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An Investigation of Transnational Higher Education in Hong Kong:

Developing Transnational Intercultural Communities of Practice

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LAU Tsing, Erica

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ABSTRACT

Driven by globalisation and neoliberal agendas (GATE, 2000; WTO, 2015), Transnational Higher Education (TNHE) has emerged to meet the educational demand of markets around the world, including those in Hong Kong (Lo, 2017; UK Higher Education International Unit, 2016). In view of the rapid development of TNHE over the past decade, focus has turned to quality and the purpose of TNHE (Leung and Walters, 2013a, 2013b), with scholars advocating the development of the intercultural collaboration and interaction in order to bring distinctive value to TNHE (Djerasimovic, 2014; Keay et al., 2014; Montgomery, 2014).

This study aims to enable a new understanding of the phenomenon of TNHE in Hong Kong, with particular focus on how different TNHE models of provision offer intercultural experiences to staff and students and how they develop interculturality, through intercultural communities of practice (Keay et al., 2014). The conceptual framework of this study is built on the concept of communities of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). The unique nature of communities of practice as a social form of learning is essential to the development of interculturality in TNHE communities (Kim, 2009) and presents a new perspective through which to interpret TNHE. This study adopts a qualitative method and is set within the interpretive paradigm. Case study approach have been adopted to include universities from the United Kingdom and the USA delivering TNHE programmes in Hong Kong, under the models of branch campus, joint delivery and franchised delivery. Prior to the data collection, a review of documents was carried out to explore the institutional mission and internationalisation strategies of the selected universities, and to contextualise the case studies. Individual interviews and focus group interviews with TNHE staff and

students were conducted to explore their perceptions of intercultural interaction in TNHE.

The findings of the study reveal that diverse models of transnational education, namely: branch campus, joint delivery and franchised delivery, have a significant impact on the development of perceived intercultural communities of practice. In these models, members of the communities of practice are engaged in diverse rhythms of intercultural interaction, according to which distinctive communities of practice are formed with different forms of interculturality. The study also shows the distinctive value of TNHE in developing positional advantage for graduates in the global labour market, through the nurturing of intercultural and professional competence (British Council, 2013; Mellors-Bourne et al., 2015; Jones, 2013).

Central to this study is the innovative contribution in reconstructing the framework of communities of practice, to develop the concept of transnational interculturality in TNHE communities of practice. This concept illustrates a set of processes of intercultural interaction between TNHE communities of practice, which may contribute to the long term benefits and distinctive value of TNHE as a form of education.

In memory of Andrew, an inspirational man who was greatly admired.

You will always live in my heart.

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GLOSSARY

Term	Working Definition
culture	culture is a complex concept with many definitions; the concept of culture is complex and contested. More recent approaches acknowledge culture as dynamic, hybrid, pluralistic, and subject to constant change (Rapport, 2014). From an anthropologist's view, culture registers with the extraordinary diversity of ways of living (Ingold, 1994); the notion of culture is related to hybridity, community exchange and encounters between social groups, it is "an autonomous systematically harmonised whole, each comprising a shared and stable system of beliefs, knowledge, values or sets of practices" (Rapport, 2014: 107). This working definition guides the discussion of the family of terms "transnational", "intercultural" and "interculturality" in this study.
intercultural	the term intercultural describes the nature of encounters, contacts and exchanges which take place across cultural boundaries (UNESCO, 2006; Kim,2009). The term is used to indicate the interaction of and relationship between different cultural groups in a culturally diverse setting (Hill, 2007)
interculturality	a set of intercultural processes to constitute relationships between people from different cultures (Kim, 2009)
internationalisation of higher education	any systematic processes aimed at making higher education responsive to the requirements and challenges related to the globalisation of societies, economy and labour market (Van der Wende, 1997:19). It is a process of integrating an international/intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of the institution (Knight, 2004:21)
internationalisation of the curriculum	curricula, pedagogies and assessments that foster: understanding of global perspectives and how these intersect and interact with the local and the personal: inter-cultural capabilities in terms of addressing different value systems and subsequent actions. An internationalised curriculum may have several recognisable components: global perspectives; intercultural communication; and socially responsible citizenship (Clifford, 2009:135; 2013)

CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

1.1 About Transnational Education

Following the globalisation of the world-wide economy, higher education has become

part of the increasing globalisation of the trade in goods and services in the framework

of WTO General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS). Transnational Higher

Education (TNHE) has emerged as an attractive and crucial part of the economic sector.

The new form of education, as defined by The Asia-Pacific European Cooperation

(APEC), includes:

> "all types and modes of delivery of higher education study
> programs, or sets of courses of study, or educational services
> (including those of distance education) in which the learners are
> located in a country different from the one where the awarding
> institution is based. Such programs may belong to the education
> system of a State different from the State in which it operates, or
> may operate independently of any national education system"
> (Asia-Pacific European Cooperation, 2013).

This definition is in alignment with the Council of Europe (2002). O' Mahony asserts

that TNHE is "an award or credit-bearing learning undertaken by students who are

based in a different country from that of the awarding institution" (2014:8). Driven by

the process of globalisation, the international mobility of programmes and institutions

has increased significantly over the past two decades. TNHE is becoming an

increasingly important form of international education. Evidence suggests that it is

continuing to expand, and so are the modes of delivery and TNHE policy (Vincent-

Lancrin, 2009; Trahar and Yu, 2015). It is one form of the most "visible manifestations

of the globalisation, liberalisation and commodification of higher education in a

borderless market" (Caruana and Montgomery, 2015:10).

From a macro-perspective, the forces of globalisation have, by shortening distances

across the world, benefited economic and business development. However, scholars

also argue that with increased connectivity, the differences between societies will be reduced, having a negative influence on cultural diversity (Mok, 2014; Caruana and Montgomery, 2015; Appadurai, 1996). The tension between globalisation and cultural diversity has had a significant influence in the development of TNHE while scholars have contended that the discourses of marketisation and the knowledge-based economy bring conflicting influences in transnational higher education because "educationalists and students have yet to find their voice" (Caruana and Montgomery, 2015; Djerasimovic, 2014).

Meanwhile, a wide variety of cross-border activities in higher education, such as campus branches, franchised delivery and double and joint degree programmes, have been developed and applied in different places (Lo, 2017). With key drivers in finance, internationalisation and partnerships, the number of higher education institutions developing TNHE programmes offshore (Altbach and Knight, 2007, Altbach, 2013) is increasing. In fact, evidence reveals that three-quarters of higher education providers in the UK now have some form of transnational education in place (HESA, 2016), bringing significant economic value to the UK. With such a scale of rapid development, scholars want to know how transnational education supports meaningful and sufficient intercultural interaction among staff and students from diverse cultural backgrounds (Dunn and Wallace, 2005, 2006, 2008; Caruana and Montgomery, 2015). Some suggest that the development of intercultural communities enhances the intercultural value of TNHE, and is of significance in the future development of TNHE (Dunn and Wallace, 2006; Keay et al., 2014). Moreover, increasing numbers of studies have emerged in TNHE with major focuses on the trends and issues related to regulations, compliance, policies, quality assurance and effectiveness, although not many research and studies in TNHE focus on intercultural interaction between staff and students. With

an aim of filling the above-mentioned knowledge gap about the interculturality of TNHE, this study will investigate the phenomenon of TNHE, with a particular focus on how intercultural communities of practice have evolved in distinctive models. The study also adopts micro-perspectives to offer an analysis of the role of transnational higher education in nurturing interculturality through communities of practice (CoPs) (Lave and Wenger, 1991).

1.1.1 The Landscape of Transnational Higher Education

So far it is difficult to estimate the global scale and scope of TNHE as many countries do not have clear records about the overseas activities of their universities (Martin, 2007; UK Higher Education International Unit, 2016). Drawing on UK universities' involvement in TNHE, however, would provide some useful perspectives on the global trends in the phenomenon of TNHE. A recent report from the Department of Business, Innovations and Skills, UK Government (2014) reveals that UK transnational education revenue has brought almost £496 million into the UK for 2012/13, which is significantly higher than the annual estimates in previous studies, representing around 11% of international fee revenues to UK higher education institutions. In terms of the number of students, the UK is reported to have more international students studying for UK degrees located outside the UK than inside (British Council, 2013). Britain's Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) has also revealed that the number of students studying in British TNHE programmes outside the UK amounted to 663,915 in 2014/2015, compared to 636,675 in 2013/14, representing an increase of 4%. The top host countries with most registered TNHE students are, in a descending order, Malaysia, China, Singapore, Pakistan, Nigeria and Hong Kong. The Statistics Agency also suggests that this increasing trend of TNHE will continue over the next twenty years for the UK.

A wide range of TNHE collaborative models have evolved over the past two decades, as well as partnership arrangements. These models are categorised into distance education, joint delivery, franchised delivery, dual or joint degrees and branch campus (UK Higher Education International Unit, 2016; Francois, 2016). Moreover, with the rapid development of online technology, there is also increasing interest in distance/online learning as a form of TNHE delivery. Statistics reveal that in the 2014/2015 academic year, distance/online learning contributed to 52% of the total student enrolment, whereas partner-supported delivery contributed to 40% and the model of physical presence has 8% of total enrolled students (UK Higher Education International Unit, 2016). It is highlighted that models of TNHE delivery have a significant impact on the staff and students' intercultural experiences, as they frame the roles and responsibilities of partnering institutions and how the TNHE programmes are operated.

In connection with the rapid growth of TNHE, there are increasing calls for research and TNHE practice to focus on the question "how do we deliver better TNHE experiences to staff and students from different cultural backgrounds" (O'Mahony, 2014; Trahar and Yu, 2015; Peak, 2013; British Council, 2014). Following these concerns, this study sets out to explore the intercultural interaction of TNHE and the development of interculturality in transnational communities of staff and students, through the lens of communities of practice.

1.2 Personal Statement

In this section I would like to present some of my personal background and explain my research interest. I have always been fascinated by different cultures and how they are reflected in history, literature, lifestyles, arts and music. I always enjoy travelling to admire different forms of culture in arts, music and literature in intercultural settings,

and this is why I have chosen to develop my professional practice in international education. At different stages of my professional development, I had responsibilities and opportunities to work with UK, Australian and US universities in developing transnational higher education programmes as well as internationalisation initiatives of higher education institutions in Hong Kong, China, Malaysia, Taiwan and Macau. Such professional experiences were most invaluable to me in developing my empathy to other cultures as well as my intercultural competence. I have enjoyed interacting with different cultures and have gradually gained trusting friends and professional peers of long standing in different parts of the world through TNHE experiences. With the fast development of TNHE in recent years, I have noticed some significant gaps in the current practice in TNHE, in particular related to cross-cultural exchange in TNHE, leading to my reflections on the intrinsic value of TNHE to teaching staff and students. The motivations of wanting to know more about intercultural interaction have continued to develop, which nurtured my interest in the interculturality of TNHE. In my current role as an academic registrar of a tertiary education institution in Hong Kong, I have professional responsibilities in TNHE partnerships as well as developing teaching and learning communities for the local and overseas staff. In sum, my previous TNHE experiences, my aspirations and passions in international education, as well as my professional roles have combined to shape my research interests, and to form the mission of this study.

1.3   The Research Gap and the Aims of the Study

Since the early 2000s, there have been increasing numbers of research studies that investigate the relationship between globalisation and the marketisation of higher education. For example, Mok (1999, 2000, 2008, 2014) has related the marketisation of higher education to entrepreneurial activities like academic consultancies and industrial

research. There are more previous research studies by different researchers on how higher education governance and regulations were reformed to allow entrepreneurship to happen. The sharp increase in the number of programmes as well as the number of students enrolling in TNHE programmes, however, has gradually demanded further studies and attention on understanding how TNHE nurtures intercultural interaction and learning, and brings distinctive value for TNHE compared to other forms of education. Knowledge about TNHE from intercultural perspectives is so far limited, as indicated by Peak (2013), "it is crucial that the 'foreign' institution is aware of the local cultural context and priorities for partnerships to have truly mutual and sustainable benefits for TNHE". The significance of the TNHE models with regard to the development of intercultural interaction and learning between staff and students is a gap in knowledge which has not been sufficiently researched and theorised. The key significance of this study is its investigation of the phenomenon of TNHE, with particular focus on how the different TNHE models of provision offer intercultural experiences to staff and students and develop interculturality through intercultural communities of practice. In the process of the research, I will investigate how different groups of stakeholders, including students, teaching staff, employers who are located in Hong Kong and overseas, interact across borders and distance to develop their distinctive TNHE experience. With a specific interest in the experience of intercultural interaction, the study will critically appraise a wide range of conceptual models and literature in areas of globalisation, interculturality, intercultural interaction, and communities of practice developed by Lave and Wenger (1991), to investigate how different models of TNHE delivery offer intercultural experiences to staff and students and how the intercultural communities of practice evolve.

With a focus on the Hong Kong context, the study will also provide contextual background of the development of TNHE in Hong Kong, from a macro-perspective. The phenomenon of transnational education in Hong Kong is a relatively new issue in the higher education sector within East Asia. In Hong Kong, the development of transnational education was not significant until 2000s. Being one of the major Asian educational hubs, Hong Kong has experienced a marked increase in transnational education delivery in 2000s due to the forces of globalisation as discussed earlier. According to statistics from the Education Bureau (2016a), there are a total of 1,149 non-local higher education programmes being delivered in Hong Kong as at 2016, of which 726 programmes are awarded by UK universities. Over 55 UK universities are providing transnational educational services in Hong Kong. Most of the above-mentioned programmes are delivered in part-time mode, demonstrating a high demand from life-long learners for higher education programmes in Hong Kong. With the rapid development of TNHE programmes in Hong Kong, gaps of knowledge have been identified in how to enhance the TNHE experiences of staff and students while retaining the richness of the local Hong Kong culture (Mok, 2014).

A new body of knowledge with a focus on the nurturing of interculturality through intercultural communities of practice within TNHE will be developed subsequent to the investigations of this study. In sum, the above gap in knowledge has driven the following research questions, which will be used to guide the investigation of the research. These questions are:

- How is interculturality developed through diverse forms of communities of practice in TNHE? (Main Question)

With the following sub-questions:

- What sorts of communities of practice are associated with the TNHE models of branch campus, joint delivery and franchised delivery? (Sub-question)

- How do particular models of transnational higher education offer intercultural interaction for communities of staff and students? (Sub-question)

1.4 Design of the Research

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the topic of TNHE is contemporary and current, and under-theorised. An interpretive paradigm of inquiry was adopted as the study is focused to understand the participants' experiences in different TNHE models. Given the nature of this inquiry, the study is designed with a qualitative methodology, taking the approach of case study to undertake some in-depth studies of the phenomenon of transnational higher education. Data were collected using the instruments of individual interviews as well as focus group interviews, to involve senior managers of TNHE institutions, staff, students and managers as participants, along with institutional and policy documents produced by the institutions, policy makers as well as facilitating agents such as the British Council. This research strategy enabled me as the researcher to interact with TNHE practitioners, staff and students over details and to learn about their TNHE experience from a micro-perspective.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study provides new insights into the phenomenon of transnational higher education, in particular how the intercultural communities of practice evolve in distinctive models. The study also offers different perspectives in analysing the role of transnational higher education in nurturing interculturality through communities of practice. As discussed earlier, increasing numbers of studies are emerging in TNHE, with major foci on trends

and issues related to regulations, compliance, policies, quality assurance and effectiveness. So far not much research or studies in TNHE focus on intercultural experience and interaction. This study is significant for policy makers, institutions, staff and students of TNHE as they will be informed of the impact and detailed experiences with diverse TNHE partnerships. The findings of this study will also encourage reflection on professional practice.

The study brings new knowledge in the area of developing interculturality in TNHE. It provides an in-depth investigation to interpret the phenomenon of TNHE and its associated models, using the lived experiences of staff and students. The analysis of intercultural interaction brings an innovative orientation to the understanding of the intrinsic values of TNHE. Furthermore, the study aims to bring a new perspective to investigate the intercultural interaction which TNHE offers, in constructing a new body of knowledge to develop intercultural communities of practice and interculturality in transnational higher education.

In conclusion, through investigations in intercultural interaction, this research analyses the interculturality of transnational higher education, using the lens of communities of practice. It presents a new dimension of academic exploration as compared to existing research which is more focused on the business and management aspects of transnational higher education.

1.6   Layout and Organisation of the Thesis

The thesis will be organised in eight major chapters in the following fashion. Chapter 1 presents the general background information on the phenomenon of transnational higher education and demonstrates how TNHE has developed and expanded. The aims and

objectives of the study and the research questions posed for this study are presented, followed by the significance of the study.

Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 present a review of relevant literature related to this study. They will outline different models of transnational education delivery and how these models develop within the Hong Kong context. Moreover, the framework of "Communities of Practice" (Lave and Wenger, 1991) will be critically appraised and discussed, alongside the concepts of interculturality and intercultural interaction. This part of the thesis will also identify previous studies and research for the phenomenon of TNHE, with an aim of providing wider perspectives to appraise the phenomenon of TNHE. Moreover, a conceptual framework of the study will be set out to inform the data collection process, data analysis and discussions of this study.

Chapter 4 outlines how the research design is undertaken and will provide justification for the interpretive paradigm adopted in this study. The qualitative approach and methodologies will be discussed and justified.

Chapter 5 provides the detailed background and context of the three selected cases in the case studies. The chapter will provide a detailed account of the development of the three cases and their adopted TNHE models, aiming to provide a fundamental understanding of the selected cases to set the scene for the interview and data analysis to take place in the later part of the study.

Chapter 6 presents the findings of the study, and Chapter 7 presents the analysis of these findings. Chapter 7 will also discuss how these findings answer the research questions set out in Chapter 1. Chapter 8 is the conclusion of the thesis, aiming to provide a

summary of the study, its implications and recommendations for the future direction of

TNHE research.

CHAPTER 2 - THE RISE OF TRANSNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION

2.1   Introduction

This chapter aims to explore the literature and theoretical perspectives so as to provide a contextual background for understanding the phenomenon of transnational higher education (TNHE) which has arisen over the past two decades. The literature reviewed in this chapter focuses on the emergence of TNHE and various models of TNHE.

This chapter will be organised in the following sequence. Section 2.2 discusses the background and the rise of the phenomenon of TNHE, aiming to set the scene for subsequent investigations. Section 2.3 accounts for the current issues in TNHE to identify some gaps in knowledge which the present study seeks to address. Section 2.4 describes the TNHE landscape in Hong Kong with an aim to justify the scope and topic of this study. Section 2.5 provides a summary of the entire chapter.

The study aims to investigate the phenomenon of transnational higher education, with a particular focus on how interculturality can be developed through intercultural interaction and exchange. A family of terms related to culture, including "culture", "intercultural", "interculturality", "internationalisation of higher education" and "internationalisation of the curriculum" will be frequently used throughout the dissertation. These are complex and ever-changing concepts. Thus, it is essential to provide working definitions of them to illustrate how they are used to frame the discussions in this study.

Culture is a complex concept with many definitions, the concept of culture is complex and contested, but has been frequently referred to as a set of values, beliefs, material

and immaterial expressions that characterise a particular group or community (Hall, 1976; Mulholland, 1991). Such historical approaches to "culture", however, have been criticised for applying a narrow and exclusive "container" view, which is linked to communal or national identity, more recent approaches acknowledge culture as dynamic, hybrid, pluralistic, and subject to constant change (Rapport, 2014). From an anthropologist's view, culture registers with the extraordinary diversity of ways of living (Ingold, 1994); in this connection, cultural homogeneity is outdated, the notion of culture is related to hybridity, community exchange and encounters between social groups, it is "an autonomous systematically harmonised whole, each comprising a shared and stable system of beliefs, knowledge, values or sets of practices" (Rapport, 2014: 107).

Within a similar approach, Holliday (1999) presents a notion of "small" culture as an alternative to the "large" culture which concerns ethnicity and nationality. According to Holliday, small culture signifies cohesive social grouping; therefore, a small culture approach attempts to understand culture out of the notion of ethnicity and nation. As explained by Holliday (1999, 2011), there are increasing concerns that intercultural issues are often dominated by a large culture approach, in which large culture difference is also taken as the basic unit in influential cross-management studies; such a large cultural approach results in over-generalisation and "otherisaton of foreign educations, students and societies" (Holliday, 1999:238). A small culture approach, on the other hand, is related to any cohesive social grouping with no necessary subordination to large cultures. "In cultural research, small cultures are thus a heuristic means in the process of interpreting group behaviour" (Holliday, 1999:238). Whereas the large culture notion imposes a picture of the social world which is divided into different ethnic, national or international cultures, the small culture notion advocates a more open

approach in all types of the social grouping which may or may not have significant ethnic, national or international qualities. In sum, the small culture approach is more concerned with "social processes as they emerge" (Holliday, 1999:238).

Holliday and Rapport's interpretation of culture highlights that the notion of culture is contested, hybrid, pluralistic and ever-changing. In fact, it is worth noting that the hybridity and the plurality of culture are closely related to the essence of this study. While this study looks into the detailed social process on how ideas, communication, sense of communities, learning and teaching are negotiated in the small cultural context, the notion of culture interplays with the other key terms "intercultural" and "interculturality" to express the complexity of intercultural communities of practice to be developed through transnational higher education. Further, such a dynamic notion of culture is also accelerated and informed by the process of globalisation which will be discussed later in this chapter. In view of the fast process of globalisation, there are increased intercultural exchanges and encounters of people from diverse backgrounds, which lead to significant impact on how intercultural communities emerge.

The term "intercultural" describes the nature of encounters, contacts and exchanges which take place across cultural boundaries (UNESCO, 2006; Kim, 2009). While recent globalistion processes may have made cultural boundaries increasingly porous and fluid, authors have referred to the prevalence of cultural particularism and differentiation as means to denote particular group identities and boundaries based on historical, linguistic, ideological, national, ethnic characteristics (Hopper, 2007). The term "intercultural" is thus used to indicate the interaction of and relationship between different, and increasingly heterogeneous, cultural groups in a culturally diverse setting (Hill, 2007). In this sense, intercultural communication takes place when individuals influenced by

different cultural communities negotiate shared meaning in interactions (Ting-Toomey,1999).

Interculturality is a dynamic concept, UNESCO (2005:4.8) refines the term as "the existence and equitable interaction of diverse cultures and the possibility of generating shared cultural expressions through dialogue and mutual respect." Leclercq (2005:7) refers interculturality as a process of constructing relationship between different cultures, and defines the notion as:

> "the set of processes through which relations between different cultures are constructed. The aim is to enable groups and individuals who belong to such cultures within a single society or geopolitical entity to forge links based on equity and mutual respect."

Dervin (2016:2) describes interculturality "as one which translates as a process and something in the making." In this study, interculturality refers to a set of intercultural processes to constitute relationships between people from different cultures (Kim 2009); it indicates evolving relations between cultural groups. While intercultural relationships and processes may unfold from practices of travels, migration, distance communication, this study focuses on forms of interculturality that emerge from regular exchange, interaction and communication between TNHE staff and students from diverse cultural backgrounds. The concept of interculturality will be further discussed and critiqued in Chapter 4 of this thesis.

"Internationalisation of higher education" is an equally contested term, but generally refers to any systematic processes aimed at making higher education responsive to the requirements and challenges related to the globalisation of societies, economy and labour market (Van der Wende, 1997:19). In this connection, Knight (2004:21) describes internationalisation of higher education as "the process of integrating an

international/intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of the institution". It is essential to note that beyond being a concept, internationalisation of higher education has also developed as an important academic field in the disciplinary area of international education.

As explained in Chapter 1, internationalisation of higher education in general, and TNHE in particular, may be seen as emerging from wider globalisation processes. However, as Warwick (2014) states, internationalisation of higher education cannot merely be seen as a consequence or by-product of globalisation, but is in itself a significant agent and contributing element towards the process of globalisation. In order to better define the concept for this study, this paragraph outlines the benefits and risks associated with the internationalisation of higher education. Internationalisation of higher education can be beneficial in sustaining and growing science and scholarship through dynamic academic exchanges; and building capacity in nations which develop TNHE activities (Knight, 1994). In addition, it also brings positive aspects of improved academic quality, fostering global outlook for students who are desirable in the global economy. It is important to note that most of the countries identified commercialisation, brain drain and low quality education as the major risks associated with internationalisation of higher education (Knight, 1996). Each of these risks relates more to the cross-border aspects of internationalisation. In addition, the loss of cultural or national identity, homogenisation of international curriculum are threats that may be inherent in the process of internationalisation of higher education (Eldik, 2011). The impact on globalistion on the internationalisation of higher education will be further discussed in Section 2.2.

The term "internationalisation of the curriculum" is also frequently used in this thesis. It refers to a set of processes in which curricula, pedagogies and assessments foster understanding of global perspectives and how these intersect and interact with the local and the personal, inter-cultural capabilities in terms of addressing different value systems and subsequent actions. The major aim of internationalising the curriculum is to prepare responsible, open-minded, professionally competent and innovative graduates for the global economy and labour market (Barnett, 2006; Clifford and Montgomery, 2014). Hence according to Clifford (2013), an internationalised curriculum may have several recognisable components, including global perspectives; intercultural communication; and socially responsible citizenship. The emphasis placed on these components will reflect how the institution, the discipline and the teaching staff interpret internationalisation of higher education.

In sum, ongoing globalisation brings opportunities, challenges, and risks to the higher education sector across the world. On the other hand, it is important to note that globalisation is not only the driver of internationalisation of higher education, but marketisation of higher education is also a significant contributor to the process of globalisation. The process of internationalisation of higher education has led to increased contacts, communications, knowledge exchanges of culturally diverse groups and individuals. TNHE, as part of the internationalisation of higher education and the key subject of this study, may generate new "cultures" of learning, teachings and knowledge exchanges beyond and across national boundaries. In this connection, the key terms "culture", "intercultural", "interculturality", are of great significance in understanding the internationalisation processes in global higher education. Given the highly contested nature of these terms, they will be used within the above working definitions to guide the research and discussions of this study.

2.2 Framing Transnational Higher Education in the Context of Globalisation

This section looks at the issues which are leading to the globalisation of the higher education sector across the world and how TNHE has emerged as a different form of education to fulfil the global demand for higher education. In fact, the impact of globalisation on such a process as TNHE has become a current topic of discussion among academics. As argued by some scholars (Maringe, 2009; Cohen and Kennedy, 2007), the force of globalisation has a significant impact on economic, social and cultural development of societies. Subsequent to the influence of this force, the time and space distances of interaction between societies are minimised, resulting in increased cultural interactions and flow. Moreover, transnational corporations, international governmental organisations and non-governmental organisations are gradually dominating the daily life of people. While societies are becoming more interconnected and interdependent on one another, global issues such as climate change and poverty are getting more synchronised (UNESCO, 2016).

With the development of international trade in education during the globalisation process, higher education has become part of the globalised trades and services (GATE, 2000). In fact, transnational education is often discussed as a form of international education deriving from the notions of international mobility and education as a tradable service (Caruana and Montgomery, 2015; Lo, 2017). Over the past two decades, TNHE has been growing very fast in many parts of the world and it is widely accepted as an emerging global trend (Alam et al., 2013; Ennew and Greenaway, 2012). Recent statistics published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA, 2016) reveal the following fast growing trend of this form of education. In the academic year 2007–2008 there were 196,670 foreign students studying UK programmes in their home countries. Within a seven-year period, the absolute total number of enrolled TNHE students had

increased to 663,915 in 2014-2015, representing a 330% increase. The top 6 TNHE-importing locations are Malaysia, China, Singapore, Pakistan, Nigeria and Hong Kong, suggesting that the major demand for TNHE programmes rests in Asia. The rapid rise of TNHE has generated much interest from academic, business, education and cultural perspectives. In fact, such demand for TNHE is driven by the economic progress of developing nations, demographic trends and increased globalisation of economies and societies (Alam et al., 2013).

In the process of globalisation, the development of TNHE is greatly related to the rise of privatisation in higher education, to which neo-liberalism is the key force (Mok, 2008, 2016; Francois, 2016). Under the policy of neo-liberalism, free trade and the operation of market mechanisms are adopted by national governments, and hence applicable to traditional public functions such as healthcare and education. Driven by the force of neo-liberalism, national governments make substantial efforts to decentralise power to the market, resulting in a reduction in importance of public education when compared to the private sector, along with a decrease in public higher education funding (Mok, 2014). Education is nowadays regarded as "tradable item" in accordance with the development of the neoliberal agenda for higher education; hence higher education is perceived as a profitable investment that can be used to generate revenue from international student fees (Lo, 2017). Consequently, the neoliberal market model has dominated policy discourse on the development of higher education across the world. It is within such a context of neoliberal policies that TNHE has emerged.

On the other hand, with substantially reduced government funding, universities are required to diversify their financial sources for survival and future development (Mok, 2011). Under the force of neoliberalism, there have been increasing entrepreneurial

activities from universities to promote closer ties with the private sector for networking and funding purposes, which help generate income sources, strengthen research capacity and establish reputations (Mok and Hawkins, 2010). The private higher education sector, therefore, has paid for much of the higher education sector expansion, leading to the new dimension of a growing private system of higher education across the world (Altbach, 2004; Altbach and Levy, 2005; Lanzendorf, 2013). In sum, the process of globalisation has a considerable structural impact on the internationalisation of higher education and it is argued that the development of transnational education programmes is moving the international elements towards the centre of the higher education scene (Lanzendorf, 2013).

2.2.1   *Drivers of Transnational Education Development under Globalisation*

When studying the process of globalisation, scholars (Albach, 2007; Doorbar and Bateman, 2008; Oleksiyenko and Yang, 2015; and UK Higher Education International Unit, 2016) have identified the following elements as the core motivations of higher education institutions in developing TNHE programmes offshore.

The economic dimension is regarded as the most essential driver for TNHE development. Many universities operating TNHE programmes are located in countries like the UK and Australia, where public funding in higher education has been reduced and the governments try to encourage international ventures so as to develop alternative income streams for higher education (Mok, 2008; McBurnie and Ziguras, 2007). When less public funding is available, universities "have to be creative in exploring and finding alternative income generation initiatives" (Francois, 2016:14). As higher education has been defined as a tradable industry to be regulated through international trade agreements (GATE, 2000), the subsequent development of trade within higher

education has made a strong case for universities to push for TNHE in countries where demand for higher education exists.

Internationalisation of higher education is another key driver for the development of TNHE (Francois, 2016). The forces of globalisation have driven many universities to explore opportunities in creating international elements such as studying abroad and scholarships for exchange, as part of their academic provision to attract overseas students. Transnational study with articulation to an overseas university is seen as one way to attract students from overseas (McBurnie and Ziguras, 2007). It is also found that universities with higher levels of internationalisation (including transnational education delivery) attract more foreign staff and students and help to diversify income generating sources (Mok, 2011).

Developing partnerships is another key driver for universities to offer TNHE programmes offshore. It is believed that through TNHE initiatives, universities can establish their education footprint in other countries, which is expected to create collaborative learning, and most of all, should in return benefit the teaching and learning activities at the home campus (Altbach and Knight, 2007; Altbach, 2013). As such, partnerships, networks and global alliances have become strategically important and one of the major drivers for universities to enter TNHE activities. "Universities can realise significant value from engaging in alliances, as global university alliances create substantively important collaborative advantages for those involved" (Gunn and Mintrom, 2013:180).

So far, the neo-liberal force as driven by globalisation and how it leads to dramatic changes to the character and functions of higher education has been discussed.

Transnational education is one of the products of this process and this form of education has developed rapidly in recent years to address the growing demand for higher education. On the other hand, the issue of how transnational education can be adapted to fulfil the traditions and cultures in offshore countries is receiving more attention and critical examination (McBurnie and Ziguras, 2007; O'Mahony, 2014; British Council, 2014; Mok, 2014). As argued by Nussbaum (2010), modern international tertiary education has focused too much on turning out graduates for the labour market rather than "citizens of the world" who are able to comprehend and articulate world problems and be committed to offering solutions to transform their societies. The intrinsic value of TNHE and its benefits to staff and students are indeed prominent issues to be critically examined.

2.2.2 *Globalisation and its Cultural Impact on TNHE*

While there is growing interest in the income and business value generated by TNHE, very few researchers focus on the specific intercultural value of TNHE for the offshore students (O'Mahony, 2014). In order to highlight the above issues of the adaptability of TNHE in another culture, as well as the cultural values of transnational education, this study has a particular focus on how the models of TNHE offer experiences of intercultural interaction to staff and students. While the force of globalisation has brought close links of economic development and higher education development between different countries, it has also led to significant cultural impacts on individual countries. The fast process of globalisation has been criticised as having brought homogeneity to different societies and it has been argued that the distinctive character of individual nations and cultures has been diminishing (Appadurai, 1996). Scholars argue that the unprecedented acceleration and intensification in the global flows of

capital, labour and knowledge caused by globalisation have had a homogenising influence on local cultures (UNESCO, 2016; Deardorff, 2009; Maringe, 2009).

Appadurai also argues that "the most valuable feature of the concept of culture is the concept of difference" (1996:12), and he advocates reflection on "how locality emerges in a globalised world" (1996:18). Applying the notion of developing locality in a globalised world in terms of TNHE implies that TNHE should lead to a journey of intercultural interaction for staff and students from diverse cultural backgrounds, rather than just reproducing the delivery of TNHE programmes from the perspective of the awarding institutions. While we see some benefits through intensification of cross cultural interaction in the process of globalisation, in which learners embedded in one set of local cultural practices are provided access to educational services that emerged from another cultural regime, there are tensions between the marketisation of higher education and its impact on individual cultures. Many scholars equate such forms of knowledge transfer to the "McDonaldisation of society" and therefore suggest they may pose the danger of cultural imperialism (Tickly, 2004; McBurnie and Ziguras, 2007; Djerasimovic, 2014).

Balancing the benefits of integrating into a globalised world and protecting the uniqueness of local culture is a key topic of interest for developing transnational education. Intercultural awareness, understanding intercultural interaction and development of interculturality in TNHE are key to achieving such balance. In fact, preserving cultural uniqueness for higher education does not need to be confined in a conservative framework (UNESCO, 2016). On the contrary, placing culture at the centre will lead to recognition and respect for the diversity of cultures as well as setting up the conditions for mutual understanding, dialogue and peace (UNESCO, 2016;

Deardorff, 2009). With the tension between the marketisation of higher education and cultural diversity in mind, scholars advocate a collaborative approach in TNHE to achieve intercultural learning between TNHE awarding institutions and the host institutions (Dunn and Wallace, 2006, 2008; Djerasimovic, 2014). In fact, developing educational quality in a cross-border programme requires 'transformation' of values, understandings and methods identified with the home programme of the awarding institution to local cultural understandings (Pyvis, 2011). More importantly, it is a transformation process for institutions, staff and students of both the exporting and hosting countries to establish collaborative and equal partnerships, which are rich in intercultural interaction (Djerasimovic, 2014; Dunn and Wallace, 2006).

So far, the cultural impact brought by the process of globalisation has been discussed from a macro-perspective. With the rapid development of TNHE programmes, globalisation has had a great deal of cultural impact on TNHE, as a result of which the intrinsic values of TNHE are being queried. Firstly, students studying an "international" programme at "home" are seen to be second tier students who study less preferable international programmes just for the qualifications (Leung and Walters, 2013a, 2013b). There are criticisms on issues such as using the standardised physical environment of the partnering institutions, and that of local teaching teams having little knowledge of how the TNHE programmes are delivered at the home campus of the awarding institution. In short, the value of TNHE for the purpose of capacity building is in question (Leung and Walters, 2013a; Walters and Leung, 2014). These concerns call for some critical examination of the existing approach of TNHE delivery, in particular on how TNHE programmes can be translated into another cultural context and nurture intercultural interaction.

In sum, the development of intercultural interaction in TNHE would be a long nurturing process (UK Higher Education International Unit, 2016) which is crucial to the sustainability of TNHE development.   Building intercultural interaction within the TNHE partnership models is the key to guide the conceptual framework and subsequent investigations adopted in this study.

2.3   A Key Issue of TNHE at Present: Translating Transnational Education to Different Cultures

In view of the varieties of participating institutions and programmes, TNHE delivery models and practices are very diverse. In order to better understand the phenomenon of TNHE in the context of intercultural interaction, the following section will review the major current issue of TNHE, which is how to translate TNHE programmes to different cultures to offer intercultural experiences to staff and students. This issue is central to the investigation of this study.

One of the major issues of concern for TNHE delivery is related to the cultural impacts on the flow of ideas and techniques across borders, particularly from higher income countries to lower income countries (McBurnie and Ziguras, 2007). Scholars question whether the adoption of the home institution's practice is a suitable way for delivering TNHE programmes because without proper contextualisation, the adoption of "trendy global strategies" or "global reform measures" may prove to be counterproductive (Mok, 2014:47). In fact transferring TNHE curricula to another country without considering local contexts and cultures can be problematic and it would be necessary for practitioners to reflect on how to make appropriate adaptations to suit local contexts (Wang, 2008).

Recently, more research is available for exploring how TNHE can be contextualised to cater to the needs of students who study offshore programmes. O'Mahony (2014), commissioned by the Higher Education Academy of the UK, has conducted an integrated research study on how to enhance teachers' and students' development in TNHE. A major topic of discussion in the research is to recognise the acute need to contextualise education practices in TNHE. It is argued that the agenda of quality sometimes overshadows the need for TNHE programmes to be contextualised, in terms of both content and approach. Pyvis (2011) criticises the narrow understandings of quality as providers operate on the understanding that "sameness of quality requires sameness in approach" (2011:741). Likewise, through an ethnographic study of academics running a TNHE programme in Singapore, Hoare (2013) finds that a "universalist mindset" (2013:561) can be damaging to educational outcomes since it fails to recognise the intercultural differences between hosts and providers. Hoare's case study (2013) shows that staff engaged in offshore teaching would experience different levels of culture shock, and therefore academics who have never had the chance to engage in reflective intercultural development will usually have difficulty in communicating with students who have different socio-cultural backgrounds. In view of the above concerns, the question is how to develop TNHE learning experiences which help develop unique contexts and honour the rich traditions of other cultures (Healey, 2016).

Translating TNHE programmes in different cultural contexts requires staff to be aware of cultural distance and to possess intercultural competence, in order to provide TNHE experiences which are of relevance to students' study and career needs. Within this frame of the need to contextualise TNHE programmes, scholars have reflected on the power hierarchies of TNHE and the power relationships between the exporting

institutions and the importing institutions. Djerasimovic (2014) promotes a moderate term "empowerment" for the relationship between the awarding institutions and the partner institutions and suggests that "collaborative partnership" is the best way to translate TNHE programmes to different cultures. Her arguments have moved away from the traditional discourse of cultural imperialism where the importing institutions become victim in the process of knowledge transfer. She suggests that focusing on students' motivations, values and experiences, and by analysing them alongside those of their foreign tutors, future TNHE studies can work towards minimising cultural opposition between two sides and seeking points of contact, similarities of ideologies and ways of transforming something that counts towards productive relationships between students' expectations and actual experiences. Djerasimovic's views demonstrate a much more modern approach and some alternative views on how interaction should take place in TNHE to better deliver TNHE programmes.

In a more recent research on the scale and scope of UK TNHE conducted by the UK Higher Education International Unit (2016), it is revealed that:

> "partnership approaches with host country partners are becoming more equitable. The UK partner is usually the lead on those areas of its global calling card of excellence – curriculum, quality assurance and assessment. In all other areas of programme delivery there is either an equal distribution of responsibility or a strong focus on joint delivery and ownership" (2016:6).

Such a trend in the partnership approach indicates that the agenda of intercultural interaction and learning is paramount to the future development of transnational higher education. In fact, building up intercultural partnerships where curriculum is transported from one higher education learning context to another offers an intercultural experience for students (Montgomery, 2014) and should be taken as one of the key values of TNHE.

In providing a reflective account of her TNHE teaching experience in Hong Kong, Trahar and Yu (2015) emphasises the importance for TNHE staff to be aware of cultural differences when they are engaged in TNHE classrooms:

> "In my case, I have used the experiences of teaching in Hong Kong to learn more about the ways in which learning, teaching and assessment are mediated in Confucian heritage cultures (CHC) and to integrate such learning into my teaching in Bristol, to establish environments that are culturally synergistic and inclusive of a range of different practices and traditions" (2015:105).

It has been observed that interacting and engaging with others with different cultural backgrounds is an essential process, as learning, teaching and assessment practices should be created and mediated by cultural norms and academic traditions (Trahar, 2011).

In sum, the intercultural interaction and learning of TNHE staff and students are important to the question of translating TNHE in different cultures, which is a key issue of TNHE delivery. In the next chapter, concepts of "communities of practice", "interculturality" and "intercultural interaction" will be studied to form the core theoretical framework for studying the mentioned key issues as identified above.

2.4 Forces of Change in Higher Education under Globalisation: the Hong Kong Context

So far this chapter has discussed some of the emerging issues leading to the globalisation of higher education sector across the world and how TNHE emerged as a different form of education to fulfil the global demand for higher education. Models of transnational education have been discussed and examined. This section focuses on the forces of change in Hong Kong's higher education sector, aiming to present the landscape of TNHE in Hong Kong.

2.4.1   Developing Hong Kong as an Education Hub

In the Hong Kong context, privatisation of higher education is the major force of change the government has used to develop Hong Kong into an education hub (Mok 2008, 2014; Mok and Yu, 2011; Lo, 2017).

In Hong Kong, the competition for university places was very keen prior to 2000s because public sector HE institutions could only accommodate 18% of the post-17 age group. In response to the worldwide agenda of globalisation as discussed earlier, the government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) initiated a higher education reform in early 2000s. It introduced the agenda of widening access to higher education through the private higher education sector, which led to fundamental changes in the landscape of Hong Kong's higher education sector in the subsequent years.

Following the neoliberal approach, the Hong Kong government has, on the one hand, strictly controlled public funding of the university sector; and on the other hand, encouraged local institutions to develop self-financed higher education programmes with overseas institutions to cater for the demand from local students. This has led to the rapid development of TNHE partnerships and programmes in Hong Kong (Lo, 2017). The second Chief Executive, Tsang Yam-Kuen, Donald, in his Policy Address 2009 stated that the development of a self-financing higher education sector was essential for the development of education services in Hong Kong, as it would "make the best use of social resources in the non-government sector to provide more opportunities for students to pursue degree education" (paragraph 26).   Education services, according to Tsang, will serve the role of "enhancing Hong Kong's status as a

regional education hub, boosting Hong Kong's competitiveness, and complementing the future development of the Mainland" (paragraph 26).

Within the context of globalisation, the vision of becoming an education hub is viewed as a strategic response to intensify cross-border higher education activities (Knight, 2011), leading to a drastic increase in the number of TNHE programmes in Hong Kong, including those delivered in full time and part-time modes. According to statistics from the Education Bureau (2016a), there were a total of 1,149 non-local higher education programmes being delivered in Hong Kong as at 2016. The city is now one of the top six hosting countries for TNHE programmes offered by UK higher education institutions (UK Higher Education International Unit, 2016).

2.4.2 *Advocating Life Long Learning for Hong Kong Society*

Meanwhile, a new academic structure for senior secondary education and higher education was introduced in Hong Kong from 2009, leading to a major shift in secondary and higher education in Hong Kong, which subsequently became one of the essential driving forces for the fast development of TNHE in Hong Kong. Part of this change was the new "334" curriculum, composed of 3-year junior secondary education, 3-year senior secondary education and 4-year university education. The new curriculum, with a learner-focused approach, aims to "provide all students with essential lifelong learning experiences for whole-person development" to which "students should acquire a broad knowledge base, and be able to understand contemporary issues that may impact on daily life at personal, community, national and global levels" (Education Bureau, 2016b). Two key dimensions of the new academic structure focused on students developing into life-long learners with a global outlook, indicating possible comparative advantages for TNHE to fulfil the needs of Hong Kong

society. Moreover, the new academic structure has established natural articulation pathways for secondary school leavers to international qualifications, for which TNHE can be seen as an attractive pathway of further study for secondary school leavers.

On the other hand, in response to structural changes in the economy of Hong Kong, there has been increasing demand for local working adults to pursue higher academic and professional qualifications for their career development (Young, 2012). A recent survey on the "Demand for Continuing Education in Hong Kong", conducted by the School of Professional and Continuing Education, University of Hong Kong (HKU SPACE) in 2011/2012, showed that 1.46 million adults participated in continuing education that year (Young, 2012), representing a significant participation rate from the 7.3 million total population in Hong Kong. The advocates of life-long learning for this society suggest that TNHE programmes in Hong Kong will continue developing to serve working adults and to provide opportunities for their future professional advancement.

In sum, the emergence of transnational education and the associated calls from government for building an education hub are viewed as a form of neoliberal globalisation (Lo, 2017). The landscape for TNHE in Hong Kong is complex with keen competition and rapid changes. According to information from the Education Bureau, Hong Kong (2016a), all TNHE deliveries in Hong Kong are carried out with one or other of the franchised delivery, joint delivery or branch campus models. Furthermore, the same statistics reveal that quite a number of UK institutions partner with a network of different institutions in Hong Kong, delivering TNHE programmes in a variety of collaborative models. With the complexity of players and programmes, the services provided by transnational education have been attracting increased attention and hence

it is essential to reflect on how the current approaches of TNHE can be further enhanced to benefit Hong Kong society in the longer term.

2.5   Summary of this Chapter

In sum, as the first part of the literature review, this chapter considers how the forces of globalisation have influenced higher education sectors around the world. Subsequent to the impact of globalisation, GATS has included education as a tradable item in its framework, creating a neoliberal agenda for higher education. It is within such a complex context that TNHE has emerged to facilitate the import and export of education services (Lo, 2017).

Current issues of concern regarding TNHE are discussed in this chapter, which seeks to justify the major scope of this study. Drawing upon the previous experience of TNHE, scholars (Trahar, 2011; Trahar, 2015; Montgomery, 2014, 2016; Djerasimovic, 2014) have discussed and advocated the importance of adopting an intercultural approach which is less "western-led" and culturally sensitive, in shaping future TNHE development. This intercultural focus will guide the conceptual framework to be developed in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 3 - TEACHING AND LEARNING IN TRANSNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION

3.1 Introduction and Organisation of This Chapter

The literature review in Chapter 2 adopts a macro-perspective to deliberate the background and the drivers for TNHE. This chapter seeks to explore the approaches to teaching and learning in higher education focusing on TNHE, so as to enable understanding on the emerging issues related to TNHE as an alternative form of education.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the drive for internationalisation in higher education is not without its challenges and potential for conflict among a wide range of local and global stakeholders (Daniels, 2013). With the rapid increase of TNHE activities around the world, there emerge issues related to teaching and learning which lead to concerns on the quality of TNHE provision. These emerging issues include the lack of contextualisation of curriculum to suit students' needs, the lack of intercultural communication between staff and students from diverse backgrounds, and the insufficient staff development opportunities for handling transnational classrooms (Walters and Leung, 2012). The main issue, in particular, is concerned with the TNHE teaching being characterised by assimilationist approaches adopted by the teaching staff of awarding institutions, in which other learning modes in different cultural contexts such as Confucian Heritage Culture (CHC) are often misrepresented as being in conflict with "traditional" western pedagogies (Trahar, 2011). In sum, the above mentioned issues all call for further improvement on the TNHE provision.

Developing effective intercultural communication is one of the key challenges to the teaching and learning within TNHE, given that tensions may develop due to

misunderstandings of certain behaviours or languages (Wang, 2008). In view of the cultural sensitivity of TNHE, scholars (Wang, 2008; Montgomery, 2014; Trahar, 2011) suggest that intercultural interaction is essential to achieve mutual understanding and benefits, and that intercultural interaction is a process that allows individuals to mediate between cultures and gradually develop intercultural competence. In fact, academic staff from different cultures do not necessarily share views on how students learn in different cultural contexts, hence creating misunderstanding and frustration between TNHE teachers and students, which can negatively affect student learning (Dunn and Wallace, 2008; Bovill, 2014; O'Mahony, 2014; Leung and Walters, 2013a). This chapter aims to outline a range of teaching and learning issues in specific to TNHE, which inform the investigations of this study

Moreover, this chapter also explains the framework of the three TNHE collaborative models and discusses their advantages and disadvantages to institutions, staff and students. The chapter will be organised as follows: Section 3.2 discusses issues and theoretical approaches related to teaching and learning in transnational higher education. This section also discusses the influences of Confucianism on teaching and learning in the Hong Kong context. In addition, this section represents the teaching and learning approach for employability to inform how TNHE programmes can be more adaptive to the global human resources demand. Section 3.3 presents an array of TNHE delivery models adopted by higher education institutions, as well as the key characteristics of each model. The lived experiences of participants in the existing research which are related these models will be discussed prior to subsequent investigations. Section 3.4 provides summary of this chapter.

3.2   Approaches of Teaching and Learning in TNHE

This section aims to discuss theoretical approaches of student-centred approaches, a social constructivist approach in the context of TNHE, so as to facilitate better understanding of the current issues of TNHE, and to inform the investigations of the study. Over the past few decades, the concepts and practices of student-centred approaches and the social constructivist approach have become important fields of study within the teaching and learning in Higher Education. These approaches emphasise active participation and collaboration between students and teachers, in this section, a body of literature in these approaches will be studied to help understand and evaluate the TNHE practices investigated in the case study. Furthermore, this section will also discuss the influences of Confucianism on teaching and learning in the Hong Kong context.

3.2.1   Student-centred Approaches

Student-centred learning, as the term suggests, is an approach of learning or teaching that puts the learner at the centre. Over the past few decades, student-centred learning was created as a concept within the field of educational pedagogy and has been a topic of discussion within many higher education institutions and within national policy-making (MacHemer and Crawford, 2007). Student-centred learning allows students to shape their own learning paths and places upon them the responsibility to actively participate in making their educational process a meaningful one (MacHemer and Crawford, 2007; Tsui, 2002). Furthermore, scholars (Van Eekelen et al., 2005; MacLellan, 2004) are of the view that within the student-centred learning approaches, students are given the opportunity to compare their ideas with their peers and their teachers. In this context, students are encouraged to ask questions and be inquisitive and teachers are seen as facilitators, rather than as the main source of knowledge.

According to Fay (1998:8), student-centred learning is a "concentration of the ideas of humanist philosophy and psychology which recognises the freedom of the individual and attempts to convert the teaching and learning process accordingly". With its roots in humanist thought (Knowles, 1990), student-centred learning emphasises on individual development through the following four parameters (Brandes and Ginnis, 1986): firstly, the students have full responsibility for their own learning; secondly, subject matter must have relevance and meaning for the students. In addition to that, the student-centred approaches emphasises that involvement and participation are necessary for learning, and that relationship between students is important. Last but not least, in this learning approach, the teacher should be a facilitator and resource person rather than an instructor.

In Fay's framework (1998), teaching and learning practices of the student-centred approaches include: student involvement in the formulation of course outcomes; group discussions and student-led assessment. Moreover, lectures are interactive with students being encouraged to input into assessment and learning activities. According to Knowles (1990), the student-centred approaches emphasise the importance of the teacher/s in creating an atmosphere that enables interaction and participation among students, learning is considered to be most effective when leaners are encouraged to identify their learning expectations and needs, to interact with the teachers as a facilitator rather than an expert to transmit knowledge and truth (Knowles, 1990). Essentially, student-centred approaches have student responsibility and activity at their heart, in contrast to a strong emphasis on teacher-control and coverage of academic content found in much conventional, didactic teaching.

Considering its cross-cultural and cross-geographical nature, the delivery of TNHE involves students with cultural diversity, thus creating challenges which are beyond

traditional university teaching (Zigarus and McBurnie, 2008). The student-centred approaches and their focus on autonomy, subject-relevance and active participation, are well-fitted for the teaching and learning in TNHE. In the context of student-centred approaches, students who are from different cultural backgrounds can be engaged with learning and assessment activities specific to, or tailored around, their own cultural and professional contexts. In view of its humanist tradition and its emphasis on functioning teacher-student relationships, scholars with TNHE teaching experiences (Trahar, 2011; Keay et al., 2014) are of the view that the student-centred approaches help establish close relationships between TNHE students and academic staff, which, in turn, can engage learning which embraces cultural diversity, and lead to intercultural interaction to bring long term benefits to students' learning.

Statistics from Education Bureau (2016a) reveal that over 60% of TNHE programmes delivered in Hong Kong have components of group projects and individual research projects embedded in their curricula. The delivery of these projects illustrates how student-centred approaches can be adopted in TNHE teaching; in these individual projects, students have to take the lead to develop their learning plans and provide academic reports under the guidance of their academic supervisors. The teaching and learning activities for these individual projects are constructed in accordance to students' learning progress, such student-centred approaches are reported to be effective in developing closer teacher-student relationship in TNHE (Sia, 2015). In fact, the characteristics of these commonly used learning tools of student-centerd approaches, such as independent projects, group discussions, portfolio development, can well support active learning with groups or individual student who are culturally diverse.

In sum, how the teaching and learning approaches mentioned above are applied in different TNHE models to generate intercultural interaction will form one of the core investigations of this study, and will be further discussed in Chapter 7.

3.2.2   *Social Constructivist Approach*

This section presents the core elements of social constructivism as a teaching and learning approach. The theory of social constructivism and its teaching and learning approach are closely related to TNHE in the sense that students are encouraged to interact with others through distance to create meaning and learning (Casey and Wilson, 2005). In fact, TNHE at the later phases characterised by online support and discussions is believed to be oriented towards a social constructivist approach to encourage intercultural interaction, encounters and learning (Cullinane, 2014). In view of its features of encouraging social interaction in the learning process, the social constructivist approach is related to the construction of cultural identity in the way that ideas of cultural identity and difference are frequently "socially" constructed (Campbell, 2000). In this connection, within the context of TNHE, the social constructivist approach presents a strong case to be connected with concepts of "intercultural interaction" and "interculturality".

The social constructivist approach is associated with the social constructivism philosophy, which views learning as knowledge construction (Vygotsky, 1978; King, 1990; Bransford et al., 2000). The social constructivist approach was primarily developed for, or applied to, the purpose of developing more effective students' understanding of theoretical concepts within a particular disciplinary area. The basic principle of the social constructivist approach to teaching is that students learn most effectively by engaging in carefully selected collaborative problem- solving activities,

under the close supervision and coaching of an educator (Hanson and Sinclaire, 2008). Social constructivist teaching views learning as a social process, according to McDermott (1999:16),

> "learning is not in heads, but in the relations between people. Learning is in the conditions that bring people together and organise a point of contact that allows for particular pieces of information to take on relevance; without the points of contact, without the system of relevancies, there is no learning, and there is little memory. Learning does not belong to individual persons, but to the various conversations of which they are a part".

It is therefore important that teachers provide possibilities for cooperation and conversation about various educational topics for their students (Smith, 1999). As stated by Campbell (2000), the ideas of culture and cultural identity are formed through social interactions which occur among groups and individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds, informally through daily exchanges and encounters, and formally in educational contexts. In the context of TNHE, ideas and practices of teaching and learning are socially constructed between teaching staff and students through virtual and face to face interactions, which in return lead to the development of intercultural communities of practice.

Although there are many variations on the use of a social constructivist teaching approach in higher education, most share the following characteristics (Palincsar, 1998): firstly, the approach encourages small groups work collaboratively on solving the problem; there is also teamwork in some tasks, so all members are accountable to the group. Dialogue, interaction and negotiation of share understanding are central to the learning process under the social constructivist approach. Student groups exercise self-management in deciding what they need to learn to gain a better understanding of the problem. It is important to note that with this approach, teachers take a coaching role to facilitate critical reflection on group interaction. The purpose of the teaching and

learning activities is to enable the construction of knowledge that may be generalised beyond the specific problem. It requires them to work in groups and interact in social settings based on the principle of Vygotsky's social constructivism (1978). In this reading, students' involvement results in their effective learning, as stated by Johnson and Johnson (1999), effective learning takes place through one's personal involvement in learning experience.

In higher education, critical thinking, problem solving approach and analytical skills are assumed to be the essential constructs (Biggs and Tang, 2011), the approach of social constructivism helps equip students with such faculties and skills, they construct new knowledge based on their previous experiences and involvement in learning process (Li, 2001). In the context of TNHE, the emphasis of social participation and collaboration within the social constructivist approach is essential to develop close interaction between staff and students from diverse cultural backgrounds, the approach encourages exchanges between students and staff who share their learning experiences and practice to peers. It is also essential to note that the social constructivist approach is closely related to the conceptual framework of communities of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991), which emphasises the importance of social participation as a form of learning process.

In addressing the primary research question "how is interculturality developed through diverse forms of communities of practice in TNHE", the study focuses on the process of the intercultural interaction to understand the phenomenon of TNHE. In the research process, how the TNHE staff and students from diverse cultural backgrounds are engaged in intercultural interactions within distinctive TNHE models were investigated and analysed in order to make sense of how interculturality can be developed in TNHE.

While discussing the TNHE teaching and learning approach in Hong Kong, the following paragraphs will consider the influences of Confucianism on teaching and learning in the Hong Kong context, in order to better understand how the TNHE teaching and learning practices should be developed to fulfil the learning needs of Hong Kong students. While previous research considers that teaching and learning practices in Confucian Heritage Culture (CHC) classrooms are more teacher-centred (Bjorning-Gyde and Doogan, 2008), Confucianism is often wrongly seen as opposed to "western" traditions and often misrepresented as a learning deficit rather than a valuable complement to "western" approaches of learning. This section therefore aims to consider Confucianism from an alternative perspective to justify how Confucianism can act as a facilitating agent to enable intercultural interaction and practice sharing in the TNHE context.

In comparative studies, Confucian teaching and learning have multiple meanings. On the one hand, they refer to contemporary educational practices and contexts in Asian countries and regions such as mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, and Singapore. Comparative researchers contend that Confucian Heritage Culture (CHC), a mixed and blended cultural tradition of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism, has heavily influenced these countries and regions. On the other hand, Confucian teaching and learning merely stand for teaching and learning principles in Confucianism (Meng and Uhrmacher, 2017). In this study, we will take the second conception of Confucianism to analyse how Confucian beliefs and values can be applied to influence practices of intercultural interaction in the context of TNHE in Hong Kong.

From the "western" perspective, CHC students are viewed as passive, exhibiting compliance and obedience, and concerned only with absorbing knowledge rather than understanding it (Purdie et al., 1996). This passive learning style is often attributed to

"Confucian values" and is considered to be attached to the CHC. It is also considered in contrast to the "western" student learning style, which is described as assertive, independent, self-confident and willing to ask questions and explore ways of thinking and acting (Purdie et al., 1996). Moreover, it was observed that in CHC classrooms, the role of a teacher is seen as an expert, who masters the knowledge and transmits such knowledge through lecturing (Bjourning-Gyde and Doogan, 2008). In fact, the misconception of passivity of CHC learners could pose the danger of over-generalising and hence stereotyping the characteristics of CHC learners. Scholars (Tran, 2013; Kember, 2000) have opposed the above claim and disproved the common assertions that CHC students are passive learners. It was suggested that CHC students can and do adjust to active forms of learning if given the opportunity and that learning approaches are influenced by students' perceptions of course requirements rather than being determined by personal characteristics or cultural differences (Kember, 2000; Volet et al., 1994). In Hong Kong, students tend to hold a different view about the appropriateness of speaking out in class (Trahar, 2011; Tran, 2013). They do not see quietness as passiveness, and sometimes they see quietness as necessary and supportive for a productive learning environment. Most of them try hard to understand by reading and listening, and sometimes prefer questioning each other after class time (Meng and Uhrmacher, 2017).

In fact, various aspects of Confucian beliefs in learning, such as to be self-reflective and to think independently in the learning process (the Analects, n.d.), do serve today's modern Chinese learners well. Nevertheless, Chinese students in Hong Kong are shown to be cue-conscious and respond well to new pedagogy when provided the opportunities. It was argued that if passiveness of CHC students is indeed observed in the Hong Kong context, it is more because of situation-specific factors of teaching methodologies,

learning requirements, learning habits and language proficiency rather than national cultural factors (Tran, 2013).

In this connection, there is a paradox between passive learning style and CHC, between memorising and understanding and between quietness and passiveness. In fact, according to Meng and Uhrmacher (2017:29), core principles of Qifashi teaching (enlightening teaching, which originated from Confucianism and adopted in some China and local Hong Kong Schools) include: knowledge is not equivalent to the rules, theories, and problems in a textbook. Rather, knowledge is a process of inquiry that is related to students' intelligence. Students should be actively involved in the learning process to acquire knowledge, furthermore, teachers should discuss with students and provide guidance based on students' learning trajectories. Moreover, Qifashi teaching can apply to after-class activities and communities' services in order to encourage students' engagement with others. These principles are essentially encouraging social interaction and active participation in negotiating meaning during the learning process. In this context, the learning process in CHC can be taken as a socially constructed process.

Trahar (2011) makes the interesting observation that the nature of the Confucian philosophy on learning shares similarities with student-centred approaches. In this reading, it was considered that the approach adopted by Confucius in fact encourages questioning and informal relationships between teachers and learners (Trahar, 2011). Such questioning and informal discussion approach of Confucius, in the contemporary sense, cultivates interaction and participation between students and teachers. To some extent, it fulfils the nature of social learning as outlined by the social constructivist and student-centred approaches. In sum, the influence of Confucianism on the teaching and

learning of TNHE should be positively oriented towards intercultural exchanges, encounters and practice sharing to generate mutual learning and to embrace interculturality, instead of being in conflict with 'traditional' western pedagogies. Hence well-managed student-centred teaching and learning approaches in TNHE, with focus on active engagement and practice sharing can produce innovative learning across cultures, and bring long term benefits to TNHE staff and students in their teaching and learning practices.

Last but not least, it is essential to consider that in light of globalisation of economies as discussed in Chapter 2, the global expansion of higher education has required new approaches to curriculum instruction, the notion of social participation and collaborative learning, as advocated in the student-centred approaches and social constructivist approach, is seen as one of the key developments in teaching and learning approach in Hong Kong and Asia (Hallinger and Lu, 2012; Watkins, 2000). The rapid development of TNHE programmes in Hong Kong, in many ways, demands new teaching and learning approaches to benefit teachers and students' continuing development. Understanding the philosophical and pedagogical underpinnings of both student-centred approaches and the social constructivist approach informs the ways in which TNHE can be developed effectively in Hong Kong.

3.2.3   *Teaching and Learning for Employability in TNHE*

As a result of massification in higher education, the number of global university graduates has been increasing over the past two decades, leading to increasing concerns on the employability of university graduates (Mok, 2016). Having experienced the significant impacts of globalisation, there is increasing competition for jobs in the global job markets, in this connection, a strong tide of international learning has become

increasingly popular, especially when parents and students consider that international learning experiences are important to future job searches and career development (Mok, 2017). How the teaching and learning approaches in TNHE can be linked to the development of employment skills in specifc to global markets becomes an increasingly important topic to be investigated. These employment skills, such as intercultural competence and languages, may provide positional advantages to TNHE graduates in the global market as compared to traditional higher education graduates (Mellors-Bourne et al., 2015; Jones, 2010, 2013). In order to address the development of these employment skills with the TNHE teaching and learning practices, this section aims to explore relevant literature underpinning how the employment skills including intercultural competence and languages can be developed through TNHE teaching and learning activities.

First of all, to make employability links clear to the teaching and learning of TNHE, it is essential to make clear how the term employability is interpreted by the employers and how it is reflected in the learning outcomes. In a large-scale study that investigated TNHE and employability development, Mellors-Bourne et al. (2015) indicate that employability refers to both "employment skills" (job-specific and related to professional development) as well as "employability skills", which are transferable and not job-specific. It is important to note that, in the globalised economy, employers tend to value transferable skills such as people's skills and intercultural competence more highly than job-specific professional skills (Yorke, 2006; Mellors-Bourne et al., 2015). In summarising international research on what employers are looking for, it is observed that these transferable skills include knowledge, intellect, willingness to learn, communication skills, intercultural competence, team-working, interpersonal skills, effective learning skills, networking and negotiating skills, decision-making skills and the capacity to cope with uncertainty and adversity (Knight and Yorke, 2004; Harvey et

al., 1997). In addressing the dynamic changes in the demand for global human resources as mentioned above, many universities have put terms of "critical thinking", "creativity", "problem-solving", "decision-making", "personal effectiveness", "cultural awareness" in their module descriptors across different disciplinary areas (Kneale, 2008). In view of the emerging needs to develop graduates' transferable skills in additional to professional skills for their future careers, TNHE is becoming closely linked with the development of interculturally competent graduates with positional advantages in the global labour market.

There is so far little evidence whether generic employment skills can be developed as an outcome of TNHE programmes. There is also real debate on whether the topics of employability should be developed within the career sessions or academic departments of higher education institutions, and whether such teaching should be optional or compulsory (Kneale, 2008). In view of the agenda to develop students' employability, universities have developed a wide range of teaching and learning approaches to enhance their students' professional and transferable skills. As the employability agenda is of paramount importance to all higher education graduates for their future employment, these approaches are adopted both in traditional forms of higher education and TNHE, and they are outlined in the following paragraphs.

Firstly, there are increasing examples of embedding employability skills into curricula by UK Universities (Universities Alliance, 2013), in which universities map their specific subject curricula against the skills sought by employers. For example, Leeds Beckett University and Middlesex University in the UK (Mellors-Bourne et al., 2015; Jones, 2013) have outlined specific skills in entrepreneurship, digital literacy, and global outlook that are specified in their curricula in both global and local contexts. Furthermore, assessments for modules or subjects with an employability focus have

been developed to give participants opportunities to practise the skills recognised as having employability dimensions (Jones, 2013; Kneale, 2008). The styles of assessment, including reports, presentations and personal reflective accounts, are in alignment with the student-centred approaches, aiming to develop their self-efficacy for studying and employment.

In addition to that, there are initiatives in organising group work between students from different cultural backgrounds to enhance intercultural competence (Bell, 2008). Some universities organise practice-integrated learning experiences in their offshore campuses in collaboration with industry in order to enable graduates to acquire and practise employability skills that match employers' expectation (Bilsland et al., 2014; Mellors-Bourne et al., 2015). All these initiatives create value-added impact on TNHE, and require active engagement with industry. Such form of interaction forms the core component of social learning as deliberated in the social constructivist approach.

Furthermore, work placement and experiential learning also appear in many university's teaching and learning strategies with different emphases. According to Kneale (2008), work placement may be specialist modules, it may be part of the recognised curriculum which needs to be assessed, or may be extracurricular. Reflective accounts, practice reports are often used as the assessment tools for work placement (Pegg et al., 2012). In the context of TNHE, the development of work placement and experiential learning can "bridge" TNHE curricular to other cultural contexts. More importantly, through the development of work placement and experiential learning opportunities, staff from TNHE universities are able to embrace professional contexts in other cultures, through such processes there emerge intercultural exchanges between the TNHE university staff, representatives of industry where students are based, local staff and students. Such

intercultural exchanges in the contexts of work placement can generate distinctive forms of intercultural communities of practice.

It is thought that graduates will become more effective in the workplace and make a greater impact in their career if lifelong learning skills are developed in their university studies. Social constructivist approaches and student-centred approaches to teaching and learning are well aligned with this process and develop employability because they encourage exploration, social participation, and develop reflection and engagement with others (Pegg et al., 2012). In the TNHE context, this process also cultivates intercultural exchanges and practice sharing between professionals, staff and students from diverse cultural backgrounds.

To conclude, the above sections deliberate the teaching and learning approaches which are related to TNHE. Both student-centred approaches and a social constructivist teaching approach emphasise students' independent learning through engagement and active participation. Furthermore, such approaches encourage social interaction between staff and students, which cultivate intercultural interaction and construct knowledge. These approaches are closely related to the framework of communities of practice which considers social participation and practice sharing as part of the learning process. In the later part of this study, details of teaching and learning activities including work practice related elements will be investigated in the case study, to analyse how interculturality can be developed in TNHE.

3.3 Crossing Boundaries: The Models of TNHE

So far, a diverse range of literature has been reviewed to deliberate theoretical perspectives of teaching and learning in TNHE. This section aims to introduce details of TNHE delivery models to analyse 'how' TNHE activities are delivered. Moreover,

the characteristics and challenges of each model, as well as lived experiences of staff and students in these models, will be studied and discussed.

Defining TNHE delivery and models is challenging as there are numerous attempts from different countries trying to capture the full activities of TNHE (UK Higher Education International Unit, 2016). Table 2.1 below seeks to summarise the categories and definitions from TNHE delivery models and the provision of their scope of services to provide some understanding of a range of terminologies used to identify the models of TNHE delivery.

Table 3.1 - Categorisation of TNHE Models

	Branch Campus (UK Higher Education International Unit, 2016)	**Partner-supported delivery (UK Higher Education International Unit, 2016)**	**Distance /Online learning (UK Higher Education International Unit, 2016)**
Francois (2016)	• Overseas branch campus	• Franchised delivery • Joint Delivery • Dual /double degree • Flying faculty • Validation	• Online learning • Correspondence education
McBurnie and Ziguras, (2007)	• Branch Campuses	• Franchises • Articulation • Twinning	• Cross-border distance education

For the purpose of defining operational characteristics, the broad definitions of the UK Higher Education International Unit (UK Higher Education International Unit, 2016) will be adopted in this study. TNHE arrangements will be categorised into three broad approaches, namely distance education, partner-supported delivery (including models of franchised delivery and joint delivery), and branch campus. In fact, given the strong

influence of globalisation, the categorisation of these TNHE models is similar to the cross border management models for business corporations (Bartlett et al., 2008).

The definitions and categorisation of these models have been changing fast, with increased diversity and complexity to cope with the rapid development of TNHE. For example, some partnerships may involve multiple models to provide a mixture of joint delivery in the early years of a degree with franchising in the final year. Given the aims and focus of this study, the following sections will focus on discussing the models of "Franchised Delivery" and "Joint Delivery", as well as the "Branch Campus".

3.3.1 Franchised Delivery Model

In franchising arrangements, the awarding institutions authorise their partners to deliver part or all of their own approved programmes, with some prior assessment of the local teaching team's academic and professional profile. Through franchised delivery arrangements, these local partners usually provide some face-to-face teaching, library services, computer facilities, administration and student support to students. In most cases, the local partners do not have their own degree awarding powers, which therefore creates a need to have a franchise from a degree awarding institution (McBurnie and Ziguras, 2007; Francois, 2016). Recently published statistics indicate that the franchised delivery model is one of the most popular models of delivery adopted by UK higher education institutions (Higher Education Statistics Agency [HESA], 2016).

3.3.1.1 Lived Experience of Staff and Students and Challenges of Franchised Delivery

The key challenge for the model of franchised delivery is related to the teaching quality of the local teaching team in providing comparable learning experiences with home institutions' delivery to students studying TNHE programmes (Alam et al., 2013). In a

case study investigating students' lived experiences in the TNHE experiences delivered by Hong Kong lecturers through the model of franchised delivery, Leung and Walters (2013a) comment that TNHE programmes are not identical to those offered in the UK, even though the programmes share the same name and often identical course outline and materials. Providers of this mode of delivery should reflect on the capacity development potential of their TNHE programmes to raise students' academic competence and other forms of related cultural capital (Leung and Walters, 2013a).

Despite being the most cost effective of the three delivery modes, with a certain degree of quality assurance, the model poses some financial and reputation risks due to the local partner's financial vulnerability and other shortcomings (Alam et al., 2013). In view of the prevalence of this model in the TNHE landscape, this study will further investigate the details of intercultural interactions of staff and students within this model of delivery, through a case study approach.

3.3.2 Joint Delivery Model

The second model for partner-supported delivery is in the form of "joint delivery". The model adopts a "flying faculty" approach, within which the academic teams from the awarding university (home university) make regular teaching visits to the partner institution to conduct teaching session with students. In most cases, the major roles and responsibilities of the local partners are to provide administrative support and physical resources to the TNHE programmes. In some case, tutorial support sessions by local tutors are also provided by the local partners (UK Higher Education International Unit, 2016; Francois, 2016). The approach of sending flying faculty staff to teach for intensive short periods, with the support of local tutorials, is seen to be challenging from the perspective of teaching, in particular on how to prepare teaching staff to teach in a

transnational context (Leask et al., 2005; O'Mahony, 2014; Keay et al., 2014; Wang, 2008).

3.3.2.1 Lived Experience of Staff and Students and Challenges of Joint Delivery

As mentioned previously, the flying faculty approach within the joint delivery model poses challenges for the teaching staff with regard to teaching in a transnational classroom, and handling students with different cultural and social backgrounds. As transnational education teachers, they are expected to be experts in their field, skilled teachers and managers of the transnational learning environment, efficient intercultural learners, as well as able to display particular personal attitudes and attributes (McBurnie and Ziguras, 2007; O'Mahony, 2014; Leask, 2005).   Being an experienced transnational teacher, Trahar (2011) has provided a reflective account of her TNHE teaching experience. It indicates how important it is for flying faculty staff to be interculturally competent:

> "I have therefore been provoked to explore ways in which I might unwittingly continue to uncritically transfer my own attitudes and practice of learning and teaching, developed and grounded in particular western cultures when working with other people who bring different traditions and values" (2011:20).

Both models of franchised delivery and joint delivery are classified in the category of "partner-supported delivery" by the Higher Education Statistics Agency, and together they accounted for 40% of TNHE programmes offered by UK institutions (HESA, 2016). Both models have a significant impact on the academic and economic values of the type of transnational education they deliver, and they will be investigated in detail later in the study.

3.3.3   *Branch Campus Model*

The branch campus model involves a bricks-and-mortar presence in the host country, fully or jointly owned by the awarding institution (UK Higher Education International and Europe Unit, 2013). A branch campus is a satellite campus set up by a higher education institution in another country to deliver some academic programmes offered at the home campus (Francois, 2016). Academic programmes are delivered with a similar management mode to other campuses of the institution, and usually involve a significant proportion of teaching activities conducted by the home teaching team, or teaching staff appointed by the awarding institution (home institution) (McBurnie and Ziguras, 2007). This arrangement for a branch campus allows the awarding institution to conduct TNHE activities more effectively than any other modes (ICEF Monitor, 2015). However, offering programmes through branch campus is costly and requires significant investment and resources from the home institution, and therefore the number of institutions adopting the branch campus model is far smaller than in the partner-supported delivery mode (Alam et al., 2013). Due to the above-mentioned reasons, fewer than one in ten (8%) TNHE programmes from the UK are delivered through the branch campus model where the UK institution has a physical presence in the overseas country (HESA, 2016).

The branch campus model is, however, becoming popular among students, especially in restrictive countries such as India and Pakistan, in moderately restrictive countries such as China and Bangladesh, and in liberal countries like Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, United Arab Emirates and Qatar (Alam et al., 2013). The branch campus model, including Nottingham University in Ningbo China and Malaysia, showcases many successful TNHE deliveries (UK Higher Education International Unit, 2016). Some TNHE partnerships have been developed from the basis of collaborative teaching or

research partnerships, which have eventually paved the way for the establishment of offshore branch campuses (The Observatory of Borderless Higher Education, 2010). There are a total of nearly 220 branch campuses worldwide (The Observatory of Borderless Higher Education, 2016). In Hong Kong, as at 2016, there exist two branch campuses delivering a range of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes offered by the home institutions in the United States.

3.3.3.1 *Lived Experience of Staff and Students and Challenges of Branch Campus Model*

Due to the costly investment and resources involved in setting up branch campuses in other countries, there are many challenges in setting up and managing them. Healey (2016) suggests that such challenges explain the associated risks for the higher education institutions to prepare. First of all, branch campuses are operated in a highly regulated educational environment which is sensitive to the government policy of the host country. Furthermore, the shifting objectives and power of the various stakeholders mean that managing a branch campus "is not just extraordinarily challenging, but it is generally far beyond the comfort zone of even the most experienced academic manager" (Healey, 2016:73).

Recent research also reveals that due to low recruitment, some branch campuses of UK universities had to be closed (Havergal, 2015), demonstrating the reason why not many institutions adopted such model for new TNHE development. In view of the competitive landscape of TNHE and the challenges of setting up branch campuses, there is a slowing pace of UK higher education institutions setting up new branch campuses in other countries (UK Higher Education International Unit, 2016).

3.3.4   Remarks on the Models Discussed

In sum, each model discussed above has different characteristics and the area of responsibilities varies among different delivery types. Where there is a local delivery partnership (joint delivery or franchised delivery), responsibilities tend to lie either with the awarding institution or jointly with the local partner. Where a physical presence (i.e. branch campus) exists, responsibility for most aspects lies with the awarding institution. Previous findings have highlighted that physical presence is important to students' experiences because it affects the ability "of students to cultivate institutional and other forms of social capital, with implications for subsequent employment opportunities and social mobility" (Leung and Walters, 2013b:44).

In alignment with the research's aims in studying the intercultural aspect of TNHE and investigating the interaction between stakeholder groups as communities, this study will focus on analysing the models of joint delivery, franchised delivery as well as branch campus to examine the details of intercultural interaction in TNHE communities, using the lens of communities of practice.   The concept of communities of practice is to be introduced in the second part of the literature review.

The complexity of TNHE delivery not only intensifies competition among providers but also leads to competition between the partners and the awarding institutions (UK Higher Education International Unit, 2016). The models of TNHE provide parameters on the responsibilities of partnering institutions, accounting for an important part of the framework that guides TNHE delivery, as well as showing how the TNHE communities interact interculturally.

3.4 Summary of This Chapter

This chapter considers a body of literature on the common teaching and learning strategies of TNHE. In view of the cross-cultural and cross-geographical nature of TNHE, there are considerable challenges in adopting appropriate teaching and learning approaches to address the needs of students and their future employers. The chapter discusses the theoretical frameworks and practices of the student-centred approaches and social constructivist approach, which will help contextualise this study. The chapter also considers the influences of Confucianism in the teaching and learning of TNHE. Furthermore, the chapter discusses relevant teaching and learning strategies in developing employability in THNE. In addition, models of TNHE are outlined and discussed in this chapter to provide fundamental understanding in the delivery practice of TNHE.

In the next chapter, a range of literature will be discussed to analyse the concepts of communities of practice, interculturality and intercultural interaction to delineate the intercultural dimensions of TNHE. Towards the end of the chapter, a conceptual framework will be developed to guide this study.

CHAPTER 4 - CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

4.1   Organisation of This Chapter

This chapter aims to provide a detailed overview of the readings that underpin the ideas and articulate the concepts developed in this research. The literature review in the previous chapter introduces the macro context of transnational education, which provides an overview positioning of transnational higher education delivery as compared to traditional higher education provision. As outlined in the previous chapter, the academic 'marketplace' is becoming increasingly international under the influence of economic globalisation. These forces of change have emerged to drive higher education institutions to offer TNHE as new educational services which were not available a few decades ago. The primary aim of this research is to examine transnational higher education as a phenomenon, with particular focus on the process of the intercultural interaction. The study also adopts micro-perspectives to analyse the role of transnational higher education in nurturing interculturality through communities of practice.

The body of knowledge in this research will be rooted in the concepts of "intercultural competence and interaction", "interculturality" and "communities of practice", which, together, will help to develop the conceptual framework of this study. It is intended that these inter-related concepts can be further elaborated and adapted to interpret the phenomenon of TNHE. The theoretical framework proposed in this chapter will underpin the research process and provide guidance for the empirical work conducted in this study.

To address the research question, this chapter seeks to explore the concepts of "intercultural competence and interaction", "interculturality" and "community of practice", from different perspectives. Firstly, the framework of communities of practice helps examine the social learning processes which constitute intercultural interaction. In the process of analysing the framework of communities of practice, we shall examine the limits of the concept and reappraise the concept of communities of practice in the TNHE context. Secondly, we shall consider how intercultural competence is developed among participants in TNHE, as that will provide underpinning knowledge about how communities of practice can interact across distance and across cultural contexts. Finally, the notion of "interculturality" will be explored to discuss how the sharing and interaction of communities of practice in intercultural TNHE contexts develop and take shape. The empirical work of this research will consist of three case studies of TNHE communities, so as to analyse how intercultural communities of practice correspond with each model of TNHE delivery.

The chapter is organised in the following fashion. Section 4.2 seeks to identify the knowledge gap this study is addressing, subsequent to reviewing the macro-perspective of TNHE in the context of globalisation. Section 4.3 reappraises the concept of communities of practice, with critical analysis to reconstruct the concept in the TNHE context. Section 4.4 seeks to conceptualise interculturality in the context of TNHE, while section 4.5 presents the concepts of intercultural competence and interaction and their relations to the development of intercultural communities of practice. Section 4.6 presents the conceptual framework of this study to explain the three inter-related concepts named above. Section 4.7 is the summary of this chapter.

4.2   The Knowledge Gap Addressed in this Study

Driven by the forces of globalisation, the rapid development of TNHE during the last two decades has made it an increasingly important component of education. Statistics suggest that it is continuing to expand, while the modes of delivery and policy approaches to TNHE continue to evolve (HESA, 2016). TNHE offers opportunities for overall development of higher education institutions in the era of marketisation of higher education (Kim, 2009; Mok, 2014). In addition to this, there is increasing academic mobility, student mobility and programme mobility, which are strongly linked to the global marketisation of higher education (Kim, 2009). Building reputation and brand, increased income to institutions as well as governments, and widening participation (Dunn and Wallace, 2008) have all been identified as key drivers for higher education institutions' participation in TNHE. The benefits and opportunities of TNHE are obvious not only to education institutions but increasingly to governments (O'Mahony, 2014). As discussed in Chapter 2, while many neoliberals advocate that spatial difference has been minimised through globalisation in favour of a universal narrative of change where space and location are becoming less important, the force of globalisation also brings the tension of minimising cultural particularism (Caruana and Montgomery, 2015; UNESCO, 2016).

On the other hand, in view of the rapid development of TNHE, there are increasing concerns and issues about the existing models and practice of TNHE delivery. First of all, TNHE, as a form of education delivered to students in other countries, is considered by students as a second, less desirable option (Mellors-Bourne et al., 2015) to studying abroad. There were also critical views about TNHE in Hong Kong that this form of education exists mainly for business opportunities. In addition to that, the ability of TNHE programmes in Hong Kong to facilitate the development of social relationships

amongst students and graduates is under question, together with concerns about students' future employment experiences and social mobility (Waters and Leung, 2014). Leung and Walters (2013a) further criticise TNHE programmes for failing to develop capacity for students and staff. In a case study of British TNHE programmes delivered in Hong Kong, Leung and Walters (2013a) argue that students may have been wrongly attracted by the marketing of TNHE programmes, as they later found that they "had no school life in their TNHE study", being taught by Hong Kong tutors in a business building located in commercial district (Leung and Walters, 2013a:483). A number of recent studies on staff and students' experiences (O'Mahony, 2014; Walters and Leung, 2012; Leung and Walters, 2013a; Hoare, 2012) reveal that there are a few areas in TNHE delivery requiring attention and improvement. These issues include the quality of TNHE programme delivery, and the need for appropriate contextualisation of the curriculum to be delivered in other countries. More importantly, there are acute needs for transnational education staff as well as students to be able to interact in an intercultural context. Increasing calls from scholars and facilitating agents are beginning to suggest that developing intercultural interaction would be the future of TNHE, and would bring real value to TNHE (Otten, 2009; British Council, 2014; Keay et al., 2014; Montgomery, 2014; Trahar, 2015). Providing opportunities for cultural exchange, intercultural interaction and learning from a different cultural set up would be one of the key challenges for the future of TNHE; the interplay of intercultural communities of practice and the interculturality of TNHE could be central to addressing these challenges. Caruana and Montgomery (2015) suggest that "TNHE brings 'home' and 'host', 'sender' and 'receiver' states, institutions and their staff and students into intercultural partnership relationships that, rather than being static, are subject to a continuous process of change" (2015:7). Some authors suggest that communities of practice may help to develop the intercultural interaction of TNHE and to develop

added value in TNHE (Dunn and Wallace, 2005; Kim, 2008; Keay et al., 2014). All these concerns call for a new appraisal of intercultural interaction in a transnational and culturally complex context. Not only is there an urgent need to reappraise the concept of communities of practice in the context of TNHE, but there is also a gap in identifying how interculturality can be developed within TNHE communities of practice for the betterment of TNHE.

Given the shortage of TNHE studies that adopt the framework of communities of practice to model the process of developing interculturality, this study aims to advance existing knowledge about TNHE, with a particular focus on how intercultural interaction can be developed. The study also offers micro-perspectives for analysing the role of transnational higher education models in nurturing interculturality through communities of practice.

4.3   Communities of Practice: Theoretical Perspectives

In view of the cultural challenges related to TNHE, such as different communication styles, and learning and teaching styles, the literature suggests that developing communities of practice in the delivery of TNHE further improves the practice of TNHE and eventually leads to intercultural learning for staff and student (Dunn and Wallace, 2006; Hoyte et al., 2010; Keay et al., 2014). The term intercultural learning, in the context of this study, refers to "an individual process of acquiring knowledge, attitudes, or behaviour that is connected with the interaction of different cultures." (Council of Europe, 2000). The concept of communities of practice (CoPs) is the key framework of this study which the major argument of the research will build on; the concept will be adopted for the purpose of interpreting the intercultural interaction and practice sharing in TNHE. Through the lens of CoPs, we shall appraise and investigate

how TNHE creates a platform for different groups, including students and staff, to interact and to share practice, which constitutes the development of interculturality in TNHE.

4.3.1   *Defining Communities of Practice as a form of Social Learning*

Developed by Lave and Wenger (1991), the concept of communities of practice is associated with social learning. According to Lave and Wenger, learning is associated with the practice and participation in which it takes on meaning. Rather than looking at learning as the acquisition of certain forms of knowledge, Lave and Wenger tried to place learning within social relationships and participation; learning involves participation in a community of practice. The concept of communities of practice suggests that learning is formed by relationships between people and society (Wenger, 2010). A community of practice itself can be viewed as a simple social learning system (Wenger et al., 2002).

According to Wenger, participation "refers not just to local events of engagement in certain activities with certain people, but to a more encompassing process of being active participants in the practice of social communities and constructing identities in relation to these communities" (Wenger, 1998:4). Learning is thus not seen as the acquisition of knowledge by individuals, so much as a process of social participation, and the nature of the situation impacts significantly on the process (Wenger, 1998; Keay et al., 2014). While the TNHE context is filled with the complexities of engaging staff and students with diverse cultural backgrounds, the concept of communities of practice and its emphasis on participation and relationships offers a foundation for intercultural learning and interaction to take place (Hoyte, 2010).

The mastery of knowledge and skills requires newcomers to move towards full participation in the socio-cultural practices of a community. A person's intentions to learn are engaged and the meaning of learning is configured through the process of becoming a full participant in a socio-cultural practice. This social process includes the learning of knowledge and skills (Lave and Wenger, 1991:29). Social learning theorists (Vygotsky, 1978; Bandura, 1977) suggest that individuals can learn by observing and modelling other people, hence the concept of communities provides a foundation for sharing knowledge. It is believed that in the process of learning, observing other people's behaviour allows for a safer and more efficient way of acquiring complex behaviours or skills than learning by trial and error (Bandura, 1977). Vygotsky and Bandura's schools of thought in social learning identify the essential element of communities in the learning process. Central to social learning is the element of communities (Wenger, 1998). In Wenger's model of communities of practice, learning takes place within practice, while "learning is the engine of practice, and practice is the history of that learning. As a consequence, communities of practice have life cycles that reflect such a process (1998:96). Learning in practice includes the processes of "evolving forms of mutual engagement", "understanding and tuning their enterprise" and "developing their repertoire, styles and discourse" (1998:95). Moreover, in modern society, communities of practice can be physically located, locally networked (for example, within a company via an intranet), virtual (i.e., networked across distance, which is particularly relevant to TNHE context) or a combination of these (Preece, 2004).

The concept of communities of practice is being widely used and applied in business, government and education (Wenger, 2016). As an evolving concept, there is a diverse range of interpretation and understanding of the concept. Scholars interpret CoPs at

different levels: it is considered as a theory of learning (Tummons, 2014), as a notion to explore collaborative partnership (Keay et al., 2014), or a "specific and institutionalised type of Intra-organisational network" (Probst and Borzillo, 2008). It is worth noting that in higher education in modern societies, communities of practice operate widely to support the teaching and learning of staff and students. Supportive networks naturally evolve to help members construct knowledge and solve problems through exchange of practice and ideas as well as interaction (Higher Education Academy, 2016). In TNHE, communities of practice may evolve through a mixture of virtual and physical networks as outlined above.

While this research focuses on investigating the details of intercultural interaction in TNHE, the concept of communities of practice may leverage tacit knowledge for the understanding of interaction and learning (Hoyte, 2010; Keay et al., 2014). In light of the multiple cultural backgrounds of major stakeholder groups in TNHE, research points out that CoPs are of essential value as they enable staff and students to share resources and practice, to facilitate the enhancement and continuing development of their practice (Keay et al., 2014).

4.3.2   *Characteristics of Communities of Practice*

According to Wenger et al., communities of practice share a basic structure (2002), which is a unique combination of three fundamental elements: a domain of knowledge (in the TNHE context this is related to the TNHE models); a community of people who care about this domain; and the shared practice that the communities are developing to be effective in their domain (2002).

"Practice", as one of the fundamental elements of communities of practice, refers to a set of frameworks, ideas, tools, information, artefacts and documents, which the community members share (Wenger, 1998). The defined practice is the specific knowledge which the community develops, shares and maintains. The meaning of "mutual engagement", "joint enterprise" and "shared repertoire" form the dimension of "practice" in the framework of CoPs; they are the key dimensions to be further discussed in the following sections. Scholars have identified that these three elements are the paramount elements in making communities of practice a form of social learning (Brown and Duguid, 1998; Wenger, 1998; Gherardi et al., 1998; Carlile, 2002). The following sections will outline how communities of practice in TNHE are engaged to interact within the three dimensions of mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoire.

4.3.2.1 *Dimension of Joint Enterprise and its relevance to TNHE*

Joint enterprise, as one of the dimensions of practice, provides an essential source of community coherence (Wenger, 1998). Joint enterprise is not just a stated goal; it creates among participants relations of mutual accountability that become an integral part of the practice. The joint enterprise is joint because it is communally negotiated. Mutual accountability is an important element of joint enterprise (Wenger et al., 2002); negotiating joint enterprises manifests relations of mutual accountability within the CoPs.

Since communities of practice are not self-contained entities and do not require homogeneity, a joint enterprise might have some disagreement and the participants will negotiate and shape the practice (Wenger, 1998, 2010; Wenger et al., 2002). Putting the above features in the context of TNHE, the dimension of joint enterprise explains the

"why" aspect of the existence of different levels of communities. Given the complexity of the operation of TNHE, membership of communities of practice include some diverse groups of managers, students and staff who have different commitments and goals in the course of TNHE delivery. How these members share the mutual accountability and negotiate concerns for themselves and other members may depend on various settings and domains within the TNHE models. Exploring staffs' commitment and expertise in the joint enterprise of providing a high quality TNHE experiences will therefore be part of the investigations in this study. As suggested by Keay et al.:

> "While not all TNE is collaborative in its provision, there is arguably a mutual vested interest, between those working in the home institution and overseas, in the quality of the activity undertaken. Therefore, opportunities for joint working can be fostered as an approach" (2014:262).

4.3.2.2   *Dimension of Mutual Engagement and its Relevance to TNHE*

The mutual engagement of participants (Wenger, 1998; Wenger et al., 2002) forms another essential dimension of CoPs. With the concept of mutual engagement, Wenger has constructed the definition of "membership", in which a community of practice is not just a group of people defined by some characteristic (1998). It was suggested that there should be an essential component in any practice which makes mutual engagement happen; such an essential component most often consists of activities in which the participants are engaged as a group. Moreover, according to Wenger, what makes engagement in practice possible and productive is "diversity", in which participants interact and connect in ways that can foster relationships. In this study, the nature of diversity may refer to different cultural backgrounds of the community members, which is an essential point in constituting the interculturality of TNHE communities. A concept of "rhythm" is developed within the dimension of mutual

engagement to delineate ways to cultivate communication within communities (Wenger et al., 2002). The concept of rhythm is essential in the TNHE context as it refers to the pulse of how staff and students interact across geographical and cultural distance. The rhythm of interaction, in the TNHE context, include regularities and frequencies of face to face contacts, meetings through physical encounters or virtual platforms, and other forms of interaction, they are influential in shaping the interculturality of TNHE.

The dimension of mutual engagement explains "how" the communities of practice interact. In the TNHE context, membership of communities of practice includes the staff of partnering institutions, students, and external members. These members, with great diversity in terms of their background and roles in TNHE, are mutually engaged with interacting within the TNHE delivery process. Given the complexity of the process of interaction within the transnational setting, scholars argue that nurturing communities of practice to include cross-cultural members would lead to long term benefits for TNHE (Dunn and Wallace, 2005). In TNHE's terms, the rhythms of the mutual engagement as well as the regularity of the engagement of staff and students are dependent on the distinctive TNHE models. In essence, the dimension of mutual engagement includes a mixture of joint physical and virtual interaction between staff and students from local and TNHE awarding institutions.

4.3.2.3   *Dimension of Shared Repertoire and its relevance to TNHE*

According to Wenger, "the repertoire of a community of practice includes routines, words, tool, symbols, genres … that the community has produced or adopted in the course of its existence, and which have become part of its practice" (1998:82). The repertoire of a community refers to the artefacts that record how the community interacts and practices. It reflects the history of mutual engagement (1998). In the

TNHE context, the repertoire of the communities reflects "what" the communities produce during their interaction and practice sharing. The repertoire might involve different artefacts, systems, mechanisms such as any quality assurance manuals, operation and management manuals, module notes and handbooks which are shared between members of the communities. Some of this suggested repertoire provides guidance for the TNHE operation; some others reflect a history of mutual engagement and hence allow further engagement in practice for new members. This study will later examine the nature of the artefacts and information shared between the members of communities, alongside the details of practice within each model of TNHE delivery.

In sum, according to Wenger (1991, 1998) and Wenger et al. (2002), the concept of communities of practice outlines how a group of people (community) constructs knowledge in a domain (domain) within the process of practice (practice). There are elements of joint enterprise (why), mutual engagement (how) and shared repertoire (what) within the dimension of practice. When members of CoPs interact and share knowledge they eventually learn from each other's practice and construct knowledge.

4.3.3   *Deconstructing the Concept of Communities of Practice: Critical Perspectives*

While the concept of communities of practice has become an increasingly influential model of learning, organisation and creativity in higher education, this section seeks to critique the concept and to review how communities of practice are limited, in particular within the context of transnational higher education. The following critiques aim to deconstruct the concept from multiple perspectives, and to analyse its relevance as well as applicability to TNHE.

First of all, the different interpretations of the concept of CoPs have led to some misuses of the concept (Tummons, 2012, 2014) and make it challenging to apply the concept or take full advantage of the benefits which the concept of CoPs offers (Li et al., 2009). Since the introduction of the term communities of practice in 1991 as a social form of learning (Lave and Wenger, 1991), Wenger (1998) has extended the concept to set some parameters for the dimensions of practice, and to apply the extended concept to other domains to include business organisations (Li et al., 2009). With the increasing need for improved knowledge management, people use the term CoP for ways of promoting innovation, a management tool for developing social capital and facilitating peer learning for knowledge construction (Wenger, 2006, 2012, 2016; Wenger et al., 2002; Probst and Borzillo, 2008), which to some extent deviates from the original concept of it being an intellectual discourse.

Scholars argue that the concept has gone through a journey of transformation, from being an academic model to a practitioner instrument of knowledge management (Hughes, 2007b; Li et al., 2009). The intellectual foundations of the concept of CoPs were first laid by Lave and Wenger to indicate a social learning process through participation in communities (1991). When applying the theory to the workplace, the concept has gradually morphed into a set of instruments for knowledge management. In this reading, the earlier conceptualisations of learning through participation (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998) have been transformed to a knowledge management tool which ought to enhance organisational management (Wenger, 2010; 2016).

However, in higher education, some scholars argue that there is misuse and misunderstanding of CoPs which calls for a critical reappraisal of the framework. For example, scholars have critiqued some misinterpretation of the framework of CoPs as

not being relevant to pedagogy in higher education due to its rejection of a formal instruction approach (Tummons, 2012, 2014). Elsewhere, Tummons also discusses several examples of insufficient use of the framework to illustrate that there is "insufficient understanding to define or describe where these communities are, what their practices are and how their repertoires are consulted and so on …." (2014:126). Tummon's arguments put in place an essential view that the elements of practice and the dimensions of joint enterprise, mutual engagement" and shared repertoire form the basic and essential structure of the framework of CoPs.

In view of the above, it is of paramount importance to highlight the positionality of the framework of communities of practice as a theory of social learning in this study. In the context of this study, the concept of CoPs informs the process of how, under a domain of knowledge, a group of people can interact, and share practice within a process of social interaction (Wenger, 1998). Central to this learning theory is the concept of community, which creates a social structure to facilitate learning through interactions and linking up with others (Bandura, 1977; Wenger, 1998). The concept is closely related to TNHE delivery, where staff, students and managers from diverse cultural backgrounds are mutually engaged in specific rhythms of face to face contacts and meetings, to nurture some form of intercultural interaction and interculturality of TNHE.

Secondly, the concept of communities of practice is seen to overlook the uneven power dynamics in communities and organisations, which is essential for any knowledge creation and dissemination (Roberts, 2006; Fuller, 2007; Veenswijk and Chrisalita, 2011). In contemporary workplaces, stability and harmony might not be guaranteed, and there are bound to be power dynamics in which community members may not necessarily develop beyond a position of peripheral participation (Roberts, 2006, 2011;

Fuller, 2007). In response to the critique, Wenger has argued that the focus of the theory of CoPs is in learning instead of power; hence the self-generating character of CoPs obscures the degree of influence by power structures (Wenger, 2010). The criticism of overlooking the power dynamics may in fact be relevant to some current practices in the TNHE context, where power structures may have influenced interaction processes. For example, scholars have observed that within different models of TNHE partnerships, power and cultural politics between the home institutions and the partnering institutions do exist (McBurnie and Ziguras, 2007; Dunn and Wallace, 2006). Others have advocated moving TNHE partnerships towards a more collaborative approach where power distance between TNHE awarding institutions and their partners can be minimised (Djerasimovic, 2014; Caruana and Montgomery, 2015; Pyris, 2011; Otten, 2009).

In addition to that, the emphasis of communities of practice on the presence of a relationship of trust between individuals indicates that there is a need to share a high degree of mutual understanding. It has been argued that trust, familiarity and mutual understanding, developed in their social and cultural contexts, are prerequisites for the successful transfer of knowledge (Roberts, 2006; Amin and Roberts, 2008). Hence, in practice, it is the nature of the relationship that plays an essential role in determining the success of a community of practice. (Fuller, 2007; Anand, 2016). Given the complexity of the nature of TNHE, in which communities include diverse groups of members from different professional and cultural backgrounds, the ways in which members can build up a more trusting relationship for knowledge construction remain one of the key challenges for the delivery of TNHE.

The limits of size and territorial development and spatial reach of communities of practice have also been of much concern (Roberts, 2006; Amin and Roberts, 2008; Hermandrud, 2016). Along this line of discussion, it is worth highlighting that the conventional approaches of CoPs are often locality-based (Lave and Wenger, 1991), which has overlooked the emerging changes of organisations in global and international settings. With the geographical and cultural distance between the transnational communities, it has been argued that communities in TNHE partnerships may operate across large distances, causing limitation for these communities to share practice in regular rhythm. To this, the rapid development of virtual platforms in recent years has served to support the communication of TNHE communities and helped extend the spatial reach of communities. However, with human connections still being at the heart of the digital learning age (von Konsky and Oliver, 2012), TNHE models with face to face contacts are still more popular with students (Alam et al., 2013). The notion of the limited spatial reach of CoPs has posed some challenges in the TNHE context, which is a knowledge gap in current studies of CoPs. It is worth highlighting that one of the major aims of this study is to adopt a new approach to the framework of CoPs through the concept of interculturality, and by analysing the intercultural interaction of communities of practice in the TNHE context.

The idea of community of practice is also limited according to Engestrom, who argues that the CoP is a fairly well bounded concept with clear boundaries and membership criteria. It has "a single centre of supreme skills and authority, typically embodied in the master; and that it is characterised by movement from the periphery towards the centre, from novice to master, from marginal to fully legitimate participation" (2007:40). According to Engestrom, communities interact with a high level of diversity in

knowledge and skills, and that such a notion as apprenticeship is deemed to be out of date since boundaries of groups are less fixed in modern societies.

These challenges and critiques, as outlined above, have deconstructed Wenger's theoretical framework of CoPs and have brought different perspectives on how CoPs should be considered in the higher education environments in Hong Kong. In order to embrace the complexity of TNHE, we shall further reflect upon Lave and Wenger's concept with the above critics, to approach the concept with an intercultural lens and to investigate the intercultural interaction of TNHE communities.

4.3.4 Reconstructing the Concept of Communities of Practice in the Context of TNHE

So far we have appraised the theoretical perspectives and critiques of CoPs. This section seeks to appraise how communities of practice emerged in TNHE to enhance the experiences of staff and learners. Previous research examining the development of communities of practice in TNHE will be reviewed to reconstruct the framework of CoPs in the context of this study.

4.3.4.1 Evolution of Communities of Practice in TNHE

The delivery of transnational education programmes requires substantial input from professionals from multidisciplinary and multicultural backgrounds. Because of the rapid growth of TNHE as well as its impact on higher education, the intercultural communities have become dynamic and complex in nature. According to Wenger (2010) and Wenger et al. (2002), the dynamic nature of communities is the most important factor in their evolution. As the community grows, new members bring new interests and knowledge into the community, which might change the direction of the community. Wenger's notion of communities of practice and their evolution describes

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a continuing opportunity for commitment to be directed towards the process of developing effective TNHE relationships (Keay et al., 2014), which are built on intercultural interaction. Evolution is essential to the development of communities (Wenger et al., 2002; Li et al., 2009; Omidvar and Kislov, 2014), and central to this principle is the relevance of intercultural interaction and practice sharing for the continuing evolution and development of TNHE communities of practice. In view of this, recent reports and literature suggest that equitable partnership with intercultural interaction would be key to facilitating future evolution of communities of practice in TNHE (Hackett, 2016; Djerasimovic, 2014).

Having interaction with multiple stakeholders is also seen to be essential for the evolution of communities of practice (Wenger, 2002; Tummons, 2014). Through interaction, communities of practice help members to see new possibilities (Wenger et al., 2002). In fact, in order to develop positionality and marketability of TNHE programmes, universities are developing engagement and partnerships with industry and policy makers as well as with international agencies such as the British Council and the Higher Education Academy (British Council, 2010, 2013, 2014; Mellors-Bourne et al., 2015). It is within such contexts that TNHE communities naturally evolve and share knowledge to make sense of new knowledge (Wenger, 2010).

In addition to that, the evolution of communities of practice is also reliant on being "rich in connections that happen both in the public spaces of the community … and the private space, the one-on-one networking of community members" (Wenger et al., 2002:58). Building up both public and private spaces for CoPs in the digital age is becoming one of the key dimensions of CoPs. For example, TNHE offering universities such as RMIT in Australia have set up a dedicated online platform

"Transnational Teaching Quick Guide" (RMIT Australia, 2015) to provide both public and private places for teachers of TNHE to share knowledge. Communities of practice gradually evolve upon such virtual platforms, where teachers of TNHE can interact with others and gain peer support. More importantly, they can share practice and knowledge of their transnational teaching, and formulate some form of social interaction and knowledge sharing amongst the members. Similar sector-wide platforms and public networks have also been established by government and international agencies such as the British Council and the Higher Education Academy to promote practice sharing (British Council, 2010, 2011, 2014). These online knowledge sharing platforms provide virtual spaces for interactions between institutions, staff and students, in which communities of practice in TNHE naturally evolve and interact to construct intercultural learning.

In sum, the development of virtual space for TNHE has extended the spatial reach and public space for communities of TNHE to interact and evolve. In fact, with the rapid development of virtual platforms, the complexity of TNHE communities of practice in the digital age is a topic to be further researched.

4.3.4.2   *Developing Rhythms for Communities of Practice in TNHE*

The rhythm of a community is seen to be significant in the process of interaction and learning among members (Wenger at al., 2002; Wenger, 2016). In the context of TNHE, the rhythm of communities may refer to the regularities and frequencies of interactions and contacts between members with cultural and geographical distance. In different TNHE models there are different regularities of contacts through both face to face and virtual platforms. For example, in some models intensive teaching visits are conducted by the awarding institutions (British Council, 2013, 2014). In the transnational and

intercultural context, there are also synchronous rhythms of virtual interactions between transnational community members in view of the global time differences. The pulses and frequencies of the interaction between home institutions and offshore staff and students are closely related to how TNHE programmes are perceived (Leung and Walters, 2013a, 2013b). Building communities of practice with strong interaction and well-paced rhythms is seen to be essential to address existing challenges of TNHE, and to provide students with an improved quality learning experience (Keay et al., 2014; Kim, 2009). The concept of rhythm is also significant for the nurturing of intercultural communities of practice and will be further investigated in case studies later in this study.

Based on the concepts and the literature studied in this chapter, Table 4.1 below summarises the elements discussed as representing the framework of communities of practice in the context of TNHE. With an aim of reconstructing communities of practice as an academic model of social learning in TNHE, the dimensions of "joint enterprise", "mutual engagement" and "shared repertoire" are of paramount significance to this study. The three elements inform the why, how and what aspects of intercultural interaction between TNHE staff and students. Instead of viewing communities of practice as being a practical tool which is developed step by step, the evolving nature of CoPs with specific rhythms is significant for this study and is to be highlighted in the rest of the study.

Table 4.1 - Highlights of Definitions of Communities and their Practices in TNHE

	Domain	*Community*	*Practice*		
			Joint enterprise	*Mutual Engagement*	*Shared Repertoire*
TNHE Models	• knowledge about delivering transnational education programmes from overseas to Hong Kong	• staff, students, professionals, employers from overseas and local	• mission of the institution • educational aims of the TNHE programmes • students' aspirations in career development	• rhythms of teaching and learning activities • rhythms of industrial engagement activities	• operation manuals • shared teaching materials • shared student artefacts • handbooks and information packages related to TNHE programmes

4.3.5 Concluding Remarks on Communities of Practice

Wenger's early work (1991, 1998) is significant in establishing the relations between learning and practice, while his later work (2009, 2010, 2016) has focused on developing communities of practice as an instrument for organisational management and knowledge management (Omidvar and Kislov, 2014). For the purpose of this study, the concept of communities of practice is viewed as a social and cultural learning process, to illustrate how TNHE institutions, staff and students construct intercultural interaction and learning through their practice in TNHE. This view is adopted in accordance with Wenger's model of CoPs developed in his earlier work, where he indicated that a strong learning community fosters interactions and relationships based on mutual respect and trust. Being a powerful manifestation of social learning (Bates, 2014), communities of practice create a social structure for individuals to share ideas and artefacts (in forms of stories, documents, recordings) that support community activities and help individuals make sense of new knowledge (Wenger, 2010 and Wenger et al., 2002).

The concept of CoPs is gaining popular application from the perspectives of knowledge management and organisational management (Hughes, 2007a; Tummons, 2014). In fact, the notion of social learning specified by communities of practice is also receiving much attention in higher education (McDonald and Cater-Steel, 2017: xi). However, so far there is a shortage of research investigating the intercultural interaction and interculturality of TNHE using the concept of communities of practice as an academic model of social learning. Building upon the literature reviewed in this chapter, this study will adopt a new perspective to approach communities of practice so as to investigate intercultural interaction and interculturality in TNHE, and to advance some new knowledge in developing intercultural communities of practice in transnational higher education.

In sum, the dynamic changes in higher education have shaped the complexity of TNHE delivery, and the new approach of communities of practice in interculturality offers intellectual advancement in understanding the intercultural interaction of TNHE communities which brings added value to the future of TNHE development. In the following sections, the framework of intercultural interaction as well as interculturality will be studied and analysed, to develop a new conceptual framework for this study.

4.4   Conceptualising Interculturality in Transnational Higher Education

So far, in the course of establishing the conceptual framework for this study, the concept of communities of practice has been studied and discussed, with the focus on how the concept is related to the development of intercultural interaction for TNHE stakeholders. In the course of TNHE delivery, members of TNHE communities build up their intercultural competence through intercultural interaction and practice sharing, resulting in the evolution of some distinctive forms of intercultural communities of

practice within different TNHE delivery models. In this study, the set of processes in intercultural interaction and its nurturing of intercultural communities of practice are referred to as "interculturality". The concept of interculturality will be examined in this section, in order to develop a conceptual framework for this study.

According to Learn NC (2015), the notion of "interculturality" simply refers to "the interaction of people from different cultural backgrounds." In a more nuanced assessment, Leclercq (2005:7) refers interculturality as a process of constructing relationships between different cultures, and defines the notion as:

> "the set of processes through which relations between different cultures are constructed. The aim is to enable groups and individuals who belong to such cultures within a single society or geopolitical entity to forge links based on equity and mutual respect."

Dervin (2016:2) describes this notion of interculturality "as one which translates as a process and something in the making". He points out that interculturality is not a new phenomenon and that the process of interculturality should be related to the discourse of "globalisation", in which "education is probably one of the best places to learn about practice and reflect on interculturality, something we rarely have time to do outside this context" (Dervin, 2016:2). His views suggest that interculturality emerges from the forces of globalisation and leads to increasing intercultural exchange and impact both economically and culturally. Due to the increasing privatisation of higher education within the context of neoliberal globalisation, programme mobility has not only led to the mobility of people and knowledge, but also to the mobility of culture (Dervin, 2016; Montgomery, 2014), which provides rich opportunities to bring the benefits and value of intercultural interaction to staff and students.

On the other hand, Kim (2009:395-6) relates interculturality to a form of relationship between cultural groups, and defines the concept as:

> "the existence of a relation based on mutual understanding and interaction between the people who belong to various cultural groups. Interculturality goes beyond a mere 'tolerance of the other'. It requires engagement and can involve creative abilities that convert challenges and insights into innovation processes and into new forms of expression."

Table 4.2 below seeks to summarise the key dimensions of the concept of interculturality within the above three discussed models:

Table 4.2 - Defining Interculturality

	Definitions
Dervin (2016)	not a new phenomenon; a notion which translates as a process of cultural exchanges, and is related to globalisation.
Kim (2009)	a form of relationship between cultural groups.
Leclercq (2005)	a set of processes through which relations between different cultures are constructed. The aim is to enable groups and individuals who belong to such cultures within a single society or geopolitical entity to forge links based on equity and mutual respect.

The above definitions of interculturality suggest that the concept of interculturality is constructed on relationships between different cultural groups and it is related to the forces of globalization. In the context of this study, the notion of interculturality is interpreted as a set of intercultural processes driven by globalisation, to constitute relationships between people from different cultures. While there is an increasing need to advance knowledge and practice in intercultural learning in TNHE, scholars suggest that promoting intercultural interaction and understanding may benefit future development of TNHE (Kim, 2009).

The concept of interculturality is central to an understanding of the research questions posed in this study. The discourse of "nurturing interculturality and intercultural interaction through communities of practice" provides an overarching framework for understanding the details of intercultural learning, and forms the major component of the academic explorations in this study.

4.4.1 Rhythms of Communities of Practice and the Development of Interculturality in TNHE

The literature reviewed in this chapter suggests that interculturality in TNHE is developed through a process of intercultural interaction between intercultural TNHE communities of practice (Otten, 2009). Within the process of TNHE delivery, communities of practice are mutually engaged in negotiating the practice, with interaction in specific rhythms from distinctive TNHE models. The rhythms of interaction include pulses and regularities of physical and virtual contacts and practice sharing, which are of paramount importance in negotiating interculturality. In fact, the negotiation of interculturality in higher education is also related to the development of intercultural communities of practice and the rhythms of their interaction (Otten, 2009; Nedic and Nafalski, 2011). As communities with diverse cultural composition interact with specific pulses and rhythms (Wenger et al., 2002), intercultural competence is developed to enhance their ways of intercultural interaction. This is the nurturing process of interculturality of TNHE, a significant by-product of intercultural interaction, which adds to the value of TNHE. In order to answer the research question of how interculturality is developed through distinctive forms of communities of practice in TNHE, the study will adopt case study investigations to examine the process of intercultural interaction between institutions, staff and students of the three TNHE models studied in the previous chapter.

4.5   Conceptualising Intercultural Interaction in Transnational Higher Education

So far we have examined the notion of interculturality in the context of TNHE, which comprises of a range of sub-concepts that are relevant to this study, including intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2009), global competence (Hunter, et al., 2006), intercultural communication, and intercultural awareness (Spitzberg and Changnon, 2009). However it is not possible to explore all of them in this study, the following section will focus on discussing the concept of intercultural competence which is most relevant to this study and is most related to the framework of CoPs; as well as intercultural interaction in TNHE.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the impact of globalisation on internationalisation of higher education is significant (Maringe, 2009; Altbach and Knight, 2007; Montgomery, 2014). With the process of globalisation, the distance and time between countries is being minimised (Caruana and Montgomery, 2015), leading to increasing cultural interactions (Maringe, 2009; Cohen and Kennedy, 2007).   In globalised societies, employers tend to look for people who are competent in intercultural exchange (Mellors-Bourne et al., 2015; Jones, 2013). To this end, the development of intercultural competence is vitally important for individuals in the era of globalisation, where people have to live and work productively and harmoniously with people with different values and backgrounds (Bok, 2009). Transnational education delivery, as a product driven by the forces of globalisation, requires participants to be culturally competent in order to deliver meaningful intercultural experiences to staff and students. Given the unique nature of TNHE as a form of education, many managers and scholars in higher education are ready to accept that national culture may influence the ways students and staff relate to each other, and so there is an increasing need to reflect upon

the value of TNHE in promoting intercultural learning and interaction for staff and students (Pyvis, 2011; Dunn and Wallace, 2008; Caruana and Montgomery, 2015).

The following section will review literature that conceptualises the discourse of nurturing intercultural competence through intercultural interaction. Later in this section, we shall also discuss how the components of intercultural competence lead to the negotiating process of interculturality of TNHE.

4.5.1   *Conceptualising Intercultural Competence*

The concept of intercultural competence describes the abilities and competence of people to interact in intercultural circumstances. The concept is essential to the understanding of interculturality (Medina-Lopez-Portillom and Sinnigen, 2009); it is the enabler of interculturality and is an important concept for outlining how TNHE communities interact.

Intercultural competence is defined as:

> "having adequate knowledge about particular cultures, as well as general knowledge about the sorts of issues arising when members of different cultures interact, holding receptive attitudes that encourage establishing and maintaining contact with diverse others, as well as having the skills required to draw upon both knowledge and attitudes when interacting with others from different cultures" (UNESCO, 2013).

In the above definition, dimensions of "skills", "attitude" and "knowledge" are highlighted. Two models of intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2009; Byram, 2008) will be selected to consider the importance of the three dimensions of skills, attitude and knowledge in the development of intercultural competence.

Deardorff (2009)'s "Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence" comprises a set of research-based components of intercultural competence, the model of which is presented in Figure 4.1 below.

Figure 4.1 - Deardorff's Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence [Adapted from Deardorff (2006)]

Desired External Outcome
Behaving and communicating effectively and appropriately (based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes) to achieve one's goals to some degree

Desired Internal Outcome
(Informed frame of reference / filter shift)
- Adaptability (to different communication styles and behaviours; adjustment to new cultural environments)
- Flexibility (selecting and using appropriate communication styles and behaviours; cognitive flexibility)
- Empathy

Knowledge and Comprehension	**Skills**
• Cultural self-awareness	• Listen
• Deep understanding and knowledge of culture (including context, role and impact of culture and others' worldviews)	• Observe
	• Interpret
	• Analyse
• Culture-specific information	• Analyse
• Sociolinguistic awareness	• Relate

Requisite Attitudes
- Respect (valuing other cultures, cultural diversity)
- Openness (to intercultural learning and to people from other cultures, withholding judgement)
- Curiosity and discovery (tolerating ambiguity and uncertainty)

Figure 4.1 presents a model of intercultural competence comprising the process (how) and components (what), which is developed as a process model to identify attitudes that facilitate intercultural competence. In this model, attitudes are enhanced by a range of knowledge and competence (including knowledge of cultural self-awareness, deep cultural knowledge, and social linguistics knowledge, as well as skills to listen, to observe, to analyse, to analyse, to interpret and relate). These aspects of attitudes,

knowledge and skills follow a path of interaction and facilitation, to develop a range of

desirable outcomes for an interculturally competent individual to behave and

communicate effectively and appropriately in an intercultural setting (Spitzberg and

Changnon, 2009).

Similarly, Byram (2008) develops a theme of intercultural competence seeking to

identify how a person should be equipped to interact with people of a different culture.

Figure 4.2 below summarises components for developing intercultural competence, as

illustrated by Byram. This model delineates intercultural competence within the three

dimensions in "skills, knowledge and attributes". According to Byram, an intercultural

speaker is more of a mediator between cultures, able to negotiate and communicate

between the cultures and able to combine aspects of cultures in performance. The most

competent intercultural mediators are:

> "those who have an understanding of the relationship between
> their own language and language varieties and their own culture
> and cultures of different social groups in their society, on the
> one hand, and the language (varieties) and cultures of others,
> between (inter) which they find themselves acting as mediators"
> (Byram, 2003:61).

Figure 4.2 - Factors of Byram's Intercultural Competence

	Skills interpret and relate (savoir comprendre)	
Knowledge of self and other; of interaction: individual and societal (savoir)	**Education** critical cultural awareness (savoir s'engager)	**Attributes** relativising self-valuing other (savoir être)
	Skills discover and/or interact (savoir apprendre/faire)	

In sum, the two models of intercultural competence highlight the importance of three components, i.e. knowledge, skills and attitudes, in the course of developing intercultural competence. Table 4.3 below compares the key characteristics and factors of intercultural competence, as identified by Deardorff and Byram.

Table 4.3 - Key Characteristics and Factors of Intercultural Competence

	Deardorff's Process Model	*Byram's Factors of Intercultural Competence*
Attitudes	● respect ● openness ● curiosity and discovery	● relativising self-valuing other
Knowledge	● cultural self-awareness ● deep cultural knowledge ● socio-linguistic awareness	● of self and other ● of interaction: individual and societal
Skills	● to listen ● to observe ● to analyse ● to analyse ● to interpret ● to relate	● to interpret ● to relate ● to discover ● to interact
Outcomes	● informed frame of reference shift (adaptability, flexibility, empathy) ● effective and appropriate communication and behaviour in an intercultural situation	● critical cultural awareness

The two models above are selected due to their strong emphasis on the elements of knowledge, attitudes and skills, in negotiating interaction effectively with others from diverse cultural backgrounds. Given the complexity of TNHE, the concept of intercultural competence is essential for understanding how people interact within the intercultural contexts (UNESCO, 2013). Understanding the concept of intercultural competence would enable TNHE staff and students to interact in intercultural environments, and to nurture positive experiences in the context of TNHE (Spitzberg and Changnon, 2009; Trahar, 2011; McBurnie and Ziguras, 2007; Keay et al., 2014).

4.5.2 The Importance of Intercultural Competence for Developing Intercultural Communities of Practice in TNHE

The components of attitudes, skills and knowledge within the concept of intercultural competence are inter-related and they are of paramount importance to the intercultural interaction of TNHE communities. The two discourses influence each other to form an essential dimension informing how TNHE staff and students negotiate the process of interculturality in the transnational context.

Previous studies have shown that intercultural competence can be nurtured through the process of social learning, and is related to communities of practice (Cajander et al., 2012; Nedic and Nafalski, 2011). The dimension of social learning in CoPs and peer interaction is central to the nurturing of intercultural competence (Cajander et al., 2012; Nedic and Nafalski, 2011). Cajander et al. (2012) argues that when members of communities of practice are mutually engaged in negotiating the process of intercultural interaction (Wenger, 1998), the skills, attitudes and knowledge specified by models of intercultural competence contributes to the process of intercultural interaction (Hoyte et al., 2010; Nedic and Nafalski, 2011). In the TNHE context, communities of practice are seen to be a suitable platform in which staff and students develop intercultural skills through a mixture of face to face and virtual interaction (Nedic and Nafalski 2011). In sum, social interaction and peer influence is of great value in nurturing intercultural competence (Francois, 2016), and such interaction of communities enables intercultural learning to take place (Cajander et al., 2012), leading to the evolution of intercultural communities of practice (Dunn and Wallace, 2006; Otten, 2009).

In light of the TNHE context, intercultural competence is not only related to the intercultural interaction of TNHE communities of practice, but it is also an essential

concept to address a current gap in TNHE practice of better preparing TNHE staff to deliver TNHE programmes. Studies (Paige and Goode, 2009; Gopal, 2011) have found that in the TNHE context, flying faculty and local tutors do not always receive adequate preparation to help foster cultural awareness and intercultural competence among their students (Sia, 2015; Keay et al., 2014; O'Mahony, 2014). A recent study by O'Mahony (2014) found that the development of teaching staff's competence in intercultural interaction is becoming a key issue of concern within TNHE delivery. In view of the increasing concerns about enhancing the intercultural competence of staff engaged in transnational teaching, promoting intercultural interaction and nurturing intercultural competence may greatly help enhance the TNHE practice experience for staff and students.

The literature discussed in this chapter suggests that the concept of intercultural competence is essentially linked to intercultural interaction and communities of practice (Nedic and Nafalski, 2011; Sia, 2015; Cajander et al., 2012). Through the three case studies conducted in the latter part of this research, we shall investigate how TNHE staff and students interact and develop TNHE practice at individual and group levels, while looking into the details of "communities of practice", "intercultural interaction" and the nurturing of "interculturality" developed through distinctive TNHE models.

4.6 Developing the Conceptual Framework for this Study

The previous sections in this chapter examined theoretical perspectives on communities of practice, intercultural competence and interaction, and interculturality, which represent the core conceptual elements of this research. This section aims to integrate the above three concepts related to intercultural interaction and learning, to form the core conceptual framework for this study in response to the knowledge gap identified

earlier for this study. The conceptual framework will guide the research design, the empirical work and the analysis of this study. Leshem and Trafford describe conceptual frameworks as:

> "fulfilling an integrating function between theories that offer explanations of the issues under investigation. Conceptual frameworks also provide a scaffold within which strategies for the research design can be determined, and fieldwork can be undertaken" (2007:99).

In this context, this section explains how the conceptual framework for the research has been developed and how it will be used to guide the investigations of this study. Figure 4.3 below shows the core concepts explored in the study. So far we have reviewed the background, trends and issues of TNHE, together with a number of frameworks and concepts below, which are to be integrated to form the major conceptual framework of the study. The framework will inform the research design, data collection methods and process, as well as the findings and discussion of this study.

Figure 4.3 - Elements of the Conceptual Framework in this Study
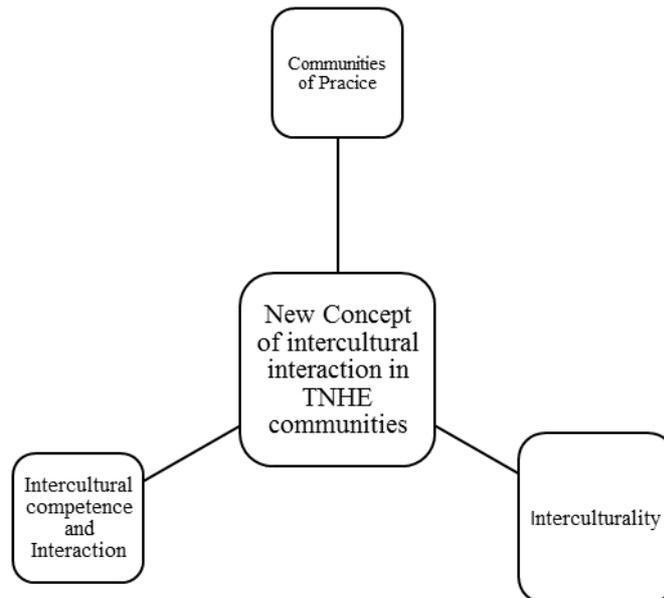
The conceptual framework as shown in Figure 4.3 is generated through a combination of separate sources, and emerged from "appreciation of reading, personal experience and reflection upon theoretical positions towards the phenomena to be investigated" (Leshem and Trafford, 2007:99). These mentioned sources are now integrated through the theoretical frameworks informing the main body of the study, to include: (1) partnership models of TNHE developed in the process of globalisation of higher education (2) theory of communities of practice (3) conceptualisation of intercultural competence and interaction (4) conceptualisation of interculturality in TNHE communities of practice. In conclusion, the conceptual framework in this study includes components of: TNHE models, communities of practice, intercultural competence and interaction; and interculturality. A new discourse in interculturality in TNHE will be developed subsequent to the investigation of the study, with an aim to advance the existing knowledge in TNHE.

4.7   Summary of this Chapter

This chapter reviews literature that has developed the concepts of communities of practice, intercultural competence and interaction, and interculturality, and discusses their relationships with TNHE.   This literature studied in this chapter shows the relevance and linkage between concepts in the context of TNHE.   A conceptual framework has been developed by reviewing the literature.

This chapter delineates the detailed elements within communities of practice and those which contribute to intercultural competence, which in turn is the most essential component of intercultural interaction. Theories and discourses of intercultural communities of practice and intercultural interaction have then been explored to extend the original concept of communities of practice.

This chapter further argues that the great challenge to grow communities of practice in the TNHE context can be addressed by the discourse of interculturality, which refers to a set of intercultural processes nurtured through intercultural interaction between intercultural TNHE communities of practice.   The evolving nature of communities of practice as a social form of learning is essential for the development of interculturality. In the course of intercultural interaction, intercultural communities of practice share practice and knowledge and develop understanding and empathy towards people from other cultural backgrounds, leading to the process of evolution and learning in TNHE. Subsequent case study investigations will discuss the details of three cases to develop a new concept related to interculturality in TNHE, aiming to bring long terms benefits to enhance the experience for staff and students in TNHE communities.

CHAPTER 5 - METHODOLOGY

5.1　Overview and Organisation of this Chapter

This study aims to investigate the phenomenon of transnational higher education, with a particular focus on how intercultural interaction can be fostered. The study also analyses the role of transnational higher education models in nurturing interculturality through communities of practice. In addition to the above, the study tries to interpret different TNHE models from social and cultural perspectives and is concerned with the "what", "why" and "how" of TNHE, orienting the nature of this inquiry towards an interpretivist paradigm. This chapter aims to introduce the research approach and design of this study. It also explains the data collection methods, and seeks to justify the approaches used in the study.

The central aim of this study is to understand the phenomenon of TNHE; a form of education which the researcher builds her professional experiences upon. Hence, the research uses interpretive perspectives, in which a qualitative approach is adopted. With an aim of developing an in-depth understanding of TNHE, this study adopts a case study approach, using focus group interviews and individual interviews for data collection, and qualitative thematic analysis to interpret the data collected. The relationship between the methodology and the empirical work will be discussed throughout this chapter.

Denzin and Lincoln set out the discipline and practice of qualitative research into five phases, namely; Phase 1: the researcher as a multicultural subject; Phase 2: theoretical paradigms and perspectives; Phase 3: strategy of inquiry and interpretive paradigms; Phase 4: methods of collection and analysis and Phase 5: the art, practices, and politics of interpretation and evaluation (2011:12).

These five phases of the research process will be used as the guiding framework within the research process and will guide the presentation of this chapter. Justifications for the selection of a qualitative approach within the interpretivist paradigm; details of the inquiry strategies and data collection method by case studies, will be discussed. This chapter will also provide justifications for the selection of the cases and the backgrounds of the participating higher education institutions. Furthermore, the latter part of this chapter will explain the instrumentation for data collection strategies, their process and administration procedures. In the final part of this chapter, the data analysis methods will be outlined in detail.

5.2   Phase 1: The Researcher

I have always been fascinated by the arts, history and literature in different cultural contexts. I chose to do my undergraduate study in literature, and that study has greatly nurtured my interest in intercultural learning in the arts and cultural contexts. Through my explorations in comparative and international literature, I became very interested in communicating with people from different cultural backgrounds. Such aspirations in understanding different cultures have influenced my career development in international education over the past decade. As an education practitioner working in higher education institutions in Hong Kong, I have had substantial experience in the development and management of TNHE programmes in Hong Kong. This special role has driven me to explore my professional and personal networks with universities in the

UK, Australia, Malaysia, China, and Taiwan who are active in delivering TNHE across different parts of the world.

Over these years, my professional practice in TNHE has brought some invaluable learning experiences to my career. I have a strong belief that the value of TNHE is not just related to the academic awards, but more importantly, to the intercultural experiences offered to staff and students for them to learn collaboratively. In connection with my intercultural experience through the TNHE context, I decided to select a topic of research in this area to explore how TNHE can nurture intercultural interaction and learning between staff and students.

As indicated in the previous chapters, the development of TNHE has been a very complicated process throughout the last decade. Activities and strategies of the major players have been greatly influenced by the process of globalisation and shifting governmental policies. It would have been very difficult to conduct research in this field without relevant experience and networks in TNHE. During the research process, I was able to bring my own professional experience to interact with the participants, and I found my knowledge and experience in this field to be an essential part of the research process. As a practitioner in TNHE, I have found this research has not only enhanced my professional knowledge, but the research process has also provided me with some different perspectives and reflections with regard to the practice of TNHE.

As Reed and Procter identified, there are a few 'idealised' criteria for practitioner research, research of this nature should be: a social process undertaken with colleagues; focused upon aspects of practice over which the researcher has some control and in which the researcher can initiate change; capable of identifying and exploring socio-

political and historical factors affecting practice; capable of exercising the professional imagination and enhancing the capacity of participants to interpret everyday action in the work setting; capable of integrating personal and professional learning; and likely to yield insights which can be conveyed in a form which make them worthy of interest to a wider audience (1995:195).

As a practitioner of international education, I have greatly enjoyed and appreciated the research experience, which has provided opportunities for my interacting with staff and students from other institutions and sharing their TNHE experiences, some of which are different from my practice and understanding. On the other hand, there are challenges to practitioner research as there may be lack of distance between the researcher and the participants, to which some possible bias may occur. On reflection, the process of the study has enabled me to reappraise the practice of TNHE in different contexts, and, more importantly, the experience of interacting with the student groups as well as with other academic teams involved in transnational education has been invaluable to me. After the completion of the data collection, I have kept in touch with some academic staff who participated in the study, and together we formed a "transnational community of practice" quite naturally, to share information, updates and practice in international education.

5.3 Phase 2: Research Philosophy – Interpretivist Paradigms

This study aims to study and analyse the phenomenon of transnational higher education in Hong Kong. It is important first of all to interrogate the research philosophy in order to develop a coherent and logical research strategy.

The nature of this research falls under an interpretivist paradigm. The paradigm implies that individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work.

Individuals therefore develop subjective meanings of their experiences. Such meanings are complex and multiple, leading researchers to look for the complexity of views rather than narrowing meanings into a few categories or ideas (Creswell, 2014). According to Creswell (2014), interpretivist researchers often address the process of interaction among individuals. In interpretivist research, the researcher's intent is to make sense of (i.e. interpret) the meanings others develop about the world. This approach is usually used where complex issues are involved in research, through a variety of qualitative methods, it is considered possible to build up a picture of a social 'reality'.

Crotty's (1998) identification of interpretive research below is worth noting. He assumes that human beings interpret the world they live in and construct meanings; to accommodate this, qualitative researchers tend to use open-ended questions so that participants can share their views. Furthermore, qualitative researchers seek to understand the context through visiting the context and gathering information personally; the interpretation is shaped by the researcher's own experiences and background.

In the interpretivist paradigm, the researcher analyses the collected data, categorises themes and uses a personal lens to make a personal interpretation of a specific socio-political and historical moment (Creswell, 2014). Interpretivist research looks into people's own experiences and interpretations to find meanings at the individual, micro level, and it allows many 'truths' within the social world.

Interpretive researchers study meaningful social action, not just the external observable behaviour of people. The ultimate purpose of conducting social scientific research is to get to know a particular social setting and to see it from the point of view of those in it

(Neuman, 2006). According to Easterby-Smith et al. (2012:59), the essence of interpretivism is that "the reality is determined by people rather than objective and external factors", hence the focus would be on what people are thinking and feeling. He also summarises the methods of interpretivist research and contrasts them with those of positivist research. Table 5.1 below seeks to provide a summary of the interpretivist paradigm, in order to provide a comprehensive explanation of the philosophy of this research. The table also relates his identified categories to the details of this study.

Interpretivism (Bryman, 2012; Holloway and Wheeler, 2010) arises from a philosophy that knowledge is produced by exploring and understanding the social world of the people being studied, and social reality cannot be captured "accurately" because people have different perceptions and understandings. Since facts and values are not absolute, and objective, value-free research is not possible, so the research methods used in the natural sciences are not appropriate for studying the social world. The process of interpretivist research is therefore largely inductive, and researchers construct meanings and interpretations based on those of the participants.

In sum, the use of a qualitative approach to explore the phenomenon TNHE and an interpretivist paradigm to make sense of the learning of the communities that I have observed are intended to provide the kind of understanding that the research topics demand.

Table 5.1 - Summary of the Interpretivist Paradigm (Easterby-Smith, 2012:59)

	Interpretivist Paradigm	*Corresponding Details in this Research*
The Observer	Is part of what is being observed	The research aims to investigate the phenomenon of TNHE. The researcher has been a practitioner of TNHE for over 15 years.
Human interests	Are the main drivers of science	The major theme of this research is related to interculturality and the development of intercultural communities of practice; hence it is largely related to human interests.
Explanations	Aim to increase general understanding of the situation	One of the key purposes of this research is to increase general understanding of the phenomenon of TNHE with particular focus on intercultural interaction and exchange in the development of interculturality.
Research progresses through	Gathering rich data from which ideas are induced	The research will progress through gathering qualitative data from interviews and case studies of TNHE communities of staff and students, from which the ideas are induced.
Concepts	Should incorporate stakeholder perspectives	The research will include methodologies of case study, focus group and individual interviews, to investigate perspectives of different stakeholders of TNHE including managers, teaching staff and students.
Units of analysis	May include the complexity of "whole" situations	The units of analysis in this research are complex. One unit of analysis is a case (a TNHE partnership) which includes various participants within the topic.
Generalisation through	Theoretical abstraction	The generalisation of this research will be through the study of distinctive communities of practice in the TNHE.
Sampling requires	A small number of cases chosen for specific reasons	The major sampling for this research is three particular cases of TNHE partnerships operating in three specific collaborative models.

5.4   Phase 3: Strategy of Inquiry and Interpretivist Paradigms

Phase 3 of the research process begins with research design, which involves a clear focus on what information most appropriately will answer specific research questions, and which strategies are more effective in obtaining such information (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011).

This study aims to provide new understandings of the phenomenon of TNHE, in particular how intercultural communities of practice evolve in different models. The study also adopts micro-perspectives for analysing the role of transnational higher education models in nurturing interculturality through communities of practice. Within the above mission of this research, a qualitative approach was adopted as the strategy of inquiry.

In qualitative approaches, because of closer researcher involvement, the researcher gains an insider's view of the field. This allows the researcher to explore the details of the issues researched and to come up with an in-depth interpretation of these issues. "Qualitative researchers believe that qualitative methods can provide deeper understanding of social phenomena than would be obtained from purely quantitative data" (Silverman, 2013:10).

The nature of inquiry in this research corresponds with the approach described by Denzin and Lincoln (2011). In actual implementation, due to the bulk of textual data and the time required for data collection, analysis and interpretation is lengthy. In a qualitative approach the researcher collects open-ended, emerging data with the intention of developing themes from the data, and then makes this knowledge known based primarily on the multiple meanings of individual experiences (Silverman, 2013).

The method adopted in this study is inductive which means that themes and meanings are generated from data (Creswell, 2014). In this research, the examination of interactions between the UK and Hong Kong staff and students, and of the individual learning process in TNHE are most effectively revealed by qualitative rather than quantitative study. Using a qualitative approach for this study has made it possible for me to follow in-depth the development of each partnership and TNHE practice within different TNHE models. More importantly, the study has provided opportunities for me to interact with different groups of staff and students within the TNHE communities.

5.4.1 *Using Case Studies in the Research Design*

The case study research method was adopted for this study, within the interpretive paradigm. A case study is "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context" (Yin, 2013:13). Case study is a widely used research method for understanding the dynamics present within a single setting. A case study is not a set of instruments for collecting data, but rather it provides a strategic framework for how the study is undertaken and how data collection should actually take place (Robson, 2002). As Yin (2013) puts it, case study research is not just aiming to explore certain phenomena, but also to explore them within a particular context, and it is a methodological approach which can employ a range of research methods.

Case study can take many forms. This study adopts a single case study approach within a multi-site setting, which allows me to investigate some in-depth details of how transnational education (a contemporary phenomenon) is perceived by staff, students and other education practitioners. A multi-site case study offers a means of understanding this phenomenon by illuminating the experiences, implications or effects of the phenomenon in question in more than one setting (Mills 2010). For this study,

three higher education institutions (located in the US and the UK) involved in transnational education provision in Hong Kong were selected as multi-site cases. In each TNHE model of Branch Campus Delivery, Franchised Delivery and Joint Delivery, a partnership involving an overseas university and a Hong Kong institution was selected for this study. Within the three selected models, interviews (focus group interviews and semi-structured individual interviews) were employed as the main research instruments to collect the data.

During the study, the details of their interaction with Hong Kong partners for the transnational higher education provision were investigated. The three cases of the multi-site case study were selected through my professional network which suggests a convenient sampling approach. Yet, the selection of these cases was equally based on the purposive sampling criterion that the three overseas universities delivering TNHE programmes with Hong Kong partners represent the three models of TNHE delivery, i.e. "Branch Campus", "Joint Delivery" and "Franchised Delivery". These models of delivery, as discussed in the literature review chapter, may have a significant impact on the details of operation for the TNHE programmes, and subsequently have implications on how the staff and students interact. Prior to data collection, I have formally invited the senior manager of each institution in these multi-site cases to participate in the study. During the research process, I interacted with staff, students and education managers from these institutions and their partnering institutions, so as to investigate the details of how they interact and share knowledge through the delivery of TNHE programmes. In addition, the research process has also enabled my understanding on how these interaction processes of TNHE staff and students facilitate evolution of distinctive communities of practice and interculturality in TNHE.

5.4.2 Selection of Participating Institutions

The cases were selected with the following considerations. Firstly, I have selected from my professional network a number of overseas universities which are engaged in TNHE activities in the three specific models discussed in this study. Considerations were given to the three selected overseas universities who had more than 10 years' experience in delivering TNHE programmes in other countries. These universities were experienced players in TNHE delivery with well-defined missions and strategies underpinning their international development. Furthermore, the three overseas universities had TNHE partnerships in more than one country, indicating that they established previous TNHE practices within intercultural settings. This experience and practice of the selected institutions may provide a fertile intercultural context to enrich the experience of communities of practice in Hong Kong.

As outlined in the literature review, each TNHE model has a distinctive combination of academic input, roles and responsibilities between the staff of awarding institutions and their local partners (UK Higher Education International Unit, 2016). Hence the models adopted by different institutions have a significant impact on how staff and students interact, and thus determine the formation of intercultural communities of practice. As such, the three cases are seen to represent different and culturally rich settings for the development of interculturality between student and staff groups, which makes the study multi-dimensional. Subsequent to formal consent gained from these institutions, senior managers of the institutions have sent formal invitations to the targeted teaching staff and students to participate in the interviews and focus group interviews. A list of participants was sent to me before the data collection took place. In order to assure participating institutions that every effort has been made to ensure the confidentiality of

the data collected, the study uses pseudonyms for participating institutions and the exact location of the university is not disclosed.

It is worth noting that the three cases were selected within broad disciplinary areas of Built Environment and Design, these disciplines involved professional training to students and practical input from relevant industries which were considered as one of the essential values of TNHE.

The following sections profile each of the selected cases, each case representing a different collaborative model for TNHE delivery. Details of how each model operates will be elaborated in the next chapter.

5.4.2.1   Case A [Branch Campus Model]: American Hong Kong International University (AHKIU)

AHKIU (Branch Campus) is an American university, with an education mission to "prepare talented students for professional careers" (note: reference withheld to protect the anonymity of the institution). The University has long experience in delivering TNHE programmes and has a few branch campuses in different countries. AHKIU (Branch Campus) set up a branch campus in Hong Kong in 2010, under a partnership scheme with the Hong Kong Government. Instead of setting up partnerships with Hong Kong institutions, AHKIU (Branch Campus) invested human and physical capital in setting up a branch campus, aiming to "develop a coherent and integrated entity of university community in the world" (note: reference withheld to protect the anonymity of the institution). The university website reveals that the branch campus of AHKIU (Branch Campus) offers a range of TNHE programmes in the discipline of art and design, which are offered in the home campus as well as in other offshore campuses. While offering students a learning environment and experiences which are comparable

to those of the US home campus, the Hong Kong campus also offers students opportunities to study the same programmes in other campuses. The teaching of the curriculum of AHKIU (Branch Campus) is conducted by a team of US home staff who are seconded from the home campuses, as well as a team of expatriate and local staff recruited locally in Hong Kong (note: reference withheld to protect the anonymity of the institution).

5.4.2.2 Case B [Franchised Delivery Model]: Northern Metropolitan University (NMU) and Hong Kong Further Education College (HKFEC)

NMU (Franchised Delivery) is a British University with substantial experience in delivering TNHE programmes offshore. The University has collaborated with HKFEC since 2010 for the delivery of a part-time undergraduate degree programme in construction and 5 full time programmes, in the disciplinary areas of business and computing. Under the model of franchised delivery, the Hong Kong partner is responsible for recruiting local staff for the teaching and assessment of the curriculum. At the time of conducting this research, both institutions were engaged in multiple TNHE partnerships in Hong Kong. HKFEC (the College) is a self-financed private college focusing on part-time TNHE provision in different disciplinary areas. The College has partnered with 4 other overseas universities to deliver more than 15 TNHE programmes in Hong Kong (Education Bureau, 2016a). Both institutions have appointed dedicated staff teams with specialised roles to manage their partnership and the TNHE programmes.

5.4.2.3 Case C [Joint Delivery]: Midland British University (MBU) and Hong Kong College of Professional Development (HKCPD)

With long experience in offering TNHE programmes across different countries, Midland British University (MBU) set up partnership with HKCPD in 2005 to deliver a

range of TNHE programmes in the disciplinary areas of engineering and construction. The TNHE partnership was set up under the joint delivery model, through which the university has adopted a "flying faculty" approach, sending academic staff to Hong Kong to teach the curricula to Hong Kong students. With the responsibility of handling teaching and assessment, the university staff team is tasked with the responsibility of ensuring the comparability of standards between the Hong Kong and the home programmes. Both MBU (Joint Delivery) and HKCPD have well-established experience in TNHE and this partnership has produced several cohorts with a handsome number of graduates.

The Hong Kong College of Professional Development is a well-established Hong Kong community college, with more than 10 UK partners delivering over 20 transnational education programmes for students in Hong Kong. A dedicated team of academic and management staff has been appointed to operate different TNHE programmes with different partners.

In sum, the three cases described above have distinctive characteristics in their TNHE partnership set-ups. The details of how staff and students in these models interact were the core focus of the data collection process.

5.5   Phase 4: Methods of Collecting Data

The process of data collection in this study was divided into two stages. In order to understand the background and details of TNHE development in each case study, I first conducted a documentary review of each case. The documents which I explored included policy and strategy papers for each university as well as marketing literature. University manuals and guidelines related to TNHE practice were also inspected and

studied in terms of content (see Table 5.2 below). These documents were selected to illustrate the institutional mission and internationalisation strategies. They also provide a general overview to the TNHE activites of these universities. Individual face-to-face interviews and focus group interviews were then conducted to investigate the views participants had about their TNHE experiences, focusing on the details of their intercultural interactions. The use of the above instruments enabled the investigation of various groups of stakeholders by "collecting primary, observational data" (Creswell, 2014:15), aiming to interpret the practice in relation to the development of interculturality in TNHE.

5.5.1   *The Pilot Study*

Prior to the process of data collection, a pilot study was conducted with an aim to test the instruments of the research method, to inform the ideas of the study and to refine the methodology. As Kim (2011) suggests, the benefits of carrying out a pilot study for qualitative research include: finding issues and barriers related to recruiting potential participants; engaging the use of oneself as a researcher in a culturally appropriate way, and modifying interview questions.

The pilot study focused on studying a small scale TNHE partnership between Far East Institute of Science and Technology (FEIST) and the North West International University in the UK (NWIU) (note: pseudonyms are used to ensure data privacy). NWIU is one of the most established overseas TNHE providers in Hong Kong. The university has over 700 students in Hong Kong studying its programmes through partner institutions. The university has partnered with FEIST for an undergraduate programme in the disciplinary area of construction. The partnership has been selected with the following considerations: firstly, it has been set up with the franchised

delivery model, one of the core models selected in this study; moreover, students studied the TNHE programme via a part-time mode of study, creating a challenge for both institutions to translate a full-time UK undergraduate degree programme to a part-time Hong Kong context. The context of this partnership was similar to one selected for a case study, and the results of the pilot study would provide guidance to refine the methodology of the study.

Through the pilot study, I had the opportunity to investigate how the model of TNHE collaboration developed and how the TNHE programme was delivered in Hong Kong. The pilot study employed interviews including individual interviews and focus group interviews for data collection. During the interviews, interviewees were asked to give details of their interaction with the UK home university staff, UK student groups and Hong Kong student groups. Each of them also gave a description of their personal experience and their views of the TNHE programme delivery.

The pilot study provided some understanding of the nature and format of communities developed through TNHE delivery. It provided a guiding framework for the data analysis process of the main research study. Furthermore, the pilot study also provided insights on the development of the focus of interviews.

5.5.1.1   *Significance of the Pilot Study*

The pilot study is significant in the following ways. First of all, the experience in the pilot study informed the design of instruments adopted in the main study. In alignment with the interpretive research philosophy, the pilot case study used qualitative instruments of interviews to collect data. Some documents were reviewed to provide contextual information on the background and strategy of NWIU for its transnational

education development. Individual interviews and focus group interviews were used to collect participants' views on their intercultural experiences in TNHE. The process and findings of the pilot study reaffirmed that the instruments were sound and appropriate for the main study. The results of the pilot study helped inform what questions needed to be explored in the interviews. Hence the interview schedule and questions were modified for the subsequent investigations conducted in this research.

In addition to that, results of the pilot case study indicated that partnership models of TNHE seem to have a significant influence on the nurturing and the development of interculturality in TNHE. The results also demonstrated that in order to have in-depth understandings of the TNHE phenomenon, it is important to engage different models of collaboration in the case studies. The findings of the pilot case study indicated that the details of interaction between staff and students in TNHE should be further studied to investigate how intercultural communities of practice evolve and how interculturality is developed through TNHE delivery.

5.5.2 *Reviewing Documents to Understand the Institutional Contexts*

In this study, relevant documents were reviewed to provide background understanding of the three cases. The documents which I appraised provided useful background information about the institutional ethos and international strategies of each university so as to add context to the understanding of how and why these universities are engaged in TNHE. Such information provided insights into different TNHE models and their education philosophies; they served as a significant reference towards understanding the TNHE models. Bowen (2009) suggests that the major functions of document review are to provide background and context, context of questions to be asked and supplementary data. It is also a means to verify findings from other sources.

During the research process, I appraised international strategy documents, annual reports of the universities. Moreover, selected marketing materials of the TNHE programmes were also studied. The international strategy documents for the overseas universities provided a general overview of the university's strategies and mission in their international development. These documents provided insights in the teaching and learning strategies adopted by each TNHE university, they also allowed insights on how each TNHE university embraces intercultural learning through their international development strategies.

5.5.3 Semi-structured Interviews

As defined by Wisker (2008:19), "Interviews enable face to face discussion with human subjects". An interview is a two-way conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information. Bryman (2012:471) also suggests that "the relatively unstructured nature of the semi-structured interview and its capacity provide insights into how research participants view the world". Creswell (2014) sees the benefits of interviews in allowing the researcher to conduct face to face meetings with the participants and to elicit views and opinions from participants. In-depth interviews are powerful instruments for generating views and interpretation of people's worlds (Rubin and Rubin, 2012). During interviews, knowledge is constructed through collaboration between interviewee and researcher (Holstein and Gubrium, 2011). In this study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with senior managers, teaching staff from the TNHE institutions and their partners in Hong Kong. The diverse groups of participants provided multiple perspectives from members who had different roles in TNHE communities of practice.

In-depth interviews have key features including combining structure with flexibility to allow detailed exploration of the research topics; and interaction between interviewers and interviewees (Yeo et al., 2014). These features enabled me to interact with the participants to explore in-depth their knowledge and practice of TNHE.

Gillham (2000), however, suggests that the main disadvantage of using an interview as a research tool is the time factor. It requires a lot of time to develop and pilot the interview, to set up and to travel to the interview location, then to transcribe and analyse the information. However, as a practitioner in the field, I find that the time spent on the transcription of the interviews as well as the analysis of the transcripts has greatly facilitated my reflections on TNHE and benefited my professional practice.

Semi-structured interviewing is perhaps the most commonly used interview technique in qualitative social research, and was used in this study to collect views from stakeholders in TNHE. The interviews were designed with a fairly open framework which allowed for focused, conversational, two-way communication. Unlike a structured questionnaire or interview framework, where detailed questions are formulated ahead of time, semi-structured interviewing starts with more general questions or topics. A relevant framework and topics are identified in advance (Creswell, 2014). The following sections describe the types of interview that were included in each of the selected cases in this study.

5.5.3.1 *Interviews with Senior Management*

The interviews with senior management staff of the selected institutions sought to investigate the international strategies of the institutions, and how the institutions aspire to develop their TNHE activities in different cultural contexts. Semi-structured

interviews with the senior management staff were conducted with each of the selected overseas institution and their partner institution in Hong Kong.   There were a total of six participants in this category, as illustrated in Table 5.2 below.

Each participant in this category has a management role in TNHE delivery, and management experience of TNHE programmes.   Some of them have had a role in negotiating the TNHE model with their institutional partners, such experiences are essential for an understanding of institutional ethos and intercultural interaction in TNHE practice. Each participant received a formal invitation to participate in the study and all interviews took place in Hong Kong.

5.5.3.2   *Interviews with Academic Staff*

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with two to four teaching staff from each case study (both the TNHE awarding institutions and the Hong Kong partner institutions). There were a total of 10 participants in these interviews (Table 5.2). Each member of staff interviewed had a teaching role in the TNHE partnerships studied in this research.   Academic staff are central to the establishment and delivery of TNHE programmes, and they are core members of the TNHE communities of practice. Therefore the interviews with academic staff groups are essential for the investigation of the research questions. Moreover, how the academic staff interact with students in different models of TNHE delivery is important to the evolution of the communities of practice and hence the development of interculturality. The interviews with academic staff aimed to examine their TNHE experience, the views of the participants are essential for the analysis of how interculturality is developed in each TNHE model. All the interviews were conducted in Hong Kong; UK academic staff were interviewed when they visited Hong Kong for teaching commitments.

5.5.4 Focus Group Interviews

A focus group provides a collective context which is different from an in-depth interview. In focus groups interviews, "group interaction is explicitly used to generate data and insights" (Berg and Lune, 2012). Data from focus group is primarily generated by interaction between group participants (Finch et al., 2014). The focus group presents a "more natural environment than that of an individual interview because participants are influencing, and influenced by, others – just as they are in real life" (Krueger and Casey, 2009:7). An understanding of the group processes and small group behaviour is helpful in offering insight into what can happen in focus groups (Finch et al., 2014). The elements of group interaction and the richness of views and discussions generated from group interaction are the main reason to engage students of TNHE in focus group. Due to the complexity of TNHE delivery in each model, focus group interviews create a context for participants to listen and reflect. "Individual response becomes sharpened and refined, and moves to a deeper and more considered level" (Finch et al., 2014:212).

5.5.4.1 Focus Group Interviews with Students

In this study, Hong Kong students studying TNHE programmes are core members of the communities of practice, their views are of much significance to the understanding of the TNHE communities of practice. Students from each selected case were invited to participate in focus group interviews; there were a total of 27 participants in this category (Table 5.2). In each case, students studying in different TNHE programmes or classes were invited to join focus group interviews in order to investigate different views from students. Participating students were mostly local Chinese, except in the case of AHKIU (Branch Campus), in which case some expatriate and home students from the USA participated the focus group interviews. The student groups for the three selected cases included a variety of participants. In the case of AHKIU (Branch

Campus), participants included students studying in different undergraduate programmes in the disciplinary area of art of design. For NMU (Franchised Delivery), participants included part-time students studying construction and engineering programmes. In the case of MBU (Joint Delivery), participants were from undergraduate programmes in construction offered in part-time mode.

The focus group interviews with students provided perspectives on how they perceive their learning experience on TNHE programmes. Participants provided details on how and why they selected to study TNHE programmes. They also provided detailed accounts and reflective feedback on their learning experience and how they interacted with overseas and Hong Kong academic staff as well as other students. The data from the focus group interviews provided invaluable information for analysing how the intercultural communities of practice have emerged and how interculturality is developed in each TNHE partnership model.

Sources of information from the three cases are listed in the Table 5.2 below:

Table 5.2 - Summary of Sources of Data for the Study

Case A [Branch Campus Model] : American Hong Kong International University (AHKIU)			
Documents			
Information		**Source**	
Institutional information		Institution website	
International strategy		Institution website Hong Kong legislative council online information	
International campuses		Institution website	
Management structure		Annual report	
Student recruitment information		Annual report Hong Kong non-local course registry	
Individual Interviews			
	Position	**Nationality**	**Working experience in cross cultural environments**
Participant A1	Associate Vice President	American	• Relocated from home campus • Over 10 years' experience working with people from multiple cultural backgrounds • Over 3 years' experience working in different cultural locations
Participant A2	Lecturer	Hong Kong Chinese	• No overseas working experience • Over 3 years' experience working with people from different cultural backgrounds
Participant A3	Lecturer	American	• Seconded from home campus • No overseas working experience
Participant A4	Lecturer	American	• Seconded from home campus • No overseas working experience • Substantial experience working with professionals from multiple cultural backgrounds
Participant A5	Lecturer	Hong Kong Chinese	• Graduate from the home university • No overseas working experience
Participant A6	Quality Assurance Manager	European expatriate	• Newly employed at AHKIU • Substantial overseas working experience, including Middle East

Table 5.2 - Summary of Sources of Data for the Study (Con'd)

Case A (Con'd)			
Focus Group Interviews			
Participant A7	Student	Local Chinese	● Year 1, BA in Graphic Design
Participant A8	Student	Local Chinese	● Year 2, BA in Advertising
Participant A9	Student	Local Indian	● Foundation year
Participant A10	Student	Local Indian	● Foundation year
Participant A11	Student	Local expatriate	● Year 2, BA in Photography
Participant A12	Student	American home student	● Final year, BA in Illustration
Participant A13	Student	Local expatriate	● Foundation year
Participant A14	Student	American home student	● Final Year, BA in Photography
Participant A15	Student	American home student	● Final Year , BA in Photography
Participant A16	Student	Local Chinese	● Year 3, BA in Advertising

Table 5.2 - Summary of Sources of Data for the Study (Con'd)

Case B : Northern Metropolitan University (NMU) and Hong Kong Further Education College (HKFEC)			
Documents			
Information		**Source**	
Institution information		Institution website	
International strategy		Institution website	
International collaborative ventures		Institution website information Hong Kong Non-Local Course Registry	
Management structure		Annual Report	
Student recruitment information		Annual Report Hong Kong Non-local Registry	
Individual Interviews			
	Position	**Nationality**	**Working experience in cross cultural environments**
Participant B1	Associate Dean	British	● More than 15 years' experience in developing and managing TNHE provision in Hong Kong, South East Asia and Middle East
Participant B2	Lecturer A	British	● More than 10 years' experience in operating TNHE provision in Hong Kong and Middle East
Participant B3	Lecturer B	British	● No previous TNHE experience
Participant B4	Lecturer C	Hong Kong Chinese	● More than 10 years teaching experience in delivering TNHE programmes in Hong Kong
Participant B5	Head of Programme (Hong Kong)	Hong Kong Chinese	● No previous experience in delivering TNHE programmes

Table 5.2 - Summary of Sources of Data for the Study (Con'd)

Case B (Con'd)			
Focus Group Interviews			
Participant B6	Student	Hong Kong Chinese	● Part-time Final Year, BSc (Hons) Civil Engineering
Participant B7	Student	Hong Kong Chinese	● Part-time Final Year, BSc (Hons) Civil Engineering
Participant B8	Student	Hong Kong Chinese	● Part-time Final Year, BSc (Hons) Civil Engineering
Participant B9	Student	Hong Kong Chinese	● Part-time Final Year, BSc (Hons) Civil Engineering
Participant B10	Student	Hong Kong Chinese	● Part-time Final Year, BSc (Hons) Computing
Participant B11	Student	Hong Kong Chinese	● Part-time Final Year, BSc (Hons) Computing
Participant B12	Student	Hong Kong Chinese	● Part-time Final Year, BSc (Hons) Computing
Participant B13	Student	Hong Kong Chinese	● Part-time Final Year, BSc (Hons) Computing

Table 5.2 - Summary of Sources of Data for the Study (Con'd)

Case C : Midland British University (MBU) and Hong Kong College of Professional Development (HKCPD)	
Documents	
Information	**Source**
Institution information	Institution website
International strategy	Institution website
International collaborative project	Institution website Hong Kong Non-local Course Registry
Management structure	Annual Report
Student recruitment information	Annual Report Hong Kong Non-local Course Registry

Individual Interviews			
	Position	**Nationality**	**Working experience in cross cultural environments**
Participant C1	Head of Department	British	• Over 15 years' experience of developing and managing TNHE programmes in Hong Kong
Participant C2	Head of Programme (UK home programme)	British	• Over 10 years' experience of delivering TNHE programmes in Hong Kong
Participant C3	TNHE manager	British	• Over 5 years' experience of developing TNHE programmes in Hong Kong, South East Asia and Middle East
Participant C4	Tutor	Hong Kong Chinese	• Over 5 years' experience of delivering TNHE programmes in Hong Kong
Participant C5	Tutor	Hong Kong Chinese	• Over 3 years' experience of delivering TNHE programmes in Hong Kong

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Table 5.2 - Summary of Sources of Data for the Study (Con'd)

Case C (Con'd)			
Focus Group Interviews			
Participant C6	Student	Hong Kong Chinese	● Part-time Final Year, BSc (Hons) Construction Project Management
Participant C7	Student	Hong Kong Chinese	● Part-time Final Year, BSc (Hons) Construction Project Management
Participant C8	Student	Hong Kong Chinese	● Part-time Final Year, BSc (Hons) Construction Project Management
Participant C9	Student	Hong Kong Chinese	● Part-time Final Year, BSc (Hons) Construction Project Management
Participant C10	Student	Hong Kong Chinese	● Part-time Final Year, BSc (Hons) Construction Project Management
Participant C11	Student	Hong Kong Chinese	● Part-time Final Year, BSc (Hons) Construction Project Management
Participant C12	Student	Hong Kong Chinese	● Part-time Final Year, BSc (Hons) Construction Project Management
Participant C13	Student	Hong Kong Chinese	● Part-time Final Year, BSc (Hons) Construction Project Management
Participant C14	Student	Hong Kong Chinese	● Part-time Final Year, BSc (Hons) Construction Project Management

In sum, the research methodology for this study is qualitative guided by an interpretivist paradigm. The data in this study were collected through the instruments of individual interviews and focus group interviews. In view of the differences between the disciplinary areas of the TNHE programmes and between the modes of study offered by the three selected institutions, it was not feasible to find participants teaching and studying in similar subject areas across the three case studies. While the combination of

studied areas represented by the three cases might impose some limitation on the study, it is also worth emphasising that the study was conducted within an interpretivist paradigm, and with an aim of understanding the views of participants instead of measuring data for the purpose of generalisation.

5.5.5   *Processes of Data Collection*

This section aims to provide details of the data collection process. As delineated in the above section, the study of relevant documents of the three selected cases prior to the collection of data provided some fundamental understanding of the background and context of individual institutions, regarding their missions and international strategies. The study of relevant documents set the scene for the research processes and facilitated the design of the interview questions, aiming to examine the TNHE experiences of the teaching staff as well as the students. The interviews were conducted afterwards in different stages.

5.5.5.1   *Selection and Invitation*

Prior to conducting the interviews, letters seeking permission to conduct the research (Appendix A) and enclosing an information sheet (Appendix B) were sent to the selected institutions. The aims of the study, the data collection activities envisioned in the institutions, and the possible implications for enhancing TNHE practice were clearly stated in the letter and the information sheet.

Secondly, senior management staff of each institution were invited individually to participate this study. Individual participants received a consent template (Appendix C) and information sheet prior to the data collection.

Teaching staff and students were contacted through individual institution to participate in the interviews. Prior to each individual and focus group interview, the participants were briefed on the aims, scope and objectives of the research, the data to be collected, and the nature of voluntary participation. An information sheet and consent template (Appendix B and Appendix C) were given to each participant before data collection took place.

5.5.5.2 *Approaches to Data Collection*

A total of 43 participants from the 5 institutions participated this study. The data collection process took a calendar year to finish. I made two to three visits to each Hong Kong partner institution to conduct the interviews. There was a timetable for each visit to include several participants. The time of the interviews varied between institutions. Some were conducted in lunch times; others were conducted in the evenings or weekends when the part-time students and academic staff came to the campuses. As the interviews were arranged by the institutions, they took place mostly in their meeting rooms, where participants were provided with comfortable settings and refreshments. I briefed the participants on the contents of the information sheet to make sure that there was a clear understanding of participants' involvement and the aims of the study before the interviews began. Each interview lasted between 30 and 45 minutes, depending on the views and responses from the participant. The focus group interviews involved more participants and usually lasted 60 to 75 minutes. The interviews were semi-structured (Appendix D), in which participants were asked to present their views on their TNHE experiences, the details of intercultural interactions in TNHE, including how they communicated with stakeholders from different cultural backgrounds within each TNHE model, and how teaching and learning activities

involved intercultural interaction. Participants were also asked to give their reflections and observations on their TNHE experiences in their particular one of the three models.

5.6   Phase 5: Analysis and Interpretation of Data

The research adopted a case study approach for data collection and qualitative content analysis to analyse the data collected from the above instruments. Since the textual data of qualitative research is lengthy, and not all the information can be used, Creswell (2014) has suggested the following hierarchical approach for the analysis of the qualitative data. Step 1 includes organising and preparing the data for analysis; step 2 involves reading the data to get a sense of it; step 3 is to organise the data by coding them. Details of the data analysis procedures will be delineated in the later part of this section. The data collected for this study was qualitative, including institutional documents and audio recordings of individual and focus group interviews. The audio recordings were transcribed in a textual format in preparation for the analysis

There were advantages and disadvantages for me, as a practitioner in TNHE, in the data interpretation process. On the one hand, my professional practice experience helped me to understand the context effectively. On the other hand, my practice and experience had some influence on how I interpreted the data. As I am familiar with TNHE practice, I may have had bias for or against the views provided by participants. The major challenge to me, within the process, was to switch my mind to that of a researcher and listen with an open mind to the details of the participants' views.

5.6.1   Data Organisation

The inductive phase of analysis was undertaken in a largely phase by phase manner, as guided by Creswell's hierarchical approach (2014). Step one is to organise the data for analysis and step two is to make sense of the data. The two steps together are related to

"how researcher gains an overview of the data coverage and becomes thoroughly familiar with their material" (Spencer et al., 2014:297). Table 5.3 below lists the total volume of raw data after data collection.

Table 5.3 - Volume of Raw Material

Sources of Data	Volume and Quality
interviews and focus group interviews	19 audio recordings of 50-80 minutes each
institutional documents	More than 80,000 words for each case, making a total of over 240,000 words

The first step was to transcribe the interviews, and to make myself familiar with the transcriptions to prepare for the coding procedure to take place. A three-tiered coding system has been developed to name each file of transcription notes for future referencing. Figure 5.1 below shows that the coding of each interview transcription is sequenced to include case number of C1 to C3 (to represent the three cases[1]), following by the nature of the interview (FG for focus group or Interview), and the numeric code of the participants as defined in Table 5.2.

Figure 5.1 - Coding System for the Transcription Notes
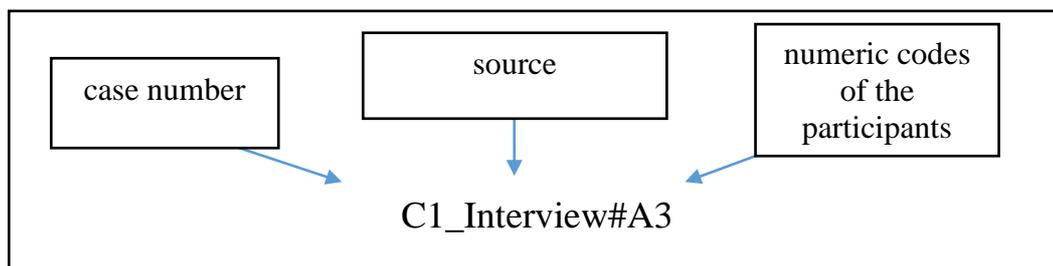
While reviewing the data, I tried to familiarise myself with the context of the transcriptions and the documents, to understand the views of the participants, and to identify topics of interest. In the process of familiarising myself with the data, I used

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[1] The three cases are represented as : C1- AHKIU (Branch Campus); C2- NMU (Franchised Delivery); C3- MBU (Joint Delivery)

the Popplet application for iPad to help organise initial thoughts and to summarise the data into categorised ideas before the coding procedures (see Figure 5.2).

Figure 5.2 - Mind Map from Popplet for iPad (generated during familiarisation with the data)
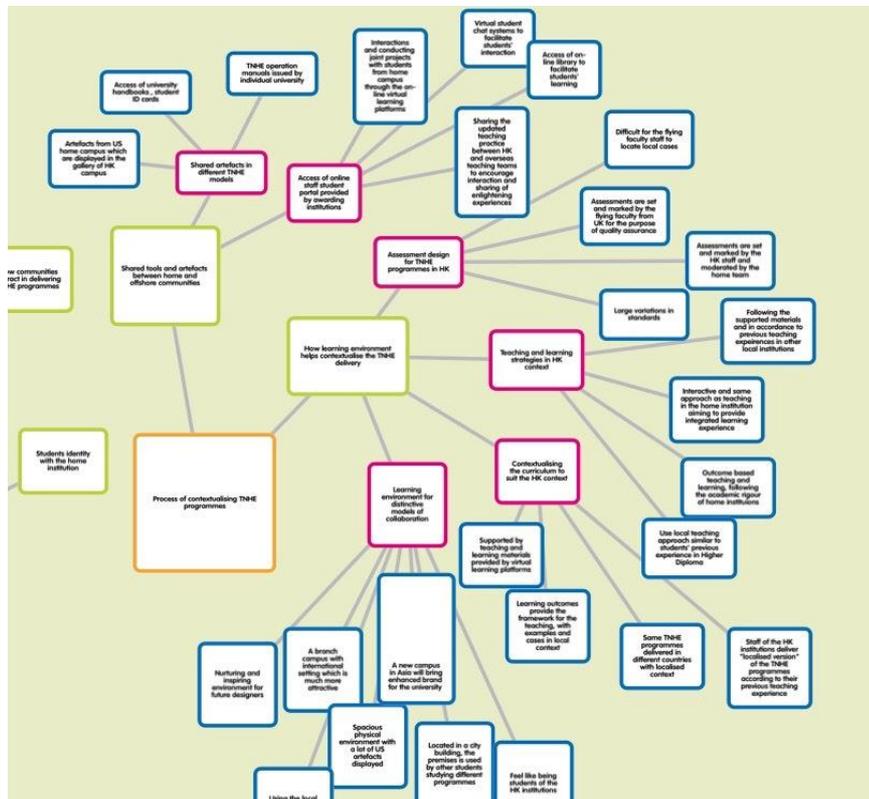
After creating the mind map, I returned to the transcripts and tried to understand the data in detail so that coding could take place. I went through the transcriptions 3-4 times in order to identify the features of the communities of practice.

5.6.2 The Coding Procedure

Case study methodology tends to generate large volumes of textual data resulting in potential problems associated with analysis (Robson, 2002:476). A systematic coding process was adopted to handle the large volume of data. Table 5.4 below summarises how the data was handled and reduced.

Table 5.4 - Coding Process

Transcription of the interviews	19 audio recordings of 50-80 minutes each. After transcription, the total volume of interview notes was approximately 200,000 words
Number of initial extracts from the transcriptions	110
Initial Codes	25
Sub-themes	9
Themes	3

The coding for this research was guided by the research topics and divided into different parts with the aid of NVivo, a software application for qualitative data analysis. First, all the documents collected in the document analysis phase were put into NVivo. These documents were filed and used by NVivo to count frequency and to reveal patterns and underlying meanings (Figure 5.3).

Figure 5.3 - Transcriptions of Interviews were Inputted to and Managed by NVivo.
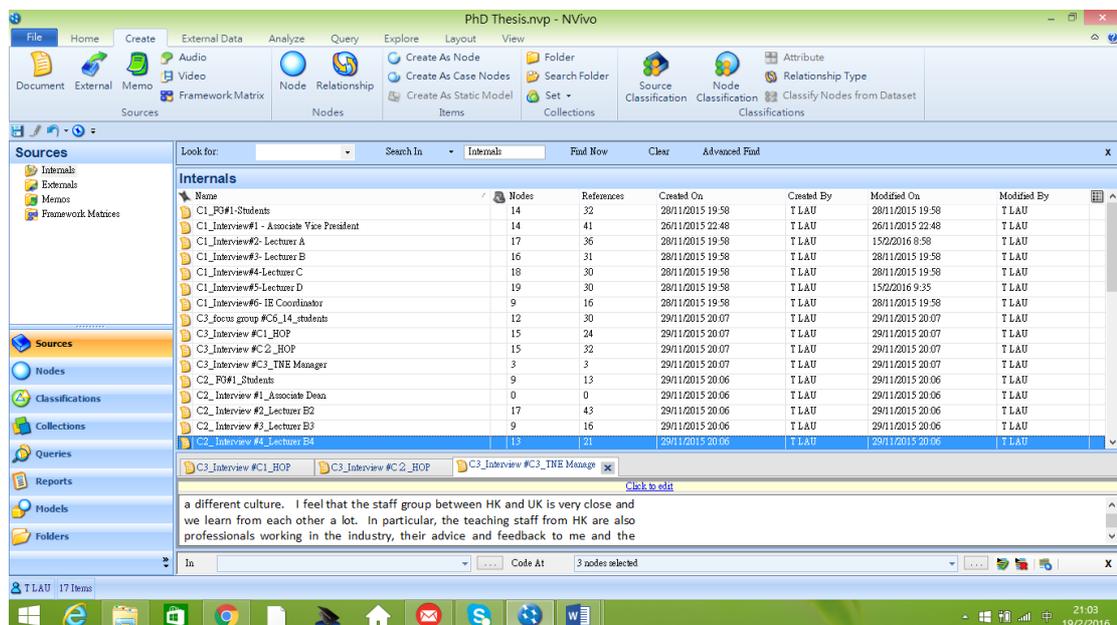
Phrases from the interview transcriptions were coded by inductive analysis, with the support of NVivo. Nodes and categories were created and grouped under higher order

headings to provide tools for describing phenomena (Elo and Kyngas, 2008; Creswell, 2014). The use of NVivo allowed a clearer view of which terms and phrases relating to TNHE were most frequent, their underlying meanings and the participants' perceptions of these concepts (Figure 5.4).

Figure 5.4 - Coding Procedure of the Transcriptions of Interviews
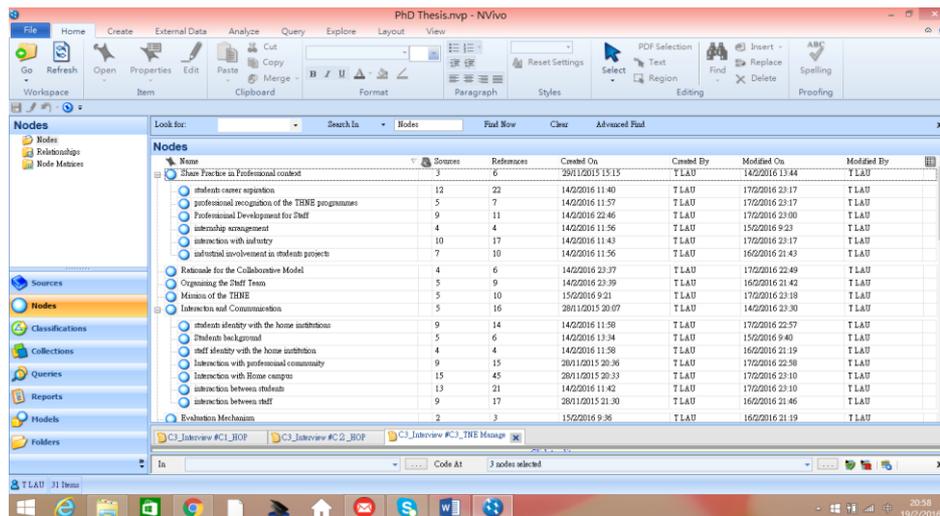
The data was then categorised into patterns that emerged into themes (Appendix E). Since each partnership model of TNHE was viewed as a unique case, within-case and cross-case analysis could be used to look for patterns in the extent, degree, similarity and differences in the development of interculturality within TNHE. The unit of analysis on individual cases was first presented in Chapter 6, and then some interpretation is made between different cases with regard to themes that cut across cases in Chapter 7.

5.7   Ethical Considerations in the Study

Upon identifying the focus of the study, I completed the necessary paperwork to gain permission from the Ethics Committee of the University which I studied at. A letter to participants in the study, explaining the purposes and nature of the research, and

consent forms were also developed (Appendix A-C) so that I could brief the participants prior to the individual interviews and focus group interviews. As an Academic Registrar of a tertiary education institution, I am very much aware of the issues relating to compliance and ethical considerations in my study. I have followed the guiding framework provided by the Economic and Social Research Council in the UK (ESRC) (2015) as delineated below:

5.7.1 Recruitment of Participants

There are possibilities that the researcher might know some of the participants in her study in professional contexts. In order to address the principle stated in Economic and Social Research Council (2015), that "research participants must take part voluntarily, free from any coercion", all the target participants were formally invited to join the research. An information sheet and consent form was sent to each participant to explain the detailed process of the research. The nature of voluntary participation was explained again face to face before any interview took place. I also explained to the participants that all information collected was to be used for research purposes only.

5.7.2 Confidentiality

Being a practitioner in TNHE, it might have been possible for me to access some confidential information which might not necessarily be available to a normal researcher, such as some disclosure of malpractice in the workplace in other institutions. It is essential to note that while I am an insider of TNHE practice, I have never been employed in any of the selected case study institutions. However, I have been able to access some confidential and contextual information of TNHE delivery in Hong Kong supplied by the Education Bureau of the Hong Kong Government. I have been aware of appropriate boundaries of disclosure and I have ensured that the disclosed information

was agreed by the relevant institutions. Moreover, as suggested by Economic and Social Research Council (2015), "the confidentiality of information supplied by research participants and the anonymity of respondents must be respected." I reassured the participants that names of institutions and participants would not be disclosed.

5.7.3 *Dissemination of Findings*

Since the number of institutions engaged in transnational education activities has been small, the dissemination of findings might have an impact on the participants' anonymity. As the research findings might be disseminated through professional settings, it was essential for me to explain clearly about the context to the participants and gain their agreement to participate in the research.

During the data collection process, participants were asked to give their personal opinions about and experiences of TNHE. There is a possibility that in giving personal views, some participants might have divulged inappropriate or confidential information which might create associated risks for the informant's future employment and professional development. In order to protect their identity and privacy, no individual names have been mentioned in the thesis, and pseudonyms have been used for each institution.

It is worth noting that in Hong Kong, the Education Bureau encourages TNHE providers to share their practice and experience on public platforms. Several platforms were established for the purpose of practice sharing. The British Council, for example, acts as a facilitating agent to promote exchanges for TNHE providers. It organises an annual TNHE forum in Hong Kong, inviting TNHE providers and policy makers to share their experiences and challenges in TNHE provision. In such a context, the

models of TNHE collaboration and their providers, as well as their practice, have been made known within the Hong Kong higher education community. It is common for institutions to present their own experience and information on public platforms. In the study, there are investigations of teaching staff's and students' opinions on particular institutions and programmes. So in order not to harm any informants or institutions, all negative opinions have been treated with care and will never be published should this create any harmful effects for any concerned parties.

5.8   Limitations

So far we have discussed the strengths and advantages of using the case study approach in this study, within the interpretive nature of the study. It is also recognised that the case study approach has its limitations. On a practical level, case study research can be time consuming, with particular issues of gaining access to the site and permission to research within the site (Robson, 2002; Bryman, 2012). Moreover, case studies of a few TNHE collaborations cannot be generalised to all TNHE programmes throughout the world. In fact, the nature of the interpretive paradigm of this research does not and cannot aim at generalising universally valid results or theories. From that viewpoint, the selection of three cases with three different TNHE models was essential for this study to elicit some in-depth views to interpret the phenomenon of TNHE.

Furthermore, there were other limitations in the data collection process, including the volume of work involved in the empirical research phase. A compromise solution needed to be found and this was to limit the number of case studies to three. Moreover, the time required for the data collection process was lengthy, with cross over between cases, making the data analysis for each completed case prolonged. Due to the fact that there were time gaps between university home staff visits to Hong Kong, the interview process with the UK staff was lengthy and prolonged.

5.9 Summary of this Chapter

This chapter aimed to delineate the philosophy, research design and methodologies of the study. In view of the philosophy of this research and topic of inquiry, this study adopted a qualitative approach and was set within the interpretivist paradigm. This chapter has been framed by Denzin and Lincoln (2011)'s 5-phase research framework. The chapter first explains the researcher's role and subjectivity, followed by an explanation of the research design to support the interpretivist paradigm. The research design of this study focuses on three case studies to collect two forms of data: documents collected through public channels, and individual and focus group interviews with individual participants. The context, background and characteristics of the selected institutions have been analysed and illustrated. The development of interviews, the data collection procedures and ethical issues relating to permission, consent, and privacy in handling sensitive materials have also been explained. Lastly, issues of this study's limitations and attempts at solutions have been discussed.

CHAPTER 6 – CONTEXT OF THE CASES

6.1   Introduction

In order to understand the background and context of each selected TNHE case in this study, and to set the scene for exploring how each TNHE model generates intercultural interactions and interculturality in communities of practice, this chapter provides a detailed account of the context and background of each selected case. This chapter captures the information generated from reviewing the institutional documents, which was conducted prior to the case study to provide an overview for each of the selected cases. The chapter is organised into the following sections. Section 6.2 describes the background and narrates the context of the three TNHE case selected for this study. Section 6.3 analyses the features and common themes of the three models studied. Section 6.4 is a summary of this chapter.

6.2   Background and Context of the Cases

This study set out to investigate the intercultural interaction of TNHE. It also adopts micro-perspectives to analyse the role of transnational higher education models in nurturing interculturality through communities of practice. The study has selected three TNHE cases to investigate how three different TNHE models lead to the evolution of distinctive intercultural communities of practice, as well as the development of interculturality. The concept of interculturality is central to the development of new knowledge in this study. It refers to a set of intercultural interaction processes through which relations between TNHE communities of practice are constructed. This section delineates the details of the three cases of TNHE providing institutions, including their institutional ethos and international strategy, experiences and quality assurance mechanisms for international activities, using the reviewed documents such as international strategy papers, marketing materials, quality assurance manuals (Table 4.2

in Chapter 4) as part of the study. All information reported in each case was collected through institutional websites, and other public information domains. The context of each case will be outlined in details in the sections below, with focus on the TNHE awarding universities. Pseudonyms are used for the universities participating in the case studies, so domains and websites of these institutions will not be mentioned or referenced, in order to avoid disclosure of potentially sensitive details of these institutions.

6.2.1 Case A – American Hong Kong International University (AHKIU) [Branch Campus Model]

6.2.1.1 Background and Context

Being the forerunner of TNHE delivery, AHKIU (Branch Campus) is the first overseas university setting up its own campus in Hong Kong. AHKIU (Branch Campus) is a private, non-profit institution, with two campuses in the USA and one in France, making the University a multinational higher education institution. According to University website information, the university has more than 11,000 students from nearly 50 states of the USA and more than 100 countries worldwide. Approximately 23 percent of the student body is international (note: reference withheld to protect the anonymity of the institution).

The University confers degrees of Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Fine Arts, Master of Architecture, Master of Arts, Master of Arts in Teaching, Master of Fine Arts and Master of Urban Design. With a Hong Kong campus that commenced operations in 2010, AHKIU (Branch Campus) offers a wide range of programmes in Art and Design at undergraduate and postgraduate levels for the Hong Kong students. Current figures indicate that the Hong Kong campus offers some 21 programmes in 2016, all of which are accredited by the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and

Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ), and recognised by the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (HKQF) (Education Bureau, 2016a).

According to the University website, the home university of AHKIU (Branch Campus)

> "was founded in 1978 to provide college degree programmes to create a specialized professional art college to attract students from throughout the United States and abroad. The curriculum was established with dual goals of excellent arts education and effective career preparation for students" (note: reference withheld to protect the anonymity of the institution).

Today, with multiple locations and online distance education offerings, the University continues to actualise its aspiration in the context of globalisation. The University has a team of 650 academics located in the 4 campuses, with the staff population reflecting multinational and multicultural demographics. On its official website, the University emphasises its mission to international students:

> "the class size is small, allowing each student the opportunity to receive individual attention. Faculty members have distinguished backgrounds in their fields. The international faculty and student body come from all 50 states and 100 countries. An English as a Second Language program and dedicated international student services staff are available to assist international students with the adjustment to university life" (note: reference withheld to protect the anonymity of the institution).

The University initiated a strategic plan "AHKIU 2020" in 2012 (The Plan), aiming to set out a blueprint of institutional development for the interim term. The Plan has been set out with the four pillars of "Quality, Community, Identity and Fortitude". Following this ethos, the University aspires to "embrace a community with students, alumni, faculty, and staff" in every location and online,

"the university must endeavor to engage students' intellects and imaginations, ensuring a dynamic trajectory from first contact through commencement and into professional life" (note: reference withheld to protect the anonymity of the institution).

It is worth noting that the term "community" is used in The Plan, to indicate the institutional ethos in nurturing a coherent university body engaged in interactions and constructing knowledge in different locations. The terminology of community reaffirms that the discourse of social learning and interaction emphasised in Wenger's model of communities of practice (1998) is essential for the future of higher education institutions. With an education mission to nurture future professionals in creative industries across the world, the University has gradually established a total of four satellite branch campuses in the USA and France. In the course of developing its international education footprint in different locations to build up a wider community, the University made a move to launch a branch campus in Hong Kong in 2010 through a "Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme" initiated by the Hong Kong Government.

6.2.1.2   TNHE Arrangements within the Branch Campus Model

Information from CONCOURSE for Self-finance Post-secondary Education (an official information platform developed by the Education Bureau, Hong Kong government) (Education Bureau, 2015) reveals that AHKIU (Branch Campus) offers a total number of 21 programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, in the disciplinary areas of Arts and Creative Design. The content and awards of these programmes are identical to those of its US home campus. There are 50 full-time staff and 10 part-time staff working in Hong Kong campus for the academic year 2015-2016, with a total student population of less than 400.

6.2.1.2.1 Programmes and Students

According to the University website, programmes offered in Hong Kong are delivered in 4-year full time mode for Bachelor programmes, and 1-year/2-year full time mode for Masters programmes, sharing identical names, structure and curricula with the programmes delivered at the American home campus (Appendix F). The programmes developed by the University have an international focus and are seen to suit the professional context in different countries.

CONCOURSE shows that all students in AHKIU (Branch Campus) are full time students (Education Bureau, 2015). During the individual interview, Participant A1 (Associate Vice President of AHKIU Hong Kong campus) reported that the student body in the Hong Kong branch campus is less than 400 students, including local Hong Kong students as well as exchange students from different campuses who have studied in Hong Kong for a short term. Students in the Hong Kong branch campus come from diverse cultural backgrounds, including local Hong Kong Chinese and expatriates from overseas, making the demographics of students in AHKIU (Branch Campus) very diverse and international (C1_Interview#_A1). Later in the findings chapter we shall explore the details of how they interact with their student peers and staff, and their TNHE experience in a branch campus of an American university.

6.2.1.2.2 Staffing Arrangements

During the individual interview, Participant A1 (Associate Vice President of AHKIU Hong Kong Campus) provided a detailed account of the establishment of the Hong Kong academic team (C1_Interview#_A1). During the first two years of operation, the university relied on seconding staff from the home campus to teach in the Hong Kong campus, on a semester basis, a system which the University had put in place with other

TNHE ventures since the previous decade. It was seen as a transition period for the home campus staff to provide induction and peer mentoring to the newly recruited academic team in Hong Kong to ensure continuity of the teaching practice of the home institution. Drawing upon the experience of those first two years of operation in Hong Kong, the University has started to recruit more local Hong Kong staff or expatriate staff with local contracts, aiming to build up a more coherent and long term academic community for the Hong Kong campus.

According to the lived experience of the managers of branch campuses, one of the key challenges is related to how expatriate staff and home campus staff teach students with "different learning styles and cultural frame of reference" (Healey, 2016:63). The branch campus model, on the one hand is seen to have the advantages of building up the university's reputation and business portfolio, but on the other hand, is also complex to manage and exposes the home university to considerable financial and reputational risks. (Healey, 2016:73). During the data collection process, participants from AHKIU (Branch Campus) revealed some key challenges similar to the above, which are to be discussed in the findings chapter.

In accordance with the quality assurance manual provided by Participant A1 (Associate Vice President of AHKIU Hong Kong Campus), Table 6.1 below provides a detailed summary of roles and responsibilities of the Hong Kong branch campus and the home institution at USA. The information is of paramount importance in informing the data analysis and putting the interview data into perspective.

Table 6.1 - Roles and Responsibilities as illustrated in AHKIU (Branch Campus Model)

	Home Institution	Branch Campus
Curriculum design and approval	**	
Recruitment of students		**
Delivery of programme content		**
Provision of teaching and learning resources	**	
Assessment setting and moderation		**
Examination boards	**	
Review and monitoring	**	
Overall quality assurance of the awards	**	

Table 6.1 above indicates the roles and responsibilities for the staff in Hong Kong and the USA under the branch campus model. The branch campus in Hong Kong is one of the satellite sites of the university, and is strategic in building up a global university community with the mission of nurturing professionals for creative industries across the globe.

6.2.1.2.3   Campus and Facilities

CONCOURSE (Education Bureau, 2015) shows that the Hong Kong campus of AHKIU (Branch Campus) is equipped with a wide range of teaching and learning facilities to simulate the home campus in the USA. These facilities, including lecture halls, studios for different professional purposes, a gallery for exhibitions, library, workshops, photography rooms, and student study areas, have been set up in a listed heritage building in Hong Kong, to provide a conducive and inspirational environment in nurturing future professionals in creative industries. It is important to note that the branch campus model offers integrated and coherent teaching and learning settings and

systems to provide students with a higher education experience comparable to that of the home campus. Students studying in Hong Kong are seen to be part of the wider university community. For students, "the attractiveness of enrolling in a branch campus has to do with obtaining a degree at an internationally ranked university without travelling abroad" (ICEF Monitor, 2015).

In view of its educational mission to nurture professionals for the advancement of creative industries within and beyond the United States, the University sets out an institutional ethos to build up an international university community through the setting up of branch campuses, with a diversity of staff and students from diverse cultural backgrounds.

6.2.2 Case B- Northern Metropolitan University (NMU) [Franchised Delivery Model]

6.2.2.1 Background and Context

Case B studies the TNHE provision of Northern Metropolitan University in HK. The University is located in the UK, claiming to have a vision "to be acknowledged for our commitment to student success, our innovation and enterprise, our global reach and strong local impact" (note: reference withheld to protect the anonymity of the institution). The University has a staff population of 2,900, servicing more than 28,000 students from almost 100 countries around the world. Like many other universities in the UK, the University has developed a strategic plan 2010-2015 [2] (the Plan) highlighting five strategic themes to set out a roadmap for the University's interim development (UK Higher Education International Unit, 2016). A bespoke strategy for internationalisation and international development has been laid down in the strategic

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[2] A new version of strategic plan 2016-2021 was published in May 2016 on the University website

themes of "curriculum and academic activities" and "research and enterprise", demonstrating the University's vision in developing its outlook internationally.

A combination of materials, including the Plan, the University website and the interview notes from senior staff of the University, suggest that partnership and international development form one of the core institutional strategies for the University's development. Built on the institutional strategic plan, the University has formulated a "Franchise Framework" (The Framework) deliberating its approach in establishing and maintaining collaboration provision with partner institutions. Since 2011, franchised delivery has been the major collaborative model for the University's overseas activities. A franchise is defined by the University as "an arrangement whereby the University allows the whole or part of one or more of its own internally developed programmes to be delivered and assessed at a partner institution, leading to an award of NMU (Franchised Delivery)" (note: reference withheld to protect the anonymity of the institution). The University retains overall control of the course's content, regulations, delivery, assessment and quality assurance arrangements. A dedicated partnership homepage has been set up for the purpose of enhancing exchange and communication with the international partners.

The Framework provides a guiding framework for how the TNHE programmes developed from the partnerships should be operated. Within a franchise framework, the University retains ultimate responsibility for the quality of student learning opportunities and the academic standards of the awards. The partner institutions are required to follow all procedures within the University's quality management systems and regulations. According to the University website, there are clear and thorough procedures for the approval and monitoring of franchise activities from the outset. An

operational guidance has also been developed for the use of staff and partners (note: reference withheld to protect the anonymity of the institution).

6.2.2.2   TNHE Arrangements in the Franchised Delivery Model

6.2.2.2.1   Programmes and Students

NMU (Franchised Delivery) has three collaborative partners in Hong Kong, running a total of 18 programmes from foundation degrees to postgraduate degrees (Appendix F).

The programme offerings of NMU (Franchised Delivery) in Hong Kong provide a few key points of interest for further analysis. First of all, NMU (Franchised Delivery) has long experience in delivering TNHE programmes in Hong Kong. The partnership with Partner A (Appendix F) started in the 1990s and was phased out in 2014, indicating that the University has the knowledge and rich experience in understanding the needs of students in Hong Kong and is able to offer quality TNHE to students. Moreover, the programme portfolio and student recruitment numbers suggest that programmes within the disciplinary area of building and construction are well received in Hong Kong, indicating the trend of dynamic development of the construction industry in Hong Kong and its human resources needs.

The University's partnership with Partner B (Hong Kong Further Education College) (Appendix F) was selected as one of the case studies in this study. With an education mission to "offer distinguished professional courses according to social needs and international standards with a strong link to industry" (note: reference withheld to protect the anonymity of the institution), Partner B is a self-funded post-secondary education college in Hong Kong offering a diverse range of full-time and part-time sub-degree programmes for in-service adults and school leavers. The selection of this

partnership was justified by Partner B's academic status as a local post-secondary college, as well as the institute's experience in delivering TNHE programmes with other UK and Australian partners[3.] Table 5.2 shows that the partnership between the two institutions started in 2009, with the two partners continuing efforts to develop new TNHE programmes to fulfil market needs. In accordance with the Franchise Framework specified earlier, the University has taken on the responsibilities of curriculum design, staff induction and development, and the review and monitoring of TNHE programme delivery, whereas Partner B is responsible for the recruitment of students, recruitment of staff to be responsible for the teaching, and the delivery of the teaching and learning activities (Table 6.2).

Table 6.2 - Roles and Responsibilities as illustrated in NMU (Franchised Delivery Model)

	NMU (Franchised Delivery)	Partner B
Curriculum design and approval	**	
Recruitment of students		**
Delivery of programme content		**
Provision of teaching and learning resources		**
Assessment setting and moderation	** in consultation with local staff	
Examination boards	**	
Review and monitoring	**	
Overall quality assurance of the awards	**	

From the promotional literature published by Partner B, NMU (Franchised Delivery)'s TNHE programmes jointly delivered with Partner B are operated in part-time mode.

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[3] Partner B offers 16 TNHE programmes with 5 overseas institutions (as at 2015 academic year)

The undergraduate top-up awards target in-service practitioners in the construction industry with an academic qualification at higher diploma level. This suite of construction programmes is supported and recognised by a range of local and UK professional bodies, including the Institute of Civil Engineers. The focus on professional development and qualifications is one of the key attractions for the practitioners to advance their future career development.

6.2.2.2.2   Staffing Arrangements

In accordance with the Franchise Framework, the staff team for the TNHE programmes is recruited by the Hong Kong partner and the appointment of the Hong Kong teaching team is endorsed by NMU (Franchised Delivery). In view of the seemingly strong elements of professionalism in the TNHE programmes provided by NMU (Franchised Delivery), members of the Hong Kong teaching team are full-time professionals and are engaged in the TNHE teaching in part-time. With their background and expertise in the industry, it is believed that these part-time staff can provide a fruitful TNHE experience to students in professional practice sharing and to deliver relevant content of study to students for their further career advancement. In this study, we examined the details of interaction between these part-time teaching staff and relevant stakeholders, to investigate how this interaction may nurture interculturality in TNHE.

6.2.2.2.3   Campus and Facilities

Students studying in the TNHE programmes provided by NMU (Franchised Delivery) are accommodated in one of the city campuses of the local partner. According to the website of the local partner, the campus is equipped with teaching and learning facilities including a library, computer rooms and leisure facilities to be used by the students studying with the local partners, including all TNHE students studying for higher

education programmes with other UK institutions. The campus provides an integrated study environment for multiple groups of students who study with 5 awarding universities (note: reference withheld to protect the anonymity of the institution). The compact physical learning environment poses a challenge to NMU (Franchised Delivery) to give their students a sense of identity with the home campus of NMU (Franchised Delivery). On the other hand, the University has a policy of not providing TNHE students with access to the University's electronic learning portal, posing more challenges for the Hong Kong students in connecting with the home campus of NMU (Franchised Delivery).

With a vision to be a "globally engaged university", NMU (Franchised Delivery) sets out its institutional ethos to make a positive difference to local and international communities of staff and students (note: reference withheld to protect the anonymity of the institution). The Franchise Framework of the University delineates the position of the University's international education development, and identifies the roles and responsibilities of the university and its partners in the TNHE partnership. As guided by The Framework, the operation of the TNHE programmes involves different levels of communication and interaction between institutions, namely the senior management team, the teaching staff, staff working for quality assurance, administration and supporting staff from both institutions. The complexity of interaction between the UK and the Hong Kong staff and students was the core focus of this case study.

6.2.3   Case C: Midland British University (MBU) [Joint Delivery Model]

6.2.3.1   Background and Context

Located in the UK, the Midland British University (MBU) has a vision in providing education opportunities with creativity and innovation, with an educational mission to

"be an employer-focused university connected with our local, national and global communities delivering opportunity and academic excellence" (note: reference withheld to protect the anonymity of the institution). Such a strategy of collaboration is similar to that of NMU (Franchised Delivery) and some other UK universities, reflecting an increasing trend of internationalisation through extending partnerships for UK universities.

Similar to AHKIU (Branch Campus) and NMU (Franchised Delivery), the University has developed a strategic plan for the period between 2012 and 2017, outlining how the institution will face the modern challenge of the shift in the funding paradigm over the next five years, and how it will develop an institutional approach to "economic regeneration, academic excellence, social inclusion and global engagement". With the goal "to be collaborative, innovative and entrepreneurial", the University delineates its aspiration to "develop a strong learning environment, becoming a university that is innovative and entrepreneurial in the design and delivery of its programmes, through collaboration between our schools, departments and our communities which include partner colleges within the UK and globally" (note: reference withheld to protect the anonymity of the institution).

Similar to NMU (Franchised Delivery), the University has a bespoke website for its partnership development, providing information and resources with regard to partnering with the University. The publicly available information reveals that the University is currently in partnership with 27 institutions internationally, with institutional partners in China, Malaysia, Mauritius, Singapore, Hong Kong, Sri-Lanka and more. The website presents the University's strategy of inviting partnership from educational, training and business organisations and professional bodies, through different models of off-Site

delivery of University's courses (TNHE), supported delivery of university courses, and accreditation of partner provision (note: reference withheld to protect the anonymity of the institution).

The University has a quality management unit acting as a facilitating agent to support and monitor the quality of the university's TNHE programmes. Unlike NMU (Franchised Delivery), the university does not have a defined model of TNHE. The proposing faculties and departments have to develop and negotiate their partnership models taking into account the local context. In order to further develop the internationalisation of the University's portfolio as well as the international partnerships, information from the university website states that a TNHE co-ordinator is appointed in each faculty to take the role of developing and supporting TNHE activities for each faculty (note: reference withheld to protect the anonymity of the institution).

6.2.3.2   TNHE Arrangements in the Joint Delivery Model

6.2.3.2.1   Programmes and Students

Partnering with three institutions in Hong Kong, MBU (Joint Delivery) operates a total of 12 awards from foundation degree to doctoral level (Education Bureau, 2016a) (Appendix F). It is worth noting that most of MBU (Joint Delivery)'s TNHE programmes in Hong Kong are delivered through part-time learning mode to address the learning needs of working adults.

Like the programme portfolio of NMU (Franchised Delivery), there is a distinct trend of strong student recruitment in the subject area of building and construction, indicating the strong demand for upgrading human resources qualifications in the industry in Hong Kong. In view of this strong preference of students, it was essential to study how the

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part-time programmes address such needs in intercultural settings and the TNHE context.

The Partnership with Partner E (Hong Kong College of Professional Development, the continuing education unit of a local funded university) was selected as a case study because of the significant number of programmes and students in this partnership. With an aspiration to be "a leading school in professional and life-long education" (note: reference withheld to protect the anonymity of the institution), Partner E offers a wide range of continuing education programmes, from certificates to diploma levels. In addition to that, Partner E collaborates with more than 10 overseas universities to offer both part-time and full-time TNHE programmes to Hong Kong students (note: reference withheld to protect the anonymity of the institution). As reported by Participant C1 (Head of Department of MBU) during the individual interview, the University does not adopt a definitive approach in developing TNHE collaborative models. It is therefore up to the proposing departments / faculties to develop well-suited models catering to the local context. The collaborative models can be varied for each individual programme. The case study focuses on investigating the delivery of construction related programmes in which a joint delivery model is adopted. The interview notes with Participant 1 (Head of Department of MBU) (C3_Interview#_C1) set out the following roles and responsibilities between MBU (Joint Delivery) and Partner E as below (Table 6.3).

Table 6.3 - Roles and Responsibilities as illustrated in MBU (Joint Delivery Model)

	MBU (Joint Delivery)	Partner E
Curriculum design and approval	**	
Recruitment of students		**
Delivery of programme content	**	
Tutorial support		**
Provision of teaching and learning resources		**
Assessment setting and moderation	** in consultation with local staff	
Examination boards	**	
Review and monitoring	**	
Overall quality assurance of the awards	**	

6.2.3.2.2 *Staffing Arrangements*

Within the joint delivery model, MBU (Joint Delivery) has adopted the "flying faculty" approach, involving regular home staff visiting Hong Kong to deliver the teaching. Tutorials conducted by the local tutors are arranged in between the teaching visits, to support the TNHE programmes. The local tutors are mostly construction professionals working full-time in the construction industry and their input in the TNHE programmes has been essential in nurturing the professionalism of the students. There is a wide mixture of interaction between home staff and local staff in this model, which may lead to frequent intercultural interaction in communities of practice. The details of the interaction process are central to this study and they will be discussed in the next chapter.

6.2.3.2.3   Campus and Facilities

Like NMU (Franchised Delivery)'s case, the delivery of MBU (Joint Delivery)'s TNHE programmes is located in the city learning centres provided by Partner E. Students are able to access teaching and learning facilities of the local university, including library and computing facilities. These learning centres are located in the city area for the convenience of the part-time students (note: reference withheld to protect the anonymity of the institution). Students are able to access the on-line portal provided by MBU (Joint Delivery). In sum, MBU (Joint Delivery) and Partner E claim to provide an integrated and conducive learning environment and support for the Hong Kong students, who share the use of local teaching centres with local students studying other awards from different UK universities. The electronic support and platforms provided by MBU (Joint Delivery) suggest that students in Hong Kong have access to the same electronic support as the home students studying in the UK.

In sum, with a bespoke vision to nurture a global university community, the University sets out a key agenda for internationalising the University's programmes and its educational provision. The joint delivery model adopted by MBU (Joint Delivery) suggests that the interaction of TNHE communities in Hong Kong and UK would be very different from NMU (Franchised Delivery) in the rhythm and language of interaction, providing potential opportunities for the nurturing of interculturality within distinctive communities of practice.

6.3   Analysing the Common Themes of the Three Cases

So far the background and context of each selected case has been discussed in detail. The information in these sections was presented after analysing a diverse range of documents and websites (Table 5.2 in Chapter 5). The above sections suggest that each of the three models adopted in the three cases presents a distinctive institutional mission

and approach in developing TNHE programmes. The secondary data studied reveals that all three cases employ the term "community" in their institutional strategy paper to stress the institutional ethos in building up a harmonious, coherent entity of staff and students. The institutional ethos of the three cases in setting up global communities has not only facilitated TNHE development, but this development also suggests that there are potential opportunities for intercultural interaction and learning to take place, which may nurture interculturality in the university communities. In sum, the three models, with specific division of roles and responsibilities between the partners and the universities, all seek to build up varieties of intercultural interaction between staff and student communities, which is the core interest of this study. Table 6.4 below summarises the features of each model with the themes discussed above.

Table 6.4 - Summary of the Common Themes from the Three Cases

Theme	AHKIU (Branch Campus)	NMU (Franchised Delivery)	MBU (Joint Delivery)
Strategy in Internationalisation	With a vision to set up a global university community, the University has formulated a strategy of internationalisation through expansion of the university's community in different countries. The University has a few other campuses in the USA and France.	Internationalisation is one of the key items in the University's strategy 2010-2015. The University has adopted franchised delivery as the core TNHE framework in developing international partnership.	Internationlisation is one of the key items in the University's strategy 2012-2017. The University has adopted various partnership models in developing its TNHE programmes in other countries. A designated role of TNHE Coordinator is set up in each faculty, with responsibilities in developing and supporting the development and management of TNHE programmes.
Learning Environment	The home institution has set up a purpose built campus in Hong Kong. The setting of the branch campus is in reference to the home campus. The Hong Kong Campus has a clear, single branding and identity of AIUHK	Teaching venues, physical resources and supporting facilities are provided by the local partner.	Teaching venues, physical resources and supporting facilities are provided by the local partner
Programmes	The programmes offered in Hong Kong are identical to the home campus, offering opportunities for Hong Kong students with career aspirations in creative industries.	The majority of the TNHE programmes are offered in part-time mode in Hong Kong to fulfill human resources needs in Hong Kong. In the promotional literature, NMU (Franchised Delivery)'s programmes are put together with other TNHE programmes awarded by other universities, under the name "Centre of International Education" of the local partner.	The TNHE programmes are offered in part-time mode in Hong Kong to fulfill the human resources needs in Hong Kong. MBU (Joint Delivery)'s TNHE programmes are promoted under the brand name of the local partner. MBU (Joint Delivery)'s logo is used alongside other universities' logos
	The content and the structure of AHKIU (Branch Campus) programmes are identical with the ones offered in the home campus. Staff of branch campuses are encouraged to contextualise the cases and content to suit local industrial needs	The curriculum of NMU (Franchised Delivery)'s TNHE programmes is identical to the home programme. The Hong Kong teaching staff are encouraged to contextualise the cases and content to suit the Hong Kong context.	The curriculum of MBU (Joint Delivery)'s TNHE programmes is identical to the home programme. The home teaching staff are encouraged to contextualise the cases and content to suit the Hong Kong context.

Table 6.4 - Summary of the Common Themes from the Three Cases (Con'd)

Theme	AHKIU (Branch Campus)	NMU (Franchised Delivery)	MBU (Joint Delivery)
Programmes (Con'd)	AHKIU (Branch Campus) programmes have a strong focus on vocational and professional education and training, aiming to develop students' professional skills and competence for their employment after graduation. From the promotional literature, the Hong Kong programmes are supported by local employers and professionals to provide practice opportunities for students.	The most popular TNHE programmes operated by NMU (Franchised Delivery) are building and construction related programmes. The local partner of NMU (Franchised Delivery) sets up networks with local employers and professional bodies to support the TNHE programmes, and to establish industrial recognition for the TNHE programmes in Hong Kong.	The most popular TNHE programmes operated by MBU (Joint Delivery) are construction and building related programmes. MBU (Joint Delivery) flying faculties set up network with local employers and professional bodies to support the TNHE programmes, and to establish industrial recognition for the TNHE programmes in Hong Kong.
Staff	The teaching of TNHE programmes is conducted by an academic team composed of: (1) seconded staff from the home campus (2) expatriate staff employed in Hong Kong and (3) local staff employed in Hong Kong.	The teaching is conducted by Hong Kong lecturers, employed by the Hong Kong partner. A team of part-time teaching staff with substantial professional experience are involved in the teaching of the TNHE programmes. The Hong Kong teaching team interacts with the UK home team to consult and share practice on the teaching and curriculum of individual modules.	The teaching is conducted by UK flying faculty staff, each teaching visit lasting for 2 weeks for each module. Hong Kong tutors are employed to conduct tutorials to supplement the lectures. The UK flying faculty team interacts with the Hong Kong tutors on the teaching and curriculum of individual modules.
Students	Students all study full time on campus. The Hong Kong campus has a student body with diverse ethnic and international backgrounds. English is the medium of communication on campus.	Students studying NMU (Franchised Delivery)'s programmes in Hong Kong are mainly full time practitioners in the building and construction industry. All of them possess higher diploma qualifications, and study TNHE programmes part-time.	Students studying MBU (Joint Delivery)'s programmes in Hong Kong are mainly full time practitioners in the building and construction industry. All of them possess higher diploma qualifications, and study TNHE programmes part-time.

The above summary outlines the features of different collaborative models, under the themes of internationalisation strategy, staff, students and campus, representing special features of each model, which are to be discussed in the following sections.

6.3.1 Internationalisation Strategy

All three cases have a bespoke strategy in internationalisation, and among them NMU (Franchised Delivery) has developed a prescribed approach in their Franchise Framework for the development of their TNHE activities. As commented by Maringe,

> "internationalisation is now a key strategic aspect of the mission of universities across the board. However…mere mention of strategy does not on its own constitute a sufficient basis for declaring a phenomenon as operating at strategic level within an organisation" (2009:559).

As discussed in the literature review, the phenomenon of TNHE is part of the internationalisation process for higher education institutions, as driven by globalisation. The development of TNHE is viewed in terms of increasing staff and student diversity offshore, and therefore poses challenges as to how staff and students from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds interact within an intercultural context (O'Mahony, 2014). Due to the differences of approaches in realising their institutional ethos in internationalisation, the three institutions adopted diverse TNHE models to actualise their education missions. Under the diverse TNHE models, distinctive intercultural communities may be evolved through intercultural interaction, and interculturality could be developed through these TNHE models.

6.3.2 Programmes

The TNHE programmes selected in the three cases are in different academic disciplines. They share the same curricula and learning outcomes with the parent programmes delivered at the home campuses of the awarding universities. Despite being delivered in different operational models, all programmes have strong vocational and professional focuses, with clear objectives in training students' skills and competencies for their future career and professional development. The vocational and professional foci of these programmes, as well as the student recruitment numbers, demonstrate that one of the key values of TNHE is to fulfil the human resources needs in Hong Kong. On the other hand, the professional dimensions of these programmes may facilitate intercultural interactions between overseas and local teaching staff, local industry and local and overseas students.

6.3.3 Campuses and Supporting Facilities

In terms of the campus and learning environments, the branch campus model offers a conducive teaching and learning environment for TNHE students and staff, in which students and staff can interact and communicate within a single brand entity. With the establishment of branch campuses in different parts of the world, this model reaffirms AHKIU (Branch Campus)'s mission of being a global university. In the cases of NMU (Franchised Delivery) and MBU (Joint Delivery), the local partners provide physical teaching and learning resources for the students. It is worth noting that these facilities are shared with other students studying a wide range of programmes awarded by other overseas universities. Such complex learning environments would be challenging for the development of intercultural interaction and communities of practice.

Further to the physical environment, access to online electronic resources and student learning portals is also provided by AHKIU (Branch Campus) and MBU (Joint Delivery), but not NMU (Franchised Delivery), which is an exception due to their institutional policy. Electronic learning platforms nowadays provide significant support to teaching and learning and hence is essential to link up TNHE students with their home universities. Students' views on this perspective were collected in the interviews, which will be analysed and discussed in Chapter 7 the findings chapter.

6.3.4 Staff and Students

The composition of the student bodies in the three distinctive models (Table 5.4 above) suggests that the nature of intercultural interaction may be significantly different in the three cases. The backgrounds of staff and students, their modes of study and their professional backgrounds, all bring rich and multiple perspectives for intercultural communities of practice to evolve.

Similarly, the composition of the teaching teams in the three cases is complex, involving local and overseas full time teaching staff and local part-time professionals (Table 6.4). In the case of branch campus, the composition of the teaching team suggests that the teaching of TNHE programmes may largely simulate the style of the teaching at the home campus of AHKIU (Branch Campus). In the franchise delivery model, the teaching by Hong Kong staff suggests that the teaching styles and staff student interaction may be very different from that of the UK campus of NMU (Franchised Delivery). In the case of joint delivery, the flying faculty approach appears to be challenging for the transnational teaching team, from the perspectives of intercultural interaction and understanding the needs of transnational classrooms. The details of how staff and students interact and share practice within the above models are

central to the nurturing of interculturality, which are to be studied and discussed in Chapter 7, the findings chapter.

6.4   Summary of this Chapter

This chapter has described the context of the cases, as well as the detailed background of each selected case studied in this research. Details from the institutional strategy papers, websites and a range of documents of the TNHE awarding institutions have been reviewed to provide an overview of the three cases. A comparative analysis was conducted to identify common themes with respect to features of the three models, from the perspectives of internationalisation, staff and students, programmes and campuses. The discovery process upon reviewing these documents 4.5has indicated some directions for further analysis as to how interculturality can be developed.

CHAPTER 7 - FINDINGS

7.1 Organisation of this Chapter

The purpose of this chapter is to report on the findings from the analysis of the data collected during the case study. Furthermore, this chapter seeks to discuss the implications of the findings in relation to the theoretical framework discussed in the literature review. The major focus of this study is on how particular models of transnational higher education offer intercultural interaction for communities of staff and students. The data collected in the study included: documents related to TNHE policy; strategy papers on TNHE developed by UK universities; and notes from individual interviews with participants and focus group interviews. This chapter aims to analyse the data collected from interviews to illustrate the views of participants regarding their TNHE experiences. The data will also inform an analysis of the significance of the transnational education models within TNHE context. The themes that emerged from the interviews with the participants will be interpreted in line with the interrelated concepts of communities of practice, intercultural interaction and interculturality in the context of TNHE.

In accordance with the detailed background of each case provide in Chapter 6, this chapter will be organised as follows. Section 7.2 provides an overview of the findings of the case studies using the thematic analysis approach as proposed in the methodology chapter; Sections 7.3 to 7.5 interpret the overall findings for the three cases categorised under each theme and examine the extent to which they are consistent with the findings of previous and additional literature; and Section 7.6 is a summary of this chapter.

7.2 Findings from the Case Studies using Thematic Analysis: An Overview

Subsequent sections in this chapter aim to integrate the responses from the participants in the interviews, and to provide detailed findings of the case studies with an approach of thematic analysis. The three themes that emerged are: "knowledge and competence of staff and students developed through different TNHE models", "features of communities of practice in different models" and "processes of contextualising TNHE programmes". These themes are inter-related, together they formulate the discourse of intercultural interaction through the development of intercultural communities of practice, and contribute to the major investigation of this study. Sections 6.3 to 6.5 are organised to present the details of each theme and their sub-themes to make a thematic analysis of the data collected through the interviews.

Figure 7.1 below provides an overview of the themes and the number of references and comments made by the participants about each of them. It was found that two themes, "features of communities of practice in different TNHE models" and "knowledge and competence of staff and students developed through different TNHE models" were the most mentioned (Figure 7.1), accounting for 39% and 38% of references and comments respectively, suggesting that they were the key topics of concern for the participants.

Figure 7.1 - Overall Number of References to the Themes

Overall Number of References to the Themes

- Theme 1: Knowledge and competence of staff and students developed through different TNHE models
- Theme 2: Features of communities of practice in different TNHE models
- Theme 3: Process of contextualising the TNHE programmes
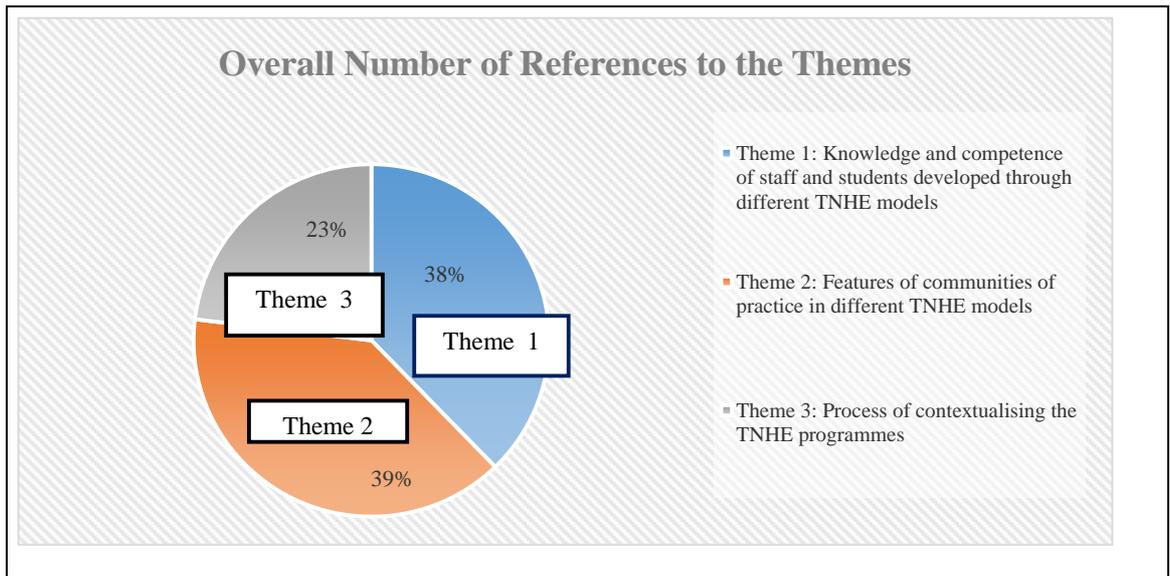
Given the complexity of the data in this study, it is not possible to provide an overarching concept of the findings without providing brief outlines on how the data presentation is structured. Table 7.1 below shows a detailed mapping between the themes and the conceptual framework studied in the literature review, indicating the coherence and relationship between the data and the conceptual framework of this study. The following sections of this chapter will be structured in accordance with the hierarchy of themes listed in Table 7.1. Each major theme mentioned above will be organised as an individual section, to include discussions of findings of all related sub-themes.

***Table 7.1 – Mapping between Sub-themes, Themes, and the Conceptual Framework
of this Study***

Sub-theme	Themes	Conceptual Framework Studied in the Literature Review
Theme 1.1 Developing professional knowledge and competence for staff and students	***Theme 1***: Knowledge and competence of staff and students developed through different TNHE models	Intercultural competence and interaction
Theme 1.2 Interacting and practice sharing with industry to nurture students networking and understanding of the industry		
Theme 1.3 Developing intercultural competence		
Theme 2.1 Institutional strategy and mission of TNHE (Joint Enterprise)	***Theme 2***: Features of communities of practice in different models	Communities of practice in TNHE
Theme 2.2 Roles and affiliations of Hong Kong staff in different TNHE models (Joint Enterprise)		
Theme 2.3 Students' affiliation with the home institution (Joint Enterprise)		
Theme 2.4 Rhythms of interaction of communities in delivering TNHE programmes (Mutual Engagement)		
Theme 3.1 Strategies of contextualising TNHE programmes in different models	***Theme 3***: Processes of contextualising TNHE programmes	Interculturality and Communities of Practice
Theme 3.2 Tools and artefacts shared between TNHE communities (Shared Repertoire)		

In sum, the process of data analysis in this chapter highlights the interpretive nature of the study, with the collected data used to interpret and conceptualise the participants' views on their intercultural interaction and practice sharing experiences through the framework of communities of practice, intercultural interaction and interculturality as discussed in the literature review.

7.3 Theme 1: Knowledge and Competence of Staff and Students Developed Through Different TNHE models

This theme emerged from the sub-themes of "developing professional knowledge and competence for staff and students", "interacting and practice sharing with industry to nurture students networking and understanding of the industry", and "developing intercultural competence". This section will discuss how both professional and intercultural competence and knowledge can be nurtured with different TNHE models, to develop the capacity of TNHE communities. The professional competence and knowledge discussed in this chapter is associated with the development of employability and professionalism among the participants. Intercultural competence and knowledge will be discussed later in this section, to complement the professionalism nurtured through different TNHE models. Both professional and the intercultural competence are complementary to each other, as part of intercultural interaction process for staff and students, and lead to the intrinsic core values of TNHE.

This section will be organised as follows to include the details of the above sub-themes: Section 7.3.1 will illustrate the findings of the sub-theme 1.1 "developing professional knowledge and competence for staff and students" (Table 7.1). Section 7.3.2 considers the detailed findings of sub-theme 1.2 "interacting and practice sharing with industry to nurture students' networking and understanding of the industry". Section 7.3.3 will discuss sub-theme 1.3 "developing intercultural competence", which is related to the

development of intercultural skills, knowledge and competence of staff and students. Under this sub-theme, the role of language proficiency as well as the development of understanding of cultural diversity will be presented in detail. Section 7.3.4 presents some conclusions on this theme.

7.3.1 *Sub-theme 1.1 : Developing Professional Knowledge and Competence for Staff and Students*

This section aims to present participants' experiences in the development of professional knowledge and competence. The sub-theme in this section "developing professional knowledge and competence for staff and students" emerged from the lower level themes of "developing students' professional identity", "professional recognition of the TNHE programmes" and "developing professional knowledge for staff in industrial context". The following data relating to these sub-topics will be discussed to examine how the three TNHE cases have developed professionalism for TNHE staff and students.

A considerable number of participating students (C1_FG#1_students, C2_FG#1_students, C3_FG#1_students) from the three cases indicated that their decision on which TNHE programme to study was closely related to their expectation of future career and professional development. The part-time students, in particular, had a strong preference for the development of professionalism and professional competence through the TNHE studies, for the advancement of their future career. The emphasis on students' employability and career development has therefore suggested a strong relationship between the choice of TNHE programmes and the development of professionalism during TNHE delivery. In essence, the notion of simply replicating the teaching and learning strategies from awarding institutions without looking into the context of Hong Kong's human resources needs would not make any of their TNHE

programmes attractive to Hong Kong students (Mellors-Bourne et al., 2015; Jones, 2013).

In order to address the career needs of Hong Kong students, all three institutions from the case studies had made strong efforts to ensure the relevance of their TNHE programmes to the human resources needs in Hong Kong. In this connection, the development in professionalism, as well as employability of their graduates in Hong Kong, has become a key priority in the TNHE provision. A diverse range of outreach and partnership initiatives, including field visits, industrial engagement in students' projects, internship arrangements, and networking activities with employers have been arranged by the awarding institutions as well as their Hong Kong partner institutions to establish networks between students and industry for their future professional development. All these initiatives are relevant to the recent calls for TNHEs to address the context of the labour market in which the students are located (Jones, 2013).

The case of the American Hong Kong International University (AHKIU, Branch Campus) is different from the other two cases, with the university's institutional mission to develop students' skills and knowledge to be future professionals in creative industries. Through the setting of the Hong Kong campus and the training of the TNHE programmes, students have been exposed to a specific environment nurturing their professional identity to be future professionals in creative industries:

> "I chose AHKIU (Branch Campus) because I am interested in being a photographer or a designer in my future career" (Participant A10, foundation year student, C1_FG#1_students).

> "I always want to be an interior designer. I had an opportunity to visit this campus before my enrolment and was very sure that the training here would benefit me, to be a future designer. I love the setting and would love to study here for a wider horizon in design" (Participant A11, foundation year student, C1_FG#1_students).

The University makes a priority of cultivating students' practical skills for their future career in creative industries, and strives to set up different joint projects with local and international companies in Hong Kong to develop students' professional skills and engagement in practice. Through the network of local teaching staff, the University has provided some internship and practice opportunities for Hong Kong students. As reported by the teaching staff (A2, A3, and A4), one exemplar of these opportunities was a joint design and research project with a local electric power company. The final product of the joint project, designed by students, was exhibited by the power company in a major shopping mall. The project nurtured students' professional competence through engaging them in real-life industrial projects. Moreover, internship opportunities with local studios and local companies have been arranged for the training of students' professional competence:

> "…it is important for students to train their core skills within the professional context and learn about how others do it" (Participant A3, a seconded staff member from US home campus, C1_Interview#A3).

A professional gallery has been set up in the Hong Kong campus to showcase exhibitions from practising professionals and students. The exhibits in this gallery are at professional standards and "had greatly nurtured students' professional identity" (Associate Vice President, C1_Interview#A1). The comments and views from participants further reveal the influence of such efforts on the development of students' professional competence:

> "…students here will be trained to have a strong professional identity because we aim to provide them with real life professional experience to prepare them for their future career in creative industries" (Participant A2, Hong Kong teaching staff, C1_Interview#A2).

Students of AHKIU (Branch Campus) have been very positive towards their TNHE study experience from the perspective of professional development:

> "design is an international career, as we have to learn a lot about what others do in different parts of the world. Both industrial experience and the international context are very important. That is why the designers trained from AHKIU (Branch Campus) are different from other local design colleges. I hope I can have the opportunity to engage in an exchange later, to experience the profession in the USA" (Participant A16, local Hong Kong student, C1_FG#1_student).

All teaching staff and students participating in the case study from AHKIU (Branch Campus) have displayed their strong ethos for being a professional in creative industries:

> "art and design is a very international discipline but it is also very practical. Here in AHKIU (Branch Campus) we all form part of the professional community. It is very important that we exchange regularly with different cultures and professional communities to upgrade our professional competence" (Participant A4, a seconded US home staff, C1_interview#A4).

With AHKIU (Branch Campus)'s distinctive educational mission, staff at the Hong Kong campus share a strong motivation to set up internship and industrial networks to prepare students for their future employment in creative industries. These opportunities are seen as providing invaluable platforms for students to experience the industrial context through practice and to develop their professional competence for their future careers.

In the case of Northern Metropolitan University (NMU, Franchised Delivery), an agenda of "graduate employment" and "the employability of future graduates" has been listed as top priority in the University's institutional strategic plan. In order to accomplish future career development of students, academic departments are encouraged to establish partnerships and networks with potential employers and to obtain up-to-date information on human resources needs and industrial practice (Participant B1, Associate Dean, C2_Interview_#B1). This agenda has influenced the

delivery of the TNHE programmes in Hong Kong and has facilitated the development

of professionalism for the Hong Kong students.

With some completely different student demographics from AHKIU (Branch Campus),

NMU (Franchised Delivery)'s TNHE programmes in Hong Kong were mostly for part-

time learners who have a clear focus on their pursuit of professional qualifications:

> "…as we are all full time employed, we are interested to further
> develop our professional status through the study of the TNHE
> programme, and to be a chartered engineer" (Participant B7,
> student of BSc (Hons) Civil Engineering, C2_FG#1_students).

> "…getting an academic qualification is the major aim for my study.
> The NMU (Franchised Delivery) programme offers a short
> articulation route for Higher Diploma graduates. I hope the study
> will provide me with academic and career advancement"
> (Participant B8, student of BSc (Hons) Civil Engineering,
> C2_FG#1_students).

In contrast to the branch campus model (AHKIU), there was no internship arrangements

for the part-time students of NMU (Franchised Delivery). It was reported that their

Hong Kong team made separate arrangements with local industry to enhance students'

professionalism (Participant B2, Associate Dean, C2_interview_B#1). The

development of the professional network and sense of identity with Hong Kong industry

was mainly initiated by the Hong Kong partner institution. With the franchised delivery

mode, a team of Hong Kong local lecturers was appointed for the teaching of the TNHE

programmes. These members of the Hong Kong teaching team were full time

professionals in the construction industry, who shared the professional identity and

understanding of professional needs in Hong Kong construction industry.

> "We have tried to set up some industrial site visits for students, to
> involve employers in students' academic projects. These visits are
> important for the development of students' professional knowledge
> and will be beneficial to their future professional development"
> (Participant B4, Hong Kong teaching staff, C2_interview#B4).

Professional qualifications were one of the major concerns of students. They have been provided with up-to-date information through regular surgery sessions with the Hong Kong part-time teaching staff (Participant B3, UK home staff, C2_Interview#B3). In addition, it is worth noting that the part-time TNHE programme, BSc (Hons) Civil Engineering, was accredited by the Institute of Civil Engineers, a professional body based in the UK. The professional recognition of the Hong Kong programme enabled students to pursue professional certification as a Chartered Engineer upon fulfilment of further academic requirements. Through the accreditation process of the Hong Kong programme, relevant staff of the UK home institution have gained awareness of the context of the TNHE delivery. In addition, the accredited status of the Hong Kong programme has provided good opportunities for intercultural exchange for the UK staff, bringing some added value to the professional and intercultural interaction for staff and students. (Participant B1, Associate Dean of NMU, C2_Interview#_B1). One of the UK lecturers reported that:

> "some of the technical cases and site visits initiated by the Hong Kong colleagues greatly inspired me, and I have learnt a lot about the professional context in Hong Kong, which helped me to further enhance the programme objectives and delivery of the TNHE programme" (Participant B2, UK Lecturer, C2_Interview#_B2).

The above initiatives have shown how the Hong Kong partner of NMU (Franchised Delivery) cultivated the professionalism of the Hong Kong students to enhance their future career advancement. The industrial engagement in the programme delivery has enabled both students and UK staff to learn and share practice with the industry. These activities have been well received by the participants and have been regarded as essential for building the capacity of students, and developing added-value for TNHE.

Like NMU (Franchised Delivery), the Midland British University (MBU, Joint Delivery) has identified key goals in enhancing the employability of students in the University's

Strategic Plan 2012-2017. The goal has set out a direction of industrial engagement as an essential strategy to ensure that students can be professionally articulated. In order to realise this goal in the TNHE provision in Hong Kong:

> "it is essential for the UK staff to establish partnerships and networks with the Hong Kong industry to ensure that their provision is relevant to the human resources needs in Hong Kong" (Participant C1, Head of Department, C3_Interview#_C1).

TNHE programmes of MBU (Joint Delivery) have been offered in part-time study mode for the Hong Kong market. Students were mostly employed full time in the construction industry; they had a strong professional focus, and were looking for academic and professional advancement through TNHE studies. As revealed by the Head of Programme (UK staff, Participant C2):

> "most Hong Kong students are interested in seeking professional qualifications after their study and they focus a lot on the development of their professional knowledge through the TNHE study. … Besides, students are generally more attentive to the context and requirements of professional bodies, which has been the major reason for their TNHE study" (Participant C2, MBU Head of Programme, C3_Interview#_C2).

There was no internship arrangement for MBU (Joint Delivery) programmes in Hong Kong. Arrangements were made for the students to participate in site visits to local construction sites for their final year projects. Because of students' strong preference for developing professionalism, the UK home staff made efforts to establish links with the Hong Kong institute of Engineers (HKIE) for the recognition of the TNHE programmes delivered in Hong Kong. In an individual interview, the Head of Department of MBU (Joint Delivery) (Participant C1) reported that both the TNHE programmes in this case were recognised by the Hong Kong Institute of Engineers (HKIE), so graduates were eligible to articulate to the status of professional engineers for their future professional development. Not only has the professional recognition status of the programmes enhanced the marketability of MBU (Joint Delivery)'s

programmes in Hong Kong, but such recognition has also ensured the relevance of MBU (Joint Delivery)'s programmes in addressing the human resources and professional needs for the labour market in Hong Kong.

Through the TNHE delivery and the regular teaching visits to Hong Kong, the flying faculty staff from the UK home institutions have found themselves benefitting a lot from learning about the Hong Kong professional and intercultural context, as well as the needs of students and industry in Hong Kong:

> "the exchange with the Hong Kong staff and students has provided me with an opportunity to reappraise my own practice and knowledge within the construction profession. There is a lot to learn in how to address the needs of the Hong Kong market, while aligning to the standards of UK teaching back home" (Participant C2, MBU Head of programme, C3_Interview#_C2).

Students presented a strong view that HKIE recognition was a major reason for their choice of TNHE study at MBU (Joint Delivery). Their major objective in studying was related to the professional "value" of the TNHE degree (Participant C10, C11, students of BSc (Hons) Construction Management, C3_FG#1_Students). Students however raised concerns that some flying faculty staff from UK had not been able to contextualise the UK cases to suit the professional context in Hong Kong.

In sum, there has been strong evidence in the three TNHE cases of industrial engagement to cultivate professionalism for students and staff. These endeavours aimed to ensure the relevance of the TNHE programmes in fulfilling the human resources and professional demands for Hong Kong through providing professional practice experiences to their students. More importantly, students have been provided with relevant training to keep abreast of the up-to-date professional context in Hong Kong. It is worth noting that during the course of cultivating professionalism, staff and

students have been engaged with intercultural interaction with specific rhythms and tempos, with evidence of peer support and influence, which has helped nurture their intercultural competence. Distinctive communities of practice have gradually evolved following the intercultural interaction for the purpose of professional development. The two dimensions of professionalism and intercultural competence have not only served to develop capacity for students' positionality for the global labour market, they have also brought distinctive value to TNHE. The details of the rhythms and tempos, showing how intercultural communities are engaged, will be discussed in Section 7.4 of this chapter.

Upon examining the comments from all stakeholders, it is found that three different models of TNHE have employed diverse resources and strategies in developing the professional knowledge and competence of students. With the help of an integrated learning environment and physical set-up, the branch campus model has offered a conducive and comprehensive environment to nurture students' competence to be future professionals in creative industries. On the other hand, the model of franchised delivery has offered a comparative advantage of integrating local professionals in the teaching team, with a focused and profession-oriented approach for students to develop their professionalism through the TNHE study.

7.3.2 Sub-theme 1.2 : Interacting and Practice Sharing with Industry to Nurture Students Networking and Understanding of the Industry

The sub-theme in this section emerged from the sub-topics of "interaction with industry through TNHE study" and "industry's involvement in students' assessments and projects". This section will analyse relevant data in accordance with this emerging theme.

Universities involved in the case study strove to establish some networking and support from industry to enhance their students' future career development. One of the major initiatives was to emphasise industrial engagement in developing real-life industrial projects to cultivate students' understanding of industrial standards.

At AHKIU (Branch Campus), collaborating and interacting with industry is a top priority for the academic deliveries in the USA as well as overseas.

> "One of the University's missions is to prepare talents for professional careers; therefore it is of paramount importance for us to partner with employers and industry to provide fit-for-purpose training and networks to our students. In return we also feedback to the industry on how we fulfil human resources needs in the industry"
> (Participant A1, Associate Vice President, C1_Interview#_A1).

In view of this mission, all teaching at AHKIU (Branch Campus) is required to include practical elements to nurture students' understanding of the industry. For example, students were assigned to work on academic and design projects to understand real-life industrial practice with different local companies:

> "…we have worked with a local power company for project design and research. This is a group project for all students with assessed elements. In this project, students worked with invited advisors from the local arts community" (Participant A3, seconded US home staff, C1_Interview#_A3).

Students were also provided with opportunities to interact with professionals within the setting a professional studio:

> "We have interacted a lot with the local professional companies including Film Studio and TV production houses. Students have been provided with local studio settings for their professional projects which combine multicultural elements. These local companies have been very supportive of our projects and have therefore provided our students with a golden opportunity to learn about professional practice and to network with local professionals, which is very important for their future career" (Participant A4, Local Hong Kong lecturer, C1_Interview#_A4).

At AHKIU (Branch Campus), students were provided with opportunities to interact with the industry through the following schemes. First of all, prominent professionals from local and overseas were invited to be guests to interact with students on campus; these events aimed to provide opportunities for students to experience professional practice. Secondly, field visits to different companies and studios were arranged for students to interact with practitioners and to familiarise themselves with industry settings. And thirdly, the gallery on campus provided a knowledge exchange interface between the students and the professionals, with whom they can share their exhibitions, production and practice.

Students reflected that they greatly enjoyed the TNHE study experience:

> "…at AHKIU (Branch Campus), we are trained to have a strong professional identity. We have learnt about real life professional experience, and really appreciate the opportunities to work on design projects with corporations. We feel that we are ready for taking the future career in creative industries" (C1_FG#1_Students).

In the case of NMU (Franchise Delivery), industrial networking and interacting activities were mostly initiated by the Hong Kong team in accordance with the university's specifications of franchised delivery. A diverse range of activities was arranged to engage local industry to interact with TNHE staff and students. These arrangements included the following: first of all, guest speakers from public and private organisations in the construction industry were invited to exchange with students; secondly, students were allocated to real-life construction sites for the planning of their academic projects; thirdly site visits to industrial sites were arranged for students to establish connections with in-service practitioners; and fourthly, because of the recognition by professional bodies, there were regular industrial events and seminars for the students to participate in and to experience up-to-date practice in the industry (Participant B3, Hong Kong lecturer, C2_Interview#_B3; Participant B4, Hong Kong

Lecturer, C2_Interview#_B4; Participant B5, Hong Kong Head of Programme, C2_Interview#_B5).   Not only have these industrial engagement activities benefited students' professional development, they have also nurtured some platforms for interaction and practice sharing between communities of practices.

In contrast to AHKIU (Branch Campus), the above engagement with industry by NMU (Franchised Delivery) was arranged through the networks of the Hong Kong teaching teams, with a focused aim to enhance students' networks and understanding of the construction industry.   As reflected by a Hong Kong lecturer:

> "all students in this class are studying part-time. They are aware of industrial practice and know what they need in their study. Members of the Hong Kong team are also mostly employed full time in the industry, making the setting of TNHE provision very practical and vocational" (Participant B4, Hong Kong Lecturer, C2_Interview#_B4).

Students were appreciative of the arrangements for industrial engagement, and shared the focus on accessing a "route to achieve professional qualifications" (Participant B10, C2_FG#1_Students) through their study.   Moreover, they enjoyed the professional and academic sharing with their local lecturers who have "substantial industrial knowledge and experience" (C2_FG#1_Students).   The evolution of communities of practice, with orientation on the local professional context, has been observed.

In the case of MBU (Joint Delivery), the engagement with Hong Kong industry was mostly developed by the UK flying faculty team, and supported by the Hong Kong managers.   Like NMU (Franchised Delivery)'s case, students studying MBU (Joint Delivery)'s programmes in Hong Kong were employed full time in the construction industry, and were engaged in part-time study to further advance their academic and professional qualifications.   In contrast to NMU (Franchised Delivery), the UK home

staff took the initiative in this joint delivery TNHE model to set up networking opportunities with the Hong Kong construction industry. As reported by Participant C1 (Head of Department, MBU) and C2 (Head of Programme, MBU):

> "…we set up the industrial network with Hong Kong private and public organisations through emails and distant communications. We visit Hong Kong regularly and through these visits, we meet with representatives from local professional bodies, including the Chartered Institute of Building, and the Hong Kong Institute of Engineers, aiming to establish international connections for the university to support the TNHE delivery" (C3_Interview#_C1, C3_Interview#_C2).

But they reflected that due to their insufficient knowledge in the industrial and cultural context of Hong Kong, it was "very difficult" to develop the network with Hong Kong industry by distance, and "the learning curve was very steep". Summarising participants' responses, the following presents the practice of MBU (Joint Delivery) for industrial engagement with the Hong Kong construction industry to support their TNHE delivery in Hong Kong: firstly, students were required to use real-life construction sites for the planning of their academic projects; and secondly, site visits to industrial sites were arranged for students to establish connections with in-service practitioners. These real life projects provided opportunities for students to interact with industry. The sharing of professional topics with industry is closely linked to the dimension of joint enterprise of CoP (Wenger, 1998), which has led to the evolution of distinctive communities of practice. However, due to the localised nature of these real-life projects, the interaction in this context was less interculturally related. Furthermore, in association with professional bodies, MBU (Joint Delivery) also offered regular industrial events and seminars for the students to participate in and to learn the practice of the industry.

Like NMU (Franchised Delivery)'s case, students of MBU (Joint Delivery) were positive and appreciative of the above initiatives on industrial engagement (C3_FG#1_Students). As part-time students, they repeatedly emphasised their major concerns about the development of professionalism for career advancement after their study (Mellors-Bourne et al., 2015). In great contrast to NMU (Franchised Delivery)'s case, the local tutors of MBU (Joint Delivery) had limited involvement in the TNHE delivery, and seemed to be less active in participating in the industrial engagement activities.

The above two sections have presented detailed analysis of the development of professionalism, knowledge and skills for staff and students in the three cases. Given the nature of part-time delivery, both NMU (Franchised Delivery) and MBU (Joint Delivery) adopted a much more focused approach in developing staff and students' professional competence and knowledge, aiming to fulfil students' professional needs. Table 7.2 below summarises the industrial engagement schemes put in place by the universities in support of the delivery of TNHE programmes.

Table 7.2 - Summary of Industrial Engagement for the Three Cases

	AHKIU (Branch Campus)	NMU (Franchised Delivery)	MBU (Joint Delivery)
Professional accreditation for TNHE programmes		**	**
Prominent professionals from local and overseas invited to be guest lecturers to interact with students in class	**		
Joint practical projects with industry and companies	**		
Field visits to companies /studios /construction sites arranged for students to interact with practitioners and to familiarise themselves with industry settings	**	**	**
A gallery on campus to provide a knowledge exchange interface between the students and the practising professionals, with whom they can share their exhibitions, production and practice.	**		
Students were assigned to use real-life projects for the planning and assessment of their academic projects.	**	**	**
Regular industrial events and seminars for the students to participate in and to learn the real life practice of the industry		**	**

In sum, the professional orientation of the TNHE programmes in the three models studied has brought essential value to TNHE, in developing students' capacity to address the employability needs of students, as well as the demand of the labour market in Hong Kong (Mellors-Bourne et al., 2015).

7.3.3   Sub-theme 1.3 : Developing Intercultural Competence

Through examining participants' views and their TNHE experience, this section seeks to draw some findings to interpret how different models of TNHE collaborations nurtured intercultural competence for staff and students. It is important to note that the

development of intercultural competence is one of the key themes of this study. It will be discussed throughout the chapter to relate the analysis to the development of intercultural communities of practice.

According to Deardoff (2009) and Byram (2008), intercultural competence includes skills and competence to "communicate and behaving appropriately"; "to develop empathy and adaptability" to different communication styles and environments. As discussed in the literature review chapter, the development of intercultural competence of TNHE communities plays an essential part in the intercultural interaction of TNHE communities. The concept is central to the development of intercultural communities of practice, in bringing enhanced teaching and learning experiences to staff and students (Dunn and Wallace, 2006).

7.3.3.1 *The role of language proficiency in developing intercultural competence*

According to Byram's (2008) framework of intercultural competence, language skills are regarded as core elements in enabling individuals to interact effectively with people from diverse cultural backgrounds.

With the model of branch campus, AHKIU (Branch Campus) offers a learning environment with hardware and software to facilitate intercultural interaction. The teaching team of the Hong Kong campus includes home staff from the UK, expatriate and local Hong Kong staff. Together with a student body from diverse cultural backgrounds, the University takes pride in developing an "international community in Hong Kong for the education of future professionals in creative industry internationally" (Participant A1, Associate Vice President, C1_Interview#_A1). According to the Quality Assurance Manager of the Hong Kong campus (participant A6,

C1_Interview#_A6), the demographics of students in the Hong Kong campus are diverse. In the year 2013/2014, 65% of the total student population was local, and 35% international, with students originating from South Korea, Europe, America and South Asia. The major language for communication and instruction between staff and student groups was English, which helped create a culturally distinctive learning environment from other tertiary institutions in Hong Kong.

In the student focus group interview, Participant A16, a Hong Kong student of BA in Advertising, reported that:

> "…here at AHKIU (Branch Campus), we work with students from other countries. We share our art work, we share lunch and meals together, which enables me to learn about the diet of different cultures. I like the diversity; it is different from being in a local college. My English proficiency has improved and I know more about the language and culture of America, which will definitely help me to be an adaptable designer in the future" (C1_FG#1_students).

Participant A11 was an expatriate student who studied in the international schooling system in Hong Kong prior to her study at AHKIU (Branch Campus). With her previous experience in a multicultural learning environment, she found the physical environment and the setting of the Hong Kong campus inspiring to nurture her development of intercultural competence to interact with other people:

> "some professors here worked at the US campus before so they talked about environment of the USA. Their speaking and language was different from the British, which was hard to understand in the beginning….We also have a lot of interaction with students from the US home campus, and we are closely bound by our professional aspiration to be designers in the future. I feel that I have developed better understanding of the culture and context in the USA and am more confident to take a job there if I had the opportunity" (Participant A11, Student of BA in Advertising, C1_FG#1_students).

It is evident that the setting of AHKIU (Branch Campus) has enhanced students' language proficiency. Such competence is essential for them to engage with other communities to share knowledge and interact throughout their studies.

In contrast, the franchise model has been seen to have much less influence in terms of nurturing the participants' language proficiency and their understanding of international culture. The teaching of NMU (Franchised Delivery)'s TNHE programmes was conducted by a team of local teaching staff, while the UK staff team was mainly responsible for the management and quality assurance of the TNHE programmes. This arrangement limited the opportunity of interaction and engagement between the local staff and students and the UK team. Given the nature of the part-time delivery and students' strong preference for the professional aspects of the programmes, enhancing language proficiency in English and understanding international culture was not considered as essential in their study priorities:

> "we only meet with the UK staff for the staff student consultative meetings. I feel that it was hard to communicate with them as we do not really understand their English. Moreover, I feel that our major focus should be the academic award, whereas I have other opportunities in life to learn about other cultures and languages" (Participant B10, student of BSc (Hons) Civil Engineering, C2_FG#1_students).

Students also reported that some local lecturers used Chinese in their teaching which was regarded to be more effective:

> "as part-time students, we really just want to finish the study in good time….In fact, when there are only local students in the classroom, using Chinese in class is more effective but we have to use English in the assessment" (Participant B7, student of BSc (Hons) Civil Engineering, C2_FG#1_students).

The joint delivery model adopted by MBU (Joint Delivery) has provided a rhythm of regular visits for the UK flying faculty staff to interact with the Hong Kong students.

Students generally felt that the intercultural interaction brought benefits beyond academic knowledge. First of all, students (C3_FG#1_Students) appreciated the opportunity to use English to communicate:

> "…teachers from the home university provided us a good experience to learn English and about UK culture" (C3_FG#1_Students).

In communicating with the UK teachers, they have to "understand their speaking and behaviour", they have also indicated that:

> "…technology helps us to be globalised so there are some project cases and assessments which we can do as peers with UK students on UK cases. In such cases we can learn more about the other culture and English, which is great" (C3_FG#1_Students).

Summing up the views and responses from the participants in the three case studies, the results suggest that TNHE models have a significant impact in developing participants' language proficiency and their knowledge of the culture of different countries. In essence, the development of the students' language proficiency and knowledge of other cultures were most evident in the branch campus model, in which students showed a strong motivation and confidence to pursue their careers internationally after their TNHE study. The branch campus model, therefore, could be seen as bringing added value to benefit students' positionality in the global labour market (Healey, 2016; Jones, 2013).

On the other hand, there seemed to be limited rhythms and tempos of intercultural interaction between the UK staff and Hong Kong students in the franchise model. The nature of part-time delivery led to a focused approach for the Hong Kong teaching team in developing students' professionalism, instead of language proficiency. The use of Chinese in TNHE classroom has been an issue from the perspective of quality assurance, since the practice might lead to concerns about the comparability of the TNHE

programmes in Hong Kong and the UK home programmes. Last but not least, the joint

delivery model adopted by MBU (Joint Delivery) offered students regular opportunities

to meet with the UK teaching staff. Despite their claims that it was difficult to "adapt to

their British speaking and behaviour", students were positive about the opportunity to

develop their language proficiency in English through their TNHE study.

7.3.3.2   *Understanding Cultural Diversity*

"Understanding cultural diversity" is one of the sub-topics under the sub-theme

"developing intercultural competence".   This sub-topic is related to the dimension of

knowledge and attitude studied in the framework of Byram (2008) and Deardoff (2009).

During the interviews, participants were asked if their TNHE experience had brought

them some personal development, including their skills and attitude to working with

people from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Both staff and students of AHKIU (Branch Campus) were largely positive about their

TNHE experience, as there was a wide range of physical and human resources to

support their interaction with others from diverse cultural backgrounds. Participant A4,

one of the home university teaching staff who was seconded to the Hong Kong campus,

shared the process of how he developed his understanding and knowledge to teach in

the Hong Kong campus:

> "…I really enjoy the experience of working with local colleagues
> who have taught me such a lot about the Hong Kong culture. I
> work closely with them for the teaching: we share materials and
> practice between Hong Kong and the USA; we do form a good
> community sharing the same views and mission of education.
> Moreover we also share professional practice in illustration. We
> have a strong identity of being AHKIU (Branch Campus) Hong
> Kong staff, and I enjoy being in this cosy community. Sometimes
> we review each other's teaching sessions, which is important for
> the local staff to understand our practice" (Participant A4,
> seconded staff from US home campus, C1_Interview#_A4).

Participant A15, a US home student studying on a one-term exchange in the Hong Kong campus, reported on the experience of his short term exchange study in East Asia:

> "…the Hong Kong context and environment have enriched my horizon to be a photographer in the future. I have made friends with the peer students in this campus. It was hard to use chopsticks in the restaurants in the beginning, but I feel that I am now a lot more adaptive to different environments. I have gradually realised that understanding other people from different cultures is very important. More importantly, I have now learnt to empathise in different cultural contexts and be adaptive" (C1_FG#1_Students).

Teaching staff of AHKIU (Branch Campus) reflected that their TNHE experiences in Hong Kong helped them understand a lot about transnational education. After the TNHE experience, they were more able to establish some knowledge on how to interact and communicate with people from diverse backgrounds. As described by Participant A3, one of the US teaching staff seconded to the Hong Kong campus:

> "there are about 65% local students and 35% international students in the Hong Kong campus, offering a very multicultural combination and a great diversity for an international campus. It is great for them and for myself to learn about a different culture, and to experience the complexity of communication" (C1_Interview#_A3).

The University was aware of the importance of staff development and exchange in facilitating staff understanding of the University's mission and teaching. In this connection, the university undertook staff development initiatives for locally employed staff to participate in staff orientation and development activities at the home campus in the USA. Participant A6, a locally employed Quality Assurance Manager, reported that these orientation activities greatly nurtured her intercultural learning in understanding the home campus. Upon reflection, she mentioned that the development of empathy and knowledge is essential to any intercultural interaction (C1_Interview#_A6).

Participant A3, a young lecturer seconded from the USA, who only joined the US home

institution one year ago, mentioned his strong interest in:

> "the culture of the China and Asia, and I am passionate about
> Chinese culture and calligraphy, which is the main reason for me
> to come here to work … I feel that whilst I have been here only for
> a term, I have had the opportunity to learn about the Chinese
> culture from my colleagues. More importantly I have also learnt
> how to communicate with the local Chinese students"
> (C1_Interview#_A3).

With a priority to build up an integrated intercultural teaching team for the Hong Kong

campus, the management team of the Hong Kong campus provided support in arranging

social networks and local peer activities for the expatriate and relocated staff to adapt to

the local setting. Cantonese lessons were provided for staff to join voluntarily.

In addition, teaching staff with diverse cultural backgrounds reported their priority to

nurture students' intercultural competence for their future career development:

> "…students do need to build up their flexibility to handle people
> with different cultures. AHKIU (Branch Campus) is a great place
> to learn about this. Here they are able to deal with subject matter
> from different parts of the world, and to establish some skills to
> communicate and adapt to global society" (Participant A5, Local
> Hong Kong Lecturer, C1_Interview#A5).

All the above efforts, in formal and informal settings, have provided evidence of the

development of intercultural competence for staff and students from diverse

backgrounds. In the case of AHKIU (Branch Campus), the learning process was

reported to be positive.

NMU (Franchised Delivery)'s franchised delivery model was found to contrast

significantly with the story of AHKIU (Branch Campus). First of all, UK staff with

regular visits to Hong Kong generally reported positive experiences in TNHE that help

their understanding of the different industrial and educational context in Hong Kong.

As reflected by Participant B2, Head of Programme of NMU (Franchised Delivery):

> "…I feel that I have learnt a great deal from the TNHE experience. Every time I visited Hong Kong, the Hong Kong students looked after me and took me out for sight-seeing. We also had exchanges on professional practice between Hong Kong and the UK….I think I was given a very good opportunity to broaden my mind, and to reflect on global issues in the building industry. I was able to learn from other countries, and then bring these important experiences back to my UK teaching" (C2_Interview#_B2).

Similarly, Participant B1, the Associate Dean of NMU (Franchised Delivery) shared that:

> "With more than 15 years' experience in working with overseas institutions, I have found each of these international collaboration ventures very challenging and distinctive. All these experiences have made me learn about people from different cultures. The most difficult part is to have empathy and to understand what other cultures need. These TNHE experiences are rewarding, and have given me a new horizon in life, contributing to a very meaningful personal development" (C2_Interview#_B1).

Moreover, the TNHE experiences enabled UK staff to learn about the learning styles of Hong Kong students. Participant B1 (Associate Dean of NMU, Franchised Delivery) and B2 (Head of Programme of NMU, Franchised Delivery) reported that the Hong Kong students "seemed to have some difficulties understanding English", explaining why the Hong Kong teaching team adopted the medium of Chinese in the teaching. Participant B2 (Head of Programme of NMU, Franchised Delivery) also noticed that:

> "Hong Kong students are much more focused on the value instead of the process of their TNHE qualifications. The TNHE study has been seen as an investment, and their future career advancement is the most important value of the study" (C2_Interview#_B2).

Despite NMU (Franchised Delivery)'s aspirations to build up an international community through TNHE partnerships, the franchise delivery in this case reflected an outcome with a more localised delivery approach. Due to the nature of part-time

delivery, the focus of this particular TNHE case was on the development of professionalism for students. Instead of developing students' intercultural skills and knowledge, developing networks with local industry for practice exchange and development of students' professional competence was seen as a preferred way to address the needs of part-time students studying TNHE programmes. In fact, the seeming exclusivity in developing students' professional competence against intercultural competence was not the intention of the University. As reflected by the Associate Dean (Participant B1), " we deliver TNHE programmes in other countries not only for reasons of developing alternative sources of income, but also to develop intercultural exchanges for staff and students, and to build the international outlook of the university" (C2_Interview#_B1). It can be concluded that the part-time students' preference dominated the educational approach in this case.

For Participant B5, the Hong Kong programme co-ordinator of the Hong Kong partner institution, the regular interaction with the UK staff for the delivery of the NMU (Franchised Delivery) programmes in Hong Kong provided much benefit:

> "I think personally I have had a lot to learn through this partnership arrangement. I had the opportunity to understand the culture of the UK higher education system and moreover, to communicate with the UK staff regularly, using their language. Such experience enabled my understanding of how education can be internationalized" (C2_Interview#_B5).

On the other hand, members of the part-time teaching team have been less motivated towards developing their intercultural competence through TNHE delivery. They seemed to "adopt the teaching strategies which are used for teaching in other local institutions. These strategies were effective and focused for local students. A quick fix approach is important for part-time lecturers" (Participant B4, Hong Kong lecturer,

C2_Interview#_B4). They did however emphasise the importance of interacting with students to share professional practice.

Like the part-time staff, the part-time students were seen to be less motivated towards the development of intercultural competence through their study. Participant B8, a part-time student of BSc (Hons) Civil Engineering, expressed that they were most concerned with the value of academic study, and therefore preferred to:

> "communicate with the local lecturers for immediate advice on academic study. Our major focus is to handle the assessments and finish the study in good time. Moreover the local lecturers are all full time professionals in Hong Kong, and we like to share their industry practice and updates" (C2_FG#1_Students).

The above focus of sharing industry practices provided foundations for the communities of practice to emerge, these communities of practice seemed to be mutually engaged with clear orientations of local professional agenda. The above reflections from NMU (Franchised Delivery)'s participants suggested that the model of franchised delivery, if offered in part-time mode of delivery, would not contribute to a great extent towards nurturing intercultural competence for staff and students.

Lastly, through the joint delivery model, MBU (Joint Delivery) set up a team of flying faculty staff to attend regular intensive teaching sessions in Hong Kong. As reported by Participant C1, the Head of Department of MBU (Joint Delivery), the TNHE delivery in Hong Kong greatly enabled his intercultural learning. He described this process as:

> "…a steep learning curve to interpret the mindset of local stakeholders, students and the local practice. In the beginning, it was very difficult and frustrating. However, as the University aims to diversify its footprint in different countries, it was essential for us to be adaptable and to develop skills and empathy to understand needs of stakeholders in other countries" (C3_Interview#_C1).

From the perspective of developing intercultural competence for staff and students, the joint delivery model seemed to be more beneficial to the UK teaching staff than to their Hong Kong counterparts. During the interviews, the UK staff reaffirmed their development of empathy and understanding to work within different cultures by learning from the TNHE experience. To them, the development of their intercultural competence and knowledge benefitted not only their own personal development, but also the sustainability of the TNHE programmes:

> "the experience has greatly enlightened me about different procedures for doing things in different cultures. It has helped me to transfer that knowledge and context to the UK programme, which will be of great benefit to the University at large" (Participant C2, Head of Programme of MBU, C3_Interview#C2).

As reported by Participant C3, Transnational Education Manager of MBU (Joint Delivery):

> "I feel that TNHE experiences are great as they facilitate our learning about other cultures. Through the Hong Kong delivery, I learnt about the learning styles of Hong Kong part-time students and we have to do our best to deliver relevant programmes to them" (C3_Interview#_C3).

Participant C2, the Head of Programme of MBU (Joint Delivery), who regularly visited Hong Kong for intensive teaching, found that building up understanding of the needs of the Hong Kong learners has been of paramount importance to the effective delivery of TNHE programmes. His key challenges were how to deliver the same programme to the fast-paced living city of Hong Kong, where "students aspired to an academic qualification which would bring them value and future career advancement. Here in Hong Kong, students wanted to finish their programmes as fast as possible" (C3_Interview#_C2).

The agenda of understanding cultural diversity and intercultural learning seemed to be less important to the part-time tutors in MBU (Joint Delivery), who were responsible for the tutorials conducted between the UK teaching staff's teaching visits. The Hong Kong tutors (Participant C4 and C5) mentioned that:

> "we have interacted with staff and students on the scheduled time only, as we have full time employment. It was rather hard for us to associate the UK university with the Hong Kong TNHE programmes" (C3_Interview#C4, C3_Interview#C5).

They further argued that their major role should be to support the teaching of the UK lecturers, and to provide local cases for the teaching content. In the interviews, both Hong Kong tutors made little mention of their development of intercultural competence. Table 7.3 below summarises the intercultural competence developed in specific groups in the three distinctive models. In sum, the branch campus model provided strong evidence of the development of intercultural competence for all participants. The other two models were more limited in how intercultural competence was developed within the staff and student groups. However, one key point to note is that across all three models, the development of intercultural competence was evident for the overseas teaching staff group.

Table 7.3 - Summary of the Development of Intercultural Competence through the Three TNHE models

Framework of Intercultural Competence (Deardorff, 2009; Byram, 2008)	Branch Campus AHKIU	Franchised Delivery NMU	Joint Delivery MBU
Attitude of • respect • openness • curiosity and discovery Knowledge of • cultural self-awareness • deep cultural knowledge • socio-linguistic awareness Skills • to listen • to observe • to analyse • to interact • to interpret • to relate	• Strongly evident with staff who were seconded to Hong Kong, local expatriate staff, local staff and students.	• Strongly evident with UK staff who made visits to Hong Kong for programme management • Evident with Hong Kong programme management staff who were in regular contact with UK team • Not evident for the Hong Kong part-time teaching team and students	• Strongly evident with UK staff who made visit to Hong Kong for intensive teaching and programme management • Some evidence for the Hong Kong students who were in contact with UK teaching team • No evidence for the Hong Kong part-time teaching team

7.3.4 Concluding Remarks for Theme 1: Knowledge and Competence of Staff and Students Developed through Different TNHE Models

The findings of the key theme 1: knowledge and competence of staff and students developed through different TNHE models suggest that TNHE experiences for staff and students were far beyond just building up academic capacities for students. The analysis of the case studies revealed that transnational programmes in the three case studies nurtured a range of knowledge and competence for staff and students in building up their capacities for their future careers and lives. The key findings from these themes also suggest that TNHE models of delivery had a significant impact on the development

of diverse competence and knowledge of staff and students in relation to professionalism and intercultural competence. In fact, beyond "hard skills and competence", employers nowadays also look for transferable skills in team work, communication skills, foreign language skills, leadership, interpersonal skills and intercultural skills (Mellors-Bourne et al., 2015). From many perspectives, the development of professional and intercultural competence and knowledge through transnational education programmes has gone beyond the concept of skills as stated by Mellors-Bourne et al. (2015). The distinctive development of professional and intercultural competence demonstrated by the three cases has shown the contributions and value of TNHE programmes in addressing the needs of the Hong Kong market. The detail of how intercultural competence is developed is of particular interest to this study, as it is very much related to the process of intercultural interaction, which may lead to the nurturing of the interculturality of TNHE communities of practice.

Through the three case studies, we have seen that universities operating with three different models of TNHE delivery have given priority to developing staff and students' professional identity, knowledge and competence for the students' future career development, in alignment with the universities' missions. From the three cases, we have observed that a diverse range of systems has been put in place to promote industrial engagement to benefit the delivery of TNHE programmes.

The responses from student focus group interviews suggest that the development of intercultural competence is closely related to the rhythm and modes of interaction between the staff and students, and to the distinctive nature of TNHE models. It is evident that with the purpose-built campus in Hong Kong, students at AHKIU (Branch Campus) are offered a conducive learning environment to facilitate interaction and

development of intercultural competence for the international community. In all three cases, different groups of overseas participants from the three awarding institutions demonstrated strong evidence of developing understanding, empathy and knowledge to adapt to the Hong Kong context. Intercultural interaction has taken place in different rhythms specified by distinctive models, leading to developing professional competence and intercultural competence. Both the development of professionalism and intercultural competence added value to TNHE and made the future graduates of AHKIU (Branch Campus) marketable in the global labour market. It is also essential to note that the intercultural interaction was based on the joint enterprise of developing professionalism for students' future career in creative industries, as indicated in Wenger's dimension of "joint enterprise" (1998). There was evidence that more opportunities for intercultural interaction lead to better nurturing of intercultural competence and professional competence. Such development of intercultural interaction had considerable influence on the development of intercultural communities of practice, which is to be discussed in more detail in Section 7.4.

In sum, AHKIU (Branch Campus) adopted an integrated and balanced approach to facilitate the development of a diverse range of professional and intercultural skills and competences for staff and students. The physical learning environment for AHKIU (Branch Campus) is of particular significance for cultivating intercultural understanding and competence for staff and students. The regular flying faculty visits of MBU (Joint Delivery) on the one hand provided opportunities for staff and students to engage in intercultural interaction and developed the intercultural competence of the UK flying faculty staff. However on the other hand, the UK flying faculty staff found it hard to develop industrial engagement with Hong Kong industry at a distance. In contrast, the franchise delivery model of NMU (Franchised Delivery) offered a focused approach for

developing students' "hard" knowledge and skills for their future professional development, but Hong Kong staff and students seemed to be indifferent about the development of intercultural competence in the study. It is also worth summarising the influence of part-time delivery on the development of intercultural competence in the cases of NMU (Franchised Delivery) and MBU (Joint Delivery). Due to the learning circumstances of part-time students, the part-time delivery of NMU (Franchised Delivery) and MBU (Joint Delivery) had to adopt a professional focused approach to fulfil students' study preference, which to a certain extent traded off the opportunities for the Hong Kong staff and students to build up their intercultural competence through their TNHE experiences.

In addition, the investigation of this theme revealed a key point that in each model of TNHE delivery studied, the development of intercultural competence was most evident in the overseas staff delivering or managing TNHE programmes in Hong Kong. This result corresponds with some previous studies (O'Mahony, 2014; Leask et al., 2005; Smith, 2010; Wang, 2008), and reflects some urgent needs for teaching staff or management staff from TNHE awarding institutions to be interculturally competent in order to deliver TNHE programmes effectively in an offshore context. Staff development specific to teaching and managing TNHE programmes in intercultural contexts therefore needs to be in place before and during TNHE delivery (Dobos, 2011).

7.4 Theme 2: Features of Communities of Practice in Different TNHE Models

The theme "features of communities of practice in different TNHE models" is closely related to Wenger's framework of communities of practice (1998). This section is organised to analyse the details of this theme: Section 7.4.1 reports the analysis of sub theme 2.1 "institutional strategy and mission of TNHE", which is related to the

dimension of joint enterprise in Wenger's framework of communities of practice. It covers "why" and "how" the distinctive models were set up. Section 7.4.2 presents details of the sub-theme 2.2 "roles and affiliation of Hong Kong staff in different TNHE models". The sub-theme investigates how the teaching teams for the three cases were set up and how they shared a sense of belonging with the awarding universities. The dimension of "joint enterprise" within the framework of communities of practice will be used to interpret the details in this theme. Section 7.4.3 presents an analysis of the sub-theme 2.3 "students' affiliation with the home institution." Section 7.4.4 is a detailed analysis of the sub-theme 2.4 "rhythms of interaction of communities in delivering TNHE programmes", which is closely related to the dimension of mutual engagement in the framework of communities of practice. The section will focus on the rhythms and tempo of how the intercultural communities of practice in the three models interact and construct knowledge during TNHE delivery. Section 7.4.5 is a summary of this section. In sum, detailed analysis on these themes will be built on Wenger's framework of communities of practice to investigate the main features of TNHE communities of practice in the three different models.

7.4.1   Sub-theme 2.1 : Institutional Strategy and Mission of TNHE

As discussed in Chapter 6, context of the cases, the institutional strategies and missions of TNHE have had a significant influence on the three cases and how they adopted one of the TNHE models. The models have framed the rhythms and tempos of how the staff and students interact during the process of transnational education delivery. This section aims to provide detailed analysis of the institutional strategy and mission of the three cases, which serves to set up a domain of analysis for the subsequent details of intercultural interaction between communities of practice.

In the case of AHKIU (Branch Campus), a distinctive institutional mission and

philosophy towards delivering transnational education programmes was set up. The

University:

> "aspires to be an international university and has been looking to develop footprints in different parts of the world. The Hong Kong campus was predominantly developed to be an extension of the US home campus. AHKIU (Branch Campus) Hong Kong has a mission of integrating into the local culture to establish a distinctive brand" (Participant A1, Associate Vice President, C1_Interview#_A1).

Such a mission has been communicated to staff in the Hong Kong campus:

> "we have realised there is keen competition between higher education institutions across the world. Globalising our programmes and campuses is the only way to achieve long term sustainability. The major mission of the Hong Kong AHKIU (Branch Campus) is to provide vocational and practical design training to students in different parts of the world and to enable their future careers in the design industry around the world" (Participant A6, Quality Assurance Manager, C1_Interview#_A6).

In essence, transnational education delivery is one of the major endeavours to realise the

University's mission to globalise its programmes and to deliver them to different

countries. The setting up of the branch campus is seen as a suitable model to establish

an integrated University community in Hong Kong with close linkage to the

university's US home campus.

Similarly, NMU (Franchised Delivery) has an international strategy to "internationalise

its programmes and partnership". So far the University has adopted the franchised

framework and established franchised delivery in different countries including Hong

Kong. The franchised framework, in some respects, has been seen as a model for

building up the capacity of the University as well as that of its overseas partner

institutions:

> "the role of TNHE can be seen as an intermediate measure for the university to build up international campuses, and to build up the academic capacity of the partnering institution....Therefore in the longer term, franchised activities should aim to build up the academic capacity of the Hong Kong team and the portfolio of partner institutions" (Participant B1, Associate Dean, C2_Interview#_B1).

The franchised model has involved a teaching team in Hong Kong which has substantial industrial experience in providing opportunities for knowledge exchange between the Hong Kong and the UK teams. The development of the academic capacity of a local team is one of the key issues for the franchise delivery model:

> "in an ideal context, the local team (including both part-time and full-time teaching staff) needs to adapt to the university's teaching and learning regime and not to simply "localise the TNHE programmes according to their understanding of the Hong Kong context" (Participant B1, Associate Dean, C2_Interview#_B1).

However, as we discussed earlier in the case of NMU (Franchise Delivery), the development of intercultural competence for local part-time staff through the TNHE experience, in particular in the context of engaging in intercultural interaction, has yet to be developed.

Like NMU (Franchised Delivery), MBU (Joint Delivery) also has a blue-print of their international strategy which focuses on developing its international partnerships and joint ventures through different TNHE models:

> "the delivery of our TNHE programme started in early 2000, to cope with the change of the higher education market at home. Given the government's policy in higher education, less public funding will be available for universities, and therefore a lot of UK universities have to diversify their recruitment and delivery markets to overseas...such diversification also brings benefit of capitalising on knowledge exchange opportunities and developing business which traditionally does not exist in the home market" (Participant C1, Head of Department, C3_Interview#_C1).

The above reflective account evidences the impact of the forces of globalisations on MBU (Joint Delivery)'s development of TNHE activities. At MBU (Joint Delivery), academic departments initiate proposals on the model of collaboration for each TNHE partnership, based on the market context in different countries. The joint delivery model with a flying faculty approach was selected in this instance, because the model was seen as "a good way to gate-keep the quality of the transnational education programmes with the UK team taking full responsibility for delivery and assessment" (Participant C1, Head of Department, C3_Interview#_C1). On the other hand such a model was seen to provide the university with an opportunity to "establish a wider university community and knowledge exchange platforms in Hong Kong, both for staff and students" (Participant C1, Head of Department, C3_Interview#_C1).

The above analysis suggest that the selection of the TNHE framework is closely related to institutional strategies and their mission in TNHE, which is largely in response to the forces of globalisation and market privatisation of higher education. In accordance with Wenger's framework of communities of practice (1998), the domain of a community provides an area of interest of common goal to be shared by members. In this connection, the abovementioned missions and strategies have set up domains for TNHE, within which staff and students interact and share practice. Moreover, members of the communities of the three cases have gradually formed joint enterprises for practice sharing. In the following analysis, more details of the rhythms of interaction and practice sharing will be discussed and interpreted.

7.4.2 Sub-theme 2.2: Roles and Affiliations of Hong Kong Staff in Different TNHE Models

The roles and affiliations of the Hong Kong staff form one of the essential sub-themes in this study. The sub-theme includes lower level sub-topics of "setting up the staff team in Hong Kong", and "Hong Kong staff's sense of identity with the awarding institutions". The details in these areas are essential to inform the staff and students' joint enterprise in communities of practice in distinctive TNHE models.

As a newly established international campus, the initial set up of AHKIU (Branch Campus) involved a team of home staff from the USA in the teaching:

> "In the first two years of operation, we have relied a lot on US home staff being seconded to the Hong Kong campus to conduct teaching on a semester basis. We have tried to use the same management system between the two campuses. However we found that there were a lot of problems with seconded staff, with staff identity, continuity and their sense of community … From the second year of operation, we then started to employ more local staff or expatriate staff with local contracts, aiming to build up a local AHKIU (Branch Campus) Hong Kong community with strong sense of belonging to the university at large" (A1, Associate Vice President, C1_Interview#_A1).

Moreover, Participant A5 (Hong Kong lecturer) also reported close bonding and relationships between the teaching staff at the Hong Kong campus:

> "…as we are in a small campus, I have worked closely with staff at the Hong Kong campus. As I am an alumnus of the University, I also share the mission and the practice of the University with other colleagues" (C1_Interview#A5).

Based on the diverse cultural and academic backgrounds of the Hong Kong teaching team, an intercultural domain for the communities to share knowledge and interact has emerged:

> "…here in the Hong Kong Campus, we have a team of US staff who came from the home campus, and some expatriate staff who are employed for the Hong Kong campus. There are also local staff

with different teaching backgrounds, making our community very international" (Participant A5, local lecturer, C1_Interview#_A5).

"…colleagues in this campus come from different professional backgrounds in the area of creative design, and they all share slightly different professional practices. But in education terms, we are all faculty staff of the university and we share the same ethos in teaching" (Participant A5, local lecturer, C1_Interview#_A5).

The sense of belonging from staff as indicated above suggested some strong elements in the dimension of "joint enterprise" developed in the communities of practice at AHKIU (Branch Campus).

The story for NMU (Franchised Delivery) is distinctively different from the one discussed above. Members of the Hong Kong teaching team were professionals employed full-time in the Hong Kong construction industry, and were engaged in TNHE teaching part-time. They were appointed by the local partner and some of them "have a few other part-time teaching commitments at tertiary institutions in Hong Kong" (Participant B5, Hong Kong Programme co-ordinator, C2_Interview#_B5). In this model of TNHE collaboration, the programme co-ordinator in Hong Kong is the main person to co-ordinate with the UK team for the TNHE delivery. According to the UK head of programme, his interaction with the Hong Kong programme co-ordinator was quite close:

"I have built up a very close relationship with the Hong Kong programme co-ordinator and find it very beneficial to have a mirror role in Hong Kong. We share the professional context between the UK and Hong Kong" (Participant C2, Head of programme of NMU, C2_Interview#_C2).

On the other hand, given the nature of part-time appointments under the franchised delivery model, the Hong Kong teaching team was observed to be relatively remote from the UK team as well as from the University:

"In this part-time teaching role, I have bonding with the UK University, in which I usually communicate with their module leaders on the curriculum and teaching practice, as well as students' performance. However, as I have full time job and am also engaged in other part-time teaching, my time is very limited. So I prefer to spend time with students to focus on the delivery of the module content" (Participant B4, Hong Kong Lecturer, C2_Interview#_B4).

"However, I share a strong view that the TNHE programmes delivered in Hong Kong can provide more opportunities for the practitioners to enhance their academic qualifications, bringing long term benefits to the construction industry. This is the main drive for me to engage in part-time teaching, as I really want to share my experiences and professional knowledge with junior practitioners" (Participant B4, Hong Kong Lecturer, C2_Interview#_B4).

Participants' views in the NMU (Franchised Delivery)'s case suggested that Hong Kong staff shared a mission of enhancing professional competence for Hong Kong construction practitioners. Such a strong preference for the professional development of staff and students has developed some distinctive forms of communities of practice, with a joint enterprise in establishing students' professionalism for their future career development in Hong Kong's construction industry.

In the case of MBU (Joint Delivery), two Hong Kong tutors participated in the individual interviews, and were observed to be distant from the UK Institution, given their part-time involvement with the TNHE programmes. They did not present any particular view on this topic. In sum, findings suggested that the model of branch campus has provided both hardware and software set up to nurture a strong sense of belonging for staff from different professional and academic backgrounds. In this connection, the staff's identify and affiliations towards the university communities were evident, demonstrating a strong dimension of joint enterprise as indicated in the concept of CoPs. In the other two models, despite the institutional visions to nurture

international communities offshore, the affiliations and identity of Hong Kong staff towards the awarding institutions were not evident.

7.4.3   Sub-theme 2.3: Students' Affiliations with the Home Institution

Students' affiliation to and identity with the home institutions and whether they have empathised as being part of the university community of the TNHE awarding institutions is a topic of importance in this study, since it shapes the practice of "joint enterprise" within the communities of practice.

Participants' views suggest that the model of branch campus has nurtured a strong sense of belongings for students. All participants, including staff and students in the AHKIU (Branch Campus), demonstrated their clear vision of being part of the integrated AHKIU (Branch Campus) community. As described by the students in the focus group interview:

> "here we have formal and informal channels of communication, and we have social integration with the neighbourhood area. There is a strong AHKIU (Branch Campus) identity here, with lots of student sample work being displayed in the Hong Kong Campus" (C1_FG#1_Students).

Students shared common goals and aspirations to be future designers were a key factor in the development of their strong sense of belonging to AHKIU (Branch Campus). Such aspirations and goals were supported by the learning environment which is specific to the context of creative industries:

> "we all feel that we are part of the AHKIU (Branch Campus) global community. Here we communicate with the US students through the electronic learning portal. We have joint team projects, and there are a lot of artefacts of the US students here in the Hong Kong campus. We all have the same career aspirations and share the common goal to be designers for the future" (C1_FG#1_Students).

The above responses displayed a strong sense of joint enterprise as introduced in Wenger's model of communities of practice (Wenger, 1998).

In view of the nature of part-time delivery, students of NMU (Franchised Delivery) had a strong focus on and preference for the "hard" part of the study, and claimed that they:

> "do not have a clear impression about NMU (Franchised Delivery) as it is located in the UK.... As we are studying in Hong Kong and use the premises of the Hong Kong College, obviously we feel that we are part of the Hong Kong institution" (C2_FG#1_Students).

> "we have strong bonding with the Hong Kong lecturers as they are the ones we see most in our study, and they offer strong support and professional networking to us" (C2_FG#1_Students).

NMU (Franchise Delivery)'s students in Hong Kong have not been offered access to the University's virtual learning portal. The physical distance, the nature of part-time delivery, together with limited access to the University's staff and online support systems, all accounted for the Hong Kong students being remote from the awarding university.

Like the case of NMU (Franchised Delivery), the TNHE programmes offered by MBU (Joint Delivery) in Hong Kong were part-time construction-related programmes. Students shared similar strong preferences for the development of their professionalism through the TNHE study. Some different packages were offered to students to facilitate their linkage to the University:

> "we have dual registration with MBU (Joint Delivery) and the Hong Kong universities. We get student cards from both institutions. We like seeing the UK staff regularly as they are the ones who know about the programmes and the assessments" (C3_FG#1_Students).

It is important to note, however, that despite all the above packages offered by the University, students still felt that they were students of the local partner of MBU (Joint

Delivery), "as I am studying in Hong Kong and use their learning facilities" (Student

C8, C3_FG#1_Students), which may deviate from the intention of MBU (Joint

Delivery)'s international strategy below:

> "Hong Kong students are no doubt part of our university. We have
> induction programmes for the students conducted by the flying
> faculty staff; we do the teaching to emphasise the university
> branding in Hong Kong. We want to make sure that students see
> themselves as part of MBU (Joint Delivery)" (Participant C1,
> Head of Department, C3_Interview#_C1).

Based on the responses of the participants from the three case studies, the branch

campus model has evidently nurtured a strong sense of identity for staff and students,

indicating strong elements of "joint enterprise" in the AHKIU (Branch Campus)

communities of practice. On the other hand, part-time staff and students have displayed

only a remote sense of affiliation to NMU (Franchised Delivery), but with strong

common goals for the enhancement of the construction industry.

It is however, essential to consider the small number of the student population at

AHKIU (Branch Campus). With a small community of staff and students, it is not

difficult to predict close interaction and bonding between staff and students. How the

University can nurture a strong sense of affiliation of these communities with an

increased number of staff and students would be worth further investigation.

7.4.4 Sub-theme 2.4: Rhythms of Interaction of Communities in the Delivery of TNHE

This section aims to provide details of how TNHE communities of practice interact in

the intercultural context of the three different cases, as well as how staff and students

share practice to construct knowledge and nurture interculturality for better TNHE

experiences. The section will investigate these details using the dimension of "mutual

engagement" within Wenger's framework of communities of practice (1998).

The dimension of mutual engagement refers to how members of communities of practice do things together to negotiate and build up relationships (Wenger 1998:73). As a newly established institution, AHKIU (Branch Campus) had a relatively small number of students and staff, within which staff and students had close interaction with staff and students from the US home institution, the professional community and the local community surrounding the campus. As reported by Participant A4, a seconded member of staff from the US home campus, they "formed a close community to share teaching and professional practice on a daily basis" (C1_Interview#_A4).

Newly employed local teaching staff interacted regularly with the faculty staff in the US to share the subject matter as well as the practice of their teaching. Participant A2 (a local teaching staff member who previously taught in other Hong Kong tertiary education institutions) reported that the teaching staff from Hong Kong and the USA had monthly video conference sessions to exchange and share teaching content and details, aiming to provide Hong Kong students with some learning experiences comparable to those of the US home campus (C1_Interview#_A2).

In the focus group interview, students reported on close interactions with their peer students and staff at both the Hong Kong and the US campus. The strong rhythms of interactions were nurtured through face to face and on-line virtual social platforms:

> "the Hong Kong campus is small. There are not too many students, and the setting has allowed us to work closely within a class. We have had many group projects, giving us opportunities to share information and ideas day to day. Moreover, the nice environment and virtual learning platform have provided us some space to socialise with US peers as a close community" (Participant A8, Hong Kong student in BA in Advertising, C1_FG#1_Students).

Participant A14, a senior year student studying in the US home campus, has provided the following reflective account on his positive exchange experiences in the Hong Kong campus:

> "I had the opportunity to meet my peer here face to face, and learnt about a different cultural context. We go out regularly for socialising; using chopsticks is so funny! Design is an international career, requiring us to always interact and communicate within different cultural and professional contexts" (A14, US student of BA in Photography, C1_FG#1_Students).

Students also had regular online exchange sessions with their peers in the US home campus. Online seminars, critique sessions and broadcast sessions were conducted regularly through the virtual learning platforms for students from both Hong Kong and the US to engage in intercultural interaction for supporting their studies.

The gallery located in the Hong Kong campus provided a distinctive and interactive platform for the university staff and students to exhibit their artwork to external communities on a regular basis. The gallery offered access to the public, providing regular exhibitions from local artists, staff and students of AHKIU (Branch Campus). The professional set-up of the gallery nurtured rhythms for professional exchange and critique, between the university community, other artists and the public (C1_FG#_Students). To sum up, the experiences with different communities, staff and students from the US home campus, professional artists, corporations, and local neighbourhood communities have offered Hong Kong students and staff strong rhythms of "distinctive intercultural interaction; the study experiences are far beyond the provision of a local College" (Participant A7, student of BA in Graphics Design, C1_Interview#_A7).

In sum, with the establishment of a physical environment, student support mechanisms, provision of IT hardware and software, and the setting of a branch campus specific to the needs of creative industries, a distinctive form of intercultural communities of practice at AHKIU (Branch Campus) with frequent rhythms of intercultural interaction have evolved. The communities of practice have been found to share common goals and the shared vision (joint enterprise) of building up a university community specialising in nurturing future professionals in creative industries. They also interacted in frequent rhythms and tempos through the process of teaching and learning, and found themselves benefitting from the development of professional and intercultural knowledge (mutual engagement). Artefacts and information, including artwork, were shared within the communities (shared repertoire). The above form of intercultural interaction for the branch campus model demonstrated the evolution of interculturality in intercultural communities of practice. There were emerging issues of how the American and expatriate staff can adapt to the local culture to undertake the teaching and learning of TNHE delivery, but some supportive measures were put in place to support the relocated staff. More research on the experience of the overseas staff teaching TNHE programmes is recommended in the future, to facilitate better intercultural interaction in TNHE practice.

By contrast, the story of NMU (Franchised Delivery) has presented a completely different picture for the development and interaction of the communities of practice. Given the nature of franchised delivery, the UK teaching staff did not participate in the teaching of the TNHE programmes; instead they had regular email contact and interactions with the Hong Kong team, to share curriculum development, and to communicate on matters related to the operation of the transnational education programmes (Participant B2, Head of Programme of NMU, C2_Interview#_B2;

Participant B3, UK teaching staff, C2_Interview#_B3). For the purpose of quality assurance, a few programme management staff from NMU (Franchised Delivery) visited Hong Kong regularly, as reported by the Head of Programme of NMU (Franchised Delivery):

> "I tried to establish some personal connections with the Hong Kong staff during my regular visits, and hope that staff from both locations will be able to work closely and exchange, and to develop relationships and partnership …. However I do not have sufficient knowledge of the context of Hong Kong, which I think I need to learn about more quickly" (C2_interview#_B2).

There were regular interactions and communication between both teams from Hong Kong and the UK, on the management of the TNHE programmes:

> "some staff from Hong Kong contact me through emails on a daily basis, mainly for the curriculum and the assessment of the modules. I usually share my experience about UK practice. I am also in regular contact with the administration team and the programme co-ordinator in Hong Kong to ensure that the operation and the administration of the programme are in alignment with the university requirements" (Participant B1, Associate Dean of NMU, C1_Interview#B1).

In view of the considerable number of part-time staff with substantial working experience in the construction industry, members of the Hong Kong teaching team gradually developed into a distinctive form of local professional community of practice:

> "I usually work more closely together with the peer teaching staff in the Hong Kong team instead of the UK team … together we have formed an interest group, to exchange our teaching and practice in the industry….We mostly share topics of industrial practice and also our teaching in other institutions. I feel that I am very lucky to learn such a lot and know so many friends in this industry. I really enjoy socialising with the Hong Kong staff and students" (Participant B4, Hong Kong teaching staff, C2_Interview#_B4).

One of the Hong Kong teaching staff also disclosed his involvement in part-time teaching for other local institutions and mentioned that it is "common to take on a few part-time teaching jobs" (C2_Interview#_B4). He tried to "use his own understanding

and experience to deliver the TNHE programmes to cater to students' need for professional development" (C2_Interview#_B4). Such practice demonstrated a form of "localisation" of the TNHE programmes, implying possibly different teaching and learning experiences offered to Hong Kong students compared to that offered to students studying in the UK.

In order to foster the partnerships with overseas institutions, NMU (Franchised Delivery) organises annual partnership events in its UK home campus. This event involves participants from different countries to offer an informal platform for the partners from different countries to interact with staff and students on the home campus. The annual event has been seen as an essential institutional event for the university to nurture its wider community in a coherent and integrated manner (Participant B1, Associate Dean, NMU, C2_Interview#_B1).

Like the results from the previous themes, students were found to be generally more attached to the Hong Kong team with apparent rhythms of interaction:

> "due to some cultural habits, students from Hong Kong very rarely contact UK staff. They contact their Hong Kong lecturers regularly for exchange. These part-time students do work very hard with a focused aim to upgrade their academic qualifications" (Participant B2, Head of Programme of NMU, C2_Interview#_B2).

The part-time students were aware of the importance of peer support through their study. Together they formed social networking groups and professional groups to include the local lecturers for regular critique and peer sessions. Communities of practice have emerged for knowledge sharing in the local industry (C2_FG#1_Students).

In sum, there have been distinctive rhythms of interaction and practice sharing activities between the Hong Kong and UK teaching teams for the NMU (Franchised Delivery)'s

delivery in Hong Kong. The rhythms of intercultural interaction have been less regular and focused on only a few members of staff from both institutions. Given the nature of franchised delivery as well as the part-time provision, the rhythms and tempos of intercultural interaction seemed less significant for the Hong Kong part-time teaching team and students. In fact, the current approach of delivery has seemed to develop a form of "localisation" of the TNHE programmes, which made the teaching and learning activities of the Hong Kong programmes very different from the ones delivered in the UK. The results of the case study also demonstrated the development of local professional communities of practice, with strong highlights of sharing professional information and practice in the Hong Kong construction industry.

For the case of MBU (Joint Delivery), the model adopted by the University dictated that only a limited number of Hong Kong staff were involved in the TNHE programmes. Full time professionals in the construction industry were appointed as local tutors with the main role of supporting Hong Kong students with local tutorials. The tutors also had the role of providing the UK teaching team with information on the local context.

Participant C1, the Head of Department of MBU (Joint Delivery), reported on the interaction with the Hong Kong tutors as follows:

> "They (the local tutors) share with me about their Hong Kong industrial context and in general about Hong Kong and its life. But they are busy and our contacts are mainly face to face during my visits. At the same time, I also share with them about the UK industrial and social context, and the context of the University, which I think has been a great experience" (C3_Interview#_C1).

Local tutors shared the views that interacting with UK staff to share practice in the TNHE context was of great benefit, although these interactions were not in well-paced rhythms:

> "I enjoyed working together with UK staff although I can hardly take the time to socialise with them. We have formal meetings and preparation meetings during their visits each time. Since I am also engaged in other part-time teaching jobs, sometimes it was difficult for me to get the time to understand the context and the details of MBU (Joint Delivery)" (Participant C4, Hong Kong tutor, C3_Interview#_C4).

Like the case of NMU (Franchised Delivery), MBU (Joint Delivery)'s students in Hong Kong formed peer study groups to share practice in their study and the industrial context in synchronised and well-paced rhythms. Students commented that:

> "due to the cultural differences and the time difference between Hong Kong and the UK, we feel that we should be more focused to talk to our peers and lecturers in Hong Kong, in order to complete the study more effectively. We are currently located in a convenient city campus, and we should make good use of this environment to discuss and share our studies. We also form peer groups for the group projects" (C3_FG#1_Students).

> "a lot of us have come from the same sub-degree programme and together we share a lot about the practice of the job and study" (C3_FG#1_Students).

Hong Kong students of MBU (Joint Delivery) displayed some appreciation of the engagement in intercultural interaction with the UK flying faculty team. Given the nature of their part-time study, some students were more reluctant to interact with their UK lecturers; instead, a local professional community of practice was formed among students for their practice sharing of the study.

Table 7.4 below summarises how communities of practice have interacted within the three studied models, representing the distinctive features of communities developed in the three TNHE models. In sum, within the dimensions of "mutual engagement", "joint enterprise" and "shared repertoire" of communities of practice, distinctive forms of communities of practice and elements of interculturality have evolved with specific features within each TNHE model. The results of the study show that in the branch campus model, some form of coherent, integrated intercultural communities of practice

has emerged with substantial evidence of cultivating intercultural competence and professionalism for staff and students. On the other hand, results from the case studies of the other two models reveal that "professionalism" seems to be an essential focus and common goal for capacity development of local staff and students, with relatively less interculturality being developed for such TNHE communities of practice. It is however worth noting that in the context of the NMU (Franchised Delivery) and MBU (Joint Delivery) cases, the universities have developed their internationalisation strategy with the intention to build up international university communities through TNHE activities. It was the mode of part-time delivery as well as students' strong preference for professionalism that may have hindered the development of frequent rhythms in intercultural interaction. In essence, diverse models of TNHE have strengths and weaknesses with regard to the evolution of intercultural communities of practice, with some being more intercultural than the others. Moreover, it has been found that the use of virtual learning portals and online technologies such as blackboard and social learning platforms is essential to promote intercultural interaction and the mutual engagement of intercultural communities of practice. This is an increasingly important topic of research for the future development of TNHE.

Table 7.4 - Summary of the Practices of Communities of Practice in the Three TNHE Models

Dimensions of CoPs	AHKIU (Branch Campus Model)	MBU (Joint Delivery Model)	NMU (Franchised Delivery Model)
Mutual Engagement	●With a coherent and specific physical environment, staff and students (both from Hong Kong and the USA) had strong rhythms of interaction in a conducive learning environment. ●Hong Kong students interacted regularly with US staff / students through electronic seminars and joint projects ●Hong Kong students interacted regularly with local/US peer students via virtual learning platforms provided by the University. ●Hong Kong students and staff interacted with local/ US industrial supporters through collaborations in different projects order to develop students' professionalism. ●Hong Kong staff and students were involved in community engagement with local communities to seek topics of interest for students' design projects.	●UK teaching staff were engaged in face to face contacts with staff/ students in Hong Kong through flying faculty visits (intensive teaching weeks). ●UK staff interacted with Hong Kong staff through regular rhythms of emails and teleconferencing. ●Hong Kong students did not have much daily interaction with UK staff; they had more engagement and interaction with their Hong Kong tutors. ●Hong Kong students and UK students did not have regular interaction. ●Hong Kong students/ Hong Kong staff and UK staff interacted regularly with local industrial supporters through collaboration in students projects in order to develop students' professionalism.	●Only UK programme management staff were engaged in face to face contacts with staff / students in Hong Kong through management visits (two – three times a year). ●UK staff were engaged in strong rhythms of communication with Hong Kong programme management staff through regular emails. ●Hong Kong students interacted mainly with local Hong Kong staff and students; they had less interaction with UK management staff. ●Hong Kong students and UK students did not interact. ●Hong Kong students/ Hong Kong staff and UK staff interacted regularly with local industrial supporters through collaboration in students projects in order to develop students' professionalism.

Table 7.4. - Summary of the Practices of Communities of Practice in the Three TNHE Models (Con'd)

Dimensions of CoPs	AHKIU (Branch Campus Model)	MBU (Joint Delivery Model)	NMU (Franchised Delivery Model)
Joint Enterprise	• Teaching staff of the Hong Kong campus had the common goal of setting up programme provision for the Hong Kong branch campus and to establish a University community in Hong Kong. • Teaching staff of the Hong Kong campus shared the mission of the University to nurture future professionals for creative industries. • Students of the Hong Kong campus had a common goal and mutual accountability to study international programmes in Hong Kong with international dimensions, allowing them to work in Hong Kong or overseas upon graduation.	• UK staff have shared accountability to benchmark the Hong Kong provision against the UK home course, in accordance with the University's mission in TNHE. • Hong Kong staff had the common goal of delivering the TNHE programmes to suit the demand of local industry and students. • Hong Kong students had a common goal and shared accountability to study a professional degree awarded by an overseas university for their career and professional advancement.	• UK staff had the common goal of setting up and providing good quality TNHE programmes in Hong Kong, which fitted both the expectation of the University and the demand in Hong Kong. • Hong Kong staff had the common goal of delivering the TNHE programmes to suit the demand of local industry and students. • Hong Kong students had the common goal and shared accountability to study for a professional degree awarded by an overseas university to facilitate their career and professional advancement.
Shared Repertoire	• Teaching staff of the Hong Kong campus and home campus shared teaching notes and manuals for their teaching. • Artefacts and artwork of students and staff from US /Hong Kong were exhibited throughout the Hong Kong campus. • Photography projects were published in books to share with members of public.	• UK staff shared QA manuals and guidelines with the Hong Kong staff, as set up by the University. • UK staff shared teaching notes and manuals with Hong Kong lecturers. • Students were provided with university ID cards and access to university virtual learning platforms.	• The University set up an institutional franchised framework to provide guidance to the TNHE operation. • UK staff shared QA manuals and guidelines with the Hong Kong teaching staff, as set up by the University. • UK staff shared teaching notes and manuals with Hong Kong tutors.

7.4.5 Concluding Remarks for Theme 2

To conclude, responses from staff and students from the three cases indicated that there were diverse rhythms of interaction between staff and student groups in the three different models of TNHE studied. It was evident that more coherent and harmonised intercultural communities of practice emerged from these well-paced and synchronised rhythms of intercultural interaction. The intercultural communities of practice provided a structure for intercultural learning to take place while students and staff are engaged in specific rhythms of interaction in the physical and virtual environment. Moreover, different levels of interculturality emerged in each of the TNHE models. In the branch campus model, participants' views suggested strong evidence for the evolution of intercultural communities of practice. Members of the communities demonstrated a coherent vision and seemed to be closely linked with the ethos and mission of AHKIU (Branch Campus). At the same time, their joint enterprise was demonstrated through their strong aspirations towards the creative industry internationally. The intercultural communities of practice at AHKIU (Branch Campus) included a diverse range of membership of staff and students from both the US and Hong Kong, artists and professionals in Hong Kong and the US, and members of the local neighbourhood community, making the intercultural communities of practice of AHKIU (Branch Campus) unique. These members have interacted to construct knowledge of teaching and industrial contexts in Hong Kong, with intercultural competence gradually nurtured among the members. As a result, a distinctive form of interculturality took shape to develop the academic and professional capacity of the staff and students. According to the participants, the learning environment and the set-up of the campus are key factors for the development of coherent intercultural communities, on which interculturality is built.

In the cases of NMU (Franchised Delivery) and MBU (Joint Delivery), participants' views indicated the dominance of local elements within the communities of practice. Given the nature of part-time delivery, the rhythms of intercultural interaction were less regular and well-paced. Hong Kong staff and students had strong views on and preferences for the development the "hard" knowledge and professional competence through TNHE. Regarding this, it was observed that there were strong rhythms of interaction between staff and students in Hong Kong for peer support and the sharing of study and professional experiences. Communities of practice evolved with a strong focus on sharing and exchange in professional and teaching practice. Hong Kong staff and students in both models did not indicate a strong desire to engage in intercultural interaction.

7.5   Theme 3 : Processes of Contextualising TNHE Programmes

This section aims to provide analysis of the theme "processes of contextualising TNHE programmes", which has emerged from the sub-themes of "strategies of contextualising TNHE programmes in different models" and "tools and artefacts shared between TNHE communities". The section will present participants' responses on how the three TNHE cases contextualised the programme delivery to suit the Hong Kong context. As suggested by Hoare (2012), contextualisation of TNHE programmes means more than just adding local elements into the TNHE curriculum to suit the Hong Kong context. In fact, the participants' views indicated that the process of contextualisation includes adaptation of teaching, learning and assessment to suit the local context (Hoare, 2012). The process built upon the dimension of shared repertoire from Wenger's framework of communities of practice (1998). In the three models, communities of practice shared repertoires in areas of physical campuses, teaching curriculum, handbooks, operation manuals and artefacts of student projects to contextualise the TNHE programmes.

Furthermore, the learning environment and student support systems provided by the awarding institutions also had significant impact within that process of contextualisation. Strategies of contextualisation undertaken in the three case studies will be discussed in the sub-sections below.

7.5.1 Sub-theme 3.1: Strategies of Contextualising TNHE Programmes in Different Models

The topic of contextulisation of TNHE programmes is attracting increasing research and attention. It has been recommended that the process of contextualisation should be more appropriately carried out in class rather than by distance, creating "in-class intercultural and transnational comparisons" (Hoare, 2012:282-283).

Participants' views from the three cases referred to "contextualisation" as the process of adapting the delivery TNHE programmes to suit the local social and professional context. Such adaptation should aim to ensure that the TNHE programmes are relevant to the Hong Kong context and are able to meet the expectations of students and their future employers. The subsections below analyse detailed views from participants about the processes of contextualisation.

7.5.1.1 Contextualising the Learning Environment

The responses from the participants revealed that the physical learning environment has considerable impact on the process of contextualisation. Through a partnership scheme with the Hong Kong government, AHKIU (Branch Campus) was allocated a historic building in which to set up a branch campus in Hong Kong. The revitalisation scheme of this particular historic building aimed to promote Hong Kong as a regional art and design education hub and improve the city's global competitiveness in digital media and

creative industries. Furthermore, the development of an international academic community in an old district was seen as bringing an international dimension and new elements to revitalise the old community (note: reference withheld to protect the anonymity of the institution). Drawing on its specific heritage features and its location in the old district, the purpose-built campus of AHKIU (Branch Campus) has created a distinctive and conducive learning environment for local and international students:

> "it contextualises the US learning journey for Hong Kong students. Gradually we hope the campus and its setting will nurture a university community in this old district of Hong Kong" (Participant A1, Associate Vice President, C1_Interview#_A1).

The Hong Kong campus was equipped with a university library with similar specifications and services to the one located in the US home campus. Students were provided with access to the University's electronic library. A professional gallery was set up in the Hong Kong campus, in which the art work of staff and students from the USA as well as from the Hong Kong campuses were exhibited to the public. The gallery also held exhibitions for practising international artists. Students also reported that artwork and design products from US students were displayed throughout the campus, which helped establish strong repertoire and identity of the university community (C1_FG#1_Students).

Students were very complimentary about their campus and learning environment. As shared by Participant A7:

> "in this campus, we have space to think and we can learn from the displayed artefacts produced by the US students. I feel that it is a very inspiring intercultural learning environment here" (Hong Kong student, BA in Graphics Design).

The location of AHKIU (Branch Campus)'s Hong Kong campus also provided an inspirational and rich context for staff and students to fulfil their community

engagement with the neighbourhood. The Campus is located in an old district in Hong Kong, in which the neighbourhood members do not have much English proficiency. Participant A3 (US lecturer seconded to Hong Kong) reported that a number of AHKIU (Branch Campus) lecturers developed design and photography projects for students, using the neighbourhood area and the local community as topics. Through similar projects, staff and students from overseas, together with local students, were able to interact with the local community to engage in topics of interest for their design projects. A photography book was published afterwards, aiming to showcase to the public about the rich heritage offered by the local district, through the eyes of an international academic community. These local district assignment projects were well received and served as shared repertoire to contextualise the US programmes to the Hong Kong context. These projects brought the international academic community into an old district, with a profound impact, to help embed the University footprint in the local community. As put by one of the participating staff, a professor in photography:

> "the location and the community of this old district have offered us some very rich sources of integrating international theories of design into the local context. As overseas staff in this old district, there have been a lot of challenges and cultural shock for us to handle. There are not many foreigners in this particular district, so understanding the local culture through projects of community engagement was really good for us and the students. These local community projects have provided fulfilling intercultural experiences for staff and students" (Participant A3, seconded home staff from the US home campus, C1_Interview#A3).

On the other hand, the delivery of NMU (Franchised Delivery)'s TNHE programmes in Hong Kong was conducted at the premises of the University's local partner. Students (C2_FG#1_Students) have commented that their TNHE experiences were "very localised" and not particularly "intercultural":

> "but this is what we expect; we use the premises of the College and we are taught by local lecturers…. and we feel that we are part of the Hong Kong institution" (C2_FG#1_Students).

Despite the University's mission to build up international communities, it would be difficult to replicate a learning environment like that of the UK home campus for the TNHE programmes in Hong Kong. As reflected by Participant B1, the Associate Dean of NMU (Franchised Delivery):

> "students are not familiar with the University learning environment, as it is physically far away from them. In the current delivery model, we cannot provide a similar learning environment to students, but what we are trying to do is to contextualise the programme curriculum to make it adaptive to local needs" (C2_Interview#_B1).

Students reported that the facilities and physical learning environment provided by the local partner institution were adequate to support their studies. Students commented that the facilities provided were "quite standard Hong Kong settings, similar to other colleges in Hong Kong" (C2_FG#1_Students). However, it was mentioned that a large number of students located in the same campus were studying other TNHE programmes. The mixed use of the campus brought limitations to how NMU (Franchised Delivery) communities shared their repertoire in a coherent fashion.

Like NMU (Franchised Delivery), all the teaching and learning activities for MBU (Joint Delivery)'s Hong Kong programmes were conducted at the partner institution's city campus, which was located in a commercial building in the city area. Students commented that "the location is very convenient for access, as we are part-time learners and only come to campus in the evenings and weekends; accessibility of the teaching venue is most important" (C3_FG#1_Students). Another student, Participant C10, observed that:

> "…there are many other students of the local partners coming to the same campus for study. The campus looks like an executive training centre. It is very convenient and suitable for part-time learners, but there is not much setting here which can link us to the UK University. It is hard to imagine intercultural interaction in this environment" (C3_FG#1_Students).

Despite being students of MBU (Joint Delivery), students reflected that they had more bonding with the local university instead of MBU (Joint Delivery). Students commented that the setting of the campus was very similar to campuses of other Hong Kong institutions (C3_FG#1_Students). As reflected by Participant C2, the Head of Programme of MBU (Joint Delivery):

> "It would be very hard for students to imagine MBU (Joint Delivery) campus life in the UK. The learning environment here is too different from the home campus" (C3_Interview#_C2).

Evidence from the above three cases suggested that there are close relationships between the campus environment and the contextualisation of the TNHE programmes. In fact, the physical environment has an essential role to establish the spatial repertoire for the communities of practice (Wenger, 1998). According to the views from participants, the campus environment also had significant impact in nurturing intercultural interaction between overseas staff and students. In the case of AHKIU (Branch Campus), there was strong evidence of how the communities of practice shared repertoire of art work and artefacts, which facilitated a process of "bridging" the US programmes to Hong Kong. In the cases of NMU (Franchised Delivery) and MBU (Joint Delivery), while the city campuses of the local partners provided convenience of access to the part-time learners, the fact that students found being mixed with other students of the partner institutions posed challenges to establishing a coherent repertoire and identity of NMU (Franchised Delivery) and MBU (Joint Delivery), and may explain the sense of remoteness the Hong Kong Students felt from the UK home institutions.

7.5.1.2   *Contextualisation of the Curriculum and Teaching Activities*

Further to the contextualisation of spatial environment, contextualisation of the curriculum and teaching activities of the TNHE programmes is of paramount significance to the intercultural interaction within TNHE. The three studied cases

represented diverse approaches of contextualising the TNHE curriculum, in which various levels of interculturality of TNHE were nurtured. The following sub-sections will interpret participants' views on how these approaches and processes have influenced the contextualisation process.

AHKIU (Branch Campus) adopted the following approaches and standards to contextualise their curriculum to suit the industrial needs in Hong Kong and other countries. (Participant A1, Associate Vice President, C1_Interview#A1). First of all, the teaching aims, objectives and the learning outcomes of the TNHE programmes were identical to the parent programmes delivered at US. The delivery of the curriculum was conducted by an academic team which included US home faculty staff being seconded to Hong Kong for short term teaching, and expatriate staff employed from other countries as well as locally based Hong Kong staff.   In addition to that, the Hong Kong teaching team were advised to adopt both local and international cases for their teaching and assessment. Last but not least, local internship and projects were arranged for students, to ensure that the TNHE programmes were relevant to the Hong Kong and international industrial requirements and standards.

The above approach was well-received by staff and students in the Hong Kong Campus. Participant A4, a seconded member of faculty staff from the US home campus, has emphasised that with a strong international student community in the Hong Kong campus, it was very important to use cases and projects that develop students' capacity for their future careers beyond Hong Kong.

Participant A5, an alumnus of the University appointed as a member of the teaching team at AHKIU (Branch Campus), mentioned his strong bonding with the University.

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Through his previous study at AHKIU (Branch Campus)'s US campus, he built up understanding of the mission of the University and strove to nurture the same bonding with his students in Hong Kong. He mentioned the importance of contextualising the TNHE programmes to meet the needs of Hong Kong industry. With a strong aspiration to intercultural learning, his mission of teaching was to ensure that students received contextualised training that was well-suited for their future professional needs in Hong Kong and internationally. Instead of just adding local elements into the US programmes, he sought peer review:

> "to prepare Hong Kong and international projects for his students. I think engaging students in local industry is important, but it is also important for students to be trained with intercultural skills for their future professional development beyond Hong Kong" (Participant A5, Hong Kong lecturer, C1_Interview#A5).

In sum, the views of the participants highlighted the main aim of contextualising AHKIU (Branch Campus)'s TNHE programmes in Hong Kong, as related to the "international orientation" of the Hong Kong programmes. Regarding the dimension of the joint repertoire of communities of practice, the internationalised curriculum represented a shared repertoire for the intercultural communities of practice of AHKIU (Branch Campus) to practise. It was evident that elements for interculturality were nurtured in the AHKIU (Branch Campus) communities, reiterating the distinctiveness and the unique position of AHKIU (Branch Campus) among TNHE providers in Hong Kong.

The practice of contextualisation for NMU (Franchised Delivery)'s programmes in Hong Kong was different from the above case of AHKIU (Branch Campus):

> "so far the programme of BSc (Hons) Civil Engineering has been in operation for three years. During the 1st year of operation, there was not much contextualisation. From this year the Hong Kong teaching staff has added the local context and value to the programme. I think for operating a TNHE programme,

understanding the local elements and being able to contextualise for local needs is very important" (Participant B5, Hong Kong programme co-ordinator, C2_Interview#_B5).

With no specific guidance or policy from the University, and not much interaction with the UK teaching team, the Hong Kong teaching team made use of their own industrial practice and experience to contextualise the UK curriculum, aiming to deliver some knowledge which was of relevance to the local industry. As reflected by a local teaching staff member, Participant B4:

"the subject which I taught fitted my own expertise in practice, so I put some local cases into the teaching and assessment. As I am also teaching in other local institutions, I used the same methodology in my teaching to share practice with my students because it is close to local teaching practice" (Participant B4, Hong Kong teaching staff, C2_Interview#_B4).

Despite being involved in regular staff development meetings with UK management staff for the purpose of ensuring the comparability of the teaching quality of both the UK and Hong Kong programmes, the part-time teaching team felt that the process of contextualisation was best interpreted as putting Hong Kong professional cases and practice into the teaching. Regarding the teaching and learning experiences of their TNHE study, part-time students (C2_FG#1_Students) felt that:

"the teaching and learning is quite standard for Hong Kong institutions, just like our sub-degree study in a local college. May be it is because we are supported and taught by local lectures, but we like their teaching in Chinese instead of English in class. It is fine for us as we just want to finish the degree and get an academic qualification as soon as possible" (C2_FC#1_Students).

The assessment elements were set by the local lecturers and moderated by the home staff. Therefore the adaptation and the contextualisation of the programme curriculum seemed to be dependent on the local lecturers' experience and judgement (participant B5, Hong Kong Programme co-ordinator, C2_Interview#_B5). The views and practice of part-time lecturers to "localise" the TNHE programmes, on the one hand, were

beneficial to developing students' professional competence for local industrial needs. However, on the other hand, this practice demonstrated that the TNHE delivery had deviated greatly from that of the UK home programmes, which might pose challenges for quality assurance (Leung and Walters, 2013a).

The above responses from participants indicated that the contextualisation of NMU (Franchised Delivery)'s TNHE programmes in Hong Kong was reliant on the experience and knowledge of the Hong Kong teaching team, and that this may be a by-product of the franchised delivery framework. The significant number of part-time teaching staff in the Hong Kong team indicated an urgent need for staff development to take place between the UK home team and the Hong Kong team, seeking to better prepare the TNHE teaching staff for their teaching.

In the case of MBU (Joint Delivery), participants' views demonstrated that a substantial effort had been made by the flying faculty staff to contextualise the curriculum and teaching activities to the specific needs of the Hong Kong students. As mentioned previously, there were challenges for the flying faculty to understand the needs of students and industry in Hong Kong:

> "for the sake of quality assurance, we have to ensure that the learning outcome is identical for the Hong Kong and the UK delivery. However there has to be some use of local industry regulations and cases to ensure that our delivery is relevant to the Hong Kong context. I feel that contextualisation should not just be adding local rules and regulations to the TNHE teaching. We should do more reflection on this topic" (Participant C2, Head of Programmes, UK Staff, C3_Interview#_C2).

The UK teaching staff also relied on the advice and expertise of the local tutors for the selection of cases and context:

> "the tutors from Hong Kong are also professionals working in the industry. Their advice and feedback to me and the University are

very important for us to learn about our programmes" (Participant C2, UK Head of Programme, C3_Interview#_C2).

With the assessment of the Hong Kong programme being set and marked by the UK staff, participant C2 (Head of programme, UK staff) reflected that such practice "might lead to difficulty for the UK staff in setting the assessment to suit the local context" (C3_Interview#_C2).

The teaching practice and strategy was also contextualised to cope with the part-time nature of the delivery mode:

> "the teaching strategy in Hong Kong has to be different to the UK, as here students are working full time and have different routines of work and life. Students seem to demand more focused teaching on knowledge and they are less responsive to the class discussions and surgery sessions" (Participant C2, Head of Programme, UK Staff, C3_Interview#_C2).

The model of joint delivery did create some challenges for both UK flying faculty staff and students. As commented by one student, Participant C6, a part-time student in BSc (Hons) Construction Management:

> "during the classes, sometimes the UK teachers explain concepts with UK cases which are very difficult to understand. Moreover there are a lot of UK ordinance and systems so we have to try to learn about the equivalence in Hong Kong" (C3_FG#1_Students).

Moreover, participants had various views on the effectiveness of block teaching for part-time learners. While some students claimed that the intensive teaching weeks were very demanding and tiring, other students were positive about having opportunities to be taught by the UK staff:

> "the curriculum is very internationalised and accredited by CIOB (Chartered Institute of Building) so it is supposed to be the same as other accredited local programmes in the UK and Hong Kong. However we have the benefit to learn from UK lecturers, which I think was a very good experience" (Participant C10, Hong Kong Student, C3_FG#1_Students).

The contextualisation of MBU (Joint Delivery)'s programmes was undertaken through the alteration of the curriculum and teaching activities to suit the part-time delivery. However, with the responsibility for teaching resting with the UK flying faculty team, some challenges and gaps surfaced for the UK staff, regarding how to deliver TNHE programmes that suited the context of Hong Kong. The responses showed that there was some need for staff development to build up the capacity of the UK team to understand the industrial and educational context in Hong Kong.

7.5.2 Sub theme 3.2 : Tools and Artefacts Shared between TNHE Communities

This sub-theme emerged from the lower level themes of "access to the awarding institution's online staff-student portal" and "shared artefacts in different TNHE models", which are part of the contextualisation process of TNHE. Like the physical campus, the tools and artefacts shared between the Universities and their Hong Kong staff and students established a shared repertoire to bridge the gap between the Hong Kong and home institution contexts for TNHE programmes. With continuing innovation and improvement of information technology and systems, the future development of TNHE models is expected to be largely supported by online technology regardless of the TNHE models (UK Higher Education International Unit, 2016). The following section aims to provide details of how the support of online technology and shared tools facilitated the development of intercultural interaction for staff and students and helped contextualise the TNHE experiences in the three cases studied.

At AHKIU (Branch Campus), integrated online technologies, including student learning portals, social chat systems, video conferencing and online seminars, were frequently used for staff and students to engage with each other between Hong Kong campus and US home campus:

"…our students have a lot of interaction with their peers in Hong Kong and the USA. They organise group projects to work together, and they communicate via student learning teams either on campus or by virtual portal" (Participant A2, Hong Kong Lecturer, C1_Interview#_A2).

"…students use Blackboard as a key interacting tool to share ideas with their peers in Hong Kong and the USA. Blackboard has become a strong platform for them to display their thoughts on design" (Participant A6, Quality Assurance Manager, C1_Interview#_A6).

Students also reported that they were able to engage with peers in the USA and Hong Kong for social interaction through "visual system chats":

"…we are provided with visual system chats which students from different communities can join and engage in social learning with peers from different countries. We can also learn of the US context. It is a great system and we learn such a lot about our programmes through the chats with other students in the US home campus" (C1_FG#1_Students).

Teaching staff have also been engaged in intercultural interaction between Hong Kong and the USA through regular video conferences:

"…we communicate with teaching staff of the home campus through video conferences by online electronic means. We discuss and share up-to-date teaching practice or updates from professional practice. The meetings are great because they enlightened our teaching practice in Hong Kong to help us contextualise the programmes for the needs of Hong Kong students" (Participant A5, Hong Kong Lecturer, C1_Interview#_A5).

In sum, the virtual platforms described by the participants provided platforms for the staff and students from different campuses to interact. Contextualisation has taken place through the dimension of shared repertoire in CoPs. The use of information technology in the case of AHKIU (Branch Campus) was one of the integrated strategies that helped the University to contextualise its programmes overseas. It also helped establish a wider community in different parts of the world, and bridged the teaching

and learning experiences between Hong Kong and the USA. On the other hand, with the displayed artefacts (both physical and electronic) on campus, staff and students of the Hong Kong campus were provided some shared vision of the University. The process of contextualisation took place to build up shared repertoire for the intercultural communities of practice to share their practices (Wenger, 1998).

For the case of NMU (Franchised Delivery), it was reported that the university policy was not to provide TNHE students and staff in Hong Kong with any access to the University's virtual learning environment (Participant B1, Associate Dean of NMU, C2_Interview#B1). During the focus group interview, students commented that:

> "…we do not know if there is any contextualisation of the UK programmes and delivery, as we have no impression on how the TNHE programmes are delivered in the UK home institution" (C2_FG#1_Students).

However, programme management staff had regular video conferences with the UK team to communicate regularly on the operation of the programmes.

In contrast, Hong Kong students of MBU (Joint Delivery) were provided access to the electronic library of MBU (Joint Delivery). They also had access to the virtual learning portal of the University. Student cards from the University were provided to each student in Hong Kong. "All these packages aim to provide some artefacts for them to internalise, as being part of the university" (Participant C1, Head of Department of MBU, C3_Interview#_C1). Students were positive about the provision of these supporting facilities:

> "through the virtual student learning portal, we may set up online chat groups with the UK students of the same course if we liked, so we can have direct interaction with the home students. But in the meantime, a lot of us just log in to the platform to download academic information rather than engaging in social interaction, as

social interaction with UK students is very time-consuming and not directly related to the study" (C3_FG#1_Students).

In terms of the artefacts provided to students, it was reported that:

"…the UK lecturers introduced university information to us in the student orientation; they provided us with the university handbook, student cards, and briefed us about the University. It was very important because to us these are the only materials we received with University logo, and proved that we are studying at MBU" (C3_FG#1_Students).

As put by Participant C2, the Head of Programme from MBU (Joint Delivery), the online communication platform greatly contextualised the TNHE delivery between the UK and Hong Kong:

"with the help of ICT technology, I believe the borders are much smaller in the world and that TNHE programme delivery can be much more innovative and interactive" (C3_Interview#_C2).

7.5.3   Concluding Remarks for Theme 3

The three case studies represented different approaches to contextualise the TNHE programmes to fulfil the expectations of Hong Kong students and employers. The process was interactive, requiring staff and students with intercultural competence, with distinctive forms of intercultural communities of practice being developed. The contextualisation of TNHE included the physical set up, the curriculum, and shared tools and artefacts for the TNHE programmes, all of which are linked to the dimension of shared repertoire in Wenger's CoPs model (1998).

Investigations of the three different models suggested that there seemed to be two distinct orientations in internationalising or localising the TNHE programmes. First of all, from the perspective of the learning environment, contextualisation refers to the provision of a learning environment and student support mechanisms by the awarding universities to relate the students' study experience to the mission of the institutions. In

this context, AHKIU (Branch Campus) adopted a more internationalised approach, aiming to make use of the purpose-built campus to nurture students' professional and intercultural competence for their future employment in different countries. The other two models used the teaching venues of the partner institutions, while the settings, the environment and the mixture of learners were considerably localised to fit the study needs of the local students, leading to some limitation in developing students' sense of bonding and identity towards the awarding universities.

Furthermore, the teaching and learning strategies and the models of TNHE proved to have significant impact on the contextualisation of the delivery. AHKIU (Branch Campus) adopted an integrated approach to internationalise the programmes in Hong Kong to suit the industrial context in Hong Kong as well as other countries. The localisation of the programme curriculum and the internship cases offered by the two other cases in franchised delivery and joint delivery models was seen to be beneficial to students' professional knowledge and in establishing their networks within local industry. On the other hand, too much localisation of TNHE programmes, in particular the practice of conducting teaching in a language other than English may dilute the intercultural value of the TNHE degree (Leung and Walters, 2013a).

7.6   Summary of this Chapter

To summarise and conclude this chapter, the findings of this chapter have generated the following main dimensions: (1) distinctive models of TNHE have nurtured a range of diverse professional and intercultural competence and knowledge for staff and students; (2) interactions of the communities in diverse TNHE models have facilitated the evolution of distinctive forms of intercultural communities of practice; (3) through the process of contextualising the TNHE programmes, staff and students have interacted

and reflected on the learning environment, support systems and teaching strategies, which have cultivated interactions of intercultural communities of practice and developed different elements of interculturality. These three dimensions that emerged from the findings show that the TNHE operation models adopted by the three institutions have a profound impact on how the TNHE communities are engaged in intercultural interaction and learning, and hence on the interculturality of TNHE programmes. The next chapter will discuss and delineate the above dimensions that have emerged, in relation to the interrelated concepts in the conceptual framework so as to develop better understandings of the research questions and their answers.

CHAPTER 8 - DISCUSSION

8.1 Introduction and Organisation of this Chapter

This study aimed to investigate the phenomenon of TNHE with a particular focus on how intercultural communities of practice evolve in distinctive delivery models. The study also offers intercultural perspectives in analysing the role of transnational higher education in nurturing interculturality through communities of practice.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the forces of globalisation lead to significant changes in higher education. Higher education has become part of the increasingly globalised trades and services (GATE, 2000; WTO, 2015), leading to the marketisation and privatisation of higher education. In the context of globalisation different TNHE models have emerged to meet the educational demand and markets around the world, including Hong Kong. In view of the complexity of the privatisation of higher education, there are increasing calls from scholars advocating the development of intercultural interaction to enhance the current practice of TNHE to bring added value (Trahar 2015; Montgomery 2014; Caruana and Montgomery 2015; Keay et al. 2014; Dunn and Wallace 2008). Together with this study, further research is needed to understand how TNHE nurtures intercultural interaction and learning, and how to bring distinctive value to TNHE compared to other forms of education.

The study follows an interpretivist approach to address the main research question of "how is interculturality developed through distinctive forms of communities of practice in TNHE". A multi-site case study approach was adopted to investigate the details by employing individual interviews and focus group interviews. Based on the findings discussed in the last chapter, the following three dimensions have been integrated to address the research questions and to inform the conclusions of the study, these

dimensions are: (1) the development of distinctive communities of practice, (2) nurturing professionalism and intercultural competence, and (3) the development of transnational interculturality in communities of practice. This chapter aims to discuss these three dimensions, and how they are related to the three concepts of communities of practice, intercultural interaction and interculturality outlined in Chapter 3. Furthermore, this chapter will seek to frame the above concepts in a reappraisal of the framework of communities of practice in the context of TNHE, and to advance knowledge with a concept 'transnational interculturality in communities of practice in TNHE'.

8.2   Discussion of the Overall Findings

From a macro perspective, the results emerging from the empirical work for this study are set in the discourse of the globalisation of higher education (Mok, 2008, 2013, 2014), as introduced in the literature review. The forces of globalisation have a significant impact on higher education across the world. In this context transnational education has developed into an increasingly important form of education delivery, seeking to meet global demands for higher education qualifications. Within the development of TNHE, there is an emerging tension between globalisation and cultural diversity. Scholars have argued that the discourses of marketisation and the knowledge-based economy bring conflicting influences in transnational higher education. There is a need to adopt context-sensitive measures drawing on the richness of other cultures to offer quality education in transnational higher education (Caruana and Montgomery, 2015; Djerasimovic, 2014; O'Mahony, 2014; Pyvis, 2011).

The research also develops a micro-perspective to investigate the details of education delivery in three TNHE models, namely: branch campus, franchised delivery and joint

delivery. The three models reflect three different educational approaches adopted by the higher education institutions. Throughout the study, it has been found that each model of provision has its strengths and weaknesses in the nurturing of interculturality. One of the key findings of this study is that distinctive and unique forms of communities of practice within diverse TNHE models develop distinctive forms of interculturality. Figure 7.1 below presents the research hierarchy of the study.

Figure 8.1 - Research Hierarchy of the Study
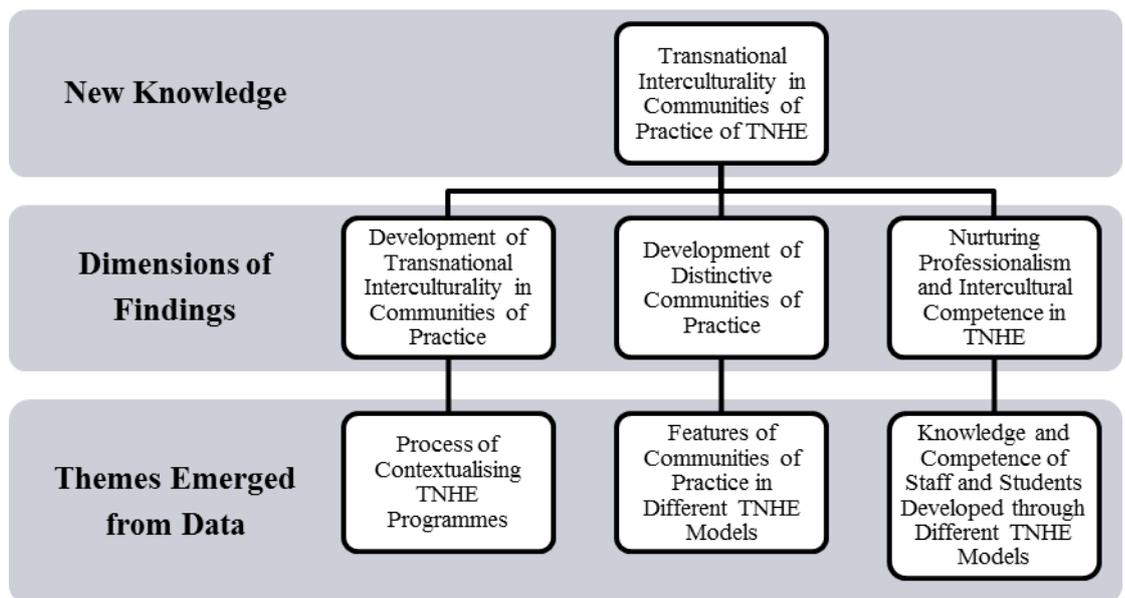
One of the key contributions of this study is to bring an intercultural perspective to Wenger's conceptual framework of "communities of practice", through the study of TNHE. The findings of the study inform the following three conclusions: firstly, diverse models of transnational education have a major impact on the development of distinctive communities of practice; secondly, diverse models of transnational education nurture uniqueness of professionalism and intercultural competence for staff and students. Finally, and complementary with the above two conclusions, the study suggests that through a particular TNHE model of operation, transnational interculturality in communities of practice of TNHE is being developed; in other words, a set of processes for intercultural interaction and practice sharing between TNHE

communities of practice across spatial distance and cultures has taken place (Figure 8.1). The three conclusions are inter-related and influence each other, contributing to the continuing development of communities of practice across different cultures and spatial distance. Together these conclusions serve to address the research questions of the study. In view of the rapid expansion of TNHE, there are high expectations to its potential to bring increased economic value (Department of Business Innovation and Skills, UK government, 2014), but it comes with its own set of tensions and challenges, in particular how to establish intercultural partnerships to offer rich and meaningful intercultural interactions to institutions, staff and students (Dunn and Wallace, 2006; Djerasimovic, 2014). The key findings of this study suggest some possible ways in which intercultural communities of practice and transnational interculturality may transform the experience of TNHE and offer distinctive value to TNHE.

The study shows that in the three institutions examined, there is a close interrelationship between the development of interculturality and how the staff and students interact and share practice (see the dimension of 'developing distinctive communities of practice' in Figure 8.1). First of all, the findings suggest that diverse delivery models of TNHE have their strengths and weaknesses, from which distinctive forms of communities of practice take shape and evolve. Subsequent to the evolution of communities of practice, the diverse models of delivery (branch campus, joint delivery and franchised delivery) nurture distinctive format of interaction between staff and students in Hong Kong and overseas universities (including rhythms and tempos of face to face contacts, emails, and virtual learning platforms). During the course of continuing interaction of these intercultural communities, a range of diverse professionalism and intercultural competence for staff and students is developed, leading to the second dimension of nurturing professionalism and intercultural competence (Figure 8.1).

The development of professionalism and intercultural competence amongst members of intercultural communities of practice enable these intercultural communities of practice to interact and exchange practice in the diverse models of TNHE, and become more mature in the course of collaboration. As a consequence, transnational interculturality emerges from the operational model of branch campus. A discourse in "transnational interculturality in communities of practice of TNHE" (Figure 8.1), as a major element of the conceptual model of this study, presents a set of intercultural processes of how communities of practice interact within transnational and intercultural dimensions. The nurturing process of transnational interculturality brings valuable intercultural experiences to the members of TNHE communities, leading to long term benefits towards transnational higher education.

The study finds that the models of transnational education are most important and strongly influential in the nurturing of communities of practice and transnational interculturality in communities of practices of TNHE. The sections below critically analyse how transnational interculturality in communities of practice is nurtured in particular TNHE model, enhancing intercultural competence and knowledge for the staff and students of TNHE.

8.3   Development of Distinctive Communities of Practice in TNHE

This study employs a micro perspective to focus on studying the element of 'practice' within the concept of communities of practice. The results of the study show that different forms of communities of practice have emerged in the three studied models of TNHE.   According to Wenger (1998), communities develop their practice through information sharing, discussions, interactions and communication. In Wenger's concept, social participation is the primary focus in learning, therefore interaction and practice

sharing among members of communities are an essential negotiating process leading to social learning. As suggested in the literature review, the three dimensions of mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoire are the core components in the concept of 'practice' (Wenger 1998; Wenger et al., 2002), for social learning to take place.

The results of these case studies reveal that different models of TNHE nurture the above three dimensions of practice in different fashions. In the branch campus model which AHKIU (Branch Campus) adopted; a purpose built campus has been made available for the staff and students from both Hong Kong and the USA. The Hong Kong campus has offered a conducive environment for staff and students to interact and to share teaching and learning practice. In addition, members of the communities have shared teaching and learning practice between the US home campus and the Hong Kong branch campus through virtual platforms. These sharing and exchange activities happened through their frequent rhythms of interaction in both physical and virtual platforms provided by the University. It is worth noting that while shadowing the teaching and learning strategy from the US home campus, the Hong Kong campus gradually established its own institutional footprint and campus culture in Hong Kong. There was a gradual transformation of the TNHE delivery to include elements of local Hong Kong culture, demonstrating the embedding of TNHE into the Hong Kong cultural and social context. Through service learning and professional projects in the local community where the Hong Kong campus is located, staff and students of the Hong Kong campus interacted with the local community and developed design projects to showcase the heritage of an old Hong Kong district. This practice has extended the communities of practice of AHKIU (Branch Campus), to include membership from US campus, Hong Kong Campus and local community, which has generated the lived practice of transnational

interculturality. Similar projects have brought rich and meaningful intercultural interaction for students studying in the branch campus, and have established bonding with the local neighbourhood and local industries. In sum, the branch campus model has adopted an integrated and balanced approach to develop a harmonised university community in Hong Kong. Figure 8.2 below visualises the format of communities of practice through this model of TNHE delivery.

Figure 8.2 - Communities that Emerged from the Case Study of AHKIU (Branch Campus)
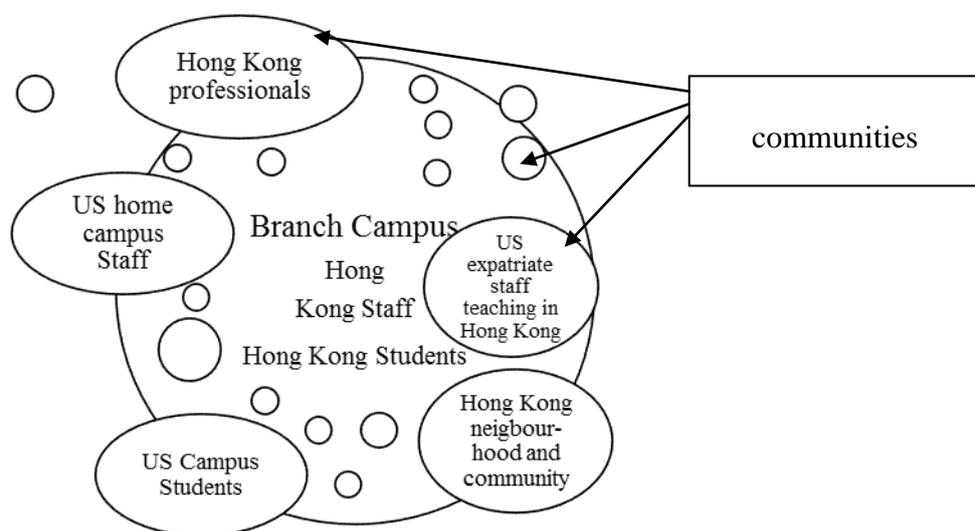
Figure 8.2 above presents the coherence of the communities that emerged through the model of branch campus. In this model, membership of communities of practice is composed of teaching staff from Hong Kong and US campuses, students studying in Hong Kong and US campuses, professionals and industrial supporters from Hong Kong and the USA, and the local neighbours of the Hong Kong campus. These communities have interacted and engaged with each other in teaching and learning, service learning, professional development activities (mutual engagement), with the shared identity of AHKIU (Branch Campus) (joint enterprise); different forms of artefacts, exhibitions, common manuals and handbooks have been developed for members to share their

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repertoire (shared repertoire). Such interaction and knowledge sharing of the intercultural communities of practice at AHKIU (Branch Campus) have developed coherent and harmonised university communities of practice, with staff and students being interculturally competent. The intercultural experience of staff and students in AHKIU (Branch Campus) presents distinctive lived practice of transnational interculturality.

In the 'joint delivery' and the 'franchised delivery' models, on the other hand, CoPs representing 'transnational interculturality' are yet to develop and these COPs have represented some development in 'professionalism' rather than interculturality. Given the nature of part-time delivery, rhythms of how staff and students interact are influenced by the part-time students' prescriptive learning patterns. In sum, the development of professional knowledge and competence has been emphasised in the model of joint delivery and franchise delivery to fulfil students' expectations. The face to face contact between the home university staff and students has been less frequent and regular in the two models of joint delivery and franchised delivery, hence fewer opportunities for the UK staff /student groups to share practice and interact with their Hong Kong counterparts. On the other hand, the interaction between the students and Hong Kong staff has been effective, in which some forms of professional communities have emerged for sharing professional practice and constructing knowledge within the industry. In both models, practice sharing between peer students and local staff seemed to take priority in their study as well as the context of the local industry. There was strong evidence of peer support and influence: for example, staff and students in Hong Kong have formed different social groups to share updates on professional practice as well as requirements of professional bodies.

In the joint delivery model, the 'flying faculty' approach was adopted for members from the awarding university visiting Hong Kong regularly. In this case, membership of the TNHE communities included teaching staff from the Hong Kong and UK campus, Hong Kong students, professionals and industrial / professional bodies from Hong Kong industry. Upon communicating and interacting in specific rhythms of intercultural interaction, some forms of intercultural communities of practice were observed. In addition to the intercultural interaction with the UK flying faculty team, students specifically expressed that they worked very closely with their fellow classmates, via peer group discussions, and that they had a lot of professional topics to share within their work practice. Promoting an open and sharing learning culture, members of the communities of practice (including Hong Kong staff and students) in the case studies claimed that they shared close information between themselves about the route towards professional membership. It is worth noting that the interaction was not limited to the two collaborating institutions, staff and students, but also to external professional bodies. They did not just discuss, support and share teaching and learning matters among themselves but they also did so with local staff groups and external professional bodies. All these activities and interactions clearly demonstrated that a few communities of practice were formed by students, staff, construction corporations and professional bodies. These communities interacted with each other, and created distinctive communities of practice within the Hong Kong construction industry. This practice corresponds with the dimension of mutual engagement in Wenger's model communities of practice (1998). Through the negotiating process, these communities of TNHE were engaged in social learning to construct practice for TNHE. It is, however, worth noting that with strong views on the development of their professional competence and knowledge during the TNHE studies, the students did not show a strong sense of bonding with the UK university. They reported to be more affiliated with the local

partner institution, because they "use the local facilities" and could not mentally and physically associate with MBU (Joint Delivery) in the Hong Kong environment. Most of them were particularly distant from the UK home students (Figure 8.3). In sum, these communities were observed to have strong ties and bonding with local industry, staff and students, but less so with the UK home campus.

Figure 8.3 - Communities that Emerged from the Case Study of MBU (Joint Delivery)
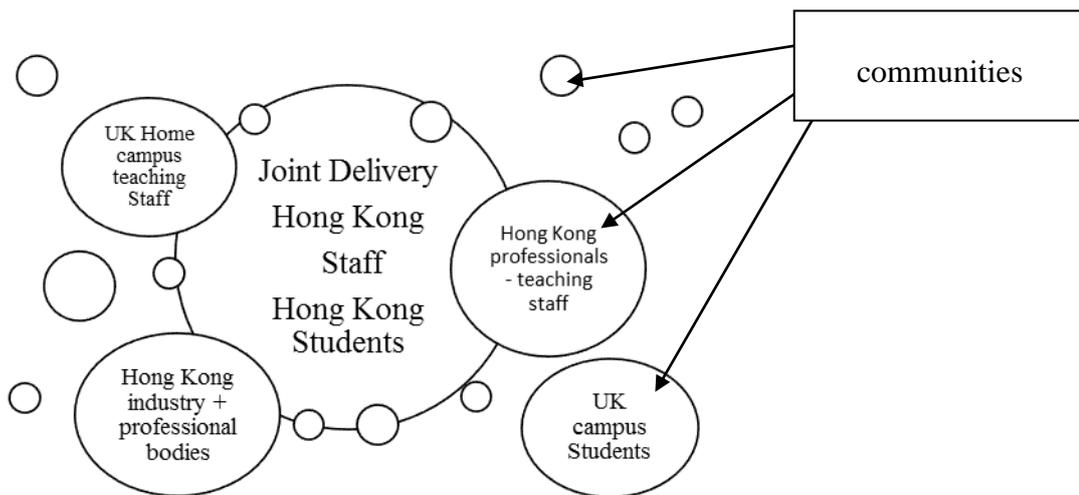
With regard to the "franchised delivery" model (Figure 8.4 below), the study has found that there is evidently much less nurturing of transnational interculturality in communities of practice. Students and staff in Hong Kong reported that they had close contacts and communications with peer students and local staff to exchange on teaching and learning matters, professional knowledge and the local industry context. The model facilitated close links and bonding between Hong Kong teaching staff, students and professionals from industry, forming communities of practice which were more "professionally-oriented". Findings also show that the professional linkage with local and international professional bodies to support students' study was a major success of the franchised delivery model. In the TNHE delivery, robust linkage with three different professional bodies was established to support the TNHE part-time

programmes. Students were encouraged to participate in the seminars and events organised by these organisations. These activities helped the students to foster linkage with professional bodies, kept them abreast of up-to-date industrial issues and also enabled them to explore further career advancement. There was, however, less interaction and practice sharing between the Hong Kong and the UK communities. Students claimed that their major focus in the TNHE study was related to professional development, hence elements of 'intercultural competence' were not highly-valued. Students were not keen to engage in exchange with NMU (Franchised Delivery)'s home staff who visited Hong Kong regularly, because of "not understanding their accents", and also due to "the different context, environment and regulations of the construction subjects in Hong Kong and the United Kingdom". As shown in Figure 8.4 below, findings strongly suggested that the elements of interculturality for the communities of practice between Hong Kong and the UK were not evident. The figure also illustrates the distance between the Hong Kong and UK communities. In sum, although communities of practice worked well between the Hong Kong students, teachers and even the professional bodies, it is the model of delivery that hindered the development of interculturality between the students studying in Hong Kong and those in UK.

Figure 8.4 - Communities that Emerged from the Case Study of NMU (Franchised Delivery)
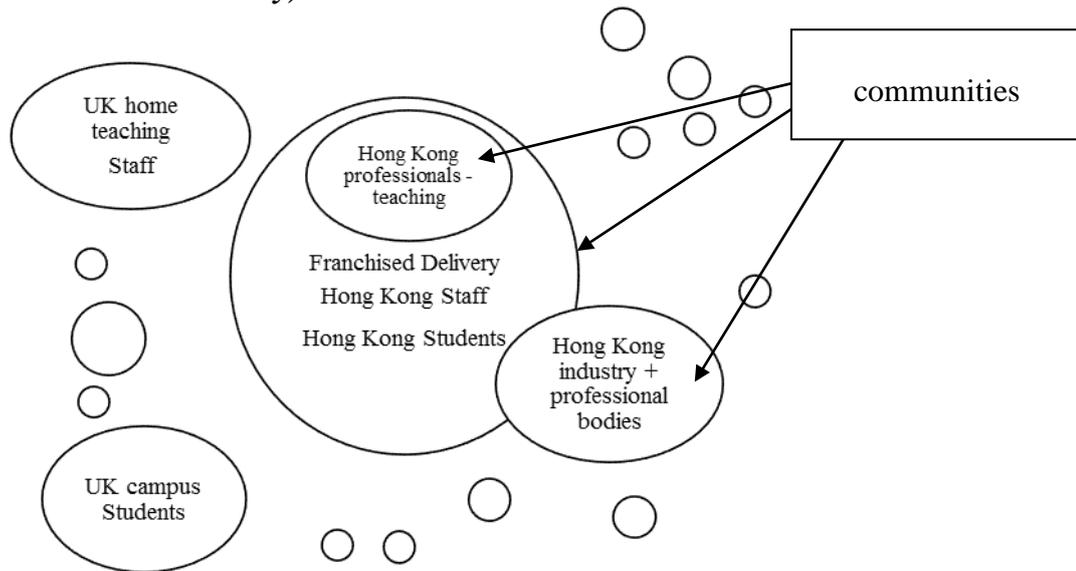
In sum, participants engaged in the three models reported that the communities of practice enabled them to communicate closely with their peers, to discuss academic matters and share professional practice within the industry, but that this has happened in diverse ways in the varying models of TNHE. The branch campus model created some coherent and integrated forms of intercultural communities of practice. On the other hand, with strong views on the importance of practical subject knowledge and a strong focus on their future professional advancement, students studying under the joint delivery and franchised delivery models generally commented that intercultural exchanges and academic exchanges might not be "necessary" and "not beneficial" to their professional development. However, it is essential to note the differences in the discipline/ subject/ mode of study of the programmes (Art and Design in the "Branch Campus model", Building Management in the "Joint Delivery Model" and Civil Engineering / Computing in the "Franchised Delivery Model") offered by the three studied models would have accounted for some of the students' response, as discussed above.

To conclude, the results from the empirical work suggest that the diverse models of TNHE delivery have significant impact on the development of distinctive communities of practice. Each TNHE model leads to specified rhythms and tempos such as timing, regularity of meetings, peer activities, platforms of practice sharing and intercultural interaction between communities of practice. The ways in which the communities of practice interact and exchange practice in each model have significant impact on the existence of "transnational interculturality". With a conducive and coherent learning environment and resources, the branch campus model offers an integrated spectrum of platforms and opportunities for staff and students to exchange practice in their teaching and learning. It is evident that the model has nurtured "transnational interculturality in communities of practice" in coherence and integration with home communities, bringing the benefits to students on their development of professional knowledge and intercultural competence. In the case of AHKIU (Branch Campus), the development of service learning projects with the local neighbourhood was one of the key initiatives in which the Hong Kong campus gradually established its footprint and distinctive local elements to translate TNHE programmes into the Hong Kong context. On the other hand, in the other two cases studied, the communities of practice exchanged knowledge and practice with the focus on the development of professionalism, which brought benefits to part-time students in terms of their development of professional knowledge, to facilitate their career advancement.

8.4 Nurturing Professionalism and Intercultural Competence through TNHE

8.4.1 Developing Intercultural Knowledge and Competence

The results of the case studies show that during the process of interaction and practice sharing in TNHE, members of the distinctive communities acquired different levels of language proficiency, knowledge and attitude which enabled them to interact with

empathy to other people from different cultural backgrounds. According to Freeman et al. (2009), such intercultural interaction nurtures "intercultural competence", an essential competence described as "a dynamic, on-going, interactive self-reflective learning process that transforms attitudes, skills and knowledge for effective and appropriate communication and interaction across cultures".

The interviews reveal that the nurturing of intercultural competence forms an essential component for the development of "transnational interculturality in communities of practice". The three models of transnational education delivery involve varying levels and modes of participation of the home university staff in TNHE delivery. It was found that the rhythms of interaction are related to the nurturing of intercultural competence for the members of communities of practice. In return, evidence from the study shows that intercultural interaction takes better shape with members who are interculturally competent. In the three transnational education models examined, members of distinctive communities of practice were engaged in diverse modes of interaction. With staff and students having culturally diverse backgrounds, the branch campus offered face to face and online platforms for intercultural interaction. Students reported that they had developed a great sense of empathy and understanding towards peer students and teaching staff from other countries, and they greatly enhanced their language proficiency and understanding to be able to communicate with others. With greater numbers of home institution staff involved in the interaction and practice sharing with Hong Kong counterparts, communities in the branch campus model appeared to have rich intercultural interaction in their teaching and learning, as well as professional practice. One of the highlights of this case was the establishment of a gallery on campus. The professional gallery provided an intercultural platform for local and international artists to exhibit and share their artwork. Suffice to say, the conducive

environment of the Hong Kong campus also offered opportunities for communities with different cultural backgrounds to interact and learn. Students were appreciative of this arrangement, and claimed to be more aware of the values and lifestyles of people from other cultures subsequent to their engagement with staff and students from diverse cultural backgrounds. More importantly, students also reported that the development of understanding and intercultural knowledge had greatly increased their adaptability and enabled future employment in Hong Kong or beyond, which meets their career aspirations to develop a career beyond Hong Kong. In sum, for the students, the delivery of TNHE programmes through the branch campus model enabled a self-reflective learning process for their development of intercultural competence and knowledge, and made them more employable in the global labour market (Mellors-Bourne et al., 2015; Jones, 2013).

For the two other models, (the franchise delivery and the joint delivery), students reported a lower level of appreciation of how TNHE experience had developed their intercultural competence. In the joint delivery model, face to face contact with the UK staff ("flying faculty") did not appeal to students just for the sake of developing intercultural competence. As reported by most students, they felt that contacting individual UK staff by email was not as convenient or direct as interacting with local staff. Students were also concerned that the UK regulations and compliance were not the same as the industrial standards in Hong Kong. They therefore preferred to communicate with local tutors direct on subject-related matters, which may explain their indifference towards the development of intercultural competence through the TNHE study.

Students studying in the franchised model had particular strong views on their development of professional knowledge and networks and therefore felt that developing intercultural competence and understanding was not essential for their future career development. Given the nature of part-time studies, students spent their time in TNHE study focusing on the development of professionalism. The franchised model offered very limited opportunities for students to engage with the UK teaching staff or students, which imposed limitations on the development of students' intercultural competence through the TNHE experience.

One key point to be highlighted in the responses from the staff in the three case studies is the development of intercultural competence for the overseas staff groups who were from the UK and the USA. Overseas teaching staff from three different models reported different levels of intercultural learning. In the branch campus model, overseas staff showed the highest level of intercultural learning, within a dynamic learning process. These overseas staff were either seconded or relocated to the Hong Kong campus, they had to get over culture shock and learn about the lifestyles and learning cultures in Hong Kong. Through the intercultural interaction in the TNHE experience they developed some intercultural competence which may have a profound impact on their personal development. It is also essential to note that they reported to have developed more empathy and respect to people from diverse cultural backgrounds. In the joint delivery model, there were different challenges for the flying faculty staff, concerning how they could understand the needs of Hong Kong students and the context of Hong Kong industry to be able to deliver quality TNHE programmes. Members of the flying faculty team reported that being regular but short-term visitors to Hong Kong, the task of ensuring that the Hong Kong programmes were comparable to the UK home programmes was difficult to carry out effectively (C3_Interview#_C2). However staff

from MBU (Joint Delivery) had positive reflections about their intercultural learning experiences. They had been motivated to interact with students and staff in Hong Kong in order to enhance the TNHE delivery. As put by Leask et al. (2005), the transnational teachers have to be skilled teachers and managers of the learning environment, as well as efficient intercultural learners. The findings reaffirm the urgent need for TNHE institutions to put supporting systems in place to nurture the intercultural competence of overseas staff and to better prepare them to teach in transnational classrooms (Trahar, 2011, 2015; Keay et al., 2014; O'Mahony, 2014). The local Hong Kong staff on the other hand, seemed to place less importance on how the TNHE experience could bring benefits in developing their intercultural competence.

The study shows that the development of intercultural competence for the members of communities of practice is closely related to the nurturing of transnational interculturality in TNHE communities. As discussed earlier in the literature review, intercultural competence enhances the rhythms and quality of intercultural interaction and is the enabler of interculturality. Models of TNHE delivery have a strong influence on the settings of the teaching and learning environment, and the rhythms and tempos of interaction among communities of practice. The strong influence of the TNHE models leads to different levels of development of intercultural competence for staff and students. The results of the study reveal that the branch campus can offer an environment and settings which facilitate more coherent, regular and integrated interaction and practice sharing between the home campus and local communities, and bring more benefits in developing intercultural competence for staff and students, than the other two models. On the other hand, the joint delivery model is seen to be challenging to the overseas staff in understanding an intercultural context, the model

may nurture the intercultural competence of the flying faculty staff with steep learning experiences.

8.4.2 *Developing Professionalism*

One of the key findings in this study is to reveal how TNHE develops students' professional knowledge and competence for their future career development. As Jones (2013:6) suggests "…it may be the case that international mobility programmes (TNHE programmes) appeal to students who already possess, or have an advantage in developing these skills (employability skills)". In fact all students in the three cases reaffirmed that the main objective for their choice of TNHE study was closely related to their future career advancement. During the focus group interviews, all students had very strong views on the acquiring of professional knowledge during their TNHE studies, which would lead them towards some form of professional qualifications, and make them competent professionals with benefits to their future career development. As suggested by Leggott and Stapleford (2007:124), "on the whole, employability interventions in the curriculum which are devised for home students planning to work in one country are largely appropriate for both home (where the awarding institutions are located) and international students who are planning to work in another country."

In the case studies, students reported that they were put into networks and activities with relevant industries, including industrial attachments, collaborative industrial projects and guest lectures, in order to develop their professional skills and knowledge, so as to facilitate their future professional development practice within and beyond Hong Kong. In the branch campus model, AHKIU (Branch Campus)'s students had industrial attachments arranged. There were cross-disciplinary design projects between Hong Kong and US students, and site visits to help develop their professionalism. Industrial

and professional support was found to be comprehensive in this case. Students reported that these industrial activities had developed their understanding, adaptability and professionalism in the industry to prepare them for their future employment both in Hong Kong and abroad. Moreover, such industrial engagement in TNHE in the branch campus model also brought positive effects with regard to the sense of community of practice between staff and students, as well as the development of their intercultural competence. The model employs a balanced and integrated approach to nurturing students' professional and transferable skills. In particular the development of intercultural competence became evident in students' empathy and understanding of people from different cultural backgrounds, and made them more adaptable for work in other cultural settings, bringing benefits to students' future career development. The embedment of employability skills (including professional and intercultural competence) is seen to be a key benefit of TNHE (Mellors-Bourne et al., 2015), which is a key topic to be further researched.

The "joint delivery" and "franchised delivery" models, in particular franchised delivery, had more focused missions in developing professional competence and knowledge to cater for students' future career advancement locally in Hong Kong. Interactions with local professional bodies and industrial supporters were set up for both NMU (Franchised Delivery) and MBU (Joint Delivery), aiming to enhance students' professionalism and networking with the local construction industry. These activities serve to facilitate the development of students' professional and industrial knowledge, which are essential to their future professional development. It is also essential to consider that both models have the benefit of bringing local professionals into the teaching teams, which have greatly enhanced the bonding between students and local

professional practice. In addition to that, during the interaction, the communities of practice of TNHE have embraced up-to-date standards and the industry networks.

In essence, the development of professionalism and knowledge for students studying TNHE programmes is closely linked to students' strong aspirations in their career development. The arrangements of interaction and exchange with industrial practice have brought great value to the TNHE programmes as well as the development of communities of practice. The issue of developing students' professional knowledge and skills in TNHE programmes has been of great concern to students, parents, and higher education institutions, as they have a significant impact on the marketability of the TNHE programmes (Mellors-Bourne et al., 2015; Jones, 2013; O'Mahony, 2014; Alam et al., 2013).

In view of the development of the global economy, there are increasing needs to assess and nurture the development of generic, transferable skills in TNHE programmes (Mellows-Bourne et al., 2015; Jones, 2013). The three models studied in this research offered distinctive experiences in nurturing students' intercultural and professional capacity. Transferable skills including intercultural competence, may not be job-specific but they are viewed to have increasing importance to support development and future employment of students (Artess et al., 2017). The study examines how the three models of TNHE delivery have developed intercultural competence and professionalism for developing students' capacity for future development. Evidently, with a balanced and integrated approach, the branch campus cultivates a comprehensive range of students' professional knowledge, transferable and intercultural competence. The other two models, with strong focus on developing students' subject-specific knowledge and skills, focus on fulfilling students' career aspirations. In fact, the nurturing of

intercultural competence for TNHE has received increasing attention from employers and is believed to provide wider opportunities to graduates of TNHE in global labour market (British Council, 2012). Meanwhile, Caruana and Montgomery (2015) argue that as higher education expands in Southeast Asia, graduate employability is becoming increasingly dependent upon the ability to maintain positional advantage in the labour market, and TNHE is exacerbating the situation by reproducing local patterns of disadvantage. It is suggested that future research needs to ascertain whether the outcomes of these processes are evidenced by the experiences and employment records of TNHE students.

In sum, the research findings show that the three models offer significantly different advantages and disadvantages to students in establishing their positional benefits in the labour market as mentioned above. The branch campus model offers a comprehensive approach to nurture students' intercultural and professional competence so as to facilitate their future employment in Hong Kong or beyond. As reported by the participating students, their TNHE study at AHKIU (Branch Campus) developed their positional advantage in being competent as professionals in creative industries, and as culturally adaptable individuals, which made them marketable in the global labour market (C1_FG#1_Students). On the other hand, the study circumstances of the joint delivery and franchised delivery models made the TNHE delivery less intercultural. However, gaining professional qualifications from international professional bodies meant that graduates of these TNHE programmes of NMU (Franchised Delivery) and MBU (Joint Delivery) were able to maintain their students' positional advantage of being construction practitioners with "international professionally recognised status" within the global labour market. As students were employed full-time in Hong Kong,

there had not been many concerns about their possible employment in the wider global labour market.

8.5   Developing Transnational Interculturality in TNHE Communities of Practice

So far, the relationship between the intercultural interaction of the communities of practice and the nurturing of intercultural and professional capacity has been discussed. This section aims to deliberate the third dimension of the findings, which is developing transnational interculturality in communities of practice.

The study reveals that through intercultural interaction between communities of practice, the nurturing of intercultural competence leads to more in-depth communication and interaction between the staff and students in Hong Kong, which in turn leads to the nurturing of "transnational interculturality in communities of practice of TNHE" and facilitates social forms of learning for members from different cultural backgrounds. Rhythms, regularity of interaction, and contextualisation of environment and curricula are key elements within the nurturing process of transnational interculturality in communities of practice. Members of TNHE communities are engaged with each other in distinctive TNHE models (joint enterprise), interact on how their students studied and learnt (mutual engagement), and develop handbooks, manuals, and artefacts for information sharing (shared repertoire), in specified rhythms and regularity as guided by the TNHE models. Results show that with more coherent and synchronised rhythms, as well as regularity of intercultural interaction, there is more evidence of transnational interculturality in communities of practice. For example, in the joint delivery model, the rhythms of the intercultural interaction can be less regular, with the intercultural interaction intensive within a short period of time (during the teaching visit), followed by a long break before the next flying faculty visit. Such infrequent and disrupted

rhythms of communication are shown to be less preferable in nurturing transnational interculturality.

Results from the study also reveal that the nurturing of "transnational interculturality in communities of practice" is closely related to the process of contextualising learning environment and curricula. As discussed in the findings (Chapter 6), contextualisation involves the transformation and exchange of curriculum, environment, tools and artefacts, including online learning portals, quality assurance documents and manuals, student handbooks and identity cards, between the TNHE programmes and their home versions delivered in the awarding institutions' campuses. The process is related to how the communities share repertoire during their practice. In the case studies, participants reported that the processes of contextualisation facilitated continuing interaction between home university staff and the local Hong Kong staff, and hence nurtured better understanding and a positive sense of communities of practice.

Within the process of contextualisation, the branch campus model offers a teaching and learning environment that simulates the home campus environment and can be conducive to students' learning. The three universities offered different levels of teaching and learning support (including virtual learning platform, library, and various forms of software) to facilitate students' learning, aiming to provide students with learning experiences comparable to those of the home institutions.

Figure 8.5 below indicates the inter-relationship between the concepts of "communities of practice" and "transnational interculturality" and how they interact within the TNHE process. In sum, the journey of developing transnational interculturality in communities of practice starts from the evolution of communities of practice in the distinctive models

of TNHE delivery. Staff and students are engaged in interaction to negotiate professional, teaching and learning practices. Upon such interaction, distinctive forms of communities of practice are developed. Within the specific rhythms and tempos of intercultural interaction brought about by the TNHE models, the processes of intercultural interaction continue along with the nurturing of intercultural competence and professional competence for staff and students. The components of intercultural competence, including attitudes, empathy, intercultural knowledge and skills among the member, further enhance the interaction of intercultural communities of practice. Transnational interculturality in communities of practice of TNHE evolves on the basis of intercultural interaction. The process of such development is a continuing cycle as presented in Figure 8.5 below.

Figure 8.5 - Developing Transnational Interculturality in Communities of Practice
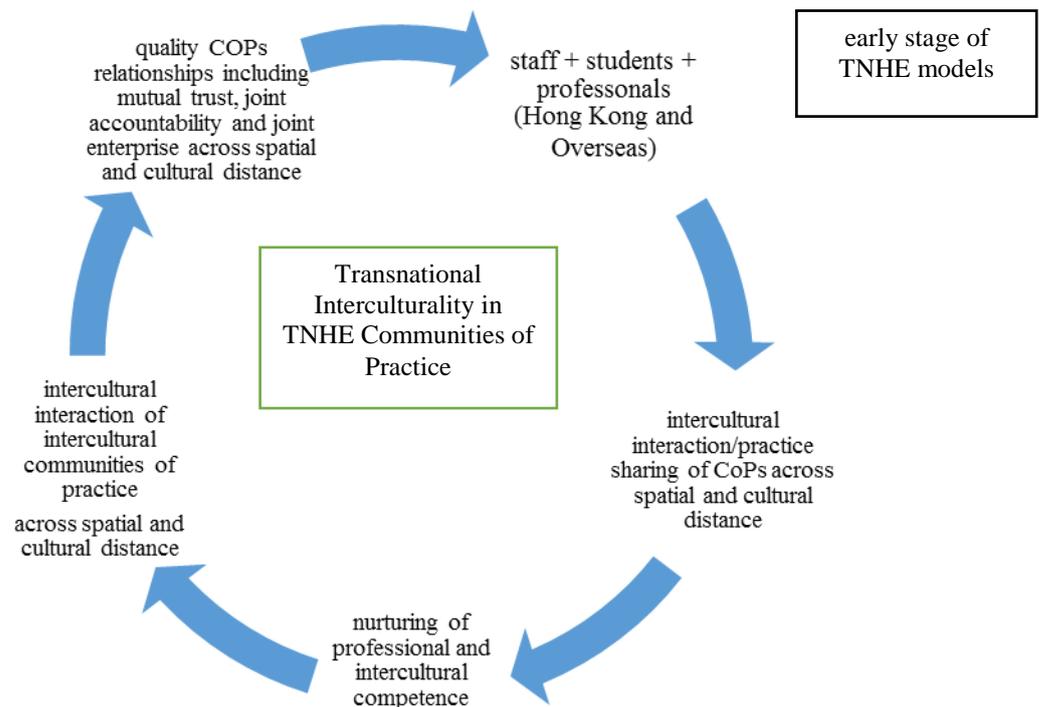
Within the three dimensions of practice (mutual engagement, joint enterprise, shared repertoire), diverse TNHE models offer distinctive intercultural interaction

opportunities to the communities of practice. These opportunities add value to the framework of communities of practice. In the course of intercultural learning in TNHE, transnational interculturality is a key transforming element and "bridge" between programmes and staff from the home context and the offshore context. In the mutual engagement of practice, staff and students of TNHE communities have established specified rhythms of communication across spatial distance and cultural difference. Face-to-face interaction in the conducive learning environment offered in the branch campus model has added significant value to intercultural interaction within these intercultural communities of practice. Hence the model has facilitated most of the "transnational interculturality" in communities of practice, in which members interact in specific ways to achieve social learning and construct knowledge. The rhythms of interaction in the models of joint delivery and franchised delivery are less regular with the UK teams, explaining the relatively distant relationship between the UK staff and the Hong Kong staff and students. Comparing the two models of joint delivery and franchised delivery, it is particularly the latter one in which "transnational interculturality" among communities of practice has yet to be developed. However, these two models have enabled close interaction between the local staff and students with the evolution of distinctive versions of communities of practice.

So far the discourse of transnational interculturality in communities of practice, its nurturing process and the relationship with intercultural interaction of communities of practice has been substantiated. The following section aims to provide some highlights to the discourse as a new body of knowledge contributing to the existing knowledge in TNHE.

8.5.1 Transnational Interculturality in Communities of Practice as a New Form of Knowledge in TNHE

The experience of offshore education programmes depends largely on the quality of the relationships between stakeholders (Heffernan and Poole, 2004), which, in turn, is related to the elements of mutual trust, mutual engagement and joint enterprise within the framework of communities of practice. As the agenda of internationalisation of higher education progresses, the development of TNHE and interculturality has been receiving more attention from researchers and higher education professionals (Kim, 2009; Higher Education Academy, 2014). The new knowledge of transnational interculturality in communities of practice may enhance the teaching and learning experience of staff and students in TNHE. The concept of transnational interculturality brings some advancement in knowledge beyond existing TNHE studies, to highlight the essential role of "transnational interculturality in communities of practice" to be the transforming element to "bridge" between programmes and staff from the home context and an offshore context.

The existing literature and the findings of this research indicate complex variations in interpreting the value of TNHE programmes. As reported by some of the participants, TNHE study is commonly seen as a 'second best' option, and some of them decided to study transnational programmes as a shorter route of study (Mellors-Bourne et al., 2015; Leung and Walters, 2013a). The findings of the study however, indicate that the discourse of "transnational interculturality in the communities of practice" has nurtured positive experience and values in TNHE study, and has generated some forms of social learning between communities of practice from different geographical locations, making TNHE a valuable and distinctive form of education. For example, students from the branch campus model have highlighted their choice to study in AHKIU (Branch Campus) not as a second choice, but rather because they have strong

aspirations that "international" and "intercultural" experience provided by AHKIU (Branch Campus) would facilitate their future career and personal development overseas.

In sum, the "intercultural" and "transnational" elements add new perspectives to Wenger's framework of communities of practice and contribute to a new form of knowledge to the intercultural interaction in transnational education. In the TNHE context, transnational interculturality in communities of practice makes TNHE communities unique among communities of practices. Members of these intercultural communities interact in specific rhythms and tempos, through a mixture of platforms including face-to-face meetings, emails, and virtual learning platforms. The intercultural interaction crosses the spatial and cultural distance between Hong Kong and the UK / USA, for staff and students to learn from different cultural contexts in developing intercultural and professional capacity, and making themselves more marketable in the global labour market. The most important finding of the study is that with more transnational interculturality in the communities of practice of TNHE, members are engaged in better intercultural interaction and with a more positive sense of community, resulting in more quality-based relationships including mutual trust, joint accountability and joint enterprise between TNHE staff and students across spatial and cultural distance. Transnational interculturality is developed and embedded in the communities where specific modes of interaction and knowledge practice are formed, contributing to the long term development and enhancement of TNHE practice. As indicated by the UK Higher Education International Unit, "the road to successful TNHE engagement is long and resource intensive. There is an absolute necessity for support at home to ensure success abroad. The management of programmes and relationships

takes time, consideration and communication, and relies upon quality assurance, transparency and shared objectives" (2016:75).

To conclude, implications drawn from the findings of this study are, firstly, each model of provision has its strengths and weaknesses in nurturing transnational interculturality in TNHE communities of practice. Secondly, a tighter bonding between students and staff from the awarding institution and students studying on TNHE programmes in overseas countries should be encouraged. To this end, the nurturing of transnational interculturality in communities of practice is central, so as to develop a positive sense of intercultural communities of practice with mutual trust, joint accountability and strong rhythms of interaction. In fact, the communities of practice in TNHE should not only aim at the sharing of academic knowledge but also to promote transnational and intercultural understandings and experiences to facilitate intercultural learning. Last but not least, with the nature of the part-time mode of study, some students appeared to be quite distant from the home university, but in such cases of joint delivery as well as franchised delivery models, the development of communities of practice focusing on professionalism has been evident.

8.6   Summary of this Chapter

This chapter has discussed the overall findings of the study, and presented the advancement of knowledge through a new overarching discourse of "transnational interculturality in communities of practice in TNHE". Transnational interculturality is specific to the TNHE context. Each model of delivery generates specific communities of practice nurturing different forms of transnational interculturality in TNHE communities of practice. The chapter has also discussed the relationship of three dimensions which are inter-related within the discourse, including "the development of distinctive communities of practice", "the nurturing of professionalism and intercultural

competence through TNHE" and "the development of transnational interculturality in communities of practice". The study has concluded that the TNHE branch campus model has advantages over the other two models in developing "transnational interculturality in TNHE communities of practice". The other two models, however are more focused in their mission of developing professionalism for the staff and students. It is essential to note that the diverse models of TNHE present different strengths and weaknesses in formulating specific rhythms and modes of interaction, and distinctive forms of communities of practice emerge in the course of social learning. Last but not least, this chapter has also addressed the processes of interaction and practice sharing under different models, highlighting the fact that nurturing "transnational interculturality in communities of practice" leads to long term continuing learning for TNHE staff and students, and upholding the long term benefit and value of TNHE programmes.

CHAPTER 9 - CONCLUSION

9.1 Purposes and Organisation this Chapter

The main purpose of this chapter is to review and conclude this study. Section 9.2 provides an overall review of the scope and the purpose of the study. Section 9.3 presents the research questions and design. Section 9.4 presents the overall findings of the study. Section 9.5 relates to the contribution and significance of this study. Section 9.6 reviews the limitations of the study. Section 9.7 presents the recommendations for future research in TNHE and finally Section 9.8 is a personal reflection to conclude this study.

9.2 Purpose and Origins of the Investigation

This study has emerged from my long-term professional experience in the higher education sector in both Hong Kong and the UK, during which I had gradually built up empathy and intercultural sensitivity to work with people from diverse cultural backgrounds. In view of the rapid development of TNHE in recent years I have noticed some significant gaps in current practice in TNHE, particular relating to forms of intercultural interaction and learning, in leading to my reflections on the intrinsic value of TNHE for teaching staff and students.

The unprecedented growth of transnational higher education in the recent two decades has taken place within a complex environment driven by forces associated with globalisation. From the macro-perspective, the process of globalisation of higher education and, with that, the evolution of the knowledge-based economy, have caused dramatic changes to higher education in many countries. From this point of view, transnational education has emerged as a form of 'education product' to meet the educational demand in different countries (Mok, 2014; Lo, 2017). In the UK, for

example, statistics published by the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (2014) indicate that the scale of development of TNHE has had a significant impact on the economic output of the country, representing 11% of international fee revenues to UK higher education institutions. While there is an increasing number of studies in TNHE focusing on trends and issues related to regulations, compliance, policies, quality assurance and effectiveness of operations, there is also an urgent need to understand how TNHE nurtures intercultural interaction, and how it relates to the values of TNHE which are distinct from those of other forms of education.

9.3   Research Questions and Design

The research has been based on the foundations described above, and it is aimed to bring new understanding to the phenomenon of TNHE with a particular focus on how intercultural communities of practice are, or could be, nurtured and sustained within distinctive models. With a mission to advancing existing understanding in TNHE, this study has adopted micro-perspectives to analyse the role of transnational higher education in nurturing interculturality through communities of practice. The above demand for knowledge drove the following research questions, which have been used to guide the research investigation. The main research question was:

- How is interculturality developed through distinctive forms of communities of practice in TNHE?   (Main Question)

with the following sub-questions:

- What sorts of communities of practice are associated with the TNHE models of branch campus, joint delivery and franchised delivery? (Sub-question)

- How do particular models of transnational higher education offer intercultural interaction for communities of staff and students? (Sub-question)

The study has been underpinned by three interrelated concepts: communities of practice, intercultural competence and interaction, and interculturality. The concept of interculturality is central to the development of new knowledge in this study. It refers to a set of interaction and communication processes through which relations between TNHE communities of practice are constructed (Leclercq, 2005; Dervin, 2016). The discussion in this study starts from understanding the concept of globalisation which is a major driving force for the development of TNHE (Mok, 2014; Lo, 2017). With the increasing development of TNHE programmes, different models of transnational education have emerged to represent different approaches in setting up TNHE partnerships. The three dominant operational models of TNHE, namely, branch campus model, franchised delivery model and joint delivery model, have been discussed and analysed in great detail to delineate their distinctive features in relation to the nurturing of intercultural interaction. One of the main objectives of this study is to analyse in detail how TNHE staff and students from different cultural backgrounds interact and construct learning through communities of practice. To explore all this, this study has adopted a qualitative approach to research, with a case study inquiry, using individual interviews, focus groups to study the practice and intercultural interaction of intercultural communities of practice through the three selected models. The three cases represent the three main TNHE models named above, and they have provided the foundation for the subsequent analysis.

9.4   Research Findings

The details of the findings are related to the key themes of "knowledge and competence of staff and students developed through different TNHE models", "features of communities of practice in different TNHE models" and "processes of contextualising TNHE Programmes", which have emerged from the data collected from the individual

interviews and focus group interviews. By relating the themes that emerged from the data, and comparing them to the theoretical concepts studied in the literature review, this study has advanced existing knowledge in TNHE to build up a concept of "transnational interculturality in communities of practice for TNHE". Key findings of the studies are substantiated in the dimensions below.

9.4.1   *Development of Distinctive Communities of Practice*

The findings of the case studies suggest that models of operating TNHE programmes have a strong impact on the development of TNHE communities of practice. The three models studied have their distinctive strengths and weaknesses, according to which unique communities of practice can be formed. In these models, members of the communities of practice are engaged in diverse levels of intercultural interaction. The course of interaction represents a process for members to negotiate practice and construct knowledge. The topics of their interactions include practice and knowledge sharing for teaching or learning, cultural backgrounds and lifestyles within their own cultures, and sharing of professional practice in their industries. It has been found that the branch campus model provides a more integrated, tangible and desirable environment to cultivate intercultural interaction for the communities of practice. There are distinctive features offered by the AHKIU (Branch Campus) model which contribute to its successful development of intercultural communities of practice. First of all, with the student-centred teaching and learning approaches, both local Hong Kong and US academic staff highlighted interactive activities in teaching and assessment, including peer critique sessions, field visits, online discussions with US students, as well as group projects to engage with local communities. Moreover, given the disciplinary nature of Creative Arts and Design, students were provided with some free choices in their assignment topics and course-related projects. All these activities were

conducted, and negotiated, in a multicultural environment with staff and students from diverse backgrounds. The student-centred model of AHKIU (Branch Campus), on one hand, encouraged intercultural interaction between staff and student groups which nurtured intercultural communities of practice and sense of belonging; on the other hand, the less formal teaching and learning approach as advocated by the social constructivist teaching was seen to be effective in developing students' professional and intercultural competence. Indeed, the findings resonate with the assertion that "learning is most effective when students feel valued and respected for the experiences they bring to the learning environment and are supported to develop as autonomous learners" (Trahar, 2011:28).

In addition to the student-centred approaches, AHKIU (Branch Campus) also developed internationalised curricula to be delivered on the home campus and its branch campuses in multiple locations. With the internationalised curricula, students in all campuses were engaged in regular virtual seminars to discuss the content of their assignments. The internationalisation of curricula of AHKIU (Branch Campus) not only brought an international dimension to the knowledge content of the curriculum, but also enhanced the development of intercultural interaction in culturally mixed classrooms. The study provides clear evidence that intercultural communities of practice flourished in such a context.

The success of AHKIU (Branch Campus)'s model also rested on the University's initiatives to actively engage with local and overseas industries to provide practice-related experiences to students. Through a diverse range of learning opportunities set within a social constructivist approach, which included work-based projects, regular industrial events, field visits, and interaction with local and overseas prominent

professionals, students were able to understand the context of the creative art industry in Hong Kong. These learning and teaching strategies and opportunities clearly show the importance and benefits of the practice elements in intercultural communities of practice. As such they are also likely to benefit students' future employment position in the global market after they graduate from the TNHE study. In view of the increasing concerns in TNHE graduates' positionality in employment market, the partnerships with industry are considered as one of the key factors contributing to the successful delivery of AHKIU (Branch Campus).

By contrast, the limitations of the other two models, in particular in the franchise delivery model where Hong Kong students do not have regular contacts with the UK staff, the existence of intercultural interaction in the communities of practice is less evident. However, with the strong desire and preference of those students to develop their professional qualifications through TNHE study, there is evident development of professional communities of practice focusing on professional knowledge sharing among staff and students.

Perhaps the most important outcome of this study is to bring an intercultural and transnational perspective for the reappraisal of Wenger's conceptual framework of communities of practice. This study makes an innovative contribution to reconstruct the framework of communities of practice and develops the concept of "Transnational Interculturality in TNHE Communities of Practice". The concept is an integration of the concept of communities of practice as a form of social learning, with the component of intercultural competence to nurture intercultural communities of practice, through the set of interaction processes of interculturality. The findings of the study suggest that "transnational interculturality in TNHE communities of practice" emerges most

evidently in the model of branch campus. The model has great impact on the development of transnational interculturality, which contributes to long term benefits and distinctive value to TNHE as a form of education.

9.4.2   *Nurturing Professionalism and Intercultural competence in TNHE*

This study attempts to investigate how intercultural and professional knowledge and competence are nurtured in the three partnership models of TNHE. Intercultural and professional competences are complementary to each other and can be seen as essential by employers in different sectors. TNHE is seen to have the potential value of developing both professional and intercultural capacity for students to maintain their positional advantage in the global labour market (Mellors-Bourne et al., 2013; Jones, 2013).

Drawing on the findings from the case studies, the study suggests that the development of intercultural competence is interrelated with the nurturing of communities of practice and together they form "intercultural communities of practice". The case studies also suggest that the rhythms and tempos of the intercultural interaction, which refer to the frequency and regularity of how communities are engaged in TNHE activities, are influenced by the nurturing of intercultural competence. To this end, it was found that the nurturing of intercultural competence is best developed within the branch campus model. In fact, the development of intercultural competence is essential to facilitate interaction and learning between TNHE staff and students with different cultural backgrounds and it is the enabler to the development of interculturality in TNHE communities.

Another essential value of TNHE is the nurturing of students' professionalism. Findings of the study suggest that all three models of TNHE strive to nurture students' professionalism for their future career development, through initiatives such as industrial engagement in joint projects and internship arrangements. Other than the branch campus model, students studying in the other two models are part-time learners, whose study circumstances have a strong impact on their motivations and their perceived need for career development. It was found that the balanced approach of the branch campus model nurtured students' professional and intercultural capacities, which bring benefits to students' employability in the global labour market. Given the nature of part-time delivery in the case of joint delivery and franchised delivery, both models put a focus on developing the professional competence of students, in fulfilment of students' needs for their professional development.

9.4.3   Development of Transnational Interculturality in Communities of Practice

The most important finding of this study is related to the development of "transnational interculturality in TNHE communities of practice", a concept that has been developed in this study. This study suggests that in the context of TNHE, the development of communities of practice, intercultural competence and transnational interculturality are interrelated. The journey of developing transnational interculturality in communities of practice starts from the evolution of communities of practice within the distinctive models of TNHE delivery. Communities of practice, as a result of their particular TNHE models, are developing from, and dependent on specific rhythms and regularity to negotiate practice and construct learning. Within the continuing processes of intercultural interaction, the nurturing of intercultural competence and professional competence for staff and students evolve. Components of intercultural competence, including "attitudes, knowledge and skills" among the members, further facilitate the

interaction and knowledge exchange of the intercultural communities of practice. Finally, the combination these processes lead to the formation of transnational interculturality in TNHE communities of practice. In the course of intercultural learning in TNHE, transnational interculturality plays an essential role as the transforming element that forms a "bridge" between the programmes and staff from the home context and the offshore context.

With the components of intercultural competence and communities of practice, the development of transnational interculturality in communities of practice is essential in framing the future development and position of TNHE. While existing studies suggest that overseas study is often seen as the 'gold standard' and TNHE as second best, TNHE has gradually been labelled as being "a quicker and cheaper option to get an international award" (Mellors-Bourne et al., 2015). The essence of "transnational interculturality in communities of practice of TNHE", in many ways, serves to answer the above question and provides some added-value to continuing improvement for TNHE.

9.5 Contributions and Significance of this Study

The conceptual framework for the study highlights how important it is to better understand staff and students' intercultural interaction in their TNHE experiences. The major contribution of this study is related to the generation of the new concept of "transnational interculturality in TNHE communities of practice", as derived from the framework of communities of practice proposed by Wenger, aiming to enhance the intercultural learning of TNHE. This study brings some new understanding to the phenomenon of TNHE, with a particular focus on how intercultural learning is nurtured in distinctive TNHE models. The study also adopts a micro-perspective to analyse the role of transnational higher education in nurturing transnational interculturality through

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communities of practice. The findings from this study make a contribution to knowledge by, firstly, bringing an intercultural perspective to Wenger's conceptual framework of communities of practice, thereby establishing an understanding of the journey of intercultural interaction of staff and students in TNHE. Secondly, the study has also generated new insights into how the framework of communities of practice can be used in transnational and intercultural contexts, by analysing the intercultural interactions that take place between TNHE staff and students across spatial and cultural distance.

In addition to that, the study also interprets the impact of TNHE operation models on the nurturing of interculturality in TNHE. The study seeks to better understand the advantages and disadvantages of each TNHE model and reveals their strong influence on the evolution of distinctive communities of practice and on the interculturality of TNHE. The success of AHKIU (Branch Campus) in nurturing intercultural communities of practice provides an exemplar for the other TNHE models to learn from. The implementation of student-centred and social constructivist approaches in teaching and learning activities, the effective internationalisation of curricula, and the contextualised learning environment to suit the Hong Kong context, and in particular the regular and frequent rhythms of intercultural interaction, all contribute to the success of this model. By fostering intercultural interaction, it gradually develops lived and perceived transnational interculturality.

So far, there has been little research focusing on how the concept and practice of interculturality fits into TNHE models as well to existing frameworks of communities of practice. Instead, the majority of studies on the TNHE models published to date have been largely geared towards the economic and operational effectiveness of TNHE.

This study also develops a concept on how transnational interculturality in TNHE communities of practice is nurtured. To date there have been few attempts to conceptualise the processes of intercultural interaction in TNHE communities of practice. This knowledge about transnational interculturality in communities of practice adds significantly to previous studies (Keay et al., 2014; Dunn and Wallace, 2008; Otten, 2009) which have attempted to relate communities of practice to TNHE. In fact, the study supports the view that intercultural learning and interaction are at the very heart of TNHE. It examines the inter-relationship between intercultural interaction, communities of practice and interculturality, to bring unique value and sustainability to TNHE.

The study is also significant because it shows the distinctive value of TNHE, in developing positional advantage for graduates in the global labour market, through the nurturing of intercultural and professional capacity (British Council, 2013; Mellors-Bourne et al., 2015; Jones, 2013). The presented findings clearly indicate that the agenda of industrial engagement has been strong across different models of TNHE partnership, and it is evident that each model offers a wide range of approaches in developing students' professional knowledge and competence for their future professional development.

9.6 Limitations of this Study

As with every empirical research, this study has some limitations which need to be recognised. The findings of this study have produced new knowledge for TNHE research and at the same time provided insights that transnational interculturality in communities of practice is essential to the value of TNHE. It is however to be

recognised that the results of this study cannot be generalised or applied to all other TNHE institutions and programmes, because it is limited by its interpretative nature as well as its particular geographical scope.

The selected samples (3 cases with a total of 43 participants) in this study are small in number, and cannot be used to represent all TNHE programmes, even though the three models that represent are used widely in TNHE. Moreover, in the three selected cases, the TNHE programmes are in different disciplinary areas, namely Design, Building and Construction, and Civil Engineering, which may limit interpretations drawn from the three models. Based on these findings, a larger scale, cross-sector sample with the use of statistical models in the positivistic regime might be able to increase the generalisability of the findings. Although sensitive and dynamic issues like 'interculturality' and 'intercultural interaction' are difficult to quantify, this could be considered as a future research direction. However, considering the difference of philosophy between the two paradigms, such positivist approaches would reduce the richness and the quality of data provided by interviews and stories, as has been possible in this study.

Interpretation of this study has been largely reliant on the views of participants. In this study data has been collected from a wide variety of participants including staff, students and managers from culturally diverse background with different locations, through a combination of interviews and focus groups. This has caused some prolonged processes for the data collection, as indicated in Chapter 4. It may subsequently pose some challenges on the currency of the findings. However, this is in alignment with the interpretive nature of the study, also because much of the data collected in this study relies on the participants' perspectives and their ability to portray their views as

faithfully as possible, and in a particular place and time, which always poses some limitation on the interpretation of the findings.

9.7 Post-Research Updates and Recommendations for Future Research

This section seeks to provide some updates on developments in the three cases after the case study was conducted in 2014, to identify possible gaps in knowledge for further research.

According to the website of the American Hong Kong International University (AHKIU, Branch Campus), the university in the last two years has made a number of changes to the organisational structure and senior management team of the Hong Kong campus, and members of the Hong Kong teaching team have been changed, with different personnel coming in. In fact, a total of 4 new appointments to the post of Associate Vice President within the period of 2 years have been recorded in meeting minutes of the Education Bureau of the Hong Kong Government (Note: reference withheld to protect the anonymity of the institution). The high turn-over rate of staff poses serious challenges to the management of the branch campus. On the other hand, the enrolment statistics listed in Appendix F show that in the academic year 2014/2015, out of the 21 programmes delivered in the Hong Kong campus, only 4 programmes (at undergraduate level) had enrolment numbers over 20 students; and programmes at post-graduate level had very small enrolment numbers, each programme with less than 7 students. The challenges of low recruitment, as well as the high turnover rate of staff are interrelated, which corresponds to key challenges identified in previous studies (Healey, 2016). In fact, despite being the best fitted model in offering intercultural interaction to staff and students of TNHE and nurturing transnational interculturality for communities of practice, the setting up and running of a branch campus exposes the home university to considerable financial and reputation risk (Healey, 2016).

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On the other hand, a similar turn-over in management staff team has been observed since 2014 in the cases of Northern Metropolitan University (NMU, Franchised Delivery) and Midland British University (MBU, Joint Delivery) (Note: reference withheld to protect the anonymity of the institution). These new changes of UK management staff are mostly due to the restructuring of both UK Universities. It is however worth noting that the Hong Kong part-time teaching team for NMU (Franchised Delivery) is stable with only minor changes being made over time. Given the nature of the part-time delivery and the demand for construction professionals in Hong Kong, student recruitment for TNHE programmes of NMU (Franchised Delivery) and MBU (Joint Delivery) has remained strong (Appendix F).

The updates on the development of these three cases has brought more insight and perspectives on how transnational higher education can address the education and human resources needs of Hong Kong society. In view of the declining youth population in Hong Kong (Lo, 2017) as well as the increasing concerns about the massification of higher education and their effect on the graduates' employment (Mok, 2016), transnational higher education in Hong Kong needs to be well-positioned to maintain its positional advantage in providing international and professional qualification to full-time employed practitioners for their career advancement. The frequent changes in the management staff of the awarding universities in these three cases are alarming for the sustainability of TNHE development. In such circumstances, the development of transnational interculturality in communities of practice may offer a way forward to better prepare staff from awarding institutions to engage in transnational settings for the management and teaching of TNHE programmes. The findings from this study suggest that there is an increasing need for further research to develop supporting

systems and mechanisms to better prepare TNHE teaching staff for their TNHE assignments in order to achieve the long term benefits and value of transnational higher education.

The findings of this study open a new horizon for communities of practice and transnational interculturality in TNHE, in that they may provide the knowledge on how TNHE could be designed to fulfil the expectations of staff and students who are culturally diverse, or perceive themselves to be so. In view of the developing trend of part-time delivery for TNHE, and the dominance of the partnership-led approach adopted by the UK universities (UK Higher Education International Unit, 2016), further research is needed to investigate how to provide better approaches to intercultural learning to part-time learners, who have restrictions in time to participate in, and make use of wider study-related opportunities. Moreover, in each model of collaboration, it is essential for the universities and their partners to deepen their understanding and levels of engagement and communications in relation to the part-time staff and students.

9.8   Personal Reflections and Conclusion

As an education practitioner, I have always had a strong interest in other cultures, through my professional experience in transnational education. I have worked with staff and students from different countries, and have subsequently developed a strong desire to share such experiences in practice. As stated in the beginning of this thesis, my interest in the cross-cultural issues in education inspired me to develop a research project in this area. Throughout my professional life I have established working relationships with academics and managers of Universities from the UK, Australia, Ireland, China and Taiwan. Such experiences seemed to be an interesting, if challenging, topic to research. In the beginning it was not easy to develop a suitable

topic and a suitable perspective for research. Moreover, as a practitioner of TNHE, it is not always easy to distance myself from the research subject. The chosen scope, which is related to the domain of culture and education in the context of intercultural learning, has motivated me to immerse myself in a new sea of knowledge, as well as to develop new ideas and approaches in comparison with existing research.

To me, this thesis is the journal of my academic explorations. The process of this research has opened up a completely new horizon for me. The cross-disciplinary nature of the phenomenon of transnational education and the complex dimensions of culture has made me aware of the need to adopt an interpretivist paradigm. After discussions with my supervisor, I have taken the chance to undertake interpretivist research in this study, aiming to study the deeper aspects of how multicultural groups interact and learn through the delivery of transnational education practice. In the beginning of the research journey, it was quite difficult for me to set out the scope of the research, as I was somehow torn between the existing dimension in intercultural interaction or whether to develop a research with the scope to measure quality effectiveness of TNHE, a topic related more to the academic domain of business and management. However, I was encouraged by my supervisor and some peers and began to consider a new method of study to investigate this topic. The journey of reviewing literature helped enhance my analytical and reflective skills, and more essentially my thoughts of how to get meaning across.

During the data collection process, I had the opportunity to meet with different groups of staff and students, both in Hong Kong and in the UK. I truly enjoyed the interviews in which I discussed education and TNHE context with them in different dimensions and perspectives. Amazingly, I also discovered that other institutions offering TNHE

programmes were in need of solutions to fill their gaps of knowledge in how to enhance staff and students' intercultural experience to achieve better TNHE operations. My professional background and experience have brought invaluable benefits and have provided me with professional knowledge for defining the scope of, and handling the data.

Part of my learning reflection is best described by a quotation from the teaching of Confucius: the Master said, "If one learns but does not think, one will be confused; If, on the other hand, one thinks but does not learn, one will be jeopardised" (The Analects) 子曰：「學而不思則罔，思而不學則殆。」(論語. 為政篇).　Not only has this research journey enabled me to acquire new knowledge in interculturality and intercultural learning, but more essentially, it has also allowed me to rethink the practice of transnational education as well as a wider agenda of internationalising higher education in a structured and coherent process.　In addition to that, experience from this research journey has trained my logical thinking and communication skills, which is paramount for my personal development in life. This journey has been a very positive one, as I have learnt not just from the research process but also from the interview participants, who have generously shared their stories and experiences, enabling me to reflect on my professional practice.

Finally, I would like to end this research journey with the following quote:

> "Intercultural learning is not just a topic to be talked about (thinking and knowing); it is also about caring, acting and connecting … it entails the discovery and transcendence of difference through authentic experiences of cross-cultural interaction that involve real tasks, and emotional as well as intellectual participation" (De Vita and Case, 2003:388).

To me, the journey of intercultural learning has been inspirational and enabling. The whole journey of this research, comprised of real life intercultural experience, has taken over seven years. Throughout these years, I have had changes in my career, taking on a role with management and administrative duties which has made my research process very difficult. Furthermore, I have also experienced changes in life circumstances, involving relocation from the UK back to Hong Kong. It is fair to say that there have been continuing challenges throughout this journey, in particular in the ways in which I have managed the time and effort as a part-time researcher. Throughout this journey I have struggled with many reflections. Now I finally come to see the proverbial 'end of this tunnel'; this research, on one hand, has concluded a journey; on the other hand, it also starts another new chapter in my life, both in my professional life and personal development.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A - Invitation Letter to the Participants

Appendix B - Information Sheet to Participants

Appendix C - Consent Form

Appendix D - Interview Schedule

Appendix E - Codes of Data Generated from the Interviews

Appendix F - List of Programmes delivered by the Three Cases

Appendix A - Invitation Letter to the Participants

Dear Sir / Madam:

I am a part time student studying PhD at Hull University, UK. I am currently doing a survey for my thesis, the topic of which is "***An Investigation of Transnational Higher Education in Hong Kong: Developing Transnational Intercultural Communities of Practice***".

I would like to invite your participation to this survey via interviews. The interview will be semi-structured in nature and it will aim to investigate a number of questions about your understanding and reflections of your previous experience in delivering transnational education programmes in Hong Kong.

The participation of the research is completely voluntary, please be assured that the data collected will only be used in the above mentioned research, your answers will be reported in groups and in strict confidence.

Attached please find an information package (an information sheet and a consent form) which provides details of the interview process. If you are willing to participate in the interview, please can you return the consent form to me via the following email address, and I will make contact to make interview arrangements.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to your favourable reply.

Yours faithfully,

LAU Tsing, Erica
Erica.t.lau@gmail.com

Appendix B - Information Sheet to Participants

Dear Sir / Madam,

My name is Erica Lau, I am studying Doctor of Philosophy at Hull University, UK. The title of my research project is *"An Investigation of Transnational Higher Education in Hong Kong: Developing Transnational Intercultural Communities of Practice"*. The major aim of the research is to investigate and analyse the phenomenon of transnational education in Hong Kong, focusing on how particular transnational education models become embedded in different social, educational and cultural contexts.

Some case studies and interviews will be included in the research and I would like to invite you to participate in the interview, please note the following detailed information:

The research will involve the following data collection process:

1. Several cases studies will be conducted in Hong Kong to investigate the details of transnational education. The target cases will be UK and Hong Kong institutions that are engaging in the transnational education delivery. Within the case studies, we will organise individual interviews with the following groups:

   - senior management staff of overseas universities
   - programme management and teaching staff of overseas universities
   - programme management and teaching staff of HK partner institutions

   Each individual interview will last about 45-60 minutes, when the participants will be fully briefed before the actual interview starts

2. Focus group interviews: this will be conducted with different groups of students who are studying the transnational education programmes located in Hong Kong.

   The focus group interviews will be conducted in the teaching venue of the students' institution. Each focus group meeting will last about 90 minutes, when the participants will be fully briefed before the actual meeting starts.

My responsibilities to my participants.

This research is classified as a "low" risk research as the research involves only the collection of personal opinion and does not aim to work with any vulnerable individuals. However, I would like to provide the following details regarding what will be provided to the participants within the research process:

1   Participants are able to access the result of the research, which aims to provide some form of study to suggest further enhancement of the current practice in transnational education, hence to benefit the students and staff in long term.

2   All the data and opinions will be collected in strict confidence.

3   Participants are free to withdraw at any time and without adverse consequences, if such situation happens, any information gathered until such time will be destroyed.

The likelihood and form of dissemination of the research results, including publication.

The results of this research will contribute to the final thesis of the Doctoral study, only group data will be reported in the thesis. There is also possibility that the result of the study will be published in some educational journals.

The research materials will be stored within the researcher's filing system and will be stored and handled separately with the other personal storage.

Participant's Consent

Participants consent will be obtained via the following:

For participants of focus groups and individual interviews, invited participants will receive and invitation package including a consent form via email, they are required to return the consent form via the researcher's email address before the commencement of the data collection process.

Inquiries

Participants can make any inquiries about the research by contacting the researcher at the following details:

Researcher:
Ms. Erica Lau
Erica.t.lau@gmail.com

Principle supervisor of the project:
Dr. Catherine Montgomery
c.montgomery@hull.ac.uk

Should you have any concerns about the conduct of this research project, please contact the Secretary, Faculty of Education Ethics Committee, University of Hull, Cottingham Rd, Hull, HU6 7RX; Tel No (+44) (0)1482 465988; fax (+44) (0)1482 466137."

Appendix C - Consent Form

THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION ETHICS COMMITTEE
CONSENT FORM: (*INTERVIEWS)*

I, _____ of

_____

Hereby agree to be a participant in this study to be undertaken

By LAU Tsing, Erica

and I understand that the purpose of the research is to investigate and analyse the transnational education delivery in HK, which forms the study process of a Doctor of Philosophy for Ms. Lau.

I understand that

1.   the aims, methods, and anticipated benefits, and possible risks/hazards of the research study, have been explained to me.

2.   I voluntarily and freely give my consent to my participation in such research study.

3.   I understand that aggregated results will be used for research purposes and may be reported in scientific and academic journals.

4.   Individual results will not be released to any person except at my request and on my authorisation.

5.   I am free to withdraw my consent at any time during the study, in which event my participation in the research study will immediately cease and any information obtained from me will not be used.

Signature:

Date:

The contact details of the researcher are: Erica.t.lau@gmail.com

The contact details of the secretary to the Faculty of Education Ethics Committee are Mrs J.Lison, Centre for Educational Studies, University of Hull, Cottingham Road, Hull, HU6 7RX.
Email: J.Lison@hull.ac.uk tel. 01482-465988.

Appendix D - Interview Schedule

1. Individual Interview (semi-structured) for Senior Management Group

	Sessions
1	Briefing and Introduction to the research (10 mins)
2	Warming up and facilitation(5 mins)
3	discussion (30-45 mins)

Interview topics (for Senior Managers)
Are there any institutional ethos, approach and strategies for internationalisation?
What is the background and rationale of selecting partnership model?
Details of roles and responsibilities of each partner?
Backgrounds of the staff and students in the TNHE partnership?
How to develop student's future career through TNHE?
How do staff from home institutions communicate and interact with Hong Kong Students / Staff on regular basis?
Any partnership with industry and external stakeholders?
How do staff and students develop intercultural interaction from the TNHE delivery?
How to contextualize the overseas programmes to suit Hong Kong students' needs?
University's digital facilities and supporting systems provided?

2. Individual Interview for TNHE Programme Managerst and Teaching staff

	Sessions
1	Briefing and Introduction to the research (10 mins)
2	Warming up and facilitation(5 mins)
3	discussion (30-45 mins)

Interview topics
Background and experience of the teaching staff in TNHE?
What is your role in the TNHE partnership and how do you communicate with the Hong Kong/UK staff to deliver the TNHE teaching?
How to develop students' future career through TNHE?
Details of communications and interactions between Hong Kong /overseas students / staff, do they interact on regular basis?
Is there any partnership with industry and external stakeholders?
[for overseas staff only] How do you interact with students in Hong Kong and how do you find them different from the home students?
[for overseas staff only] How do you understand Hong Kong students' learning needs?
What are your personal experiences in interacting with staff and students with different cultural background in the TNHE partnership?
How do staff and students develop intercultural awareness from the TNHE deliveries?
How to contextualize the overseas programmes to suit Hong Kong students' needs?
University's digital facilities and supporting systems provided?
Your personal reflections on the intercultural learning experience through the TNHE experience?

3. *Focus Group Interview with Students*

	Sessions
1	Briefing and Introduction to the research (10 mins)
2	Warming up and facilitation(5 mins)
3	Open discussion (75 mins)

Schedule of questions:

Interview topics
Why / How did you choose to study the TNHE programme? Decision making factors?
How do you compare a local degree with a transnational degree? ● employability? ● cultural considerations? ● costings? ● quality of teaching?
What are the teaching arrangements for your TNHE study, are you taught by Hong Kong or overseas teachers?
What kind of intercultural skills did you learn through the TNHE study?
Have you had any interactions with industrial bodies / employers throughout your study?
Your interaction with home staff / students?
Your interaction with Hong Kong staff / students?
Your student identity with the home university / students? ● online networking with home staff / students? ● online library provided by the University? ● others?
Curriculum and contextualisation : ● your views about the suitability of the curricula for Hong Kong market ● any need for localisation?
What are the physical teaching and lecturing arrangements for your studied programmes
Your reflections / views on the TNHE experiences?

Appendix E - Codes of Data Generated from the Interviews

Extracts from the transcriptions	Initial Codes	Sub-themes	Themes	Theoretical Dimensions
students' career aspirations to become international designers	developing students' professional identity for their future career	Theme 1.1 developing professional knowledge, competence for staff and students	Theme 1: knowledge and competence of staff and students developed through different TNHE models	Nurturing professionalism and intercultural competence in TNHE (Knowledge)
students are trained to have a strong professional identity and skills for their future career				
TNHE study provides training for students to understand the professional practice in other countries				
professional qualification and career advancement as the major aim for TNHE study				
part-time students are very focused in the professional aspects of the study				
students are concerned about the professional qualifications after their TNHE study	professional recognition of the TNHE programmes			
students are trained under the CIOB framework which is globally recognised				
understanding the Hong Kong industry practice for the teaching of TNHE	developing professional knowledge for staff in industrial context			
working closely with part-time teaching staff who are professionals in the Hong Kong industry				
include professional practice elements in TNHE teaching to enhance staff's professionalism				
understanding the needs of employers through professional exchange activities in Hong Kong				
internship arrangements with local studio to nurture hands on practice for students	interaction with Industry through TNHE study	Theme 1.2 interacting and practice sharing with industry to nurture students networking and understanding of the industry		
students have the opportunities to work with local practitioners for joint industrial projects to learn the professional context				
staff and students are linked to real life industrial platforms in Hong Kong and overseas for engagement with industry				
site visits were arranged to enable students understanding of the real practice in construction projects				
inviting guest lecturers to share professional practice with students				
art critiques and joint exhibitions with local and international artists				
part-time staff working in the industry to share their work practice with part-time students				
joint design projects were arranged with local companies	industry's involvement in students' assessment and projects			
Hong Kong part-time staff to provide technical cases and industrial sites for students assessments				
real life site projects were arranged as case studies for students final year project topic				

Appendix E - Codes of Data Generated from the Interviews (Con'd)

Extracts from the transcriptions	Initial Codes	Sub-themes	Themes	Theoretical Dimensions
Chinese students are generally quiet with less debate in classrooms	understanding students' needs and their learning habit	Theme 1.3 developing intercultural competence	Theme 1: knowledge and competence of staff and students developed through different TNHE models	nurturing professionalism and intercultural competence in TNHE (Knowledge)
overseas lecturers learning about Hong Kong context and the study needs of students				
part-time students' focus on the learning of professional knowledge				
part-time students' attendance rate is relatively lower				
Hong Kong students' focus on the assessment results and qualifications				
TNHE teachers have to be flexible and adaptive	understanding people with different cultural background			
TNHE programmes provide opportunities for interacting with staff and students from US and other cultural background				
learn to be more flexible and sensitive to different cultures and become more marketable for future career				
bring different culture and context back to UK home teaching				
understanding the speaking and behaviour of foreigner teachers				
part-time students seem to have difficulties in their understanding of English	nurturing language proficiency through TNHE			
learning in an English speaking TNHE branch campus facilitates students' communication and interaction in English				
learning about UK teachers' English				
nurturing students intercultural competence for their career in international creative industries	knowing international culture through TNHE			
a new branch campus in Asia will develop a harmonised international community with students and staff from different countries				
international outlook of the TNHE programmes can fill the Hong Kong campus with international students and culture				
graduates can work in other countries with their international qualifications and learning experiences				
technologies are globalised for students to learn together with peers in the UK home institutions				

Appendix E - Codes of Data Generated from the Interviews (Con'd)

Extracts from the transcriptions	Initial Codes	Sub-themes	Themes	Theoretical Dimensions
the branch campus has a mission of integrating into the local culture to establish an international brand and footprint for the University	mission of setting up TNHE	Theme 2.1 institutional strategy and the mission of TNHE	Theme 2: features of communities of practice in different models	development of distinctive communities of practice (Communities)
internationalising programmes and locations will lead to long term institutional sustainability				
an intermediate measure towards international campuses				
capacity building for the partnering institutions				
developing knowledge exchange opportunities				
capitalising the academic excellence in US to set up wider university community physically in other places	selection of the collaborative models			
establishing international brand for nurturing professionals in creative industries				
enable professional exchange in globalised context				
the joint delivery model brings benefit for the university to set control in QA and assessment				
franchised delivery is most cost-effective model in bringing alternative income to the University				
sense of belongings for seconded home staff	setting up the staff team in Hong Kong	Theme 2.2 roles and affiliation of Hong Kong staff in different TNHE models		
appointment of local and expatriate staff				
developing a multicultural team in the branch campus				
appointment of Hong Kong part-time with professional experience				
developing Hong Kong staff's knowledge and understanding about the overseas universities	Hong Kong staff's sense of identity with the awarding institutions			
closely linked with the local staff team and the neighbourhood community				
formal and informal channels of communications with the staff of home institutions				
developing an integrated university community with international footprint				
developing a strong peer network within the local teaching team				

Appendix E - Codes of Data Generated from the Interviews (Con'd)

Extracts from the transcriptions	Initial Codes	Sub-themes	Themes	Theoretical Dimensions
student community, including multinationals, is very diverse but distinctive in the branch campus	students cultural and academic background in different models	Theme 2.3 students' affiliations with the home institution	Theme 2: features of communities of practice in different models	development of distinctive communities of practice (Communities)
good mixture of Asian, European students sharing the same aspirations to be professionals in creative industries				
local graduates of higher diploma seeking for undergraduate and professional qualifications				
part of an integrated university community located in the branch campus	developing students' sense of identity with home institutions			
single university identity for Hong Kong and US students				
dual registration by the Hong Kong and UK institutions				
little knowledge about the UK universities				
to involve companies , professionals in creative industry to interact with students regularly through formal and informal activities	ways of interacting with professional communities	Theme 2.4 rhythms of interaction of communities in delivering TNHE programmes		
network with teaching staff and professional communities in the industry for employment opportunities				
students interaction with employers/ industrial supports to demonstrate their projects				
share ideas and professional practice with peers who work in the same industry				
interacting with staff and students at home university on daily basis for joint academic projects	intercultural interaction with staff and students of home institutions			
participating staff and student online seminars				
the Hong Kong campus is a regional hub of the university , staff and students communicate in one community				
interacting with staff in overseas universities to learn the teaching practice in the awarding universities				
regular staff visits for QA meetings				
regular teaching visits from the "flying faculty" staff from UK				
share teaching practice and tools with the Hong Kong staff				
interacting with the local students to collect student feedback and evaluation				
teaching practice sharing and critique on the assessment and teaching tools	how do Hong Kong staff interact as the local teaching team			
forming an integrated teaching community for the Hong Kong campus				
social interaction with the part-time Hong Kong staff				
set up online social groups through smartphones and iPads				
sharing of professional practice on informal and formal settings				
full-time students are engaged with peers for daily academic exchange and critiques	how do Hong Kong students interact with their peers			
close interaction with peer part-time students for joint projects and study				
formal and social interaction between student groups				

Appendix E - Codes of Data Generated from the Interviews (Con'd)

Extracts from the transcriptions	Initial Codes	Sub-themes	Themes	Theoretical Dimensions
a branch campus with international setting which is much more attractive than a local college	learning environment for distinctive models of collaboration			
spacious physical environment with a lot of US artefacts displayed				
nurturing and inspiring environment for future designers				
a new campus in Asia will bring enhanced brand for the University				
using the local partners premises in a local college				
located in a city building , the premises is used by other students studying different programmes				
feel like being students of the Hong Kong institutions				
learning outcomes provide the framework for the teaching, with examples and cases in local context	contextualizing the curriculum to suit the Hong Kong Context			
same TNHE programmes delivered in different countries with localised context				
staff of the Hong Kong institutions deliver "localised version" of the TNHE programmes according to their previous teaching experience				
supported by teaching and learning materials provided by virtual learning platforms		Theme 3.1: strategies of contextualising TNHE programmes in different models		
interactive and same approach as teaching in the home institution aiming to provide integrated learning experience	teaching and learning strategies in Hong Kong context		Theme 3: process of contextualising TNHE Programmes	transnational interculturality in communities of practice (process)
outcome based teaching and learning, following the academic rigour of home institutions				
use local teaching approach similar to students' previous experience in Higher Diploma				
following the supported materials and in accordance to previous teaching experience in other local institutions				
assessments are set and marked by the flying faculty from UK for the purpose of quality assurance	assessment design for TNHE programmes in Hong Kong			
difficult for the flying faculty to locate local cases				
assessments are set and marked by the Hong Kong staff and moderated by the home team				
large variations in standards				
interactions and conducting joint projects with students from US through the online virtual learning platforms	access to the awarding institution's online staff-student portal			
sharing the updated teaching practice between Hong Kong and overseas teaching teams to encourage interaction and sharing of enlightening experiences				
virtual student chat systems to facilitate students interaction				
access of online library to facilitate students' learning				
access of university handbooks, students identity cards	shared artefacts in different TNHE models	Theme 3.2: tools and artefacts shared between TNHE communities		
artefacts from US home campus which are displayed in the gallery of Hong Kong campus				
TNHE operational manuals issued by individual university				

Appendix F - List of Programmes delivered by the Three Cases

(As at 2015/2016 Academic Year)
(Source: Non-local Courses Registry, HKSAR Government)

Case A: American Hong Kong International University (AHKIU) [Branch Campus Model]

Name of Award	Date of Registration	Number of Students
Bachelor of Fine Arts in Animation	2009	31
Bachelor of Fine Arts in Advertising	2009	25
Bachelor of Fine Arts in Graphic Design	2009	49
Bachelor of Fine Arts in Illustration	2009	21
Bachelor of Fine Arts in Interactive Design and Game Development	2009	18
Bachelor of Fine Arts in Photography	2009	11
Bachelor of Fine Arts in Visual Effects	2009	5
Bachelor of Fine Arts in Fashion	2012	19
Bachelor of Fine Arts in Fashion Marketing and Management	2012	19
Bachelor of Fine Arts in Interior Design	2012	17
Bachelor of Fine Arts in Sequential Arts	2012	10
Bachelor of Fine Arts in Painting	2012	3
Master of Arts/ Master of Fine Arts in Graphic Design	2009	3
Master of Arts/Master of Fine Arts in Interactive Design and Game Development	2009	5
Master of Arts/Master of Fine Arts in Photography	2009	6
Master of Arts/Master of Fine Arts in Luxury and Fashion Management	2012	7
Total		*303*

Case B: Northern Metropolitan University (NMU) [Franchised Delivery Model]

Partner	Name of Award	Date of Registration	Number of Students
A (the partnership phased out since 2014)	BA (Hons) Accounting and Finance	1999	N/A
	BA (Hons) Business and Management	2002	N/A
	BSc (Hons) Business Information Systems	2004	N/A
	BA (Hons) Marketing	2005	N/A
	BSc (Hons) Multimedia and Entertainment Technology	2006	N/A
B	BA (Hons) Accounting and Finance	2013	0
	BA (Hons) Business Studies	2013	10
	BSc (Hons) Civil Engineering	2010	56
	BSc (Hons) Quantity Surveying	2016	NEW
	BSc (Hons) Building Surveying	2016	NEW
	MSc Civil Engineering	2015	NEW
	BSc (Hons) Computing	2013	1
C	BSc (Hons) Building Services Engineering	2013	99
	MSc in Building Services Engineering	2015	NEW
	BA (Hons) Housing Studies	2013	16
	Foundation Degree in Housing	2013	14
	Total		**186**

Case C: Midland British University (MBU) [Joint Delivery Model]

Partner	Name of Award	Date of Registration	Student Number
D	BDes (Hons) Interior Design	2014	0
E	BSc (Hons) Construction Management	2000	212
	BSc (Hons) Quantity Surveying	2011	88
	BA (Hons) Business and Law	2008	0
	LLM in International Corporate and Financial Law	2005	6
	Postgraduate Diploma in International Corporate and Financial Law	2005	3
	Postgraduate Certificate in International Corporate and Financial Law	2005	0
	Master of Laws	2007	1
	PhD in Law	2008	2
	MPhil in Law	2008	0
F	BSc (Hons) in Pharmaceutical Science	2011	32
	BSc Pharmaceutical Science	2011	0
	Total		*344*

END OF THESIS