research in retaining faculty while reducing dependence of specific individuals on particular research areas and maintaining a balance between research, teaching, and outreach:

To retain the best faculty, you got to have high quality research. The performance of academics these days is essentially based around, and people might not want to admit it, but it's essentially based about research and research impact. And so, if you don't have a tangible research program, and enable your high quality faculty to make an impact then they will leave. They will go to other places where their performance is supported and encouraged in that way. That's one of the biggest challenges with the new team is to shift the agenda, it is a challenge for all of TAMUQ, and I think the other sites as well, the American based sites or the international sides [bell] is to actually position yourself for a healthy sustainable future by having a good, a better balance of teaching, research, and obviously all of the other things that we do with outreach and relationships externally.

Given that we are relatively small, so compare us with the home campus or something like Colorado School of Mines or Imperial College we are still relatively small and young. In terms of content and capability, we have all of the skills that we need. However, it's only really one skin deep, and that's part of growing material research which will enable you to kind of build on that depth of capability, so that you're not fundamentally dependent on one or two individuals for particular areas. This is all part of creating something sustainable and enduring here for the long term, that's another dimension of why getting the material research program is so important. (Barbour)

Another aspect of retention is adapting staff orientation to the Arabian Gulf and the host country's culture in order to help new recruits operate smoothly in a different environment, learn appropriate behaviors during the month of Ramadan and the importance of being respectful of local traditions.

Basically in the orientation we simply you know, especially for people who've never been outside the U.S. when they come to the middle east they have to understand, that common sense is very much needed anywhere you go but you have to tell people what's acceptable in the U.S. might not be acceptable here. I'm not saying legal, illegal, we're talking about just you know greetings in the mornings, small courtesies and stuff like that. So it's important, it's our duty to tell our employees, like for example it's very disrespectful to drink water during Ramadan during the day. It's not a crime in Qatar, you know but we tell them don't do it because you live in a culture where we have to respect Ramadan, you know small things and we have a nice orientation, I mean it's a half a day for the new employees and we've never had any issue. (Bob)

The development of national human capital was raised by all participants (8 of 8 [100%]). However, nationalization laws, and challenging economic circumstances, and impact on jobs loss were brought up by three participants without neglecting the benefits of hiring Qataris in teaching and student affairs jobs.

Economy has gone down, the oil has created some significant job losses in the country so now there's probably going to be a bigger push for nationalization or hiring of nationals because there's not as many jobs available. But I think then they obviously come some challenges with that because of education, experience, etc. And then of course those will play into the student experience because that student experience could be very good.

They could also be more challenging because they don't have that experience. But I think there is a lot of positive also with that when we bring in an individual who has the regional experience or the national or being a national themselves where it would connect more with the national population which in essence is a mission of what these branch campuses were established for. So looking down the line, are some of these things going to continue to change? Foreseeable future yes and even more so more rigorously as time continues. (Malcom)

Laith focused on quality rather than setting a “Qatarization” target and identification of advantages to hire Qatari faculty. The benefits of hiring Qatari faculty is that it helps facilitate a strong local community connection and better engagement with the student population, out of which Qataris constitute more than half:

Well, I think obviously one of the reasons why we're doing this is to build human capital in Qatar, so that involves the students who would like to train students, educate them. At the same time eventually we'd like to have Qatari faculty part of the operation. I don't know whether there should be a target but I think there should be an emphasis that we aim at bringing Qatari faculty, Qatari staff as well as Qatari students whether we say we need to have a certain percentage, it would be 10 percent, 20 percent, 50 percent of Qatari faculty, I'm not sure. I think that should be an objective. We should really work hard to bring these. But at the end of the day, it should always be if we would like to be a top school that, at the end of the day, quality is the most important thing while taking into consideration that we would love to have Qatari faculty and we should do our very best to attract them and guarantee they are excellent and I think – I'm sure there are plenty of them. (Laith)

I really don't know the answer to that. I would imagine that they – when they do the hiring, they will basically compare a pool of applicants and they look at their CVs and they try to pick the best. Having said that, I think if all is equal I think it would be a great idea that they should give priority to Qatari faculty because that makes a big difference because that gives them the local connection that will allow them to engage with the community, better engage with the students and I think it will be a huge advantage.

(Laith)

As an objective, increasing the number of Qatari staff was supported by a few stories of Qatari staff who joined the branch campus.

For the staff, [pause] we collaborate with the sponsoring organization on trying to hire, you know or kind of develop the national human capital. Like one of the examples with budget constraints we would go to the sponsoring organization and tell them if you have a graduate, a high school graduate – we will hire that person that is paid by them. For example, we have her in the department where she learned English and she learned how to deal with people, she learned how to work in a diverse environment, the American culture and Qatar's – and keeping her within her means, but you know kind of give her the opportunity to learn and become, become one of us. We also recruited a person from Qatar University as well who became now the manager of the outreach program. We had an executive director before who moved to another university, which was also developed and made by QUAG from the very beginning and she kind of stepped-up the ladder. So we focus more not on the quantity, but the quality of those national students and national staff. We also hired one Qatari of our graduates who completed the PhD. in London.

Now he's a petroleum engineering faculty and we are in the process of hiring a second person. So, we do not as an institute differentiate, you know between any nationality but we work – we try to support, you know the nationalization which is part of the national vision by you know kind of taking those kids and kind of giving them the opportunity to grow. (Alice)

The hiring of Qatari student affairs staff is also difficult as this specialization is not a common academic field that Qatari would be interested in. There is only one Qatari who traveled to North America to pursue his master's degree in student affairs.

The other thing of course is you know for student affairs, one of the things affecting us is we have a strong emphasis on getting people with student affairs background. The US is one of the few places that does that, in Canada a little bit but there are not student affairs advanced degrees in European Universities, and that hinders us a little bit too as much as we'd like to. It's the same thing in terms of finding people with you know our students at colleges, our councilor or something like that. It's important that they have those backgrounds, do bearing experience. (Bassam)

Half of the participants (4 of 8 [50%]) shared their perspectives on the student experience, and recognized the different cultural context in which they operate. Overall, and more specifically in student affairs, participants considered QUAG as part of a large university, imposing consistency of student code of conduct, student organizations procedures, and other policies between the branch and home campus.

We can't have any student rules or policies that conflict with anything that happens on the main campus. However, our local context is very different in terms of the way that we structure things. Some of the things we might need to do in terms of being manageable of

men and women, being in relation to each other -- yes, some of the things we do, in terms of -- when we're very careful when student organizations want to do, for example the students to travel to Mecca, every year, as a university, we cannot sponsor that trip because it would be considered religious in nature, and it's not necessarily open to our entire student population to participate. So, from a QUAG perspective, we cannot support that activity and so we have to sort of support it but we can't support it financially and so, what we've done is we've worked with our students here to find outside organizations or outside sponsors, a lot of times we worked with another university, to directly sponsor a trip of that nature. So that's not being sponsored by QUAG but we still can meet the needs of our local students who, you know, want to participate in those kinds of activities. (Simon)

Simon explained how a student activity can be adapted to fit the cultural context.

Adaptation is made through reconciling between prevailing social traditions and the educational approach, problem solving and awareness, and respect for individual values, while negotiating and challenging students to accept different values from their own:

A good example would be our Annual Gala that we just had, actually this past Friday. In the home campus, it's a traditional dance, kind of banquet – here because of our students and the culture they have in terms of students being uncomfortable around music and dancing and what that means, particularly in a mixed gender environment. So, we've had to work with our students and we feel like our job, you know, as any student affairs staff, you know -- it's sort of the challenge and support idea -- that we want to support students in their individual values, but we also need to challenge some of our students to recognize that their values aren't the only values in the student population and there's a

population of our students that do want to dance and do want to have music at this kind of activity. So, how can we sort of negotiate that among the students and what we've done particularly for this event, is we'll have the dinner and the formal program happens earlier the night and then towards the end of the night where the DJ starts their dancing and so students can leave, some students would complain as like we're forcing them to leave early. And well, we're not forcing you to leave at all but we're going to do it at the second half of the evening, so to speak, so that you can still come in and enjoy the dinner, you can still enjoy the awards presentation and the program and then if you choose to leave, for the dancing portion, you can do that. And so, we're trying to meet the needs of the entire student population rather than just a subset.

Simon also confirmed that, in the earlier days of QUAG, gender interaction in class was a major concern for parents compared to the current era. Back then, students tended to come from conservative families and parents were not exposed to a co-educational model; despite some push back from the community, no changes were made to this practice in order to reflect social norms and local traditions. The benefits of diversity within the student population and campus experience were shared by faculty when initiated such discussions with the students. It is important to note that the sponsoring organization insisted on co-gendered classrooms as a means for societal change and preparation of the graduates to join a mixed workforce:

You know, parents coming in saying, "I'm not comfortable with my son/daughter being in a classroom with boys/girls." I said, "Well, that's how it is". We've had students who would go to their faculty members and say "I can't be in a work team in this class with girls. My parents won't allow me to do it." And you know, the faculty members say "Well, I understand that, that's part of this course." Again, when you get out to the workplace,

you're not going to be able to necessarily go to your supervisor and say, "I can't work with this person because they're [from] the wrong gender or come from the wrong country or those kind of things." This is part of the education. It's the way that we frame that. As much as learning Physics and Chemistry and Math are part of their education, being able to work with people that are different from you, being capable of being in an environment where you might personally feel uncomfortable, but having to work through that personal discomfort, and still be productive, is also part of our education.

Malcom talked about the fact that some topics are more accepted than others to discuss freely in certain cultures. Referring to alcohol and condoms, Malcom acknowledged a different way to discuss such matters considered as taboos among students:

On the home campus or in American institutions when we start looking at travelling and we start talking a lot about the culture of drinking, the culture of sexual intimacy and those kinds of things. Those are things we can have a little more open conversation, you could even go to an individual's desk and find condoms for students to be given out. In this part of the world that's a very taboo subject and not only in the essence of sexual intimacy but also even drinking as much as it is available in the country, it isn't something that's promoted very heavily within the culture in itself. So it's something that we have to be aware of in how we handle those conversations because the reality of it is the issues we deal with in other parts of the world we still deal with within this country itself. But they're handled very differently because of the way they're perceived or how individuals themselves maybe, look at that. So that all plays into the aspects of the student experience by taking into consideration the culture or thinking outside the box.

Malcom also shared examples of tweaking campus traditions to fit the cultural context

and resonate with students. This step was done through discussion with the national student association about their perception of Western campus traditions and that attendance is not based on students changing their beliefs but actually adds another way to respect the beliefs of other individuals who are part of the campus community. Traditions can be tweaked to preserve the spirit behind their initiation and ensure symbolic participation:

I had a great conversation with a student regarding our Muster program, which I mentioned has to do with us paying respects for students that, the “QNATies” that have passed away. One of the students said, you know one of the ways that we honor our people that have passed away locally or regionally is we give to charity in their name. So an idea that came from a student was, why don’t we take donations at Muster and prior to the ceremony, say that this is a way to kind of work with the local context in paying respects. So maybe they don’t go to the ceremony but they’ll still be able to contribute to the idea of respecting “QNATies” that have passed away. I thought that was a fantastic idea.

Malcom also shared that a misunderstanding of traditions or the meaning behind them hinders participation or buy-in. He also stated that traditions such as “chili cook-off” were cancelled because they didn’t have enough people to sign up confirming the need to inform students about the purpose of certain events in case they want to attend just like they do when recruiting students:

If you’re not from the state where the main campus is located who would know what a chili cook-off is until you go and see it. Same thing for Muster students, we’re asking people, what is this? So an issue that I want to initiate is we need to be able to inform our students to explain things. It’s kind of like coming into the institution, we’re trying to

recruit students. Are you just going to go, hey, here's the application, sign up and just show up on the first day of classes? No. We put programs in place to educate our students on why it's beneficial to enter QUAG.

Howdy is a way of saying hello when you're a "QNATie" or even a resident of the state where the main campus is located. But you need to explain the values behind howdy. It's not just – howdy is not just hello. Howdy is a way of saying hello to somebody that you can connect with like a family member. You know like here if we connected to a regional context. If you go up to somebody you know or somebody like a closer family member, the males rub noses, females kiss on the cheek, etc. There's different ways of doing things when you say hello. This is the "QNATie" way of doing it but differently. So we need to educate our population on why – it's important. I mean do students – will the Qataris when they're born, do they start kissing their cousins on the cheeks or rubbing noses? No. You teach them that. But that's the way to do it when it's a family member, when it's all that. So we need to educate our students on why do you say howdy.

Bassam talked about a cultural twist to the "howdy" greeting:

So instead of the – so the tradition of greeting people on our teachers is "Howdy", right that's at the main campus, so we keep that but we often times heard QUAG's teachers will have howdys and then also "salam" on the back, so things like that.

Bassam also emphasized being careful when tweaking practices. This indicates the importance of maintaining the same traditions between the home and branch campuses while accepting minor changes to fit the cultural context. He shared examples about differences affecting commencement and faculty orientation:

So we have to be very careful about tweaking practices and tweaking rules, really careful because that's, that's a big part of -- as soon as we start doing that then it gets fuzzy. Now, there are some of the things that we do, do differently. Within the rules is, the rules allow some of the things that we do a little bit differently, commencements one, I mean one of the nicest things as we ever had in the student graduation. So we can all go as the home campus has 64,000 students, so you can imagine how many thousands upon thousands of students. All our faculty go to commencement. Certain parts of the commencement are the same, we have a representative from the association of former students, our alumni president does the recognition of former students they all have the same thing but we also have the kind of national anthem not just the American one, right.

The reception is different so we have – we bring in to make it – one of the things we work with is our Qatari student association is to – we want to make it QUAG but we also want to reflect our student bodies finishing and so if you come, then you'll see that we'll have CBQ sponsoring, so one of the things we do, we are having – we're having a Majlis constructed, we'll have all the cushions and stuff out, we'll have the coffee, dates you know as well as crafts. But we also always since I've been here, we've had the sword dancers coming in and it's always been the same troop, or was the same troops the -- this particular – I think this one's from Saudi or it was once before. They come in with the drums and do sword dancing and that's a big part so it's a recognition, so it's similar to what you might see at a wedding. So there's, there's those elements that we try, it's a blend, I would say. (Bassam)

A unique aspect of faculty orientation is the assignment of a faculty cultural mentor for

new joiners to guide them through the transition to the new country and environment:

Faculty members are always assigned a mentor when they come here. It doesn't matter if there are super senior and they are full researchers, chairs, and professors coming over here. They still get assigned to kind of a cultural mentor from the beginning. You know sometimes they need it, sometimes they don't, sometimes it's just going to lunch with them once a month and saying, "Do you find your students do X?" you know and, "Yeah, they sure do," you know and then they already do that you know.

The creation of a student affairs department and the range of services offered at QUAG were influenced by the laws and culture of the host country. For example, the ownership of the student visas differs from the home campus. At QUAG, student immigration matters fall under the responsibility of the student affairs department. Such a difference impacted the processes to follow when recruiting students.

So we have to be looking at different things. For example, we're looking at certain aspects of our roles, for example student affairs we oversee immigration and in the States that would be a visa issue. But here would be a visa/residency permit and there's different processes that come into play. So that goes into issues of laws in culture in itself also and we're looking at our programs we have to take into consideration different aspects of the culture. (Malcom)

The orientation program implemented at QUAG takes into consideration cultural components making it different than the home campus. QUAG counts on the presence of Qatari students and staff to provide tips on what to change if needed:

People stay up later or they get up earlier or you know the work day is Monday to Friday not Sunday to Thursday. These things like that and we provide them enormous amount of

support networks going back and forth but yeah of course those sorts of things come in and so it's part of the cultural sensitivity training that's why it's great to have people originally here, people have been here a long time. But also people who are Qatari and we have enough and we have quite a few Qataris that work as staff members, we have a faculty member and so on, and they are great about kind of saying, "Here's a hint, here's what to do," and to be honest our senior students are fantastic where they really are they – I mean the students are very forgiving, very patient.

Although the host country's culture imposes certain norms governing gender interaction, participants say the co-educational practice is respected inside the classroom and within the course selection and advising services provided to students. However, students often seek support from the same gender staff based on religious preference or comfort. QUAG gives special consideration for students' feelings:

If you really care for that you say, "No," not officially we don't have just a male advisor and a female advisor. But having said that just as we do on main campus we do have people who offer substantial moral support so that if you are a female student and you don't feel – we have one male and one female advisor. So if you are a female and you don't feel comfortable going to a male adviser, there is an option for you. We don't mandate it. (Bassam)

Although participants reported that courses are self-selecting, they are open to both genders except for a kinesiology class that was once offered in different sections for male and female students due to the physical contact component of this course. Students also tend to behave the way they feel comfortable in the classroom allowing single gendered seating order within a diverse group of classmates.

The guys tend to congregate in one part of one of the student sections, the girls do the congregate in another and, other it's blended. So you could choose but we don't say guys only, girls only – it's self-selecting and it's the same thing for that too. So we have our campus psychologist, he's male, he's a trained psychologist. But we also have academic advisors who are trained psychologists who are also female. Sometimes it's a matter of religious preference too, they feel much more comfortable talking to someone who's in the same religion and community and culture and so since we have a huge diversity of people that is certainly available. And just sometimes we have staff members who unofficially find themselves being a magnet for that particular community and so what we strongly try to encourage amongst our staff is communication. (Bassam)

So, but, but yeah I mean we don't – the only class that we really adapted based on gender, we used to have a Kinesiology requirement. We don't anymore, the curriculum has changed on the main campus and for that, we just segregate by gender. It's basically -- we use the – it's – which was appropriate, so if they're working out in the gym and things like that we do segregate by gender for that too – and that's what we originally do. We had a male instructor and a female instructor. We benefited that we had a husband and wife team and then when they left, another husband and wife team come through the main campus. And so those were segregated but in terms of a history class we don't segregate or anything like that, not at all in group works. (Bassam)

Finding 2.3. Multifaceted governance process. Schuster et al. (1994, p. 195) and Kezar and Eckel (2004, p. 384-385) acknowledge that efficiency is the value “all the more compelling under conditions of financial constraint, of obtaining greater outputs (results) with fewer inputs

(resources) and doing so with dispatch, avoiding the delays and quagmire of endless committees and meetings that are often viewed as the curse of traditional academic governance”. This study, referred to earlier, has shown that efficiency of the decision making process is influenced by the size of the governance structure and process and their complexity.

Half of the participants (4 of 8 [50%]) referred to the governance structure as an efficient system. QUAG has two governing boards. The Board of Regents oversees the whole university system including home campus and respective branch campuses and the Joint Advisory Board (JAB), which is mainly the local governing body for QUAG. The JAB was established in 2003, following the agreement signed with the sponsoring organization to provide advice regarding the management and operations of QUAG to both parties. As stated on the QUAG’s website, the JAB is primarily responsible for the annual budget, strategic issues, ongoing review and evaluation of the success of QUAG.

The joint advisory board comprised nine individuals and three ex-officio members. It represents a variety of constituents including the Ministry of Energy and Industry of the host country, research funding agencies, senior administrators from the home campus and university system, and representatives from local and international engineering schools. The composition of the board is conducive to multifaceted perspectives of stakeholders and ensures engaging discussions that benefit QUAG and the host country. The JAB composition and its role in managing the relationship with the sponsoring organization is summarized in the following statement according to one of the study participants who states that membership on the JAB comes with different expectations:

You know, locally, we have our Joint Advisory Board and so it includes representatives from the home campus, representatives from the sponsoring organization, and includes representatives from local industry and it includes representatives from outside of all those contacts, you know, some sort of a 4th entity you know, engineers, or academics from outside of the sponsoring organization, outside of Qatar, outside of university -- you know, sort of a truly objective viewpoint to the whole operation. So the Joint Advisory Board, ultimately, -- they work to manage the relationship between the sponsoring organization and the university, that is the structural connecting body between the two. As the representatives from each of those groups come together, they're all given sort of their priorities from their individual constituency groups. So the folks who come from the home campus come with, you know, QNAT University's expectations and priorities and the representative from the sponsoring organization come with their expectations and priorities. The reps of industry who come in -- they have their expectations and priorities.

(Simon)

According to all study participants, the JAB does not have a formal authority over the Qatar campus as a typical governing board of a North American university. Simon confirms that the JAB is not a policy making body and really acts in an overview capacity, and looks at goals and metrics' assessment of QUAG, and provides support:

They do a lot of the assessment pieces of what we do all year goes to the JAB and they sort of make the metrics [...] -- that each year are evaluated in terms of are we meeting the goals of what the sponsoring organization is set as part of our agreement. So the JAB is a body that looks at the goals and says "Okay" -- as a local university we come forward and say, "Okay, here's all of our metrics. Here's our student population, our

demographics, how much research we've done, what kind of community outreach we've done, all the different things that are in the strategic plan, the things that are in the vision, the things that are in the sponsoring organization, strategic plan and vision -- how will we support all those things and it's very quantitative, you know -- here's the data. Here are all the numbers [...], there are qualitative pieces as well that [...] add the flavor, that's the JAB and then each year says, "Okay. Yep. You met the goals, you met the desired outcomes -- all these relationships, both ways" And so, we're sort of " Yay, keep going, do another year." (Simon)

Bassam confirms that the JAB meets twice a year and receives substantial annual reports. The meeting is based on presentations from members, review of reports, provision of feedback on agenda items, and identification of areas of concerns. What is unique about QUAG is that it is the only college of the university system that possesses an advisory board:

[...] we don't really have Joint Advisory Boards for any of the colleges on the main campus -- but all of them do have some variety of Advisory Boards because really, what we're hoping to get from these Advisory Boards is the same. We want some, "Okay, you are people who represent our constituencies". What we're trying to do as a publicly funded university -- is to support growth and development either in the state, where the main campus is located or here in the State of Qatar that helps promote the economy, the well-being of the populous, the education of the young people who are there." And so, the Boards really provide that service regardless of where they're located. (Kian)

The JAB makes recommendations to the Board of Regents on policy change, presents to its members trends on the branch campus, and provides opportunities to listen to QUAG's management concerns through ex-officio members.

They do make recommendations I suppose. And sure, I mean certainly on the JAB board is our provost. She sits on it. So that would go straight, I mean, that's what she reports to on our main campus. So sure, I suppose. I mean if they had a recommendation or something they were concerned by, she would take those concerns to our board of regents and so on, absolutely. (Bassam)

Although there are venues to discuss policies and practices between QUAG and the sponsoring organization, whether through the JAB or other joint committees such as the "student affairs coordinating committee", one of the participants gave examples of decisions made by the sponsoring organization without consultation with the branch campus or discussion with the right QUAG entity. In addition to issues such as gender interaction, access hours to student housing public areas, and campus safety, it became obvious that some unilateral decisions and specifically one related to gymnasium usage did not consider their respective implications:

There's been a decision made recently on the gym. And we have a big gym that has a lot of equipment and services and then we have another gym that doesn't have all that. I am aware that when you're looking at a bigger perspective, we have equal things because we have a rec center that's open to everybody. But looking at just that component, just in the student center, it doesn't give equal access to both because the females have a much smaller space and have less equipment and based on US FERPA the US title nine we must provide equal access to genders. Now, again if you really get into the issue, would it

become an issue? Probably not, because we do provide that service to students in another part of campus but the issue is going to be more of the convenience, you know. Now looking at it from a local context there's no problem. Who uses the equipment the most? Who do we have more of, maybe men so men should have the bigger one. But out of a perspective of QUAG or the US laws we have to abide by certain things. So I think [...] this is kind of where the management is making decisions without taking into consideration all implications of that law or that role. (Malcom)

In addition to the JAB, QUAG has also formed an industry review board acting in partnership with different academic disciplines to provide feedback, identify concerns and offer suggestions. The review board meets twice a year and listens to presentations by QUAG administrators covering different topics including student experience, research, and other relevant topics. Bassam identified what usually happens during this type of board meeting:

I give one [presentation] about what our students are doing. We do one on research. We listen to their feedback, their concerns, suggestions they might have, and that's really a partnership, sort of relationship because they are of course interested in getting the best students they can, possible to work for their companies and we're interested in producing the best students possible so we can make them reactive, and we've got good relations, so we have those formal feedbacks and governance and so on.

In addition to the previously defined advisory board, the Dean's Executive Council is QUAG's management team consisting of the dean, vice deans and 3 assistant deans with contributions from the staff advisory council (SAC) and the faculty advisory council (FAC) consisting of representatives from both groups.

Actually the Dean's Council is the management, the Executive Council is the management, so the management are taking the decision on our behalf – the SAC and the FAC are team members. So it seems like everybody is contributing to the decision-making. So, these are – you know the management level are taking the decisions after they go back to the Staff Advisory Council or the Faculty Advisory Council. (Alice)

Each participant valued the integration with the home campus and the opportunity to streamline priorities from the dean into university committees. Barbour warned about the negative impact of inheriting a home campus structure of a large institution on the decision making process of the branch campus. The home campus structure is based on a large number of committees. However, replicating the same committees' structure in the branch campus can be less efficient. Therefore, a few could be dissolved due to lack of accountability, unclear objectives and performance indicators. Despite the scale, size, and needs of QUAG, Barbour valued the opportunity to streamline priorities from the dean into committee conversations:

For example, if you look at what the dean's role and accountability are and what are the three or four big things that are his or her responsibility, they should then flow through the whole system and delegate and propagate themselves as they go through the system into the various committees and work groups. If they don't, and if there are things going on in the system that are not related to that one, you can question why they are being done. There are things that we've inherited, understandably inherited from the home campus, they do not probably need to do there. You can be because of the scale much more efficient I think.

Other than committees and work groups, Barbour talked about an extensive volume of paperwork indicating a certain level of bureaucracy and a barrier to empowerment and efficiency. Barbour claimed to have signed his name on pieces of paper more times in his term with QUAG than the whole of his preceding career. Building on his experience in the corporate sector, Barbour stressed the openness of management to recommendations to changes things to the better:

I think it is a reflection of the level of bureaucracy, and some of it is completely unnecessary because it doesn't carry that degree of accountability just like when signing a form if somebody wants to move a key for their office. There should be a bit more empowerment and I believe we inherited a practice implemented on a large campus size that you don't really need here and we could streamline it. But as I said, so far, with all of those things that I've come across, people have been very receptive to suggestions for improvement. I come in with a very industry facing focus, you know, and one of the things that I have lived through certainly most of my career and certainly in the latest stages of the leadership roles was efficiency. Be clear about what we need to do, and what we don't need to do, and if we don't need to do it, don't do it. And that's where I am.

Participants observed that QUAG's integration with the home campus structure adds layers of participation on joint committee work. Every college within the home university system has a certain number of operating deans who handle admissions, and its representatives sit on different committees to review curriculum and university rules. QUAG representatives participate in respective committee meetings, put items on the agenda, and review student and university policies and standards. Participation in committees maintains equivalence and

consistency of common standards and curricular procedures across the branch and home campuses.

One of the other things we do is our core curriculum for example has to be recertified every so often and so a class for example every – can't remember how – every three to five years. We use a sample class say it's a chemistry in which there is a set of procedures that particular class goes through. They have to produce individual student work. It's put together. There is a value in it and we're committed to make sure that it's the university standard because we're concerned because when you have 64,000 students on the home campus, say it's just freshman calculus, there are a lot of students, a lot of people teaching it. They want to make sure that when professor Jane teaches it, its equivalent. It doesn't have to be identical because everyone has their own style but when professor Jane teaches it, when a student gets an A in that class and passes it, that student should be just as able as when professor Bob teaches it. (Bassam)

Laith also confirms that student rules and academic policies are the same and linked back to the home campus, and thus considering the integration of rules and structure as an efficient system:

There is a very, very strong link between the way things are governed in the home campus and the way things are governed here. I think basically they follow exactly the same rules. They take similar exams and whether it's probation, whether it's disciplinary action, dismissal, admission of students, you name it, I think basically whatever the rules are applied in the home campus, it's been applied here.

To respond to QUAG's scope of work, and in alignment with a home campus practice, three participants (4 of 8 [50%]) referred to a periodic full scale organizational review covering salary, benefits, and compensation packages, performance appraisals, and structure re-evaluation.

[...] The climate is changing all the time. And so we constantly are [...] reviewing practices. We do – and each individual program, every faculty and staff member is reviewed and really through a formal review process and each unit goes to an annual review process every year and a key component is efficiency. Does this make sense? Does the current new organizational structure make sense? Should we change it? Should we alter it? What are the things coming on the horizon? So it's constantly [reviewed].

(Bassam)

Malcom stressed the collaborative work between the home and branch campuses when doing reviews. Despite active involvement of individuals from both campuses in the review, two participants (2 of 8 [25%]) talked about decisions influenced by the home campus and therefore affecting staff morale and efficiency of decision making at the branch campus level:

Main campus could make a decision on incentives and things. Now recently we made through some of that. Fortunately enough, we went through a lot. It took over a year which was probably more than what it should have taken but it was an extensive review with multiple people involved. It involved people from main campus and here. Even though the final decision was made by main campus they were gracious enough to take our consideration and our input before making that decision. They could have though just made a decision on whatever they wanted. We're just going to do this, [...] and it doesn't matter [...]. So government bodies do really affect the efficiency, the morale and other

issues on our main campus and it is a challenge because as we are getting more fiscally responsible because of the economy, it's becoming a challenge.

Finding 2.4. Resources efficiency influenced by agreement with sponsoring

organization. Schuster et al. (1994) states that efficiency is one of the key challenges facing a given organization's governance in addition to effectiveness, participation, leadership, and responsiveness to the environment. Kezar and Eckel (2004) show that for institutions to be efficient, they need both adequate staffing to sustain university operations, and the availability of technology to meet objectives and expected outcomes. In support of five hundred students at QUAG, the breakdown of faculty and staff body shows a total of 350 full time employees including seventy-three faculty members, 167 staff, 104 individuals in research, and nine deans, assistant deans and program chairs. The percentage of Qatari nationals among faculty, staff and researchers stands at 1.4%.

All participants (8 of 8 [100%]) confirmed faculty to student ratios are lower than a typical college campus referring to the role of the agreement with the sponsoring organization in dictating such ratios.

Certainly, if you look at our context here of having 500 undergraduate students -- you look at the size of our faculty about 80 or the size of our staff just under 200, compared to the home campus with almost 60 thousand students, our numbers are skewed here significantly, you know -- we're well over faculty, we're well overstaffed for our student size. The argument can be made, right? You know, at the home campus a freshmen engineering course, you have 350 students in a lecture hall. You know, here a big class for us is 35 or 40. And that part of the structure here, and again, the sponsoring organization has provided a budget for faculty and staffing structure in terms of the

number of faculty we can have, the numbers of staff that we can have to keep those ratios. The sponsoring organization wants to have small ratios. And so, we've been provided with you know, the resources to keep those ratios small which is actually to everyone's benefit. (Simon)

Bob explained how the ratios of faculty and staff to students were set when QUAG was first established and following the agreement with the sponsoring organization. Ratios were based on a class size not exceeding twenty-five students ensuring the recruitment of diverse faculty and support staff and frequent optimization. To run four engineering degrees, a thorough calculation of required courses was conducted, including liberal arts and science as well as chemistry, math, physics, English, political science, and history of the American Government. These courses were part of the home campus curriculum and the latter is a state requirement since students get the same degree as the home campus making it mandatory.

So when we did the math, when we started this campus, we knew that we had to hire an X amount of faculty members, in order to deliver these programs. In order to deliver these programs and having this number of faculty, you needed an X number of staff to support the faculty, to do their job, so when we looked at efficiency and of course, we were optimizing year after year, you know we had more people here, less people there so things, I think we are at a steady state now, maybe we tweak here and there. But when we look at the diversity of the faculty and the support staff, I think we have what we need to deliver the programs that we are supposed to deliver.

While Simon stated that the staffing ratio is not very efficient, he highlighted the benefits of small classrooms in compliance with the sponsoring organization's expectations and staffing allocation. The model adopted by QUAG is based on the offering of many sections of the same

course, allowing a small number of students in each section instead of grouping one hundred students in a single class:

So, from that regard, you would argue that it's not very efficient because you don't have – [...] a hundred freshmen in a given class, a lot of the inter-classes taught on the home campus to freshmen -- like I said, are two and three hundred students big for a single class. So, you could argue that all of our freshmen could take all their intern Engineering classes two faculty members could teach all of them because they can put a hundred students in one room and teach the course and move on, instead of having, you know, three or four sections of that same course, which is the model that we have here.

Bob identified many advantages of a small class size enabling the university to provide quality education, personal connections between faculty and students, and ample time during office hours to students, an aspect of university life that he has not witnessed in his previous work experiences in North America:

Here when I teach a class I know them by name. They can come and have a coffee with me if they want because I mean when I have office hours for twenty students, each one of them is able to get half an hour with me, face to face. We have an office hour with not six hundred, if you have a class of fifty or eighty which is a typical class on a big campus in the U.S. or Canada, there is no way I mean to remember except maybe a few names, okay this is a great advantage that the students have here. They are able to interact with the teacher and it gives them confidence to open up and ask more questions, to learn more and get clarifications and other things like that, so that's why when again we're doing the numbers at the beginning, you know we have, I mean if you look at our student faculty

ratio today it's six to one, seven. Five hundred and fifty students to almost eighty, so it's seven to one, which is perfect, I mean you cannot dream of that anywhere else.

While recognizing the advantages of a small class size, Barbour provided a unique perspective identifying risks issues around domain expertise and close relationships between students and faculty:

Assuming that the domain expertise of the faculty are teaching is right then I think, the small classroom sizes, the much greater availability and access to faculty and to the lab staff and things like that is a massive plus to people here, you know. You don't have classes of one hundred, two hundred that you get in the home campus. You have people who are around and are accessible much, much more. I think probably historical issues have been about domain expertise of the faculty meeting all of the needs to the program. I think that the way I have been able to shape the new faculty team, we have pretty much covered all our bases, so I'm quite comfortable there; the risk is that we are only one skin deep in some areas. To mitigate this risk, we need to build research capacity and capability. Over and above that, one of the potential risks of it, is the students become too [pause] close to the faculty and may at times try and persuade them to do things that are not needed or not appropriate. That is always a risk, and you've got to be conscious of that and work to it and make sure that your processes and practices and the way in which we work we uphold, they call it the Code of Honor it is about ensuring, ethics and integrity are maintained.

In his capacity as a joint advisory board's member, Laith considered the class size a strategic direction taken by the sponsoring organization and delegated to QUAG to provide

quality education and to contribute to the preparation of a competent workforce. He indicated that the sponsoring organization did not put pressure on QUAG to increase the class size:

Well, I think it's a strategic decision by sponsoring organization. That's my understanding is that they would like to have the class sizes to be small so that we can provide quality education. Certainly if there is a pressure to increase, I just don't see where the pressure is coming from is just basically to increase the tuitions or some, obviously you can get more money but then the quality is going to get worse, so there is a tradeoff. And unless there is a pressure from the sponsoring organization for the branch campus to bring more money, I don't see why would they...

In addition to the small class size, the staffing level in non-academic units is driven by the agreement with the sponsoring organization that has clear expectations for individual attention and support to the student population outside the classroom. While ratios can be changed if expectations change, however participants felt this step will be at the detriment of the level of personalization of services. At QUAG, one academic advisor currently serves one hundred students compared to 250 students on the home campus.

From a student services perspective, even outside the student affairs for their academic advising. Again, on the home campus, an academic advisor may service 250 or 300 students. Here, they service a hundred. So, there's a lot more individual attention that can be given. You double the student size, the student population size, the academic advisers could manage that load because it is going to be similar to what academic advisers do in the home campus. But there wouldn't be at the level of personal connection that we have here, that we have to give and so, again, that would be -- the new expectation, it would have to be set for the sponsoring organization in terms, you know, -- this is the level of

services -- the level of personalization that would be provided if there were significant changes to the student population without an analogous increase to the faculty and staff populations. (Simon)

The ratio comparison with the home campus does not support the statement that the branch campus is understaffed as the numbers shared are in favor of abundant staffing resources compared to the student population. However, QUAG, compared to other branch campuses in the host country, is in the lower range of faculty and staff to student ratio.

[...] compared to the main campus, [...] for example our counseling center has seventeen or something counselors but also, they're a population of 55,000. Now depending on the branch, [...] because again I don't know all the things on the main campus, but at times even with 55,000 students, seventeen counselors will never be enough, so sometimes you have to put [...] a restriction or [...] I will do so many free session and afterwards you have to go to an outside counselor. We don't have a restriction for our students but again if it gets out of hand we might need to do that. [...] when I worked in Switzerland [...] prior to [coming] here we had a five-limit restriction on how many sessions they could see our counselor for. Obviously, we had exceptions for emergencies and stuff but most of the time they had to have, find their own counselor outside or psychologist [...]. But [...] that's where it depends, you know there's the percentage of counselors or coordinators, but then it's also even management of each department. [...] unfortunately, I have myself as Director and Assistant Director but other departments in other branch campuses don't have even both of those positions. Some even have an Assistant Dean above them or even more than that and they're all Student Affairs, where here it's just myself and [...] my staff. (Malcom)

Efficiency in the student affairs department also translates into broader roles by respective staff maximizing the use of their time. One participant observed that a single staff will act as the equivalent of a whole unit taking into consideration a smaller student population compared to the home campus.

I mean sometimes you kind of end up – because we're a small campus, we have to have a student life. We need to have someone in charge of study abroad for example. So the study abroad person we need to have someone who has an expertise, because we do that sort of stuff. Now, do we have as many people in the study abroad as the main campus, they have a whole office, there was a whole area. It's a half a building actually. Per capita is – do the ratios match up necessarily? Probably not, but we still have to have one, right. So then what do we do? Well, handle an enormous amount of stuff and is integrated. So sometimes that creates those sorts of issues, but then for example our study abroad person also takes on other things too. So he takes the responsibilities if we don't have an actual student advisor, so he does that too, right. So we match now I think starting up when I first started, there was probably more inefficiencies because we didn't quite know what we needed. (Bassam).

While the scale, composition and size of the organizational structure as well as staffing ratios are much lower than the home campus, Alice admits that administrative support ratio is lower than the field average due to the need for cross training, depth of information required to do certain administrative jobs, and diversity of experiences to support the team. Alice also stated that the number of administrative support staff is higher in research departments compared to other academic disciplines not requiring usage of laboratories, and therefore she considered the ratio as reasonable:

I think it's lower, it could be lower, but again I will not really compare it very well because here although we are a branch campus we are smaller than the smallest department on the main campus. So, if you say for example a department with 20 employees, does it need two admin's or one admin? It could need just one admin and one admin can do well. But what about cross training? What about the depth of the knowledge? What about the diverse experience with the work? It could be seen as too high to have two admins; it could be seen as too low, it depends on how you look at it. For me I look at it as, you cannot give all the work to one person because you rely too much on one person, you need some kind of cross training, you need the depth in the positions and you need also kind of diverse – kind of different ways of doing things, let's put it that way. You have seen employees like process-oriented, you see another employee doing the same job, but more of thinking outside the box. So, if you just rely on one employee in one part and one vision and one way I don't think it's efficient to the department. So again, it depends on how people operate and on how you think about it.

Alice also noted that in order to maintain the specified ratios, the human resources department monitors the full time equivalency (FTE) tracking list. The FTE primarily relates to staffing and hiring, and accounts for part time and full time overhead translated into work hours including staff meetings and vacation. The monitoring measure ensures that QUAG does not exceed the FTE number approved by the sponsoring organization and tries to manage its staffing efficiency accordingly.

Even with the budget, we always keep 3% lower, so we don't, you know – if there is a budget cut, we are already like within the budget. So, we are very careful and very – we are giving ourselves flexibility to kind of have this agreement as sweet as it started with

the sponsoring organization. Yes, of course it will be a challenge, let's say for example we did have this challenge when we started the research operations here. (Alice)

Kian talked about a higher cost of education per student than the home campus and referred to the economy of scale, time usage of teaching labs, and class size as the main reasons:

I think, on you know, if we -- if we really get down to the bare-bones and talk about the dollars -- the number of, or how much it costs to educate a student here in Qatar compared to QU student in a similar Engineering program on the home campus -- it's much higher here. For a number of reasons, we just don't have the same student population. And so, there's an economy of scale that happens in the home campus that doesn't happen here in Qatar. And so, you know, particular teaching laboratory might be used 10-12 hours a week here in Doha but that same -- similarly equipped laboratory in the home campus might be well over 40 hours a week. So, the class sizes here are markedly smaller. It's a much better environment for the students. In fact, we hear that from our home campus students who come and do a semester with us here in Doha.

While participants unanimously admit that the class size is not conducive to efficiency, QUAG possesses the ability to operate at that scale (small class size) due to the financial support from the sponsoring organization, a matter that the university administration cannot afford to implement on the home campus.

So how much they really like the smaller classes, and really lets us do -- I mean from an educational standpoint, it's a beautiful thing. From an efficiency standpoint, we can't afford to do it in the home campus anymore, and so, there's a cost benefit balance here.

(Kian)

From an educational perspective, a small class size enhances the interaction between faculty and students, and supports the creation of an engaging student experience. As the student population continues to grow, and without budget constraints at certain times, Simon admitted that QUAG got a little bit bloated as a university. However, over the last couple of years, the sponsoring organization initiated a set of guidelines leaving QUAG to implement minor adjustments to staffing levels without being forced to take restructuring measures:

"Okay, there is a set number of faculty that are allocated, there is a set number of staff that are allocated and so internally, we had to make the sum" -- fortunately, we didn't have any restructuring and no one lost their jobs through attrition or through other means. We had to get in compliance with our agreement with the sponsoring organization in terms of number of headcounts for faculty and staff. They were currently [...] at that number. So, we'll continue to move forward with the staffing that we have but it has many contractions that departments that maybe had three or four staff members more, a couple of years ago than they do now despite our student population getting larger. Can we continue to meet the needs? [...] I think we are, the doors are still open. Students are still coming to class. Does that mean we need to make some adjustments in terms of the types of services that we could provide in terms of the speed with which we can provide some services? [...] obviously, yes, [...] when you have your people doing the work, there has to be some compromises there.

Simon also stated that any university would prefer to have more faculty and more staff. However, the unlimited resources contributed to its inefficiency. From a U.S. higher education perspective, the general ratio in terms of staff to faculty is 2:1, which is similar to the model that QUAG implemented. A small class size, as desired by the sponsoring organization, roughly

requires two hundred staff members to support eighty faculty members. While the ratio seemed a bit of a stretch a couple of years ago, with two hundred staff members for 350 students, it decreased because the student population reached 500:

We're servicing more students with the same number of people and so it's like "We're doing a lot more work." like well, but yeah, -- but if you think back to four or five years ago, we were not that busy" or we weren't as busy as we could have been and so now, you know, I think we're in better balance in terms of the use a sort of corporate -- but being right sized and we have the right ratios of staffing to our student population.

I think any organization, given unlimited resources, you just continue to grow and grow and grow which, in itself, becomes inefficient. If you've got twice as many people, you're not creating twice the workflow, or twice the work requirements -- and so, how efficient is that? If you have half of your staff -- if half of your staff spend half a day doing nothing, that's not efficient. And so, you can bring things down to the size where, sort of what makes sense. (Simon)

Laith reported that efficiencies of management, finance, and operations are very critical. In terms of their effect, he stated that they are relatively efficient. But sometimes, the abundance of resources would not push people to be very efficient, indicating the need for branch campuses that are part of the same Educational Hub, to collaborate in order to maximize the use of those resources:

Having said that, I think recently there is a bit of a push in terms of making efficient use of the resources, trying to have the branch campuses work with themselves, with the other branch campuses, with the sponsoring organization and so on so that we can actually

make more efficient use of the resources available because a lot of things are happening at the same time and are repeated in different branch campuses, so which is not a good thing. So I think you can actually have a much better operation if people get together and actually leave perhaps to provide the same type of services to each other.

A closer look at efficiency from a financial perspective can identify if the branch campus, while meeting the educational needs of the host country, is truly beneficial to the sponsoring organization and therefore being fiscally responsible.

If our processes aren't efficient in addressing the needs of Qatari locals and we're not increasing our Qataris that are entering our student population then over time they're not going to see that as a benefit. And all of those things obviously connect to our student experience. Are we creating a product that supports our Qatari nationals, that really encourages their development, that enriches them as students, and then that we're recruiting them because the student experience isn't just a program. It's what we're doing to get them involved into our institution as a whole. (Malcom)

Malcom emphasized the high cost of hiring and professional development in the branch campus compared to those practices on the home campus, making the support for such practices inefficient. For someone stationed in the USA, it only costs about fifteen hundred dollars to fly across the country to attend a conference or a campus interview. However, depending on university requirements, and since most of the student affairs conferences take place in North America, staff might need to buy a business class airfare in addition to related expenses making the total cost almost four times more per single trip:

So obviously it depends on the constraints financially, and being efficient or not is, can you develop all your staff the same way? You can't. And how do they grow then? And

how do you work a system that's fair across the board as well? Then also looking at that is some of our funds also have to go with working with our main campus so we have to travel to main campus on occasion as well. So I think there's different efficiency issues, with staff, some of it is hiring, some of it is professional development and the other things like I mentioned is how they work in the practice sense of specific or general.

Despite the low faculty and staff to student ratio, two participants (2 of 8 [25%]) talked about the need for more staff to provide quality services:

So looking at it from a Student Affairs perspective, I don't feel we have the correct resources but let me just say that, in the field of Student Affairs I don't think I've ever worked at a place where I've actually felt that they're staffed to where they need to be. Student Affairs is very underrepresented and maybe at times valued. So a lot of times they don't get that full support. (Malcom)

I think we require a few more staff. Again, because we have to provide here some of the services that are provided centrally at the university level on main campus that I think that we have to have a few extra people. (Kian)

In addition to staffing, the sponsoring organization has invested heavily in building QUAG's information technology (IT) infrastructure, making it probably one of the strongest IT departments across the Educational Hub. As a research institution, QUAG implemented extra security measures in comparison to others branch campuses in the host country. The investment in technology is directly connected to the host country's national vision, as QUAG has an engineering base and requires engineering resources and well-educated staff. The infrastructure

includes but not limited to a series of softwares, laboratories, audio visual equipment, and distance learning technologies.

In response to “What type of institutional support and technology tools are available to support management practices?”, the majority of the participants [87.5%] shared that they believe QUAG offers top quality IT infrastructure. Some participants, like Bob, specifically described the quality and range of technology available at QUAG:

We have amazing support to be honest. I mean technology is available for us, I mean whether it is a video conference unit, all kinds of IT support technologies, voice over IP phones, Skype or everything, and this is what we use on a daily basis, to be honest. Our classrooms and the management, the teaching side, I mean our classrooms are equipped to do distance learning, so we have some evening classes being held, but I mean on the management side, frankly we have everything that's available at our time now to use like to communicate with the main campus, to do our meetings, to solve issues, to discuss things.

Other participants like Alice spoke about the role of technology in saving money by reducing travel to the home campus, and offering online professional development courses. In addition, she talked about the availability of top quality equipment to faculty and researchers, and of high-tech audiovisual equipment in classrooms too:

Everything, everything you can imagine is available. The top quality IT equipment for the faculty; for the researchers; for the students; even the supercomputer is available here. The conference rooms fully equipped with high-quality audiovisual equipment; the classrooms; the lecture halls.

Simon insisted on the need to improve IT support for students while keeping a certain level of face-to-face contact:

There's always that balance that you want a personal touch but if a student can go in and do IT help desk request online and it can -- and some that can be sorted virtually versus students have the cue outside the IT office, and wait to stop to an individual on a desk, there's efficiencies there in terms of doing it virtually and student putting a ticket and some wouldn't be able to go in and make an adjustment to their email account. They don't actually have to have face-to-face contact with that student but it might be a 30-second fix, whereas a student might have to stand in line for twenty minutes, to get to the desk, for that 30-second fix. You know, IT can do a better job of managing their workflow if it stands in a more virtual world than if it's anyone just walking at to the desk. There's still a need -- a desire to have that face-to-face contact and so they still maintain a helpdesk where you literally can walk in and talk to an individual.

Participants, like Bassam, talked about the role of technology to streamline processes and how it connects and integrates QUAG with the home campus and how efficiency is increased through a series of online systems for performance and departmental evaluations, travel, classroom management, and video conferencing for virtual meetings:

Performance evaluation is done through an online system that we use, but it would be no different if you were on the home campus. It's the system we use, it's tailored. But we follow the annual cycle for that. So that's there for individual performance. And then for departmental performance, this is mandated in our guidelines on the home campus that they go through an annual review process as individual or whole departmental level and it's standard practice as reports are put together. There is feedback, it makes it to the

university report and the university report goes and so it just kind of trickles all the way. So to do those sorts of things – yes, I mean there is tons of information that we get that we can call on, for example, if we want to look at, say for example, travel reports or things like that, we use an online travel system that's mandated by the state that we're using and that's so we use it.

While technology is used to support operations and to connect with the home campus, Kian spoke about the duplication of services and the inability to use services provided by the home campus. This is not only due to QUAG's separate network but to the geographical separation making it difficult to take advantage of these services:

Certainly, we make good use of Skype and other types of technologies in order to maintain connection. The time difference is a bit of a hindrance but, there are, I think that we're not able to benefit here from a lot of a centrally provided resources and so – at the home campus, we'll be able to get site licenses for you know, centrally funded software products and some things like that that are just kind of operated on campus there, but because we're not on campus there, because we're on an entirely separate network here, we're not necessarily able to take advantage of those things.

We're not able to take advantage of centralization of a lot of those services and so, we operate our own research support office but on the main campus, there are research support offices really kind of at university level. They're much larger, have a lot more staff, and so they can provide -- I think just the -- a bigger breadth of service, again it's that economy of scale thing because we're much smaller, we have smaller systems. Now to some extent, we do tie into some of the support services that are provided on the home

campus, but because the geographical separation -- because people who are on the main campus, don't always understand exactly what we're doing, it doesn't always fit well.

Barbour confirmed the availability of efficient administrative support and functions. At the same time, he noted the on-going use of quite ancient technology:

There is good administrative support, these admin functions here and the support functions here seem to be very efficient. People might complain about it locally, but actually, you know, if you've worked in other places, this is as pretty much in some part as good as it gets, and people should, you know, just reflect on that sometimes. I think for the processes to encourage closer and better collaboration with main campus, probably, the technology probably could be a bit better. You know, we're still pretty much living with quite ancient videoconference technology, whereas you have certainly for business type meetings, you know, other technologies that will be far more powerful today.

Research Question Three. My third research question asked, “does the interdependence between the international branch campus and the home institution shape these management practices? If so how?” Based on the analysis of the data, four findings emerged: Responding to anticipated challenges influenced by geographical distance from main campus; strong ties with main campus; balancing autonomous and interdependent decision making; and recognizing the specificity of roles, benefits, and functions.

Finding 3.1. Responding to anticipated challenges is influenced by geographical distance from main campus. During the interview process, participants were asked, “What are some of the anticipated challenges that will affect management practices due to the distance from the main campus?” Four participants (4 of 8 [50%]) talked about the time zone difference and workweek structure as two of the main challenges caused by operating away from home campus.

Further, one participant explained that the distance and time gaps are no longer considered as challenges and therefore can be worked out. For example, participants identified the implications of time difference on delayed response to electronic communications especially during weekends. It becomes unavoidable to lose four or five days in the interim when waiting for email replies or reviews of human resources documents uploaded on the main university system.

The main challenge I see is the time difference, so basically when its 4 [...] in the afternoon, that's when the main campus wakes up and business starts flowing. That's why it causes some delays sometimes, because you know if we send a request that we want to do something and if they don't get back to us right on time, we have to wait another day. Friday is a holiday here, it's a business day there. Sunday is a working day here, it's a holiday there. So we lose three days and the time difference, we lose also Monday, because Monday morning here is Sunday evening there, so that's why sometimes we have to be you know, coming over the weekend and working with them, so the time difference is the main challenge I see. (Bob)

To make things work, there are arguments, negotiations, and compromises between both parties. In most cases, QUAG as the smaller entity is the side that is more responsive to off hours' conversations than the home campus. The compromise is usually based on reminding colleagues on the home campus to identify an appropriate time to meet outside of weekend scheduling challenges. In addition, it is nurtured by positive relationships built over time with counterparts on the home campus especially between student affairs staff. Simon stated that:

I think we recognize here that we are the smaller entity, so if I'm participating in a call that, it's me and there's eight or nine people from the home campus. For me, to be on the

phone at 7-8 or 9 o'clock at night, we'll make that concession if it's --you know that's the time on the home campus, everyone can get together. Certainly, we have plenty of staff, I've done it myself, we have been on calls Thursday nights, on Fridays, because that's what works for the bigger group on the home campus. There have been times where we've pushed back and said, "No, I'm not available on a Thursday or a Friday. We can do the call on a Monday or Tuesday if that's better for -- you know, if that works for everybody." So just having their acknowledgment and that's really where -- we're fortunate in our department in terms of the interactions that we have with our colleagues in the division of Student Affairs, we both do a lot of individual relationships, so there is that acknowledgment " Okay yes, let's have our meetings early in the morning on the main campus so that it's not so late at night for the staff here.

However, to fulfill certain business functions such as student travel, purchasing, or human resources requests, QUAG staff often extend the work shift till late in the evening or monitor tasks over the local weekend if they need a prompt response from the main campus, while remaining within the regular morning shift.

If it's some sort of purchasing or Finance or HR related function, there has to be a -- if the home campus is waiting on something and it hits, our staff here will process and even if it is after hours on a weekend, you know, in order to keep that system moving. And we have a lot of staff on the home campus that do the same. They'll monitor things over their weekend. Our student travel process as an example, it's said -- just recently maybe a year -- a year and a half ago, became centralized. Where now every travel request there's touches both here and in the home campus which again, you can run into those delays if there's -- you know, if that request falls over a weekend. But, the people who work locally

in our travel -- with our travel process, and the individuals that we work with in the home campus -- with that, recognize that the travel request need to be processed in a reasonable time frame. And so, there are a lot of times that people will be online at night and/or the weekend at the home campus, pushing a travel request through the process rather than having it sit for, you know, two or two and half days with the time differences in a week or week differences. (Simon)

Another challenge of operating a smaller entity away from a large home institution is illustrated through running placement testing reports based on the main university cycle, a step that usually delays processing of such reports and does not recognize local needs of the branch campus:

Our placement testing for all of our students, there's portion that's done online while it's processed on the home campus. Well the time cycles that they have in the home campus for when all those tests get scored and the results get pushed back out, are not, they're -- in the middle of the night in the home campus like 2am is when the report gets run. Well here, we can move that entire business day depending on when the students take that test as to when the reports get run in the home campus to when we can get the results back. So, that -- we have to be mindful that knowing of those delays and our local registrar said "Is there a way that we could run our reports separately or change the timing in the home campus -- this is what we do and this is what we're going to do." From that perspective, there's sort of a sense of there's not that level of support recognizing some of our local needs -- yeah, but I think on the whole, there is. The home institution is a big place and so, you know, for our little operation here, we're part of a much bigger picture. (Simon)

Barbour does not consider distance and time gaps as big challenges but areas that can be worked out. In parallel, he emphasized the importance of maintaining the reputation of QUAG as a center for high quality research and teaching:

The distance and the time gap is a fundamental challenge but I don't see it as a big challenge more it's an area we need to work. I am always thinking about how we leverage the really deep capability and reputation of the home institution in all aspects, not only in petroleum engineering but petroleum engineering and sciences and all aspects of the subsurface and the upstream industry. At the same time, we must grow our own reputation for high quality research and teaching. We can't just be seen as a kind of a research extension of home campus. Yet we have to leverage what the home campus offers at the moment. That's the challenge; I don't see it as an obstacle, it's just something we need to work.

Half of the participants [50%] shared how working in a different cultural context added operational challenges and perceptions to the distance and time difference. Malcom uniquely talked about a prevailing perception on the home campus of QUAG staff having limitless financial and human resources and few things to do. This perception is considered as a challenge because it is based on lack of knowledge of the branch campus environment, the host country and the sponsoring organization's guidelines.

When people think of the region what do they think? Obviously things have changed but I think there's still this perception, well the Middle East has a lot of money right? So well what are you doing in Qatar? Do you just sit back and you're rolling in incentives and you're making big money? You're not doing any work on the branch campus. But in

essence we're actually doing the same work and even harder because we have to work on all these other issues that main campus doesn't have to work around. But they don't see it that way because we're so distant. They don't have a clue but when they come visit, they'll be like wow! That's tough. You have to deal with culture, you have to deal with this, you have to and in all these especially like you're in finance you have to work with the sponsoring organization and main campus regulations and multiple budgets and stuff. If you're in that same position you don't have to deal with all those differences. But again from their perspective like you're just oh you have tons of money, you're rolling in the dough, you know. And so it's a perception as well over the value and, the perception of people's jobs as well and that's a challenge.

Overall, participants felt that difficulties arising from two separate locations is eased by staff mobility between both locations, visibility of QUAG, and repatriation of staff to the home institution after working in the branch campus:

Well, I think it's always face-to-face meetings and talking to people is always key but the fact that people don't see each other and they meet only maybe few times per year makes it hard to operate. But I think there is enough traffic. People come here, people go there and I think people they know each other, the management, then it's – so far I haven't heard that there is a big issue there. (Laith)

I think it was more serious years ago but now the internet connections are fabulous and we can Skype all the time. And also people in the main campus had gotten used to the idea that we're here, that we are not a novelty we've been around long enough, we've had enough people to have come over here and worked over here and are now back in

the various programs and departments there. I think a lot of that has gone away, I don't think distance isn't so much as, so much for a barrier and now there's millions, lots of direct flights from the US. (Bob)

Bob also acknowledged that distance is no longer a big problem because colleagues on the home campus now recognize QUAG's existence, strengthened through the development of relationships between counterparts on each campus and representation on faculty senate:

I don't think it's a big issue to be honest. Yeah, I know the distance isn't so big of a deal anymore because people are very responsive and they recognize that we're over here and they're over there. I think it was more – when I came here, this place seemed it goes a really long way away. Now, it does not. It's pretty integrated, if I would need anyone on the main campus they know who I am or they know what we need and they respond and they include us in all their meetings and things like that. So all of the campus five meetings that would have a parallel of a person over here, they're on all those lists. And they can Skype in and choose to participate. We have members of the representatives on faculty senate that are within our campus and they do sit there late at night on Skype, and they Skype them in, it's normal.

Due to distance from home campus and staff mobility especially senior administrators coming from the home institution to work at QUAG, Barbour insisted on the importance of learning what a non-home institution environment is:

He [one administrator] knows how the main campus works because he comes from the main campus. One of the challenges he has to know is to learn what a non-main campus environment's all about and what are the challenges that brings.

The majority of participants (5 of 8 [62.5%]) made comments on the relationship with the sponsoring organization, as an external entity with a certain level of control on funding and input on operations. While on the home campus, the university is funded and reports to the state, QUAG is fully supported financially through the sponsoring organization. Participants shared concerns on funding trends as a challenge for QUAG, especially with the rising cost of higher education. Affected by basic economic pressures such as the drop of oil price regionally and internationally, QUAG has gone through budget cuts due to reduced funding, a matter that is one of the anticipated challenges.

We report largely to our Board of Regents, although the Board of Regents oversee operations at the Qatar campus, they're not as intimately involved as they are with some of the main campus programs. I would say, probably, the biggest difference is our need to interface with the sponsoring organization and its affiliated university and trying to navigate those partnerships and relationships. (Kian)

So, the largest challenges that we're facing, obviously oil prices are always a concern, and that's true for international branch campus anywhere, if it's not oil it's whatever, the base economic pressures and ultimately, we are guests in a host country and it's whether the host country can continue the relationship and it comes from both sides. So that's always a challenge. Branch campuses aren't cheap. Higher education is not cheap. It's expensive and you get what you put it into it, and as that becomes an issue that's always a concern. But that's a concern I guess for higher education in the state where the main campus is located too but that's always a challenge being able to do that. (Bob)

Alice talked about additional funding required to support the increasing cost of schooling, an allowance that is part of the employee's compensation package and usually paid by QUAG to its faculty and staff:

I was actually surprised to see [in the newspaper yesterday] that dependent education for 55 schools in Qatar [...] had increased. Although we know that due to the [drop in] oil prices many companies have been laying off people. So, you cannot tell how the country operates sometimes. This is a challenge because a little bit like in Canada or the States it's kind of predicted if the prices are high then [...] if the economy is high the price are lower or vice a versa, but here it's – sometimes it's just kind of nascent you cannot make sense out of it. It's very challenging because you have to operate based on not solid facts.

Simon anticipated that research would require more funding since the home institution is research oriented and is expected to do more in this regard based on its agreement with the sponsoring organization. However, Simon also claimed that QUAG was contracted to provide undergraduate education highlighting the need to find a balance between teaching and research, which is a promotion requirement for faculty in different career fields. During budget cuts, it becomes essential to find alternative sources for research funding either externally or internally:

Qatar National Research Fund has always been a big player where the majority of faculty have been able to get their funding locally. The way that funding structure is being changed or faculty cannot always admit one request in a given year or in a given cycle; whereas before, they can submit, you know, many and then they get two or three funded, now they can only submit one and not all of them will get funded and so that's going to change the dynamics of how our faculty are getting their research funded. So,

the expectation isn't going down in terms of productivity the faculty are expected to have. But where the funding structure is going to come from, is going to change significantly and so you want to see how that, you know -- the desires to maintain the same level of research productivity but if outside funding is diminishing, do you replace that with inside funding?

In reference to budget cuts, reduced funding, and possible impact on university operations, Bob uniquely stated that the oil price drop will not have an impact on QUAG due to the continuous support for engineering education, and to QUAG's relevance to national needs as well as the country's economy driven by the oil industry. Despite a decrease in the number of academic scholarships, Bob claimed that fortunately the number of scholarships for engineering is large and cuts will possibly impact other branch campuses in the country offering different academic programs:

There is a lot of support of engineering because there is such a high demand. I think we don't feel there is pressure yet because of where we are and what we do. There will always be a need for highly trained quality engineers in Qatar, in any country which is building this quickly and designing these many projects and things like that. So, I think the key for us is to show that our engineers are the engineers they want, I think as opposed to engineering is pretty easy south. We offer engineering that makes sense but then the real question is do we offer the best engineers for the community? And I think that's what the pressure is, but we feel that all the time anyway in terms of developing a curriculum, encouraging our students, developing our students as leaders not just as technically proficient and so on. I think that's the key.

For the relationship with the sponsoring organization not to be a challenge, it should be based on multiple strategies including QUAG's responsibility to meet its needs, relevance to the host country and the world, and sensitivity to the norms and traditions of the local culture:

I view them as being among our client help, and so we have a responsibility as a campus here to do what we can to support their needs and their programming decisions and we try to do what we can on this. (Kian)

QUAG showing relevance to the host country and the world, and building its abilities to compete internationally turned out to be essential as the world becomes more of a global marketplace for education.

I think we have to show our need in future years not just to show our relevance for Qatar and the Gulf region but internationally, because I think more and more parents are sending their students – their children abroad for education. I don't think it's always long term, ten years from now. I don't think it will be enough just to say we're good for Qatar. I think we need to continue to, so that we're good for the region which means that we compete regionally and internationally with other schools and we recruit top students who have choices. (Bob)

While operating in two separate geographical locations, there may be a need to change certain traditions of the home institution over time to adapt them to a local Qatari context. However, the core “QNATie” values of QUAG fit beautifully into Qatar's culture, making sure to be sensitive to the norms regarding dress and decorum while maintaining the strong traditions of the home institution.

I think our students -- the “QNATie” culture, you know, from a student perspective, what it means to be an “QNATie” as a parent to a student at Virginia Tech or Virginia Commonwealth or something like that -- a lot of it is based around the home institution’s core values, excellence, integrity, leadership, loyalty, respect, selfless service -- well, these are core values that fit beautifully into the Qatari culture. And so, I think that to a good extent, it's fairly easy for students here to start to feel like they're “QNATies”. We have our peculiar use of “howdy” as a greeting and some of these things and the students seem to pick-up on it pretty quickly. That they affiliate with the institution pretty easily. A lot of that rest with the activities and things that are sponsored by our student affairs group, they're very vibrant. I have new leadership there and I think that he is a “QNATie” through his own education and so he brings that wanting to, you know, be part of the group with him. But, I think it's been fairly easy for us to adapt. We have to be careful to make certain that, you know, we're sensitive to the norms regarding dress and decorum that sort of thing but it's not a barrier by any means. (Kian)

As part of its commitment to be sensitive to the norms and traditions of the host country, Laith confirmed that QUAG will not bring any tradition that is not consistent with the local culture. Laith also highlighted the value of certain university traditions brought by the branch campus in building the student identity:

I think I’m sure that the home institution will not bring any tradition that is not consistent with the local culture. Those traditions to me are very important because of the reason why you have these branch campuses, because you would like to give the students the DNA of the branch campus. So you ought to be able to bring those traditions. You ought to be able to do the type of things you do as much as possible on the main campus and I

think so these are great things. And in fact if you don't do that, then what's the point of having a branch campus. As long, you ought to give all of these traditions but then certain tradition would not be consistent with the local culture and obviously these will not be there. But the rest I think anything that is consistent, the more we do, the better.

In addition to distance, time difference, running processes based on home institution's cycle, learning about a non-home institution's environment, funding, and meeting the needs of the sponsoring organization, Barbour presented two unique challenges overlooked by other participants i.e. retention of Qatari nationals' faculty and succession planning. There is greater facility at QUAG to move faculty who are either not meeting requirements or not performing well. This matter, uncommonly implemented in most university systems and certainly not on the home campus, is based on the contracting system set up at QUAG that enables faculty who perform reasonably well to be retained. While retention of faculty in general is not alarming, the retention of Qatari faculty will definitely be a challenge:

Potentially the retention of the Qatari locals will be an issue purely because they would be in the high end of Qatari intellectuals, and as a result, it will be natural for people to want to accelerate them up the promotion ladder into positions of influence and leadership in Qatar. That will be a risk, and you have to live with it; hopefully, you know, long term there will be a delivery line of future Qatari faculty that will offset that risk, okay? (Barbour)

Finding 3.2. Strong ties with main campus. All participants in the research study (8 of 8 [100%]) made a comment as part of his or her responses that alluded to strong ties with main campus. All participants expressed strong ties in three main ways. First, as stated below, the

strong ties are based on a dual reporting structure and a complete integration of the following processes including, but not limited to, recruitment, retention, promotion, annual evaluation, human resources, finance, and merit raises similar to any other college on the main campus:

There is a tremendous and a very deliberate attempt to try to maintain very close ties with our main campus. The Dean, reports to both the provost on the main campus and to the Dean of the College of Engineering, it's more of a dotted line reporting structure. All of our faculty report here to the program chairs for their respective units. But also to the department heads of the appropriate department on the main campus. (Kian)

We are completely integrated with our main campus. Our library's integrated, our IP addresses here are main campus IP addresses. When we log on and things were on the main campus the way we set it up. I mean it's, it's completely integrated, our financial practices are the same, payroll goes to the same thing and all, we're state employees, our curriculum is exactly the same as it's offered there, we do benchmarking, our faculty evaluations are done in conjunctions here and the program chairs, they are called department heads there, they come out several times a year to double check, they participate in those evaluations after a faculty evaluation is done annually, it goes to the main campus, it's reviewed by the dean's office they have a relevant dean's office as well as the relevant department heads. All of our faculty promotions go through main campus, it's exactly the same – we are essentially for a lot of purposes, we are a unit within the main campus. So, the same way you might have a college of liberal arts, a college of science, a college of engineering, we administratively speaking, operate very much like a college within our main campus. (Bassam)

Overall, there was a general sense of QUAG not being an independent or separate entity but rather part of the home institution, despite being a thousand miles away, granting the same degree and equivalent to the other branch campus within the university system located only a few hundred miles away from the main campus.

So just keep in mind (Jamil), that our degrees, they don't have Qatar on them, so QNAT University at the Arabian Gulf student, when he or she graduates, they get a QNAT University certificate. So basically, I mean that's enough to put how much weight to be put, that we are not an independent entity okay, we are a branch campus. (Bob)

Simon stated that the management has gotten more in line with the main campus, in terms of structure, the way things get done, and the language used. He also referred to the provost's visit to QUAG during which a clear message was shared saying this is not an independent university:

The Provost came over about a year and a half ago, and was very adamant that we are not an independent entity, that we are part of the home institution and so, even the way we used the language about referring to ourselves as a branch campus or referring to ourselves as a university, strictly speaking was incorrect. We're not a university, we're QNAT University, you know sort of nuance is there that really the main campus came in and sort of tightened things up a little bit.

In the same token, Bob quoted the university president who visited QUAG, saying that “he feels like he is in on the main campus when he is in this building. He said it because – and I think that's a fair assessment, it's part of our DNA as a public institution in the state where the main campus is located and part of our long tradition as “QNATies” is to show that we are relevant and serve our community and be relevant to that community. For us to come over here

that's no different. I mean it's a different community that we have to be relevant to but the tools, the attitude is exactly the same. And that's been an easy transition for us in that sense."

Lastly, Malcom talked about ways to connect the two campuses stating that "this year for the first time our student government negotiated for them to have a seat on the main campus senate even though they are 6000 miles away. So this is where, how we work separately but connectedly still comes into play."

Second, almost all of the study participants (7 of 8 [87.5%]) demonstrated stronger ties with the main campus by their affiliation with the home university and as employees of the state, where the home institution is located. The affiliation confirms tighter interdependence between the branch campus and the university system.

Most of us here are employees of the state where the main campus is located. So, I'm an employee of the state despite not having worked or lived in it because I work for QNAT University. What I've observed in the last probably 3 years, is actually tighter interdependence or really a tightening of the ties back to the main campus. Our Provost has gotten -- and the home institution has a number of entities within the system, strictly speaking there's only two branch campuses, the one in [the same state] and the one here, but there are other colleges and universities that fall under the QNAT University system so we're all under the same umbrella. (Simon)

Barbour talked about being a state employee who had to abide by state rules and additional ones that Qatar requires:

QNAT University is a state institution; I'm a State employee, so I have to abide by the rules and the regulations of being a State employee. And then on top of that, there are

some additional ones that Qatar requires. So I think it does add a little bit more onto the burden of the rules and regulations of how things go.

Bob reiterated that QUAG is a branch campus that is part of QNAT University, the home institution, and there is neither a distinction in term of practices nor in his affiliation as an employee with the home institution:

We are QNAT University, that's very simply put. All of our management style, management practices, operating procedures, Standard Administrative Procedures (SAPs), I mean we are QNAT University, so basically I mean we have, we call it the mothership, we are part of QNAT University, we are employees of QNAT University, so I don't see frankly any distinction between us being a branch campus, practices wise and the practices of the home institution.

As a result of the strong connection to the main campus, a few study participants anticipated more faculty and staff coming to work at QUAG, accountability, and involvement of the home institution in the decision making process at QUAG. Bassam said that “as a result, a lot of our people here have main campus experience as we heavily recruit there for our leadership positions. So it’s important that we have that kind of integration.” Kian summarized the benefits of hiring faculty and staff from the main campus based on their knowledge of the system, the curriculum, and existing collaborations and connections with the home campus:

We do specifically try to recruit people from the main campus when we can and so I don't know that they would necessarily have an advantage but just say, somebody here has done academic advising for example, on the home campus, they make really great advisors here because they already understand our curriculum, they already realized that you have -- yes, you have to take QNAT government [class] as part of your curriculum.

And so, having that come in with staff, is a real benefit or likewise, with faculty -- if they have worked on the home campus, then they bring with them all their contacts, all their research collaborations, all of that energy that they've had on the home campus comes with them and we're able to benefit from it on this campus.

Third, six of the eight participants [62.5%] pronounced strong ties through compliance with main campus' policies and practices. QUAG implements the same business practices as the home institution, which is a state institution while also responding to Qatar requirements while avoiding bureaucracy.

I think all of the business practices or the mechanisms that the universities use to run its operations are pretty much the same as they are on the main campus. And then what happens is whatever is a local requirement, overlay on top of it. So there are some potential challenges, not as conflicts necessarily, but just you get to make sure that this doesn't become bureaucratically overwhelming or burdensome. (Barbour)

Simon admitted that over the past few years, many local practices and policies evolved due to QUAG presence in the host country. Despite such a fact, he reiterated that all policies at QUAG were recently audited to comply with main campus requirements or when needed, to justify non-compliance:

What the Provost did was, you know, a variety of the entire spectrum of the university, looked at all of our practices, all of our policies, (they) essentially did a significant internal audit and anything that we were doing locally that was not in absolute, direct, specific compliance with a policy or rule or procedure on the home campus, we had to provide justification as why we are doing it differently. In large part, a lot of those local sort of practices we couldn't do anymore.

Compliance also covered branding guidelines, which made it difficult for the branch campus to add cultural components such as the use of Arabic language, and of the host country's name in any marketing or advertising materials. Despite the fact that such components would make branding relevant to the host country culture and traditions, Simon also referenced that the flexibility QUAG had in the past to alter marketing materials was restricted to maintain the requirements of the home campus branding practices:

Yeah, we've had things with our branding. All of our branding has been in compliance with the branding protocols on the main campus. When they make changes, we have to be in compliance with that. And whereas in the past, we have a little bit more flexibility, we do things sort of locally with some designs and you know, adding elements to things to -- whether it is with things like fonts and adding pieces of Arabic into our designs and that those are violations of the branding. And so, we had to be very careful with how we, you know, do those things because there's very specific requirements that need to be maintained. It doesn't matter where you are, those same requirements need to be maintained.

Participants shared a few examples where QUAG was able to tweak home campus policies such as the student conduct and the honor code. These changes were basic in nature and referred to the host country, sponsoring organization, and reporting staff positions dealing with specific tasks. The content was mostly edited based on an acknowledgment of the context in which QUAG operates and that sometimes a local component has to prevail.

On the academic side, we have our honor code which is managed through a separate office from Student Affairs, but in the same way, there's an honor code office on the home campus. There's a structure in terms, you know the staffing structure that's there. Here,

we don't have the same staffing structure, and so it's a similar kind of the thing, whereas the policy, the procedure, how the Honor Code is followed is identical but who's actually doing the work, needs, to be different. So, we were able to explain you know, just structurally, functionally, things have to be a little bit different. (Malcom)

The student code of conduct is not only the same, but the code's link on QUAG's website connects to the home campus student code of conduct. The code was recently reviewed to ensure compliance while referring to the local context, and language around the host country and Educational Hub that QUAG is part of. The department and staff who play a role in the conduct process on the home campus but are simply non-existent at QUAG were also replaced by proper counterparts. QUAG is now working with the division of Student Affairs of the home campus on a memorandum of understanding that takes into account local variations while complying with the same rules.

We're told specifically, we cannot have [a] "Local Code of Conduct". So, we have to go through it, literally line by line and say " Okay, what's the same, what's different?" And, again, for us, very little had to change because we are following the same procedures, the only difference is we're really structurally, in terms of who the staff was -- that was doing the functions compared to the staff on the main campus that are doing the functions. But, even that, that seems so nuanced, but now when you go to our website, usually when you clicked on the link for student rules, it took you to a webpage with our local student rules and written to the local context. Now, you click on that link and it goes directly back to the home campus code of conduct. (Simon)

Finding 3.3. Balancing autonomous and interdependent decision making. Clifford and Kinser (2016) stated that the host country influences some of the IBC's financial and academic

decisions. Such matters not only limit financial and academic autonomy from the start but may also affect how the IBC interact with the home campus. Lane (2011) emphasized on “vertical boundaries” created due to a reporting structure of faculty and staff to the main campus. Although these boundaries may support the integration with the home campus, they make it difficult for the management to operate and coordinate different functions, such as control and approval of processes of the branch campus.

During the interviews, participants were asked, “How is the delegation of authority reflected in the management structure of the international branch campus?” All participants (8 of 8 [100%]) articulated a certain level of autonomy given to the branch campus to make specific decisions while requiring consultation and approval from the home institution on others.

With full integration with the home institution, QUAG is treated as a college within the university system. When colleges are asked to prepare certain reports for the university management, QUAG’s dean prepares a report too. When the president or provost holds a retreat or meetings for all the deans, QUAG’s dean also attends, either in person or remotely. It was clear from the participants’ responses, that enough autonomy is given to the branch campus to run its operations while strategic decisions are made in consultation with the provost on the home campus as QUAG is not an entity on its own. Bob highlighted that he does not ever recall that QUAG’s dean took a decision that was overruled by the home campus. He also mentioned that decisions are made by the dean while authority comes from the provost:

Decisions affecting this campus are made by the Dean of this campus. Now of course in certain scenarios the Dean has to consult with the Provost but I mean the day-to-day operation, the running of this campus, there is a Dean here, and he or she decides on what to do.

QUAG's dean has delegated powers to manage the branch campus and shut it down when needed, an equivalent responsibility only granted to the president of the university.

On the main campus only the President can shut down the campus in case there is like some storm or anything like that. When we have a sand storm here, the Dean is authorized to do it. On the main campus nobody is authorized, only the President because the President is the CEO of the University. When we had a sand storm here a few months ago, I mean the Dean here decided to shut down the campus and send the students home. On the main campus there is no Dean of college who has the power to do that. (Bob)

Simon commented on the recent change of the dean's title from "dean and chief executive officer (CEO)" to "dean and chief operating officer (COO)" and its significance on decision making. Simon considered this step an indicator of less autonomy granted to QUAG while the responsibility over the day-to-day operations would not change significantly:

From a corporate perspective, that's a significant difference and so, that was not done unintentionally here. I don't know what the rationale is for that but I think it speaks to a desire for the home institution to have more of a direct say -- more of a direct connection and be able to provide more direction locally. Given that, he's an operating officer as opposed to an executive officer. We all sort of see how that pans out but I see a lot more decision making having to get routed through the main campus before it can be finalized and having a -- frankly, less autonomy locally.

All participants identified a list of operational decisions that were made locally but had to be vetted through the home campus; and they also noted macro-level issues and strategic matters requiring approval from the home institution or coordinated through home campus channels. Operational decisions made locally included, but not limited to, student admissions, faculty

leave, staff hiring, class scheduling, and purchasing. However, major decisions are made by the home campus such as the curriculum, faculty hiring, and budget approval.

QUAG's curriculum is mainly the same as the home institution's with flexibility to modify certain electives. Since the curriculum is connected to the main university catalog, QUAG cannot simply decide that it no longer offers a specific course without discussing the suggested changes with the home campus first. The online system does not actually allow it.

Our curricular programs -- we basically use the home campus curriculum. We modify some of the electives to better match kind of the industry needs and the industry wants here in Qatar. Some of the classes -- say, as a publicly funded institution in QNAT, we must teach QNAT politics as part of our curriculum and we must teach U.S Federal government. And so, when we teach these types of classes, we try to relate to form relations in that type of thing to make it a little bit relevant to students who probably have visited the U.S but not for longer than a vacation. And so, we try to work within this framework that's the home institution but to make the experience meaningful for students who are not QNATians (pseudonym). (Kian)

The core curriculum is set by the state where the home campus is located. The curriculum is technically restricted by a certain number of credits proposed for specific academic disciplines, and therefore limiting QUAG's ability to offer courses relevant to Qatar such as history of Qatar or Qatar politics. This shortcoming was mainly justified in one participant's response by not having enough history professors at QUAG to teach these courses.

Our core curriculum is set by the state where the main campus is located, and so for some classes, particularly the state and local and federal government classes, those are specifically mandated by state law. We cannot issue a university degree without including

those classes in the curriculum. Now, History classes, exactly what they are, really is kind of up to the institution, and so, on the home campus, we have a breadth of history classes that can be used to fulfill that piece of the core curriculum. We don't have that many faculty here in History and so, we don't offer the same breadth of opportunities but where we have the ability to modify classes to let them be a little bit more appropriate to the local culture, yes we've done quite a bit of that. (Kian)

Participants had different views on the budget approval process. Kian stated that the budget confirmation is done locally with input from the provost office:

Budgeting, largely is done locally, and we do keep people in the Provost's Office abreast of what's going on. Make certain that they have an opportunity for input but really the -- say, where we're dealing with the budget cut right now, our interface with the sponsoring organization trying to exactly figure out how that's going to look. That involves folks on the home campus; but where we figure out how to implement those cuts within the campus community, that would be done centrally. (Kian)

From a purely financial perspective, Barbour confirmed that running budgets is totally under QUAG's control and that program chairs have a say in departmental budgets without needing approval from the home campus:

I don't see, I've never seen any form of interference or anything else like that from the home campus.

Despite compliance and integration with home campus, and as resources become limited, Simon anticipated more involvement of the home campus, than the past few years, in major decisions such as allocation of financial resources:

I would anticipate that even though our budget is locally generated through our agreement with the sponsoring organization, I can see the home campus having a larger hand in making decisions on how that budget gets allocated even locally. And, not that money would get diverted to the home institution but just even looking at -- within the local context, say that we want a certain percentage to be allocated to this function versus this function and then internally we have to decide how to make that work.

All Participants (8 of 8 [100%]) believed hiring is based on a shared decision. In their responses, they used terms such as collaborative approach, endorsement, or consensus indicating the involvement of many stakeholders from QUAG and the home campus in the process.

Barbour talked about a collaborative approach to faculty recruitment denoting the ability of each side to share concerns about candidates in order to choose the best fit for a specific position through regular discussions with the home campus recruitment team:

There have been individuals, who the home campus strongly recommended to us, they really have not met what we require, and we did not believe they were right for us, so we haven't taken them. Equally, there has been one or two that we've taken through a second interview and the home campus has advised against hiring and we accepted this advice – generally if there are any doubts at all you should not hire.

Bob reiterated that decisions are made by a consensus, in the sense that QUAG or the home campus could advise against the hiring of an individual, ensuring enough deliberation between both parties throughout the process to avoid big surprises before it gets to the end:

Because everyone's involved in the discussion from the beginning. So it's a consensus building but the time there's not really a case that I can think of when main campus said, "No, you can't do that," because they were part of the discussion from the start. I mean

there could be cases where I don't know a department head said, "Well, I don't really like that candidate you're suggesting," but there's cases when our department heads said, "We don't like the candidate," that you guys [suggested].

Additionally, Barbour said "I think rather than say approval, I would say endorsement" indicating benefits to a partnership with the home institution. A fascinating disclosure occurred when Barbour referred to historical dynamics between both parties that did not favor collaboration:

It's about having a partnership rather than a reporting relationship in that sense. It is also about behaviors; if people behave the right way then things work, and if people don't, things don't. Sometimes I hear stories about historical things, and I don't think things are coming as quite as good as they should've been in the past. I'm not going to point fingers where the fingers should be pointed at but we are going through a big period of change here, and by the time we come out of that change, we will get through it. I do not anticipate that there will be any problems and conflicts and issues with the way we work with the home campus.

Staff hiring decisions are made locally at the departmental level in alignment with home campus policies, using existing forms, while interfacing with the human resources group on the home campus to maintain consistency in staffing levels and salary decisions.

If the department will recommend somebody to hire, us as HR the recruitment team will ask for the complete what we call a position file, which has the hiring metrics, the recording of the interview questions and answers, the reference check completed and the ranking of all the applicants, the position description and all that. So it's on the

department level actually, the hiring happens on the department level. (Alice)

Despite the fact that staff hiring decisions are made locally, the home campus still plays an essential role in providing approvals towards the end of the hiring process, which is not separate from the human resources process on the home campus.

When I first was offered, I was given an intention offer but it had to be approved by the state for the home institution so I had to wait. If it was just based on this branch campus, I had it. But it had to go through their process, a check, the HR because we are part of main campus. (Malcom)

Faculty hiring follows the same home institution process involving many stakeholders and signatures. There is a clear recruitment structure starting from the branch campus and going through the home campus channels i.e. from the department chairs at QUAG, through the home institution department heads, to the university president depending on the nature and level of the position.

The recruitment process is the same so, they, they sit on the committee, the hiring committee, absolutely, and they have to sign up on it. So it's just like if you were hiring someone in the chemical engineering department there, the department head would have to agree that, the department head have to agree, the college dean would have to agree, the provost and the president all sign off on the letter. It's the same thing here, it's the same signatures. (Bob)

For the faculty, it's on the department level where the program Chair and the committee, the search committee would decide on the hire, but of course it must be approved by the same department on the main campus. (Alice)

Department heads on the main campus are involved in the hiring of the new faculty here and in the Annual Performance Evaluation of our Faculty, the promotion and Rolling Contract process here, starts on the branch campus but actually as it moves through, the approval process goes to the home campus, for final approval there. (Kian)

When hiring a new dean, the process runs as per the existing university human resources channels but eventually filters back to the sponsoring organization who will provide the final approval. The agreement signed between both parties grants the sponsoring organization this authority due to the importance and scope of the dean's position.

That approval was where we've selected who we want, the home institution has to approve but then also the sponsoring organization has to approve because it's such a high level position. So again, different stakeholders come into play depending on the positions as well. (Malcom)

In terms of faculty hiring and curriculum content, communication was perceived to be key in keeping people fully informed and engaged, and avoiding surprises. If problems are anticipated, it is advisable to talk to the home campus early and seek solutions. It is a kind of partnership in which both parties would feel equal.

I don't feel it's a partnership where I'm the junior member of that partner or we in Qatar are the junior member of that partnership; they have also never created that expectation of this. I do think we're building a better relationship with the home campus, probably, than has existed historically. (Barbour)

QUAG has less autonomy to initiate change on student records that are held on the main campus. QUAG's registrar manages the local database, which is a subset of the large home campus database. The local registrar would not be able to change the number of credit hours a

student needs to graduate or any academic status decisions. Those decisions made locally would have to be consistent with the home campus policies and records.

We need to be able to demonstrate that we have followed the same procedure, same policies in terms of placing a student on academic probation that's consistent with what we've done on the main campus. We couldn't have a different standard for academic probation here. It has to be consistent with what's in the home campus. (Simon)

Malcom underlined the autonomy given to branch campus in certain areas such as the student experience, and the flexibility and authority to make staffing changes:

If I want to make a change in my staff or a position title, I have to go through the HR process. But I don't have to go through ten different levels to get something approved like on main campus. It's just me and my supervisor and HR, you know. I have flexibility in my department to move things around, do stuff and again that also depends on your supervisor of course giving you that autonomy but I think you have a lot more authority in regards to that.

I think there is more autonomy in regard to student programs, student experience, I mean obviously like our STEMs program some of our debates that we do, where we take our students, those are going to be more locally centered and student experience, and I think when you look at that again, I think we have more autonomy. Because again we have a different population and so we can do everything like in main campus.

Finding 3.4. Recognizing the specificity of roles, benefits, and functions. This finding was added to capture some of the unique perspectives shared by each participant that surfaced in

the study. For example, participants commonly discussed aspects of roles, benefits, and functions of QUAG. Those aspects are sequenced according to the frequency of citations:

Management structure. Half of the study participants (4 of 8 [50%]) perceived QUAG's management structure as a mirror of the home institution. They also stated that if there are local demands for adjustments, some kind of accommodation would be made. The branch campus connects to the home institution through a reporting channel from the dean of QUAG to the university provost and the college of engineering.

The connection is from the boss here, from the Dean to the main campus. Other entities here are not connected to the main campus but we co-ordinate, and our Finance people here work with the Finance people there, our HR here works with HR but don't report to each other. (Bob)

Having QUAG's student affairs unit placed under academic affairs is unique as it does not report to the vice president of student affairs on the home campus. This is departmental specific allowing the student affairs unit a certain jurisdiction over its own programs. We interact a lot with the division of Student Affairs but we don't directly report through the division of Student Affairs on the main campus. It's a little odd because we report up to our Dean here who reports through the College of Engineering and the Provost office. So, strictly speaking, we're on the academic affairs side of things. In the bigger picture, our records office -- you know, they had to interact directly with their peers and there are things that our local registrar cannot do that has to be done on the main campus. (Simon)

On the academic side, the dean reports directly to the provost, and QUAG's department chairs and faculty have a dual reporting to the dean of the college of engineering and department heads on the main campus respectively.

The department chairs don't report to their counterparts. The program chair is what we have here in Qatar actually reports to the Dean here but also to the Dean on the main campus. The faculty members report to their program chair here but also to the department head on the main campus. (Kian)

Scope of work for administrative units. Alice highlighted differences in the nature of certain human resources functions between QUAG and the home campus. She also emphasized added responsibilities for immigration, housing, and schooling on top of core human resources duties. To respond to increased responsibilities, QUAG created from the very beginning the Qatar support office aiming at serving the need of the "relocators" from the main campus to QUAG:

This office got expanded to serve the needs of all relocators, when we became more global and we are hiring people from all over the world and not just from the main campus. There was a need to move a staff from that office to HR, so this position will really get more cross trained, they will get closer to the relocators, they get to connect the face with the email, this person would get to see the person who have relocated to Qatar and their family members and we left the office there as well for like kind of study abroad students or exchange students and routing all faculty contracts and so on.

One of the added tasks on QUAG human resources is immigration, which has different rules and lengthy requirements in the host country forcing the hiring process to take longer. While on the main campus faculty and staff live at home, at QUAG most of them live in

university managed apartments, adding a responsibility on human resources to negotiate tenancy contracts and maintenance service packages and to provide schooling options for the children of the faculty and staff.

So the housing, here you need to house people, you need to have a duty of care for those people. The other challenge is the schooling, the dependent education and how responsible you are for those children who are, you know of our faculty and staff. The relocation as well of the new employees, so this is another challenge, you need to relocate people from all over the place and have them, you know comply with the immigration rules and have their degrees attested and police clearances and have their houses ready for them and register their children in schools, have them – like you need to spend a week to get them oriented to the country. (Alice)

Barbour referred to obtaining the permit to work as being complex, adding more responsibility on human resources compared to the home campus:

The permit to work and then on top of that the understandably quite rigid immigration and import-export type of rules added an extra layer of complexity. I haven't found it, having experienced those kinds of things from an expatriate position in industry before, I haven't found it any worse here than it would have been in other parts of the world.

Staff benefits and incentives. Half of the participants [50%] shared that the staff benefits and incentives are key to operate QUAG by recruiting quality faculty and staff from the main campus and elsewhere. With a couple hundreds of faculty and staff positions, QUAG provides unique work opportunities in the Arabian Gulf making itself one of the most sought-after regional destinations for teaching and research in specific engineering disciplines. For QUAG, as well as for other branch campuses, contracts are usually two to three years in length renewable

subject to satisfactory performance, and compensation packages are based on a basic salary with an end of service benefit, and a combination of allowances. Allowances may include accommodation, flights to the home country for staff and children, relocation and repatriation, health insurance, and education grants for dependents. Because of these provisions, teaching and working abroad became appealing not only for those seeking an international experience, but also those interested in saving a large portion of their salaries during their stay in the region.

These packages are developed by the human resources department in consultation with several university committees, with feedback from faculty and staff, and based on a review of the range of salaries and benefits in the region. They are not provided to faculty or staff on the home campus but are based on the considerations of the local context. Moreover, QUAG provided its employees with a premium on top of the home campus salaries and with a job guarantee for staff from the home institution who are willing to relocate and work at the branch campus. These incentives support QUAG's staff retention efforts and make salaries appealing compared to other branch campuses in the region. Alice confirmed that there is a larger number of faculty and staff coming from main campus than before and now stay longer, increasing therefore retention rates:

I would say we have more people now from the main campus because before – because of the nature of the region it was kind of scary to come over to and work in the Middle East, but now you know since the beginning of the operation in late 2003 until now, we have proven to be not just an operation unit, we are a branch campus with almost 500 employees, faculties, staff, graduate assistants and researchers. So I think over time we had proven to be a – like there will be – it could be better, the same order but better kind of work environment here as well as the main campus with more diverse people as well. So at the beginning yes, we did have some people coming from the main campus, but the

better thing is that the people from the main campus will not stay for a long time, they usually stay for two or three years. Now we had people staying longer than usual, so I see that as a good sign.

QUAG had just gone through a review of the benefits package, which was sent to the home campus to review it from legal and equity perspectives. While these benefits raised a lot of concerns on the home campus, local staff argued that the different benefit package is necessary for QUAG to operate. The outcomes of the benefit review may have a negative impact on hiring and the human capital. One of the things that came out of the review is that the premium paid to individuals who work at QUAG will be only given to those recruited from the home campus. This step may favor the recruitment of people from the main campus over those hired globally, who will have to accept lower salaries:

But the idea is to bring in people with expertise from our main campus because we are specialized in this academic discipline, Student Affairs, traditions, programs, etc. So, we need to be recruiting from the campus but to make it an incentive for them to come over, we need to look at and I think that's a big part also because, you know, at least for our campus if you worked for QNAT, especially as a public institution, unless you want to leave you have a job for life. And so it affects the hiring practices. It affects our human capital, specifically regarding how our campuses work together. (Malcom)

While the salary premium may favor the recruitment of staff from the home campus, the elimination of guaranteed job on the main campus except for tenured faculty may play against the relocation of faculty and staff from the home to the branch campus. When QUAG was first opened, there was an understanding that all faculty and all staff are guaranteed their job when

they go back to the home campus. However, this issue has changed during QUAG's presence in the host country.

Currently the only ones that have that guarantee are tenured faculty from the home institution. So tenured faculty – and there's only about six or seven faculty members, some of them are even deans actually, that have the privilege of going back and having a guaranteed job on main campus. The rest though, probably will have a good chance of getting a job on main campus but are not guaranteed one. Staff don't have any of that privilege anymore. (Malcom)

Role differences compared to main campus. The majority of the study participants [62.5%] shared their perceptions of the administrators' roles. They view them as being slightly different than those of the home campus. The dean at QUAG handles not only academic responsibilities but also manages university operations that differ from typical responsibilities of a college dean on the main campus. Within the context of the home institution, the dean's role is a bit different considering the size, and heritage of the home institution.

We have a very -- what we call a College Strong Administrative model and so, largely, there's kind of a framework that's provided at the university level, you know, for handling things like promotion, and tenure and budgeting, and that sort of thing. But, within that framework, the colleges have the authority to pretty much set how they want to do, and so the Provost will allocate a chunk of money to the colleges. How the colleges choose to use that money for their own operations, that's theirs to decide. Hiring of a faculty in particular, really is allocated to the colleges to handle. And so, here in Qatar, we have some things that just don't happen on the main campus so like, we've got emergency evacuation procedure. We've got responsibilities for the building and some other things

that really are more functional at just being separated geographically but from a managerial standpoint, largely, it's not that different. (Kian)

Barbour considered the dean's role as a kind of a CEO (new title is COO) for the branch campus, which is an important differentiator. He shared that if the dean behaves restrictively as an administrator, it will be to the detriment of QUAG. The CEO role, his or her visibility and leadership are proportionally much more important than it would have been in a similar role on the main campus.

Bob acknowledged the different aspects associated with QUAG dean's role covering students, faculty, staff, and facilities:

The Dean here is running an operation for the home institution abroad so there's a bit more, I should say maybe some more powers given to the Dean here that the Dean of a regular college on the main campus doesn't have, cause the Dean here is responsible for the students, for the faculty, for the staff and he's thousands of miles away from the main campus.

An intriguing disclosure occurred when Simon articulated the change of the dean's title from chief executive officer (CEO) to chief operating officer (COO) indicating that a lot of local decisions will be routed through the home campus:

I think with our new Dean being hired, he is coming actually from the home campus. We have four finalists, 3 were from outside of the university system, one was from inside -- we just received the announcement this week that pending the Board of Regents approval in May which should happen, it would be very unusual that it wasn't at this point. He's coming in with 30 years of experience from the College of Engineering on the main campus so -- I'm at least personally anticipating, again, a closer tie back to the home

campus and really ultimately, the Provost office and the College of Engineering on the main campus have an even more direct say as to what happens here.

With the dean being the external leader making sure to promote QUAG in the industry and the community, Barbour sees the assistant deans and program chairs in more leadership and strategic roles than their counterparts on the home campus:

I don't know fully the organization structure of the main campus, I get the impression that those assistant deans or the vice dean's roles are probably more strategic here than maybe they are on the main campus; and some of them may not even exist on the home campus, but they are very important [at QUAG].

Due to the size of the branch campus, the student affairs unit consists of fewer centralized positions and more general job functions enabling staff to handle a large portfolio of responsibilities. This staffing aspect requires the role of a student affairs professional to be more of a generalist than a specialist in her or his field:

So, you're still specific but you're more of a general. So, it's a combination of a generalist and a specialist. Versus on main campus you're just doing risk management, you're just doing conduct because you have 50,000 students to deal with, right? Also in conduct, you have ten investigators versus one investigator, you know. (Malcom)

Summary

This chapter began with an overview of the case under research. Then, while presenting the findings, I provided an explanation of the coding process and a brief summary of how data were analyzed and presented. In order to gain a thorough understanding of how an international branch campus in the Arabian Gulf plans to achieve sustainability, I coded data from the eight transcribed semi-structured interviews with senior administrators in one of the

international branch campuses in the Arabian Gulf. Additionally, I coded the research reports, organizational records, policy statements, and rules and regulations and researcher's journal and memos in an attempt to capture a comprehensive and triangulated picture of the case. The findings were built from the research problem, questions and design. Findings were presented in clear narrative format using verbatim quotes thus providing an opportunity to better understand the real perspectives of the research participants. Narrative data was linked and synthesized through explanatory paragraphs while trying to let participants speak for themselves; as such, and in my attempt to showcase multiple perspectives, I included quotations taken from interview transcripts in order to highlight some of the complexity of the subject matter. In addition, I noted and discussed inconsistent or unexpected data that surfaced during the interviews.

Based on the analysis of the data, four findings emerged from the first research question, "what practices are educational administrators implementing to achieve the sustainability of an international branch campus in Qatar?" First, maintaining the brand and integrity of academic programs is realized through a range of steps. Utilizing Wilkins (2010) and Knight (2011), who stressed the importance of brand reputation and guaranteeing quality academic standards, the majority of participants (6 of 8 [75%]) communicated the need to maintain the integrity of academic programs and maintain the brand and standards of research through the hiring of faculty and support staff. Participants also cited other steps including the recruitment of quality students; the role and visibility of the international branch campus in the region; outreach efforts; and making decisions locally.

Second, the uniqueness of local context has significant implications for the branch campus' operations. Half of the participants (4 of 8 [50%]) acknowledged the uniqueness of working in the Arabian Gulf from philosophical, cultural, and financial perspectives and

respective implications for the branch campus to ensure its sustainability. Participants recognized the application of main campus traditions and teaching styles in a way to resonate with local students. Additionally, concerns about pre-existing host country conditions related to human rights and freedom of speech, and implications for guaranteeing actual application in the university experience, were shared. Participants' statements confirmed that adaptation of policies and practices requires having a span of control, which allows leaders of the branch campus to make decisions locally.

Third, relevance of product delivery to stakeholders through teaching, research, and service is deemed essential to ensure the sustainability of the international branch campus. The most senior academic officials participating in this study pointed out the relevance of the product to different stakeholders through teaching, research and service to the wider community. The quality educational programs and outreach efforts offered by the branch campus need to support the development of a workforce that is useful to the community as well as the country itself. The commitment to research and offering PhD programs ensure relevance to the country's needs and service the local community and prevent the branch campus from transforming into teaching institutions. In addition, the continuous improvement of the curriculum is found essential to match job market needs and alignment with field trends and developments. To maintain the continuous flow of students into the academic programs and therefore ensuring sustainability, two of the eight participants (2 of 8 [25%]) pointed out the role of the branch campus in attracting, retaining, and educating students who will work in the country after graduation and contribute to the growth of its economy.

Fourth, the sustainability of an IBC is strengthened through a funding model centered on the educational mission of the branch campus. Each participant in the research study (8 of 8

[100%]) made a comment as part of his or her responses referring to funding. Surprisingly, few participants (2 of 8 [25%]) insisted on the role the sponsoring organization plays in supporting the operations of the branch campus through the provision of a funding model based on a commitment to education and not profit driven. In this regard, other participants talked about the financial incentives to recruit and retain staff through offering of perks such as housing and travel allowances. Such incentives may create inequity issues between faculty and staff in the home institution and branch campus. The funding model should take into consideration the added expenses and time factor involved with working overseas. Therefore, it becomes essential to recognize the difference of the milieu between home and branch campuses and the additional perks required to recruit and retain faculty and staff overseas. A distinct outlook was presented highlighting the contractual agreement signed between the university and the sponsoring organization and the competition caused by the emergence of new local universities supported by the sponsoring organization on the future of branch campuses and on the delivery of services within the same educational hub.

Four findings emerged from the second research question, “How do these management practices interface with concepts and processes of sustainability as found in the post-secondary research literature?” First, the branch campus’ goals and management practices are aligned with national priorities of host country and agreement with sponsoring organization. All participants (8 of 8 [100%]) shared that they see the role of national vision and sponsoring organization as central to impact practice. In addition, many participants explained the importance of aligning strategic goals of the university with the national vision of the host country. To achieve the host nation’s goals, participants spoke about connecting with stakeholders including corporations, governmental agencies, schools, and the local community while ensuring that the branch campus

is meeting their needs through the provision of research, services, and outreach. There is evidence of linking the national vision to the branch campus strategic plan in the answers of the participants as well as in the university yearbook and research publications. Furthermore, beyond the strategic plan, the national vision and local laws cascade down to impact programs being launched, faculty being hired, campus operations, the student experience, community engagement, and job readiness of graduates.

Second, practices are adapted to fit with local laws and cultural context. Each study participant (8 of 8 [100%]) made a comment as part of his or her responses mentioning the adaptation of practices in his or her scope or responsibilities. To operate a branch campus in a different country, administrators have to balance the complexity of home and host country, and sponsoring organization's regulations based on flexibility, respect for diversity, and having an open mind to operate within a different context. Moreover, in the interviews, each participant (8 of 8 [100%]) provided examples of how adaptation is reflected in practices related to their positions. Examples covered annual leave, holidays, salary scale, space rental, purchasing and bidding procedures, contracts with external entities, and cross registration with other universities. Participants also shared examples of practices mandated by the state and strictly prescribed within the main university system that had to be adapted to match local practice i.e. recruitment practices, FERPA, curriculum, qualifications, recruitment, and retention, and diversity of faculty. The development of national human capital was raised by all participants (8 of 8 [100%]). However, concerns regarding nationalization laws, challenging economic circumstances, and the loss of positions were brought up by three participants as needing to be balanced relative to the benefits of hiring Qataris in teaching and student affairs jobs. Half of the participants (4 of 8 [50%]) shared their perspectives on the student experience, and recognized the different cultural

context they operate in. Adaptation of student activities is made through reconciling between prevailing social traditions and the educational approach, problem solving and awareness, and respect for individual values, while negotiating and challenging students to accept different values from their own.

Third, the governance process is multifaceted. Half of the participants (4 of 8 [50%]) referred to the governance structure with two governing boards as an efficient system. Additionally, all of the eight participants interviewed [100%] spoke of how the JAB does not have a formal authority over the Qatar campus as a typical board of trustees of a North American university. The composition of the board is conducive to multifaceted perspectives of stakeholders and ensures engaging discussions to the benefits of QUAG and the host country. In addition to the JAB, participants talked about an industry review board acting in partnership with different academic disciplines to provide feedback to QUAG, identify concerns and offer suggestions. Each participant valued the integration with the home campus and the opportunity to streamline priorities from the dean into university committee conversations. However, one participant warned about inheriting a home campus committees' structure on the decision making process of the branch campus and an extensive volume of paperwork indicating a certain level of bureaucracy and a barrier to empowerment and efficiency. To respond to QUAG's scope of work, and in alignment with a home campus practice, four participants (4 of 8 [50%]) referred to a periodic full scale organizational review covering salary benefits, and compensation packages, performance appraisals, and structure re-evaluation. Despite active involvement of individuals from both campuses in the review, two participants (2 of 8 [25%]) talked about decisions influenced by the home campus and therefore affecting staff morale and efficiency of decision making at the branch campus level.

Fourth, the resources efficiency is influenced by the agreement with sponsoring organization. All participants (8 of 8 [100%]) confirmed faculty to student ratios are lower than a typical college campus referring to the role of the agreement with the sponsoring organization in dictating such ratios. Statements refer to the small class size as a strategic direction taken by the sponsoring organization. Its benefits entail the provision of quality education, personal connections between faculty and students, the creation of an engaging student experience, and a better preparation of a competent workforce. The QUAG's faculty and staffing ratios in comparison with the home campus do not support the statement that the branch campus is understaffed. Statements shared are in favor of abundant staffing resources compared to the student population. Despite the low faculty and staff to student ratios, two participants (2 of 8 [25%]) talked about the need for more staff to provide quality services. The majority of the participants [87.5%] shared that they believe QUAG offers top quality IT infrastructure. Referring to the role of quality IT infrastructure, statements referred to increased efficiency through a series of online systems and integration with the main campus. Two participants talked about a higher cost of education per student than the home campus and referred to the economy of scale, time usage of teaching labs, class size, and rising expenses for hiring and professional development as the main reasons. Statements of two other participants alluded to the unlimited resources as contributing to inefficiency.

Based on the data analysis, four findings were constructed from the third research question, "does the interdependence between the international branch campus and the home institution shape these management practices? If so how?" First, the response to anticipated challenges is influenced by geographical distance from main campus. Four participants (4 of 8 [50%]) talked about the time zone difference and workweek structure as two of the main

challenges caused by operating away from home campus. Participants identified the implications of time difference on delayed response to electronic communications especially during weekends and when running system reports. To make things work, there are arguments, negotiations, compromises to be made, in addition to relationship building through regular interaction and committee work with counterparts on the home campus. Half of the participants [50%] shared how working in a different cultural context added operational challenges and perceptions to the distance and time difference. Overall, participants felt that difficulties arising from two separate locations is eased by staff mobility between both locations, visibility of QUAG, and repatriation of staff to the home institution after working in the branch campus. The majority of participants (5 of 8 [62.5%]) made comments on the relationship with the sponsoring organization as an external entity with a certain level of control on funding and input on operations. Furthermore, the range of challenges extend to retention of Qatari nationals' as faculty, succession planning, and financial support required to support the increasing cost of schooling, an allowance that is part of the employee's compensation package and usually paid by QUAG to its faculty and staff.

Second, strong ties with main campus are developed over time. All participants in the research study (8 of 8 [100%]) made a comment as part of his or her responses that alluded to strong ties with main campus. All participants expressed strong ties in three main ways. The strong ties are based on a dual reporting structure and a complete integration of the following processes including, but not limited to, recruitment, retention, promotion, annual evaluation, human resources, finance, and merit raises similar to any other college on the main campus. Almost all the study participants (7 of 8 [87.5%]) demonstrated stronger ties with the main campus by their affiliation with the home university and as employees of the state, where the home institution is located. The affiliation confirms tighter interdependence between the branch

campus and the university system. And last but not least, six of the eight participants [62.5%] pronounced strong ties through compliance with main campus' policies and practices. QUAG implements the same business practices as the home institution, which is a state institution while also responding to Qatar requirements while avoiding bureaucracy.

Third, authority is exercised through balancing autonomous and interdependent decision making. All participants (8 of 8 [100%]) articulated a certain level of autonomy given to the branch campus to make specific decisions while requiring consultation and approval from the home institution on others. It was clear from the participants' responses, that enough autonomy is given to the branch campus to run its operations while strategic decisions are made in consultation with the provost on the home campus as QUAG is not an entity on its own. Operational decisions locally made included, but not limited to, student admissions, faculty leave, staff hiring, class scheduling, and purchasing. However, major decisions are made by the home campus such as the curriculum, faculty hiring, and budget approval. All Participants (8 of 8 [100%]) believed hiring is based on a shared decision. In their responses, they used terms such as collaborative approach, endorsement, or consensus indicating the involvement of many stakeholders from QUAG and the home campus in the process. Staff hiring decisions are made locally at the departmental level in alignment with home campus policies. Despite the fact that staff hiring decisions are made locally, the home campus still plays an essential role in providing approvals towards the end of the hiring process, which is not separate from the human resources process on the home campus.

The fourth finding recognized the specificity of roles, benefits, and functions. This finding was added to capture some of the unique perspectives shared by each participant that surfaced in the study. For example, participants commonly discussed aspects of the structure,

roles, benefits, and functions of QUAG and how different they are from the home campus. Those aspects were sequenced according to the frequency of citations.

This chapter presented the findings in a clear narrative format by organizing data from various sources into categories. The next chapter covers the analysis, interpretation, and synthesis of the findings in an attempt to reconstruct, analyze, and build a well-rounded understanding of the phenomenon while connecting the findings to relevant literature.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this case study was to gain a thorough understanding of how an international branch campus in the Arabian Gulf plans to achieve sustainability. My rationale for examining this topic was to help educational administrators in the region gain a better understanding of the factors contributing to the sustainability of international branch campuses.

This case study consisted of eight semi-structured interviews with senior administrators in one of the international branch campuses in the Arabian Gulf. Additionally, I gathered annual and research reports, organizational records, policy statements, and rules and regulations and kept a researcher's journal. Through the interviews with senior administrators I attempted to gather data about the management and operations of international branch campuses to identify practices implemented to achieve its sustainability. I wanted to explain how management practices interface with research informed concepts and processes of sustainability, and understand how an international branch campus operates in different organizational and cultural contexts from that of the main campus. The data collected from the interviews and documents' review were first coded, then analyzed and organized based on the conceptual framework (Figure 2), analytical diagram of conceptual categories (Figure 1), and research questions.

My first research question asked what practices educational administrators are implementing to achieve the sustainability of an international branch campus in Qatar. Based on the analysis of the data, four findings emerged: maintaining the brand and integrity of academic programs through the acknowledgment of the role the hiring of faculty and support staff,

recruitment of quality students, and through role and visibility of the international branch campus in the region and outreach efforts; uniqueness of local context and implications for the branch campus' operations; relevance of product delivery to stakeholders through teaching, research, and service; and funding model centered on the educational mission of the branch campus. My second research question asked how do these management practices interface with concepts and processes of sustainability as found in the post-secondary research literature? Based on the analysis of the data, four findings emerged: alignment of branch campus' goals and practices with national priorities of host country and agreement with sponsoring organization; adaptation of practices to fit with local laws and cultural context; multifaceted governance process; and resources efficiency influenced by agreement with sponsoring organization. My third research question asked does the interdependence between the international branch campus and the home institution shape these management practices? If so how? Based on the analysis of the data, four findings emerged: responding to anticipated challenges influenced by geographical distance from main campus; strong ties with main campus; balancing autonomous and interdependent decision making; and recognizing the specificity of roles, benefits, and functions.

In Chapter four, I presented the findings of this case study by consolidating data collected from interviews and documents' review into categories to construct a comprehensible chronicle. The purpose of this chapter is to thoroughly interpret these findings. In the findings chapter, I as a storyteller separated out the data to tell the "story of the research" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016, p. 243), "a story that should be vivid and interesting while also accurate and credible" (p. 207). This chapter provides an attempt to interpret and synthesize the findings and therefore reconstruct, analyze, and build a well-rounded understanding of the case study while connecting

the findings with relevant literature. This chapter ends with an assessment of the likelihood of researcher's assumptions and biases in interpreting the findings.

Analysis, Interpretation and Synthesis

In the following section, I provide an analysis, interpretation, and synthesis of the findings while responding to the research questions. In the first level of analysis, I attempt to describe the deeper meaning of individual findings and to link them to the emerging patterns and themes. As a secondary level of analysis, I look across findings while comparing the themes to the issues raised in the literature. On the third level, I look across the participants' answers seeking similarities and differences (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). This process was motivated by the following: First, I seek to understand the existing connections between the experiences of the participants as well as how they explained these connections. Second, I incorporate my own views as a researcher taking into consideration my personal experience to produce new insights. Third, I aspire to see to what extent findings increase the understanding of the phenomenon I was studying by answering the following questions: What practices educational administrators are implementing to achieve the sustainability of an international branch campus in Qatar? How do these management practices interface with concepts and processes of sustainability as found in the post-secondary research literature? Does the interdependence between the international branch campus and the home institution shape these management practices? If so, how? Fourth, I seek out unpredicted and anticipated connections. Fifth, I look for consistency and inconsistency between the findings and the existing body of knowledge. Finally, I explore to what extent the data went beyond the literature in discovering new information or practices (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). The discussion takes into consideration the limited research literature on international branch campuses because the sustainability of international branch

campus is a relatively new field of research. The analysis, interpretation, and synthesis of these findings are intended to augment the understanding of how an international branch campus plans to achieve sustainability and of the factors contributing to this field of research.

Research Question One. My first research question asked what practices educational administrators are implementing to achieve the sustainability of an international branch campus in Qatar. Based on the analysis of the data, four findings emerged: maintaining the brand and integrity of academic programs; uniqueness of local context and implications for the branch campus' operations; relevance of product delivery to stakeholders through teaching, research, and service; and funding model centered on the educational mission of the branch campus.

Finding 1.1. Maintaining the Brand and Integrity of Academic Programs. Wilkins (2010) articulates the importance of brand reputation and guaranteeing quality academic standards. He states that concerns behind the decisions of a few universities not wanting to open branch campuses were the control over their brand name reputation and quality assurance. Furthermore, Knight (2011) talks about the branch campus' ability to deliver quality academic programs when addressing sustainability matters of higher education in the Middle East. I was intrigued when eight of the eight participants communicated the importance of maintaining the brand and integrity of academic programs as a means to ensure the long-term sustainability of international branch campuses. Whether it was Bob and Alice talking about improving the quality of academic programs, and focus on research or Bassam sharing his experiences about the hiring of qualified faculty and support staff, or Simon stressing the need to make decisions locally when appropriate, participants linked the successful implementation of these practices to a variety of steps. Bob acknowledged the research component of faculty positions and the importance of retention. Alice linked maintaining the brand to recruiting qualified students who

will be leaders in their countries when they graduate. Other participants in the study offered suggestions to maintain the brand and integrity of academic programs. Barbour talked about managing reputational risks, enhancing the visibility of the IBC in the region and running efficient operations. Laith raised the importance of outreach activities to promote the field of study while trying to convince students and parents to apply for engineering especially when having a small pool of qualified applicants.

As it appears from the participants' answers, maintaining the brand and integrity of the academic programs is a complex matter. It is not only influenced by the reputation of the university but by the role of faculty, its research portfolio, its regional presence, and student recruitment and outreach efforts. As referred to in the literature, the brand reputation is a concern for higher education institutions when establishing a branch campus overseas. This matter is particularly due to their inability to recruit quality professors while aiming to guarantee academic standards (Wilkins, 2010) or to recruit academics who have a certain level of affiliation with the main campus (Altbach, 2010). It appears that Qnat University at the Arabian Gulf (QUAG) put massive efforts in maintaining its brand by recruiting faculty from the main campus in order to guarantee academic standards. Faculty recruitment strategies, compensation packages, and competitive contracts that QUAG used to successfully solicit interest from qualified faculty on the main campus will be thoroughly tackled in the analysis of upcoming findings. Referring to the establishment of the branch campus of New York University in Abu Dhabi, Bassam expressed the importance of maintaining the reputation as the main reason for universities to be brought to the region. He confirms that the university name outweighs the campus location in its importance:

[...] What people are interested [in] is not the Abu Dhabi part for the most part, the reason NYU is brought in [is] because of its reputation. That's what it's bringing to the table and it's very important to maintain status. [...] I think you can do that through maintaining good relationships with the main campus, [...] maintaining the integrity of the programs and constantly working to benchmark yourself [...]. Because once you lose [status], you lose your brand and that's essential.

In addition to community service, and teaching, the academic success of faculty relies on their ability to conduct research. I looked for documentation that supports the focus on research at QUAG in addition to what has been shared during the interviews. Despite the fact that research in the engineering field is expensive, requiring sophisticated equipment and laboratories, and resources and funding for graduate students and assistants, QUAG was successful in receiving research grants throughout the past decade either through the sponsoring organization or through the national research fund in the host country. As indicated in the 2015 research yearbook, the cumulative project funding since 2008 reached 224 million dollars in science, liberal arts and engineering. This level of funding is not only meaningful compared to regional research spending that fluctuates around developing world levels. It is definitely a point of attraction for qualified faculty to join QUAG. Bob summarized in the following quote the importance of research as an incentive to attract and retain renown faculty:

Keeping funding aside, I mean we need to keep doing research, higher education cannot exist without research. To get excellent faculty, we need to get faculty who do research; to keep excellent faculty, we need to ensure, they have what it takes to do research.

Conducting research delivers strategic support not only to QUAG's mission but to the

sponsoring organization through facilitating collaborations, encouraging invention and commercialization partnerships, and ensuring compliance with field standards. The commitment to research also responds to the host country's national vision by making vital contributions to the creation of knowledge, and the human capital in the nation and regionally.

Blending its mission with the National Vision, QUAG is also bound to enrich and educate the people, the host country's greatest natural resource. Therefore, to recruit quality students, QUAG has developed and implemented recruitment and outreach strategies to meet its enrolment targets. Amid challenging times marked by low enrollment in international branch campuses regionally (Wilkins, 2010), and while there are differences between western and Middle Eastern standards in term of application deadlines and admissions requirements for example, there is no indication that QUAG has lowered its standards to fit the Middle Eastern context despite the unpreparedness of certain students in this region to meet entry requirements. Instead, and in support of maintaining the brand and integrity of its academic programs, QUAG offers a conditional acceptance for students to join a foundation program to improve their qualifications for admissions. The recruitment strategies, outreach efforts, and ability to make decisions locally will be discussed at a later stage in this chapter.

While universities are reluctant to open branch campuses due to reputational risks, there may be a possibility to make this adventure a success. Barbour warns how things can go wrong, affecting not only the presence of the branch campus but the university's reputation strengthened by being physically in the region:

Equally, if you just do it and don't make sure you keep the program the same, the people who are delivering the program, the same, and sustain it, there will be problems because it will be a risk to your reputation. So I can understand why some people didn't do these

because of these whole reputational risks. But I think the opportunity that is presented overrides that as long as you're conscious about the risk and you manage it.

While it is difficult for international branch campuses to differentiate themselves in a competitive higher education market regionally, the biggest challenges are both internal and external. It lies in the ability of prospective students with the highest qualifications to study at reputable higher education institutions overseas instead of selecting the branch campus. It also lies in the choice of renowned faculty to remain on the main campus instead of accepting the risks associated with joining the branch campus. Therefore, it is of utmost importance for international branch campus to maintain its brand, the quality of academic programs, and enhance its ability and visibility to attract a solid pool of qualified faculty and students.

In summary, this research supports the proposition that maintaining its reputation is the most important asset educational institutions can have. A university cannot effectively achieve its mission if its reputation for quality educational experiences and degrees is compromised. Losing or compromising an institution's reputation will also jeopardize its capacity to attract students, faculty, trustees, and donors (Power et al., 2009). Therefore, to protect and enhance its reputation, determining the factors that may undermine the stakeholders' perceptions requires a comprehensive review of the practices and systems in place.

Finding 1.2. Uniqueness of local context and implications for the branch campus' operations. In his analysis of branch campuses, Lane (2011) remarks that it is natural for universities to adapt to the conditions of their local environment. Lane also suggests that home campus practices although considered successful within the specific environment of the home campus, may not be successful for the IBC in its local context. Similar to Lane (2011), Harding

and Lamney (2011) state that operating a branch campus in a foreign country requires university officials to adapt business operations to meet a different set of cultural, legal, and environmental practices and conditions. In this case study, participants' statements came in support of the acknowledgment of the philosophical, cultural, and financial implications on the branch campus while operating in a different context than the home campus.

Lane (2011) adds that the IBC leadership needs to find ways to adapt existing policies and practices while ensuring an alignment with home campus standards. Not giving the IBC the choice to adapt their policies and practices comes from "a fear that adaptation would lessen quality and negatively affect the home campus reputation" (p. 10). At QUAG, the home campus traditions and teaching styles were adapted in a way to resonate with local students who come with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This step is a good example of the importance of understanding local conditions and trying to meet the unique demands of the host country and students.

Participants shared concerns about guaranteeing actual application of human rights and freedom of speech, and implications on the university experience. Administrators from countries with a long history and commitment to academic freedom often try to establish agreements with host countries to guarantee its practice (Kinser, 2010). In the Agreement to Continue to Operate the Undergraduate and Graduate Programs at QUAG (2014), Qnat University negotiated academic freedom protection with the sponsoring organization despite the conservative Muslim roots of the host country. The negotiations translated into a commitment from both parties to respect academic freedom in teaching and publications. Mentioned four times in the document, it was clearly stated that Qnat University shall be responsible for "delivering a curriculum and degree program all according to the educational, employment, academic freedom,

nondiscrimination and quality standards observed at the main campus (p. 2).” While academic freedom is increasingly referenced in the IBC literature, none of the participants referred to specific instances where academic freedom was questioned. This is possibly due to the type of programs offered by QUAG, as engineering can be less controversial than arts or political science or other academic disciplines, or to self-censorship practiced by faculty.

Bob talked about the benefits of an American education in the host country through the provision of educational opportunities to the local population. While this step may discourage students from studying abroad, the IBC is teaching students certain values that the community, especially their parents and relatives, may not be able to relate to. Simon quoted on how to reconcile the difference:

[...] we had a parent that night asking why do we have boys and girls in the classroom together? And you know -- is that really the best environment? Is that the best way for them to learn and any of those kind of things -- I got to feel that question.

So I talked about the idea that when they get out into post-university life, they'll be working in a mixed environment. They'll be working with people particularly even if they stay here in Doha, they'll be working with a global, international workforce, and so the more they can be exposed to that in their university life, the better. The parent's counter to that was you know, "Couldn't there be a more of an ease in to that?"

This example raises questions about the ability of IBCs to reflect local values. However, most of the home institution's core values, excellence, integrity, leadership, loyalty, respect, selfless service fits well with the local culture of the host country.

Considering local conditions and their implications on the IBC operations lends support to a model whereby the IBC leaders have the authority to make decisions instead of seeking approvals from the main campus where decision makers may not have a full understanding of host country conditions. The decision making process and the delegated authority to the dean to act as a CEO and an agent of change will be reviewed in upcoming findings.

Finding 1.3. Relevance of Product Delivery to Stakeholders through Teaching, Research, and Service. Through their responses, participants referred to various stakeholders and recognized the complexity of responding to multiple bodies that have diverse relationships with QUAG. The main campus and the sponsoring organization were cited the most, indicating their strong influence on the IBC operations. Other stakeholders were QUAG's joint advisory board, board of trustees, state legislature, the host country, governmental agencies, industry partners and corporations, schools, and the local community. How the participants chose to define the stakeholders is an important determinant of the stakeholders' impact on the decision making, governance, and survival.

The literature emphasizes the relevance of practices to the economy (Tan, 2016), to the higher education sector (Gacel-Ávila, 2014), and to the country's cultural and jurisdictional conditions (Knight, 2014). To ensure their sustainability, IBCs are required to ensure their relevance to stakeholders through a variety of practices.

I think really engagement with the local industry, the local government, the local community -- to make certain that the branch campus is relevant, is absolutely essential.

(Kian)

Participants referred to the IBC being relevant through the provision of world class education and graduate programs consistent with country needs. The benefits of launching such programs are numerous. First, they ensure a fair balance between teaching and research, offering incentives for renowned faculty interested in conducting research to consider joining the IBC. Second, they prevent the IBC from limiting its role to a teaching institution and thus playing an active role in the delivery of applied research to the industry and creating knowledge.

The relevance of the branch campus is strengthened by attracting, retaining, and educating students who will work in the country after graduation and contribute to the growth of its economy. The continuous improvement of the curriculum and incorporation of specific courses while maintaining the offering of core courses supports the development of a workforce while matching job market needs and alignment with field trends. The IBC's relevance is also reinforced through service and active engagement with stakeholders, thereby showing its sensitivity to the needs of the region and culture. The emphasis on service also recognized the role of faculty in this regard as their performance evaluation combines not only the research and teaching components, but their contributions to serving the community and the country as a whole.

It is quite interesting that accreditation agencies were not mentioned as core stakeholders. While the agreement with the sponsoring organization emphasized the need to meet accreditation requirements, the host country does not impose any form of local accreditation on QUAG. However, to maintain the quality of education and the reputation of its academic programs, QUAG received the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accreditation and the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET). It is important to mention that SACS and ABET both require separate accreditation for the branch campus programs.

Finding 1.4. Funding model centered on the educational mission of the branch

campus. As literature indicates, higher education institutions wishing to establish an international branch campus seem to be increasingly opting for funding through external sources (Verbik, 2007). Despite the host country's funding support, it is essential for an institution to assess the alignment between the establishment of the IBC with its mission and institutional goals. Due to the high cost of setting up engineering programs and state legal constraints preventing the home campus from the use of public funds overseas, receiving full financial support from the sponsoring organization was the ideal financial model for the home university to establish QUAG. Following the closing of its branch campus in East Asia, Qnat University was looking for a safe approach to cover the full cost through funding from the sponsoring organization.

Knight (2012) identifies the different rationales driving the institutions to offer academic programs in a different country. In addition to increased profile, universities own a strong obligation to generate profit through the establishment of its branch campus. Each participant in the research study (8 of 8 [100%]) made a comment as part of his or her responses referring to funding. Due to the yearly cap on QUAG student enrolment and a relatively small population of five hundred students, the revenue from tuition fees was not deemed sufficient to cover all budgetary expenses. Therefore, the commitment of the sponsoring organization in supporting QUAG's operations based on a nonprofit driven funding model was the only way to make it sustainable.

In order to educate qualified engineers, and generate knowledge through innovative research and collaborative industry partnerships and thus addressing the needs of the community and host country, QUAG offered generous financial incentives to recruit and retain its faculty

and staff. This step was in support of its academic mission and the national priorities. The continued support from the sponsoring organization was found essential to the branch campus' sustainability because it was also coupled with a local demand for engineering education and a certain level of autonomy over the curriculum and other aspects of the university operations. At a certain point in time, the sponsoring organization and the host country will need to come up with a national strategy for education elucidating how they will continue to meet the limited local capacity and the role of branch campuses in its higher education sector on the long term.

Research Question Two. My second research question asked how these management practices interface with concepts and processes of sustainability as found in the post-secondary research literature. Based on the analysis of the data, four findings emerged: alignment of branch campus' goals and practices with national priorities of host country and agreement with sponsoring organization; adaptation of practices to fit with local laws and cultural context; multifaceted governance process; and resources efficiency influenced by agreement with sponsoring organization.

Finding 2.1. Alignment of branch campus' goals and management practices with national priorities of host country and agreement with sponsoring organization. All participants (8 of 8 [100%]) shared that they see the role of the national vision and sponsoring organization as a central impact on practice. As cited by the literature, the most commonly used national priorities are: expanding local capacity; economic and human development; and knowledge creation (Becker, 2009; Donn & Al Manthri, 2010; Wilkins, 2011). These priorities corresponded to the pillars of the national vision and the creation of a knowledge-based economy characterized by innovation, entrepreneurship, and excellence in education; a capable and motivated workforce; and an educated population.

Participants' statements and the document review support the alignment of QUAG's strategies with national priorities of the host country. The economic needs of the host country influenced QUAG's educational practice as evidenced by the offering of academic degrees and the creation of programs focused on supporting the oil and gas industry and thus expanding local capacity. Simon recognized the alignment with the national vision by QUAG advancing knowledge, providing quality education, and supporting the development of competent citizens. In a similar manner, Laith talked about how QUAG considers the national priorities and their impact on the type of programs launched, the focus of research, the community outreach, and recruitment of students and faculty.

The depth of understanding of the national vision and priorities revealed by the data is largely coherent across participants' responses. This translated into a series of steps implemented in each functional area to align QUAG's goals with national needs. Participants talked about the importance of meeting the needs of stakeholders through service, outreach to high school and industry partners. References were also made to the role of research in supporting the host country's transformation to a knowledge based economy and the role of the student experience in preparing competent graduates to join the workforce and support economic development and growth.

QUAG is arguably one the most successful IBC in Qatar in terms of research funding. The allocation of millions of dollars by the National Research Fund over the past decade is an indicator of the value of applied research produced by QUAG faculty to meet national needs. There is no doubt that an IBC like QUAG, if guided by national priorities as a framework for its strategic plan, and provided by targeted funding by the sponsoring organization, can trigger mutual benefits not only to its own reputation but to a wide range of local stakeholders.

Finding 2.2. Adaptation of practices to fit with local laws and cultural context. Shams and Huisman (2012) argues that many forces are involved when IBCs strive to achieve a balance between standardization and local adaptation of practices. Behind the standardization forces lie the provision of identical academic experiences, maintaining the same quality standards, and protection of the university's reputation. However, the local adaptation forces include the need to conform with host country's regulatory framework and acceptance of the local norms and cultural values of the host country. Hughes (2011) suggests that IBC management should consider the extent to which it should adjust curriculum and educational practice and thus reflect on how much autonomy a branch campus should have from the home campus.

Participants in this study described which practices of the home campus were replicated versus the ones adapted to the host country context. The practices where the standardization versus adaptation between the main and branch campus was assessed are: access and enrolment, administrative functions, curriculum, student experience, and human capital.

Access and enrolment. QUAG students consist of students whose English is not the first language; and they come from different socio-economic and educational backgrounds than students on the home campus. Lane (2011) talks about drastic differences between western and Middle Eastern standards of student recruitment and about admission processes that require adaptation to fit the local context including outreach, planning expectations by students, varied application deadlines, dealing with late applicants, and unpreparedness of students. The Office of Admissions at QUAG operates autonomously from the main campus but in compliance with the same admission standards. A number of factors influence QUAG staff to adapt their admissions process. While they strive to meet enrolment targets, set by the agreement with the sponsoring organization, they often have to attract students out of a pool of candidates that is often

considered by faculty and staff as underprepared for a typical American education experience. Therefore, QUAG launched its outreach initiatives such as STEM education through collaboration with feeder schools, and home visits to talk to parents about engineering education. QUAG also created a foundation program called academic bridge allowing borderline students to take courses for a year in order to meet the minimum requirements. Therefore, the findings from this research suggest that universities opening IBCs should assess the feasibility of recruiting the same caliber of students as on the main campus. If this assessment is conducted during the establishment phase, IBC personnel will be better informed about the challenges in recruiting qualified local students.

Administrative functions. QUAG had to deal with different regulations including those of the host country, state laws, university policies, and the sponsoring organization guidelines. Examples shared related to staff annual leave, official holidays, salaries and compensations packages, space rental, purchasing and bidding procedures, and contracts with external entities. While these practices were strictly prescribed by different stakeholders, they had to be adapted to match local practice. Adaptation was based on discussions involving staff from home and branch campuses, relationship buildings with counterparts on each campus, balancing equity issues (if implications may affect staff from both campus), and regular information sharing to ensure that needs are met and specific guarantees provided.

Curriculum. Throughout its development, QUAG administrators debated whether to modify certain components of the main campus curriculum. The home campus allowed minor modifications due to the needs of local students. Despite these minor modifications, QUAG administrators communicated a strong message of curriculum uniformity, while striving to prove that the branch campus offers the same academic experience as students would receive when

enrolled at the home campus. This is due to accreditation compliance and agreement with sponsoring organization. The findings show that IBC administrators must balance the pressure to maintain the same curriculum with the need to locally adapt to the host country's context. Despite evidence of a certain degree of adaptation to the local context, further modifications are required to ensure relevance to local industry demands.

Student Experience. With its long history of student engagement, QUAG has adapted certain practices to align with the unique needs of students and prevailing local values and traditions. In order to maintain the same institutional identity, student affairs staff were successful in adapting a few main campus student traditions more than others. During the early days of QUAG, the main campus was not involved in the adaptation process ensuring a less restrictive approach. Following tight control measures between the home and branch campus, the majority of QUAG student affairs practices now mirror the main campus. While considering QUAG as part of a large university, such measures were imposed to ensure consistency of the student code of conduct, student organizations procedures, and other policies between home and branch campuses. Modifications, when applicable, were accompanied by a strong rationale to support the variation, which were minor at the end.

When designing student engagement opportunities, higher education institutions establishing branch campuses are encouraged not to blindly replicate the same student experience of the home campus. The data suggest that delegating a certain span of control to the IBC student affairs team will help create student programs that are more responsive to the local context. It will be up to the IBC staff with prior home campus experience to suggest within their team, which traditions or program should be brought to the IBC and how they should be implemented.

Human capital. To ensure the provision of the same academic experience on both campuses, and based on the interest of the sponsoring organization, QUAG strived to recruit and retain faculty from the main campus. While acknowledging the benefits of a diverse faculty and staff body, efforts were also put towards the hiring of Qatari nationals or others from Arab speaking faculty and staff. Laigo (2013) states that American faculty interested in working for IBCs were highly influenced by the financial compensation and a desire for an adventure. They often had a prior connection to the region when the IBC is located through family ties or exposure. Laigo (2013) also stresses the need for cross cultural training especially for faculty who are unfamiliar with the host country.

As noted by the participants, QAUG's salaries and compensations packages were tweaked within the local market range and university pay scale to make them appealing to new joiners. The additional perks paid in forms of premiums and allowances facilitated the recruitment of faculty from the main campus. Without compromising the hiring credentials and to develop the national human capital in Qatar, QUAG was successful in recruiting a few Qatari faculty, despite competition with the corporate sector, students' obligation towards employers, and a small pool of qualified candidates. One participant acknowledged the obstacles hindering the hiring of Qatari student affairs staff due to the lack of degree holders with a specialization in student affairs. To retain faculty, the rolling contract substituted for the tenure system while ensuring generous funding to do research. In addition, QUAG adapted its staff orientation by adding a cross-cultural training component. Additional perks in forms of premiums and additional allowances were essential points of attraction during the establishment phase. However, with budget cuts and pressure to reduce staff cost and salary scale equality with the main campus, IBCs can benefit from attracting faculty and staff with proper qualifications

without home campus experience. With the elimination of extra perks, and as I witnessed through my employment in the region for many years, the recruitment focus can be shifted towards faculty and staff who have family ties in the region who tend to stay longer. Faculty members can get main campus experience by teaching at the home university for a semester before joining QUAG.

Finding 2.3. Multifaceted governance process. Kezar and Eckel (2004) define governance as a process of policy making and “macro-level decision-making in higher education”. It involves multi-level decision-making bodies and processes. Understanding the governance model at QUAG relates to the role identification of the main stakeholders within the university system and within the institution. As in most American institutions with a strong history of shared governance (Rosovsky, 2014), QUAG exercises its power with a governance structure shared among three constituencies: the governing boards, the faculty senate, and university administration. With two governing boards, JAB is the highest local authority, and in practice it acts in an advisory capacity. However, most major decisions are made by the home university Board of Regents. On the faculty side, the senate of the main campus has the primary role in dealing with all academic matters including research, methods of instruction, and the policy making body for most academic policies and procedures specially those related to the hiring, retention, tenure, promotion, and evaluation of academic personnel. The Faculty Advisory Council (FAC) composed of elected members from QUAG’s programs meet to discuss faculty issues and raise them to QUAG’s dean in monthly meetings. The FAC sends two senators to the larger faculty senate. On the administration side, QUAG has two teams. The executive team, composed of all directors, academic program chairs, and deans, meet monthly. The deans’ council, consisting of the employees with dean titles, meet weekly to discuss the administration

of the campus and other issues. All governing bodies at QUAG and management teams act either in an advisory or coordination capacity. The Provost Office on the home campus maintains the highest degree of formal authority over QUAG. The provost's responsibilities include the vice-chair of JAB, the supervision of QUAG's dean, and control of QUAG's management fee paid by the sponsoring organization. This governance arrangement is sufficient to give the main campus the capability of ensuring QUAG's integration and consistency of its educational activities with respective policies and strategic goals of the home campus. It also ensures strong ties with the home campus.

In general, this research supports the proposition that QUAG has grown to be a credible institution, and its level of governance is perhaps unique and not comparable to an institution of higher learning in North America. QUAG has justifiably earned an excellent reputation for its teaching and research. This reputation has been earned through a strong commitment to its shared governance approach. While JAB as the local board "helps relate the institution to its chief community" (AAUP, 2006), and support its relevance to national needs, there are instances in which the role of the provost could be problematic because it reduces opportunities for constructive debate over potential differences in interest between QUAG and the home institution. This raises the question of the extent to which this structure gives rise to a centralization of powers and whether it runs counter to the multifaceted governance model. To ensure better functional policy and decision making, this model will greatly depend on effective structures and time-tested process to exercise authority, to comply with requirements of the main campus and sponsoring organization, and to honor the University's guiding frameworks. It is important to note that small size and the composition of QUAG's governance structure (i.e. bodies mostly consisting of eight to twelve members) and its comprehensive composition of key

stakeholders and expertise largely contribute to the efficiency of the decision process (Kezar & Eckel, 2004).

Finding 2.4. Resources efficiency influenced by agreement with sponsoring organization. With adequate staffing to sustain its operations, and the availability of technology to meet objectives and goals, QUAG's proved to be slightly efficient. This finding is slightly aligned with the literature, for example, the work of researchers like Schuster et al. (1994), and Kezar and Eckel (2004) who spoke about the relation between efficiency and the provision of adequate staffing, institutional support and technology. The ratio of faculty to administrators is close to the field average i.e. one to two indicating that QUAG has half as many faculty as full time administrators. However, the FTE faculty per 100 students is higher than the ratio in typical research universities in the U.S. higher education. Data shows 14.5 faculty compared to 6.78 faculty per 100 students (Zhang & Schmidt, 2013).

While ratios are confirmed by all participants in the study, the sponsoring organization dictated this requirement. This is aligned with its strategic direction to ensure a small class size not exceeding twenty-five students in order to support the provision of quality education and the development of a competent workforce. While a small class size could not be achieved except through cost coverage by the sponsoring organization, the IBC funding should always be carefully allocated in order to ensure the implementation of this practice on the long term. Therefore, QUAG's management needs to carefully weigh the costs and benefits in times of abundance of funds to avoid being negatively impacted during periods of budget cuts. The comparison of ratios within the higher education field and with the home campus are in favor of abundant staffing resources, the efficiency also depicts broader roles played by staff in the

student affairs office and human resources. The recognition of the specificity of roles and functions will be thoroughly discussed in the following findings.

The integration of proper information technology infrastructure into QUAG's processes has become increasingly crucial to its efficiency. The IT infrastructure including systems software, application software, classroom management, computer hardware, distance learning, networks and databases ensures the connection and integration of QUAG with the home campus. Improving IT support for the whole organization heavily depends on availability of funding, qualified technical staff, and user friendly technology that people understand and can use. However, many of the problems in technology occur because of the rapid pace of change. Therefore, a thorough review should be made in order to avoid the purchase of sophisticated IT infrastructure that would require additional cost to operate, a matter that will defy the purpose of efficiency.

Research Question Three. My third research question asked does the interdependence between the international branch campus and the home institution shape these management practices? If so how? Based on the analysis of the data, field notes, and documents review, four findings emerged: Responding to anticipated challenges influenced by geographical distance from main campus; strong ties with main campus; balancing autonomous and interdependent decision making; and recognizing the specificity of roles, benefits, and functions.

Finding 3.1. Responding to anticipated challenges influenced by geographical distance from main campus. The literature review identified essential challenges associated with the establishment of an international branch campus. These challenges included alleviating the impact of different time zones on work schedules, scheduling of cyber-meetings, and software or

information systems upgrades on both campuses. The list of challenges extended to the frequency of task management including an on-going process for the development of annual budget, the delivery of student services, and the review of research guidelines (Harding & Lammey, 2011; Lane, 2011). Through my question, I attempted to get a clear understanding of the anticipated challenges affecting management practices due to the distance from the main campus and whether those challenges were similar or different from the literature or whether there were differences among participants. Half of the participants considered the temporal boundaries referenced by Lane (2011) among the main challenges caused by operating away from home campus. The time zone and workweek structure differences and running reports based on the main university cycle were addressed based on compromises, prior scheduling, and relationship building between the IBC and the home campus. As the smaller entity, IBC staff were in most cases the ones working outside regular office hours to respond to tasks and thus avoiding implementation delays.

It was evident from the data that half of the participants recognized the cultural impact of operating in the host country. The majority of the participants listed additional challenges. The lack of knowledge of the IBC environment, meeting the needs and requirements of the sponsoring organization, and tweaking certain home university traditions to fit the local context without compromising university values were listed among a few. While these challenges are inevitable, they can be worked out through the mobility of staff between both locations, representation of the IBC faculty on the senate, and relevance to the host country. Although many of the existing challenges arising from running two locations can be addressed, there are a few that remain unresolved and still require continuous efforts. The first is the retention of national faculty and succession planning. The retention of national faculty will be an issue

because local authorities would want them promoted into leadership positions in the host country. This would require QUAG to ensure a continuous recruitment of national faculty to balance the risk of losing their qualified national faculty.

Barbour also identified succession planning as a challenge that needs to be implemented for faculty leadership positions. He also highlighted the need for more faculty exchange to ensure visibility on both campuses while acknowledging the complications of taxation and contractual implications:

Is the opportunity there to rotate the faculty in the home institution who are believed to have leadership potential and stay here as the chair for three to four years at a time to give them some experience on what leadership is and to grow the relationships between the two? I think there's always, there is a whole suite of [pause] challenges associated with rotating staff between the two; some are related to taxable incomes and all those kinds of things, some are related to the fact that the kind of contracts that we have both sides make up don't facilitate it. Those are challenges, you know, seeing more visibility of home institution staff here and seeing more of my faculty team, or of our faculty team here going overseas into the home campus and teaching, I think is a challenge. I think that is something that really needs to be focused on in the future.

Finding 3.2. Strong ties with main campus. Healey (2014) stated that branch campuses start as entities strongly dependent on the home institution. As they grow and develop, they look for autonomy and the connections with the home institution “inevitably weaken until they are broken for good” (p. 23). Contradicting to scholarly literature, all participants in the research study (8 of 8 [100%]) made a comment as part of his or her responses alluding to strong ties with

main campus. Participants articulated the strong ties through three tracks. First, the strong ties are based on a dual reporting structure and a complete integration with the main campus; second, through affiliation with the home university and a prevailing identification of faculty and staff being employees of the state, where the home institution is located; and third, due to compliance with main campus' policies and practices.

The strong ties between QUAG and the main university followed a period of weakened connections. As noted by many participants, the strong ties were reinforced by regular visits of senior Qnat University officials, language conveying a clear message of QUAG not being an independent entity, and a systematic audit to ensure that practices and policies especially the ones that evolved overtime due to QUAG presence in the host country comply with main campus requirements. While few participants acknowledged the differences between the two eras, interestingly they did refer to the past where QUAG was less connected. Additional details of the reasons behind this shift from weak to strong ties was not communicated. It is probable that the entrepreneurial approach and a certain level of independence from the main campus during the early stages of QUAG was due to hiring of senior staff without prior work experience on the main campus, in addition to the limited engagement of home university leaders in the IBC operations compared to main campus activities (Lane, 2010). Therefore, operating inconsistently with main campus policies and procedures may have influenced this institutional distance in the early stages of QUAG. Among other unknown factors, QUAG's focus on research and its success in attracting considerable funds after serving as a teaching institution for the first few years may have forced the home campus administration to intensify its involvement in QUAG's matters.

While there are few branch campuses transforming into independent universities awarding local degrees, it is likely that others will remain branch campuses giving them a competitive advantage regionally over the benefits of independence (Healey, 2014). For QUAG, there are many benefits of being a part of the home institution granting equivalent degrees and thus maintaining its branch campus status. Supported by a mutual interest of the sponsoring organization and the community in the provision of American education and degrees from a renowned institution, Laith in his joint capacity as a JAB member and as an employee of the sponsoring organization, summarized the benefits of QUAG in maintaining the strong ties to the home institution as an approach that protects its reputation and meets its requirements:

“The main campus has quite a bit of influence on the management locally and I think it makes a lot of sense because you need to have some sense of accountability and the main campus must make sure that we meet the requirements of QNAT University, we guarantee the quality of QNAT University. So I think there has to be a very, very strong link in connection between the main campus and the branch campus.”

In the regional higher education market, the benefits of maintaining a branch campus status over full independence may prevail due to the excess demand for higher education. However, Malcom presented a distinct outlook about the impact of the emergence of new local universities supported by the sponsoring organization on the future of branch campuses in the same Educational Hub (pseudonym):

[...] another university has come into the picture originally as an umbrella organization [...], but its role has changed drastically in the past few years to become more of a branch

campus in itself because it now has its own graduate programs where before it was just [a] service provider. And now it's starting to open up undergraduate programs.

In his statement, Simon confirmed Healey's (2014) view that maintaining branch campus status is largely dependent on the commitment of the public authorities and sponsoring organizations in host countries to keep foreign institutions in control of their educational sector:

“We are here at the pleasure of the state of Qatar, and of the Emir and if he makes the decision that he ultimately wants to make a significant change in closing the education hub, closing QUAG, or partnering with a different engineering university, then we'll pack our bags and we'll close our doors. That's the reality of our situation here.”

Finding 3.3. Balancing autonomous and interdependent decision making. Clifford and Kinser (2016) stated that the host country places restrictions on some the IBC's financial and academic decisions such as the use of profit, setting tuition fees to be charged to students, and the selection of academic programs. Such restrictions not only limit financial and academic autonomy from the beginning but may also affect how the IBC interacts with the home campus. For QUAG, the second agreement signed in January 2014 by the presidents of QNAT and the sponsoring organization, specifies the terms of operation for a branch campus that has been established since 2003. Key requirements of the agreement stipulate that QUAG will operate “the same standards of quality for faculty, staff, students and curricula that apply on the main campus” and that QUAG “shall be responsible for selecting, employing and supervising academic and administrative staff; establishing and implementing student admissions policies; and delivering a curriculum and degree program all according to the educational, employment, academic freedom, nondiscrimination and quality standards observed at the main campus

(Agreement to Continue to Operate the Undergraduate and Graduate Programs at QUAG, 2014, p. 2).” Other provisions define the reporting line from QUAG’s dean directly to top officials of Qnat and state that the sponsoring organization retains the approval authority over budgets and business plans. This study’s conformity with the research literature around the influence of the sponsoring organization on financial decisions highlights the typical role of a funding agency to ensure they business runs as normal and strategic goals are achieved.

The rates of tuition and fees for students at GUAG are equivalent to the highest rates applicable to out-of-state students at the main campus, however, the sponsoring organization “may adjust those rates from time to time after consideration of recommendations from the Joint Advisory Board and the Review Group” (Agreement, 2014, p. 24). Students’ tuitions are then funneled back to the sponsoring organization because it simply reimburses the university for capital costs and operating expenses “in accordance with the Budget and Financial Management provisions of this Agreement, and at funding levels sufficient to ensure that QUAG maintains the quality standards required” by the agreement signed between both parties (Agreement, 2014, p. 2). Following approval of the annual budget, the university will have full expenditure authority for QUAG’s “operating budget and may transfer funds among annual operating non-personnel and noncompensation budget line items” (Agreement, 2014, p. 21). This clause in the agreement is an indicator of an interdependent decision making process allowing the branch campus to shift funds between budget line items to support its operations under the condition that the total amount of the approved annual budget remains the same. Any amount exceeding the total budget value will have to be vetted by the sponsoring organization. On the academic side, the restriction on the offering of new programs is clearly stated in the agreement. The offering of new programs especially graduate degrees shall be based on sufficient market demand, national students’

admissions ratio, and approval of the sponsoring organization. Although participants did not comment on this restriction, it is more likely that the purpose of adding this clause is threefold: have a budgetary control measure in place; limit the competition with other institutions in the country possibly offering the same programs; and align with the graduate studies agenda of the sponsoring organization based on the offering of interdisciplinary degrees in collaboration with other higher education institutions operating in the same education hub. While the academic programs' offering is restricted, the agreement gives QUAG full control over the curriculum. QUAG is trusted to design the academic curriculum as identical as possible to the one offered to students at the main campus. This statement confirms the joint will of the sponsoring organization and the branch campus to confer degrees identical to the home campus (Hughes, 2011) and thus maintaining academic quality. The sponsoring organization plays a similar role for QUAG as the state legislature does with the main campus. QUAG negotiates their budget proposal with the sponsoring organization every year and justifies any budgetary increases or academic impact in case the new programs or curriculum change. As I witnessed in my long work experience in the same education hub, the sponsoring organization has been accommodating to budget requests most of the time, although it has become strict during turbulent economic periods.

As to the integration with the home campus, Lane (2011) emphasizes the need for a “campus and vertical boundaries” constructed by a reporting structure of faculty and staff to the main campus. Regardless of how the branch campus is managed, Lane states that it is often seen as being separate from the home campus. Although such boundaries may lead to a strong integration with the home campus, the control and approval of processes while operating and coordinating different functions of the branch campus become difficult to manage. All eight

participants (100%) spoke about a certain level of autonomy given to the branch campus to make specific decisions while consultation and approval from the home institution is needed on others.

It was also clear from the participants' responses that QUAG is not considered an entity on its own but rather fully integrated with the home institution. The presence of QUAG's dean in retreats and in university wide management meetings confirms its status as a college within the university system, and the existence of a certain level of autonomy given to the branch campus to run its operations while strategic decisions are made in consultation with the provost on the home campus. QUAG's dean enjoys delegated powers equivalent to the home university enabling him or her to manage the branch campus and shut it down. Such responsibilities are not granted to deans from the other colleges on the home campus. In commenting on the dean's responsibilities, Bob stressed the fact that he does not ever recall the home campus overruling any decision made by QUAG's dean. He also acknowledged the existence of a reporting line from the dean to the provost indicating who has the highest level of formal authority over QUAG.

As identified by the study participants, the operational decisions made locally that still had to be vetted through the home campus include student admissions, faculty leave, staff hiring, class scheduling, and purchasing. However, macro-level decisions requiring approval from the home institution or coordinated through home campus channels are the curriculum, faculty hiring, and budgets. In QUAG's case, the curriculum is set by the state legislature where the home campus is located and directly connected to the main university catalog. Therefore, QUAG is not in a position to change a specific course without prior discussion with the home campus first. Hughes (2011) emphasizes the extent to which an IBC should adjust the content of the curriculum. While some institutions enable the IBC administration to make such decisions,

others require that all strategic academic matters, including the approval of the curriculum, to go through the home campus. This indicates how much autonomy an IBC should have from the home campus influence.

Different views were shared on the budget approval process. Kian highlighted the provost office's role for budget confirmation. However, Barbour confirmed QUAG's local control over the budgets and that departmental budgets are managed by program chairs without needing approval from the home campus. It is quite possible that this is an indicator of the provost's increased involvement with the Qatar campus especially considering the change of the dean's title from CEO to COO. Despite the IBC's compliance and integration with home campus, Simon anticipated increasing involvement of the home campus as resources become limited.

All Participants (8 of 8 [100%]) believed hiring is based on a shared decision. Using the terms of collaborative approach, endorsement, or consensus, they clearly stressed the involvement of many stakeholders from QUAG and the home campus in the process.

The involvement of many stakeholders and signatures in the recruitment process depicts a structure that was made clear recently starting from the branch campus and going through the home campus channels i.e. from human resources to the department chairs at QUAG, through the home institution department heads, to the university president depending on the nature and level of the position. Barbour interestingly referred to historical dynamics between the IBC and the home campus not favoring collaboration. Although study participants did not discuss specific examples in this regard, it is probable that this dynamic was due to power struggles between the college of engineering and the central administration at the home campus during the early years of QUAG. This struggle translated into unreasonable lengthy responses when decisions had to be made, forcing in a sense the IBC to function autonomously. This is an

indicator that a lack of clear descriptions of home campus and branch campus relationships and channels can lead to lengthy and confusing decision making processes. In QUAG's case, administrators were obligated to make decisions on their own in the early days instead of making it happen at a later stage. However, once a branch campus reaches a certain level of stability and departments have developed standard practices, administrators might consider limiting main campus oversight as increased autonomy will advance efficiency.

Finding 3.4. Recognizing the specificity of roles, benefits, and functions. Earlier in this study, I mentioned that this finding was added to capture some of the unique perspectives shared by each participant that surfaced in the study when discussing aspects of the structure, roles, benefits, and functions of QUAG.

Management structure. In line with field research (Lane, 2011), and despite the fact that half of the study participants (4 of 8 [50%]) perceived QUAG's management structure as a replication of the home institution's structure, they acknowledged many structural differences occurring at the branch campus level. In North America, it is uncommon for a college dean to supervise academic departments, administrative units, and student affairs offices, and facilities management. However, at QUAG, the comprehensive academic and administrative structure reports to the dean and from him or her to the provost and to the college of engineering on the home campus. It appears that the dean reporting to the provost points out the position that has the highest level of authority over QUAG. The reporting structure to the main campus may also be a channel to ensure an integration of the IBC with the home campus (Lane, 2011). In a similar manner, Bob and Simon, when talking about the reporting relationships at QUAG, indirectly recognized the need for the dean to possess a broad skillset, experiences, and proper support from the assistant deans to be able to handle a wide portfolio of responsibilities, including

finance and administration, academic and student affairs, and facilities management. One level down, it is probable that the dual reporting of QUAG's program chairs to QUAG's dean and the dean of the respective college on the main campus indicate the existence of strong ties to the main campus and the collaborative aspect of the decision making process. These points were discussed earlier during the interpretation of previous findings.

Scope of work for administrative units. The data analysis denotes clear differences in certain human resources functions between QUAG and the home campus. At QUAG, responsibilities for immigration, housing, and schooling outweigh other core human resources duties. Those increased responsibilities inexistent at the home campus are influenced by typical higher education employment contracts in the Arabian Gulf. Regionally, faculty and staff hired at higher education institutions receive specific allowances for housing and children schooling as part of their compensation packages. This step does not only increase QUAG's staffing cost, but adds an additional burden on its human resources department to support the occurring needs of staff relocation from the main campus or globally to QUAG. In order to secure university managed apartments for the purpose of accommodating new staff and families, human resources are not only required to negotiate tenancy contracts and maintenance service packages for residential complexes but to hire more staff to handle associated duties. This matter is often impacted by increased expenditures spent on human resources staff hiring, and vacancy rate of university managed apartments at certain times of the year related to staff repatriation and relocation timelines. QUAG human resources is also required to handle lengthy immigration procedures. The extended layers of the immigration process include application submission, medical testing prior to arrival, and background checks force the branch campus to review its hiring cycle to ensure having new joiners on board before the academic year starts.

Staff benefits and incentives. The commitment to guarantee academic standards have led QUAG to offer diverse incentives to attract high quality faculty with a teaching experience on the main campus. These incentives are introduced in response to the challenges IBCs have faced when trying to recruit professors in general (Wilkins, 2010) or convince academics affiliated with the main campus to teach at an IBC (Altbach, 2010). Before taking the decision to move to another country, it is more likely that the American professors would ponder financial incentives among other considerations. The decision to offer such incentives was made during these early years of QUAG's establishment carrying long-term negative implications. The components of the faculty and staff benefit compensation packages were generous most probably because of the abundance of financial resources at the time but these proved unsustainable as the institution grew, especially during periods of budget restrictions.

Half of the participants [50%] shared that the staff benefits and incentives are key to recruiting quality faculty and staff from the main campus and elsewhere. For QUAG, as well as for other branch campuses, periodic contracts are based on a compensation package consisting of a basic salary with an end of service benefit, and a combination of allowances. By providing such allowances including accommodation, vacation flights to the home country for staff and children, relocation and repatriation, health insurance, and education grants for dependents, QUAG was successful in recruiting and retaining large numbers of faculty. The faculty and staff awards honorees for 2015 and 2016 listed respectively forty two and thirty five faculty and staff recognized for five and ten years of service out of a total of 350 full time employees. In her statement, Alice confirmed a larger number of faculty and staff coming from main campus than before and now stay longer, increasing therefore retention rates:

I would say we have more people now from the main campus because before – because of the nature of the region it was kind of scary to come over to and work in the Middle East, but now you know since the beginning of the operation in late 2003 until now, we have proven to be not just an operation unit, we are a branch campus with almost 500 employees, faculties, staff, graduate assistants and researchers. So I think over time we had proven to be a – like there will be – it could be better, the same order but better kind of work environment here as well as the main campus with more diverse people as well. So at the beginning yes, we did have some people coming from the main campus, but the better thing is that the people from the main campus will not stay for a long time, they usually stay for two or three years. Now we had people staying longer than usual, so I see that as a good sign.

Although staff benefits and incentives were perceived as successful tools to recruit faculty and staff, QUAG has recently conducted a review of the benefits package. It is probable that the review is influenced by budget cuts imposed by the sponsoring organization and inequity considerations of compensation packages provided to faculty or staff between the branch and home campuses. The outcomes of the review are summarized by the elimination of the premium paid to individuals who are not recruited from the home campus and the abolishment of the job guarantee previously offered to faculty and staff coming from the main campus excluding tenured professors. The implementation of such measures will affect the majority of the faculty and staff body and may consequently affect recruitment and retention of quality faculty.

There are things like housing that staff and faculty would not be coming here if it was not provided, or if there wasn't a housing benefit provided, they couldn't afford to be here -- if you have based on our raw salaries. And so, there's an acknowledgment, obviously, from the university that, yeah, there are benefits that need to be provided but -- done so in a way that

is still consistent with sort of the ethos of how benefits are provided from the university, or by the university and making sure that, with this new structure of benefits the system that's being used to determine which staff members get or which faculty members get, what type of benefit package, is consistent with the way the university provided benefits to different classifications of faculty and staff. (Simon)

The elimination or reduction of financial incentives contradicts the recommendations of the latest research. Recent studies have shown that universities found challenges while convincing primarily American faculty to teach at a branch campus for an extended period of time (Altbach, 2011b). Research also found IBCs in developing countries offering higher salaries to persuade American faculty to work overseas (Rumbley, Pacheco, & Altbach, 2008). This argument was supported by a recent study that examined the factors that encourage American faculty to work at branch campuses in Qatar (Laigo, 2013). Findings from this study indicated that American faculty members were significantly influenced by financial incentives, including a salary and improved standards of living, in addition to an interest in an adventure or a change of life. Based on this analysis, and to compensate the changes made to financial incentives, QUAG shall seek to review their recruitment practices by targeting specific groups of faculty who are willing to work and stay in the host country and who combine the exposure to the main campus with prior experience in the Middle East.

Role differences compared to main campus. The majority of the study participants [62.5%] viewed their administrators' roles as being slightly different than those of the home campus. Lane (2011) suggested that the development of IBCs "requires an academic leader who can balance the requirements of the home country with the demands of the host environment" (p. 5). At QUAG, the dean's role goes beyond the academic responsibilities to cover the

comprehensive university operations, a matter that is different from typical dean's responsibilities on the main campus. Barbour and other senior administrators who were interviewed confirmed the regional scope of leadership of the dean who is supposed to represent QUAG in front of political and educational authorities in the host countries and the corporate sector. Any limitation to his or her role and visibility and acting in an administrative capacity restrictively will be to QUAG's disadvantage.

The dean of QUAG is a regionally significant leadership position and he or she has to behave in that way. If the dean spends time largely focusing on what we're looking at, practices and things like that, it will in the end not succeed. I think it rolls all the way through to the assistant deans and program chairs, you know, key to the outreach side of things that we're looking at, the relationship building side of things is, is of much, is probably more important locally than it would have been on the main campus if you take in the same role. (Barbour)

Despite the views of the participants, and with the appointment of the new dean, it was confirmed that the dean's title change from chief executive officer (CEO) to chief operating officer (COO) indicates that a lot of local decisions may be routed through the home campus.

As the dean is perceived as the external leader promoting QUAG in the industry and the community, the role of assistant deans and program chairs was considered to have a leadership and strategic focus compared to their counterparts on the home campus:

It is the roles that are key for example for me, I have a much more leadership type role than a purely administrative role. I do some administration but I see my main part of my role as being leadership; it feels that there is a greater sense of the value and importance of leadership here, possibly more than you would get back at the main campus where the

scale and complexity are so much greater and naturally demand more administration.
(Barbour)

To respond to the needs of hundreds of students at the branch campus, and as indicated in the study findings, QUAG's student affairs unit was structured to include consolidated positions and thus enabling staff to cover a wide array of responsibilities. This aspect of the staffing structure shaped the role of a student affairs professional to be more of a generalist than a specialized professional in a specific functional area of student affairs.

It is likely probable that the student affairs division on the main campus had neither supervision nor control on QUAG's student affairs structure especially during the early days of its establishment. Limited assistance was provided during the start-up period and the absence of a formal relationship extended over a few years. In addition, the first director of student affairs did not have relevant experience in a conventional student affairs capacity on the main campus. The lack of involvement of the main campus in structuring QUAG's student affairs unit and the fact that the first student affairs director lacked formal main campus' exposure to the student experience was likely an advantage. The absence of preconceived notions of how student affairs should be structured helped shape QUAG student affairs while allowing staff at the forming stage to define their roles and the direction of student affairs with less restriction. While the distance from the main campus influenced the creation of a different student affairs unit, the specificity of structure and staff roles in student affairs was also deemed suitable to respond to the needs of students on the branch campus and to the requirements of a different cultural context and work environment. With a small staff team striving to create equivalent services to the main campus, the replication of the home campus structure and roles would have been a deterrent for the branch campus to achieve its goals and mission. Despite the fact that the specificity of roles

fulfilled by QUAG's administrators was recognized by the participants, there is a need to integrate core responsibilities associated with certain positions as implemented on the home campus with dissimilar functions imposed by the IBC environment.

Summary

The purpose of this case study was to gain a thorough understanding of how an international branch campus in the Arabian Gulf plans to achieve sustainability by providing an analysis, synthesis and interpretation of the research findings. While abiding by the conceptual framework of this study, the challenge was to make sense of a large volume of data in order to understand and comprehend how patterns and themes connect when they are compared and contrasted to the content of the research literature. The implications of these findings were intended to help educational administrators in the region gain a better understanding of the factors contributing to the sustainability of international branch campuses. The discussion and analysis advanced in the research findings suggested that when; educational administrators maintain the brand and integrity of academic programs; recognize the uniqueness of the local context and its implications for the branch campus' operations; ensure the relevance of product delivery to stakeholders through teaching, research, and service; and adopt a funding model centered on the educational mission of the branch campus, they achieve the sustainability of an international branch campus. Furthermore, this chapter depicted how management practices interface with concepts and processes of sustainability and explained how the interdependence between the international branch campus and the home institution shaped these management practices.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this case study was to gain a thorough understanding of how an international branch campus in the Arabian Gulf plans to achieve sustainability. My rationale for examining this topic was to help educational administrators in the region gain a better understanding of the factors contributing to the sustainability of international branch campuses. This case study responded to the following three research questions:

1. What practices are educational administrators implementing to achieve the sustainability of an international branch campus in Qatar?
2. How do these management practices interface with concepts and processes of sustainability as found in the post-secondary research literature?
3. Does the interdependence between the international branch campus and the home institution shape these management practices? If so, how?

The conclusions from this study have emerged from the three research questions that were considered through my conceptual framework, a critical review of the research literature, and the collection of data conducted through this study in addition to my analysis and interpretation of the data. This inquiry responded to a significant gap in the research literature regarding the sustainability of international branch campuses. The call for additional research into understanding this topic was in response to scattered, inconsistent, and scarce research on international branch campuses and to the serious lack of understanding of the factors leading to sustainability. The call for additional research was of particular interest to me as I have witnessed throughout my international work experience a regional expansion in the number of international

branch campuses and the closure of a few institutions after a short period following their establishment. In the past 11 years of my career, I was a higher education administrator working in two countries in the Arabian Gulf, a region hosting a large number of IBCs. This experience of either working at or supporting IBCs has triggered in me the zeal for thoroughly understanding this type of higher education institutions and contributing to the field in a meaningful way by conducting this research.

First, a listing of major findings and conclusions drawn from the research are presented. Second, the implications for practice are discussed. And last but not least, my personal recommendations and final thoughts conclude this doctoral dissertation.

The Findings

The findings of this research study provide greater insight and understanding of how an international branch campus in the Arabian Gulf plans to achieve sustainability. Although international branch campuses reveal many differences in size, scope, funding model, governance, structure, and role, they do share some organizational characteristics. Stake (1995) and Bloomberg and Volpe (2012) stated that although findings in case study research cannot be generalizable to other settings, they still represent a certain level of general relevance that can be transferred to another setting with similar characteristics. This section highlights key findings and conclusions emerging from this study that can be broadly applicable and potentially generalizable to higher education institutions interested in establishing or currently operating IBCs.

1. The majority of participants (6 of 8 [75%]) communicated the need to maintain the integrity of academic programs as well as the brand and standards of research through the hiring of faculty and support staff. Participants also cited other steps including the

recruitment of quality students, the role and visibility of the international branch campus in the region, outreach efforts, and making decisions locally. [Finding 1.1]

2. Half of the participants (4 of 8 [50%]) acknowledged the uniqueness of working in the Arabian Gulf from philosophical, cultural, and financial perspectives and respective implications for the branch campus to ensure its sustainability. Participants recognized the application of main campus traditions and teaching styles in a way to resonate with local students. [Finding 1.2]
3. The relevance of product delivery to stakeholders through teaching, research, and service was deemed essential to ensure the sustainability of the international branch campus. The quality educational programs and outreach efforts offered by the IBC need to support the development of a workforce that is useful to the community as well as the country itself. [Finding 1.3]
4. The commitment to research and offering PhD programs ensure relevance to the country's needs and service the local community and prevent the branch campus from transforming into teaching institutions. In addition, the continuous improvement of the curriculum is essential to match job market needs and alignment with field trends and developments. [Finding 1.3]
5. To maintain the continuous flow of students into the academic programs and therefore ensuring their sustainability, two of the eight participants (2 of 8 [25%]) pointed out the role of the branch campus in attracting, retaining, and educating students who will work in the country after graduation and contribute to the growth of its economy. [Finding 1.3]
6. The sustainability of an IBC is strengthened through a funding model centered on the educational mission of the branch campus. It becomes essential to recognize the

difference of the milieu between home and branch campuses and the additional perks required to recruit and retain faculty and staff overseas. [Finding 1.4]

7. The data revealed in detail that alignment of branch campus' goals and management practices with national priorities of host country and agreement with sponsoring organization is central to impact practice. Beyond the strategic plan, the national vision and local laws cascade down to impact programs being launched, faculty being hired, campus operations, the student experience, community engagement, and job readiness of graduates. [Finding 2.1]
8. All study participants (8 of 8 [100%]) provided evidence in their scope of responsibilities how they adapted practices to fit with local laws and cultural context. To operate a branch campus in a different country, administrators have to balance the complexity of home and host country, and sponsoring organization's regulations based on flexibility, having an open mind to operate within a different context, reconciling between prevailing social traditions and the educational approach, problem solving and awareness, and respect for diversity and individual values, while negotiating and challenging students to accept different values from their own. [Finding 2.2]
9. Examples of adapted practices covered annual leave, holidays, salary scale, space rental, purchasing and bidding procedures, contracts with external entities, and cross registration with other universities. Participants also shared examples of practices mandated by the state and strictly prescribed within the main university system that had to be adapted to match local practice i.e. recruitment practices, FERPA, curriculum, qualifications, recruitment, and retention, and diversity of faculty. The development of national human capital was raised by all participants (8 of 8 [100%]). However, concerns regarding

nationalization laws, challenging economic circumstances, and the loss of positions were brought up by three participants as needing to be balanced relative to the benefits of hiring Qataris in teaching and student affairs jobs. [Finding 2.2]

10. Half of the participants (4 of 8 [50%]) referred to the multifaceted governance process with two governing boards as an efficient system. Additionally, all of the eight participants interviewed [100%] spoke of how JAB does not have a formal authority over the Qatar campus as a typical board of trustees of a North American university. Each participant valued the integration with the home campus and the opportunity to streamline priorities from the dean into university committee conversations. However, concerns about inheriting a home campus committees' structure on the decision making process of the branch campus and an extensive volume of paperwork indicating a certain level of bureaucracy and a barrier to empowerment and efficiency were shared. [Finding 2.3]

11. All participants (8 of 8 [100%]) confirmed faculty to student ratios are lower than a typical college campus referring to the role of the agreement with the sponsoring organization in dictating such ratios. Statements shared are in favor of abundant staffing resources compared to the student population. The majority of the participants [87.5%] shared that they believe QUAG offers top quality IT infrastructure. Two participants talked about a higher cost of education per student than the home campus and referred to the economy of scale, time usage of teaching labs, class size, and rising expenses for hiring and professional development as the main reasons. Statements of two other participants alluded to the unlimited resources as contributing to inefficiency. [Finding 2.4]

12. Four participants (4 of 8 [50%]) talked about the time zone difference and workweek structure as two of the main challenges caused by operating away from home campus. To respond to anticipated challenges influenced by geographical distance from main campus, there are arguments, negotiations, compromises to be made, in addition to relationship building through regular interaction and committee work with counterparts on the home campus. [Finding 3.1]
13. Overall, participants felt that difficulties arising from two separate locations is eased by staff mobility between both locations, visibility of QUAG, and repatriation of staff to the home institution after working in the branch campus. The majority of participants (5 of 8 [62.5%]) made comments on the relationship with the sponsoring organization, as an external entity with a certain level of control on funding and input on operations. Furthermore, the range of challenges extend to retention of Qatari nationals' faculty, succession planning, and financial support required to support the increasing cost of schooling allowance. [Finding 3.1]
14. All participants in the research study (8 of 8 [100%]) made a comment as part of his or her responses that alluded to strong ties with main campus. All participants expressed strong ties in three main ways. The strong ties are based on a dual reporting structure and a complete integration of certain processes with the main campus. Almost all the study participants (7 of 8 [87.5%]) demonstrated stronger ties with the main campus by their affiliation with the home university and as employees of the state, where the home institution is located. The affiliation confirms tighter interdependence between the branch campus and the university system. And last but not least, six of the eight participants

[62.5%] pronounced strong ties through compliance with main campus' policies and practices. [Finding 3.2]

15. All participants (8 of 8 [100%]) articulated a certain level of autonomy given to the branch campus to make specific decisions while requiring consultation and approval from the home institution on others. Operational decisions locally made included, but are not limited to, student admissions, faculty leave, staff hiring, class scheduling, and purchasing. However, major decisions are made by the home campus such as the curriculum, faculty hiring, and budget approval. [Finding 3.3]
16. Recognizing the specificity of roles, benefits, and functions was added to capture some of the unique perspectives shared by each participant that surfaced in the study. Half of the study participants (4 of 8 [50%]) acknowledged many differences occurring at the branch campus level with the comprehensive academic and administrative structure reporting to the dean and from him or her to the provost and to the respective college on the home campus. The data analysis denotes clear differences in certain human resources functions between QUAG and the home campus. Half of the participants [50%] shared that the staff benefits and incentives are key to recruiting quality faculty and staff from the main campus and elsewhere. The majority of the study participants [62.5%] viewed their administrators' roles as being slightly different than those of the home campus. [Finding 3.4]

Implications for Practice

Taking into consideration the current shortage of research on the sustainability of international branch campuses, administrators, sponsoring organizations, funding agencies, members of the boards of trustees, and higher education institutions have limited studies from

which to draw lessons. This case study conducted at an international branch campus in the Arabian Gulf is one small step in the direction to shedding light on this phenomenon.

The findings of this research study clearly illustrated that the sustainability of international branch campuses is both complex and multifaceted. The eight participants in this research study, regardless of their positions, functional areas, and years of experience at the branch campus, all described the challenges of the general dynamic between IBC and home university, the outcomes of the relationships among the IBC and its stakeholders i.e. sponsoring organization, and industry and community partners, the types of existing approaches towards tweaking practices to fit a different cultural context while preserving campus identity and traditions, the model of governance structures and distributions of power, the efficiency of the human capital and resources, the focus of higher education and research agendas, and results of the university mission, funding, and national priorities competing schemes.

The fact that many universities are now exporting their academic programs to the Arabian Gulf, the results of this study are of interest to a variety of constituents who are interested in sustaining their IBCs. Policy makers, academic leaders in charge of internationalization efforts, administrators involved in establishing and managing branch campuses can all benefit from the findings of this study to identify the factors contributing to the sustainability of IBCs. Drawing on current practices and international higher education literature, this research has the potential to extract new knowledge and help universities assure that IBCs succeed in providing access to education in countries with limited higher education options.

Despite the need for comparable data and thus conducting multiple case studies in order to substantiate generalizability, the findings of this research can definitely be tweaked and may

be transferable to support IBCs operating in different cultural contexts and diverse higher education environments.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, analysis and conclusions of this study, which examined the management practices leading to the sustainability of international branch campuses, the recommendations are:

1. The home campus senior leadership and IBC management should adopt a strategy that identifies the involvement of the home campus during the establishment, implementation, and development of the IBC. This strategy should be based on how the home campus sees the general dynamic with the IBC throughout its existence.
2. The IBC leaders should forge consistent relationships with the sponsoring organization, industry partners, corporations, governmental agencies, schools, and the local community based on regular communications, outreach, representation on boards, and identification of channels for consultations and provision for advice and ensuring that the IBC is meeting their needs through the provision of academic programs, applied research and services and offering assistance in areas where it is mostly needed. The engagement with the stakeholders is essential to ensure that the branch campus is relevant.
3. The IBC management should seek to implement a collective approach towards tweaking policies, regulations and administrative and educational practices to fit the cultural context of the IBC and to resonate with local students who come with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The collaborative approach should be based on ensuring buy-in among stakeholders, preserving university identity, history,

- and traditions, identifying non-negotiables, and respecting the host country's values, customs, and culture.
4. The IBC management should work with governmental educational authorities in the host country to endorse a national policy for hiring IBC graduates in order to ensure a regular supply of well-trained graduates to the local market and workforce.
 5. Given the increasing number of international branch campuses worldwide and the many challenges confronting this type of HEIs, the higher education community, especially institutions who operate IBCs, would benefit from a central organization or a special interest group for IBCs to help guide their establishment and development, and provide important resources, and professional advising.
 6. To protect and enhance the IBC brand, IBC leaders should develop a comprehensive risk management plan to identify and address unique risks that may affect the IBC operations, review of the practices and systems in place, conform to regulatory requirements of their countries of origin and the host environment.
 7. To maintain the quality of the IBC programs and degrees comparable to the home campus, and to be able to attract renowned faculty, efforts need to be disbursed to build research capacity and capability through securing research funding and the offering of PhD programs. This direction will ensure relevance to the country's needs and service the local community and prevent the branch campus from transforming into teaching institutions.
 8. While this study was not focused on accreditation of programs, the IBC leaders need to be proactive and take concrete steps in securing the equivalence of the degrees regionally. The official recognition of the IBC degrees by educational authorities in

- neighboring countries provide assurance to the students and parents of the reputation of the academic programs and may trigger an increase in student enrolment from respective countries.
9. The continuous improvement and adaptation of the curriculum is necessary in order to match job market needs and alignment with field trends and industry needs. To be implemented, the curriculum's adaptation requires support from the home campus management, board of trustees, and state legislature for some institutions. This step will incorporate specific courses in order to better prepare the workforce to operate in the regional context while maintaining the offering of core courses related to a specific academic discipline.
 10. Given that most of the students are financially supported by the sponsoring organization, and the cap placed by the sponsoring organization on the number of new students admitted each year, the actual revenue generation is very limited. While this study was not focused on financial matters, data suggests the need to seek new revenue streams by recruiting full fee-paying students and find alternative forms of research funding. Although this recommendation is context dependent, it will secure the financial sustainability of the IBC and reduce dependence on the sponsoring organization for funding.
 11. Increase the enrolment of students who are academically equipped to succeed in such a curriculum through work with K-12 schools, a support structure of tutors and teaching, and a campus environment aligned with the host country traditions and culture. Serious attention by the local government to reform the K-12 educational

- system and supply HEIs with a large pool of students who meet admissions requirements.
12. Establish an efficient organizational structure based on acceptable faculty and staff to student ratio and within field standards while maximizing faculty and staff use of time through respective responsibilities, committee work, community service, and hiring personnel with relevant experience and appropriate mindsets.
 13. A consistent and targeted opportunity for faculty and administrators exchange between the branch and home campuses should be fostered. This strategy will provide the connections necessary to build a trusting relationship with the main campus; ensure visibility on both campuses; enhance the understanding of administrators and faculty of operations in the local culture and context and exposure to the main campus practices and traditions.
 14. Participants shared a belief that practices should be impacted by the national vision and the sponsoring organization. While striving to achieve the host nation's goals, efforts need to support the nationalization policy to increase hiring of the national population in faculty and staff positions at the IBC without compromising the requirements of specified positions. While this step would help reduce the dependence on expatriate teams in academia, it will also improve the local community connection and a better engagement with the student population. Given the limited pool of qualified candidates for teaching and student affairs and administrative jobs, due to competition from industry, low salary scale, and prevailing perception of higher education jobs, the IBC leadership, in collaboration with the educational authorities in the host country, are encouraged to identify and track

- progress of qualified nationals in graduate schools in order to recruit them to respective teaching, student affairs, IT or other administrative positions in academia.
15. The unique and complex relationship between the branch campus and the home institution should neither hinder the existence of a balanced governance nor the ability of IBC leaders to make decisions without being tied back to the main campus. Reforms must aim to delegate a formal authority and degree of involvement in strategic matters to local boards and IBC leadership instead of acting in an advisory capacity or requiring final approvals from the main campus. These reforms when implemented will eliminate barriers to empowerment and efficiency while maintaining strong ties with the main campus through integration, affiliation, and compliance with policies and practices.
16. To continue recruiting and retaining renowned faculty either from the main campus or elsewhere, IBC leadership and university officials should explore the alternative of extending tenure positions or making non-financial concessions i.e. research funding and professional development. Eliminating recruitment barriers can also be supported by building positive relationships with the main campus departments from which faculty will be recruited.

Concluding Thoughts

As international branch campuses continue to increase in numbers in the Arabian Gulf and globally, the lessons learned from their development will continue to inform the discussion on sustainability and improve their ability to survive in unfamiliar cultural contexts and host environments. Conducting multiple case studies on branch campuses in the future will help administrators examine a wide range of management practices and approaches available

when developing international branch campus strategies and structures and to consider the potential implications of each approach on the cultural context, the campus size, its funding model, institutional type, and relationship with the home campus and sponsoring organization. As the international higher education field continues to grow towards a saturation level, the existence of international branch campuses may depend on the ability of educational administrators to explore the links between management practices and sustainability concepts with a clear vision of how international branch campuses operate in organizational and cultural contexts that are different from the main campus.

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Appendix A: Email/Information Letter to Gatekeepers



Date

Name
Position Title
Institution

Dear [Name to be added],

I am writing this letter to ask your permission to conduct an educational research study at [Name of institution to be added]. This study is part of the requirements of the doctoral program that I am pursuing in the Werklund School of Education at the University of Calgary. The purpose of my research is to explore the links between management practices and sustainability concepts and to understand how international branch campuses operate in different organizational and cultural contexts from that of the main campus. The focus of studying these links is to extract new knowledge and information pertinent to the leaders of international branch campuses and influence management practices through the expansion of research.

In this study, I will be conducting interviews with the dean or chief executive officer, two members of the board of trustees, and the most senior official and one subordinate representing each of the academic affairs, administration, and student affairs units of your institution. In these interviews, we will be discussing policy development, human capital, and student experience practices that senior officials implement to achieve the sustainability of an international branch campus through the lens of adaptability to the local context, interdependence with the main campus, and efficiency. The participation of senior officials in this study is voluntary and they may withdraw at any time without penalty or consequence. To respect privacy, the location and time of the interviews will be agreed upon based on convenience and availability of the participants. Each interview will take approximately 60 – 90 minutes and the discussion will be digitally recorded. Prior to their participation, participants will be asked to complete a consent form that acknowledges their rights and potential risks of being a participant in the study.

All data, including interview notes and digital recording, will be kept in a locked filing cabinet at my office until the completion of my doctoral program. Word documents will be saved on my password protected computer. Upon completion of my doctoral program, all types of data will be destroyed using proper privacy and confidentiality measures. To protect the anonymity of the participants and your institution, pseudonyms will be used in place of real names. The outcomes of this study may be presented in professional conferences or educational contexts including academic presentations or book chapters. Upon your request, a sample of the interview questions as well as a copy of the final dissertation can be sent to you.

This research study will be subject to the approval of the Ethics Board of the University of Calgary and therefore preventing the participants from any harm or risks. If you have questions, I can be reached at + X (XXX) XXX-XXXX or XXX@ucalgary.ca. You may also contact my research supervisor, Dr. Jim Brandon, at + X (XXX) XXX-XXXX.

If your institution will participate in this study, I believe that will be important lessons that can be reported, analyzed, and shared. I hope that I will be given the opportunity of learning about the perspectives of senior officials at your institution on the links between management practices and sustainability concepts. Thank you in advance for your interest in this study and I look forward to hearing from you by [Deadline].

Sincerely yours,

Jamil Karam (Jimmy)
Doctoral Candidate at the University of Calgary

Appendix B: Email/Information Letter to Participants



Date

Name

Position Title

Institution

Dear [Name to be added],

I am writing this letter to invite you to participate in an educational research study at [Name of institution to be added]. This study is part of the requirements of the doctoral program that I am pursuing in the Werklund School of Education at the University of Calgary. The purpose of my research is to explore the links between management practices and sustainability concepts and to understand how international branch campuses operate in different organizational and cultural contexts from that of the main campus. The focus of studying these links is to extract new knowledge and information pertinent to the leaders of international branch campuses and influence management practices through the expansion of research.

In this study, I will be conducting individual interviews with you and other senior officials at your institution. In these interviews, we will be discussing policy development, human capital, and student experience practices that senior officials implement to achieve the sustainability of an international branch campus through the lens of adaptability to the local context, interdependence with the main campus, and efficiency. Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without penalty or consequence. To respect privacy, the location and time of the interviews will be based on convenience and your availability. Each interview will take approximately 60 – 90 minutes and the discussion will be digitally recorded. Prior to your participation, you will be asked to complete the attached consent form that acknowledges your rights and potential risks of participating in the study.

All data, including interview notes and digital recording, will be kept in a locked filing cabinet at my office until the completion of my doctoral program. Word documents will be saved on my password protected computer. Upon completion of my doctoral program, all types of data will be

destroyed using proper privacy and confidentiality measures. To protect the anonymity of the participants and your institution, pseudonyms will be used in place of real names. The outcomes of this study may be presented in professional conferences or educational contexts including academic presentations or book chapters. Upon your request, a sample of the interview questions as well as a copy of the final dissertation can be sent to you.

This research study will be subject to the approval of the Ethics Board of the University of Calgary and therefore preventing the participants from any harm or risks. If you have questions, I can be reached at + X (XXX) XXX-XXXX or XXX@ucalgary.ca. You may also contact my research supervisor, Dr. Jim Brandon, at + X (XXX) XXX-XXXX.

Thank you for considering my invitation to participate in this study. I hope that I will be given the opportunity of learning about your perspective on the links between management practices and sustainability concepts. Thank you in advance for your interest in this study and I look forward to hearing from you by [Date].

Sincerely yours,

Jamil Karam (Jimmy)
Doctoral Candidate at the University of Calgary

Appendix C: Interview Consent Form



Name of Researcher, Faculty, and Contact Information:

Jamil Karam, Doctoral candidate, Werklund School of Education, XXX@ucalgary.ca

Supervisor:

Dr. Jim Brandon, associate professor in the Werklund School of Education

Title of the Study:

Sustainability of International Branch Campuses: A Case Study of Management Practices in the Arabian Gulf

Sponsor:

N/A

This consent form, a copy of which has been given to you, is only part of the process of informed consent. If you want more details about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

The University of Calgary Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board has approved this research study.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this case study research is to explore the links between management practices and sustainability concepts and to understand how international branch campuses operate in different organizational and cultural contexts from that of the main campus. The focus of studying these links is to extract new knowledge and information pertinent to the leaders of international branch campuses to influence management practices.

What Will I Be Asked To Do?

As a participant in this study, you will participate in an individual interview during which you will be asked by the researcher a series of questions focused on management practices that senior officials implement to achieve the sustainability of an international branch campus through the lens of adaptability to the local context, interdependence with the main campus, and efficiency. Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without penalty or consequence. Each interview will take approximately 60 – 90 minutes and the discussion will be digitally recorded.

The researcher will be utilizing the concepts to provide an opportunity to cluster content based on the data analysis and represent both commonalities and differences in perspectives. The researcher will then review the concepts to identify broad themes, grouping meanings within or across clusters. The researcher will triangulate data collected from multiple sources and use member checking by taking back part of the final report for the participants to check inaccuracy and provide clarifications for a better understanding.

You may withdraw from the study at any time without consequence or you may refuse to participate altogether. If you decide to withdraw from the study, then any data gathered to the point of withdrawal will be retained and used in the study.

What Type of Personal Information Will Be Collected?

If you agree to participate in the study, your educational role, years of leadership experience, and qualifications may be noted by the researchers. However, data will be reported in an anonymous format and no personally identifying information will be included in the final report.

All data, including interview notes and digital recording, will be kept in a locked filing cabinet at my office until the completion of my doctoral program. Word documents will be saved on my password protected computer. Upon completion of my doctoral program, all types of data will be destroyed using proper privacy and confidentiality measures. To protect the anonymity of the participants and your institution, pseudonyms will be used in place of real names.

What Happens to the Information I Provide?

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary and confidential. The researcher and the supervisor are the only individuals allowed to see or hear any of the written or digital recordings of your participation. The findings of the study will be summarized for a thesis as part of the requirements of the doctoral program at the University of Calgary.

All data, including interview notes and digital recording, will be kept in a locked filing cabinet at the researcher's office until the completion of my doctoral program. Word documents will be saved on the researcher's password protected computer. Upon completion of the doctoral program, all types of data will be destroyed by the researcher using proper privacy and confidentiality measures. To protect the anonymity of the participants and your institution, pseudonyms will be used in place of real names. The outcomes of this study may be presented in professional conferences or educational contexts including academic presentations or book chapters.

Signatures (written consent)

Your signature on this form indicates that you 1) understand to your satisfaction the information provided to you about your participation in this research project, and 2) agree to participate in this study as a research subject.

In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the investigators, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from this research project at any time. You should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

Participant's Name: (please print): _____

Participant's Signature: _____ Date: ___ / ___ / ___

Researcher's Name: (please print): Jamil Karam

Researcher's Signature: _____ Date: ___ / ___ / ___

Questions/Concerns

If you have any further questions or want clarification regarding this research and/or your participation, please contact:

Jamil Karam

Werklund School of Education, University of Calgary

+ X (XXX) XXX-XXXX, XXX@ucalgary.ca

and Dr. Jim Brandon, Werklund School of Education, University of Calgary

+ X (XXX) XXX-XXXX, XXX@ucalgary.ca

If you have any concerns about the way you've been treated as a participant, please contact an Ethics Resource Officer, Research Services Office, University of Calgary at + X (XXX) XXX-XXXX; email XXX@ucalgary.ca.

A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference. The investigator has kept a copy of the consent form.

Appendix D: Interview Questions

Adaptability to the Local Context

[Introduction to this section] The establishment of an international branch campus requires the development of policies covering different aspects of its operations. These aspects include mission and objectives, curriculum and academics, access and enrolment, and regulations. I would like to ask you few questions on how you adapt management practices to the local context from the perspective of national vision, culture and laws, and stakeholders' engagement.

- A. What are the key subjects that you need to consider in order to ensure that one or more of the above mentioned practices is adapted to the local context?
- B. What is the role that national vision, local laws and culture, and/or stakeholders play in the development of practices?
- C. What steps have you implemented to align the international branch campus' goals with national needs?

Interdependence with Main Campus

[Introduction to this section] Managing interdependent entities in separate geographical locations require collaboration at different levels of the international branch campus and the main campus including standards of practices, level of authority, and anticipation. I would like to ask you few questions on the relationship your international branch campuses have with the main campus.

- A. How does the interdependence between the international branch campus and home institution shape one or more of management practices?
- B. How is the delegation of authority reflected in the management structure of your international branch campuses?
- C. What are some of the anticipated challenges that will affect management practices due to the distance from the main campus?

Efficiency

The efficiency of the international branch campus will be reviewed based on its governance scale, composition, and institutional support. These main categories in addition to the size of the structure, role of governing bodies, and use of technology will provide information on how efficient the international branch campuses is when dealing with the constraints imposed by the local context and main campus.

- A. What are the implications of efficiency as a component of sustainability on the provision of quality student experience?
- B. How do the composition and role of governance bodies affect management practices?
- C. What types of institutional support and technology tools are available to support the management practices?