

READING TOURISM EDUCATION

Neoliberalism Unveiled

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Abstract: This article deploys poststructuralist discourse theory to examine ideological influences in tourism higher education in England. It foregrounds neoliberalism and managerialism circulating from government policy to higher education institutions and illustrates how the notions of competition, markets, performativity and quality assurance, commonly associated with industry and commerce, converge in tourism higher education. It highlights the role of power in mediating the relationship between tourism higher education and other institutions responsible for producing and disseminating the texts analyzed. It points to the discursive construction of tourism higher education in England and concludes by posing the question: to what extent has this state of affairs contributed to furthering its venerability within the broader higher education academe? **Keywords:** Ideology, Neoliberalism, Managerialism, Higher Education.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism education can be described as one of the main sub sectors of the multifaceted tourism phenomenon and one whose manifestation could impact on the whole of the tourism sector, directly or indirectly. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has singled out tourism (higher) education as holding a potential to achieving customer satisfaction and also improving the competitiveness of tourism businesses and regions if specific education and training are guaranteed (Fayos Solà 1997). Tourism higher education has attained formal recognition in several countries worldwide. This is evidenced by among other things the dedication of a special journal issue on the theme ‘tourism education’ in *Annals of Tourism Research* (Jafari and Ritchie 1981) and more recently the publication of two major edited collections namely ‘An International Handbook of Tourism Education’ (Airey and Tribe 2005) and ‘Global Tourism Higher Education’ (Hsu 2005). The latter was simultaneously co-published as *Journal of Teaching in Travel and Tourism*, Volume 5,

Numbers 1/2/3 2005 (Hsu 2005). Furthermore, there are three journals specifically dedicated to tourism education research; namely, the Journal of Teaching in Travel and Tourism, the Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Education and the Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism Education.

Meanwhile the provision of tourism education poses fundamental challenges to educators in that different stakeholders have specific tourism education needs they deem appropriate for their own purposes (Cooper & Shepherd 1997). Moreover, training as opposed to education has traditionally dominated the tourism industry in which vocationally-oriented courses played a crucial role in providing the necessary craft skills for many years (Cooper & Shepherd 1997; Gillespie & Baum 2000). A notable distinction between education and training emanates from Zais' (1976) work on curriculum in which he defines training as “a technical model directed toward specific behavioral changes” meanwhile “education is directed toward expanding ones awareness of human environment and how to cope with this environment” (p. 317). The challenges facing tourism educators are further exacerbated by the observation that much of the tourism industry comprises small operating units that are found in different geographical locations (Sigala and Baum 2003); with a dependency on semi or unskilled labour supply (Baum 2006). Writing about tourism education in Canada, MacLaurin (2005) comments on the disparity in interest between educators and the government, while acknowledging that an alliance has been established, with strong prospects of providing sustainable source of skilled employees for the future. Evans (2001) however points at how employers do not consider a degree in tourism as a necessary requirement for employment, perhaps due to ignorance or confusion about what is on offer. This has been reiterated by Reichel (2005), who while explaining the industry-academic

relations in Israel notes that there is anecdotal evidence pointing to the hospitality industry's slowness in recruiting graduates of hospital and tourism program.

Such issues have in the past been researched extensively by focusing on aspects such as curriculum content and planning and stakeholder approaches to curriculum design (See for example Leiper 1981; Koh 1995; Tribe 2002), and also enquiries into human resource development issues, strategies and policies (see for example Baum and Szivas 2008; Liu & Wall 2005; Singh 1997). A noteworthy example is taken from Koh's (1995) marketing approach to tourism curriculum design in which he employed the Delphi technique to design a four-year tourism curriculum with the industry. Koh (1995) expressed concerns over the fact that educators designed tourism curricula in most USA universities with little or no representation from the industry. Drawing on a panel of experts from both the industry and the education sector, Koh identified the types of tourism graduates 'useful' to the industry. These included among others; "Tourism product development specialists, tourism marketers, tourism market researchers, facility managers, convention planners/organizers, and special events planners..." (Koh 1995: 854). Although these issues constitute legitimate concerns that tourism as a relatively new field of study in higher education has had to grapple with from an educational perspective, there have been other waves of change that have swept across the whole of higher education that require further understanding.

Notable in this case has been the changing mode of state intervention in education that some argue emanates from the changes in the global economy, powerful influences from industry and commerce all of which tend to force higher education in general to respond to the needs of a constantly changing and increasingly diverse society (Barnett 2000; Baird 2006). Despite numerous debates on its (post) disciplinary status (see for example Coles *et al* 2006; Echtner

& Jamal, 1997; Leiper, 1981; Tribe 1997), tourism studies is replete with examples of partial representation of tourism through the discourses of economics and business management (Airey and Johnson 1998; Higgins-Desbiolles 2006; Stuart-Hoyle 2003). This is substantiated by the findings of a survey of the aims and objectives of tourism degree courses in the UK for the academic year 1997/1998 (Airey and Johnson 1998). This survey was conducted to identify the aims and objectives of 99 tourism undergraduate and postgraduate courses through the information obtained from the prospectuses of the participating institutions. The findings of the survey show the 'top twenty' aims and objectives of these institutions and are worth quoting at length. That is,

...The focus on vocational, business management courses is highlighted.... over three quarters (77%) of the prospectuses mention 'career opportunities' and in excess of a half (54%) cite 'employment' as reasons why prospective students might consider taking a place on the course... and over a third (36%) state that the students will be taught 'management' and/or 'business' skills...and educational concepts such as providing students with a broad education and equipping them with analytical skills are cited by only about a fifth of the courses surveyed (22% and 20% respectively)... (Airey and Johnson 1998:6-7).

A similar observation from Phillip Pearce while commenting on assessment of tourism education (in Australia) is that "many institutions promote their tourism degrees with the rich allure of future jobs in an expanding tourism world" (2005:263). As a direct response to the foregone observations, Higgins-Desbiolles (2006:1192) notes that 'the discourse of tourism as an "industry" has overshadowed other conceptualizations of the tourism phenomenon', she argues in favor of an understanding of tourism that has broader benefits to society.

In an attempt to understand the manifestation of these ‘new’ changes in tourism studies, this paper poses the question ‘is tourism higher education ideological?’ Ideology refers to an overarching network of guiding ideas that frame, direct and inform thinking. They are often taken for granted so that we are not aware of their existence because we have become deeply acculturated to their ways. Ideology has been defined as

A structure... structures can capture, can impose themselves; but they can usually be entered willingly, they can be abandoned and they can even be demolished and new ones created in their place... (Barnett 2003:57).

Ideology within the context of (tourism higher) education has been analyzed mainly in terms of curriculum planning and knowledge (Barnett 2003; Busby 2001; Scrimshaw 1983; Tribe 2000). However the discursive ideological representation of tourism in the light of these new waves of change has scarcely (if at all) been analyzed in the tourism studies literature. This paper then draws on poststructuralist discourse theory, particularly the works of Michel Foucault, and to some extent Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe as well as some recent contributions in political economy and (higher) education policy to address this problematic. It offers a discursive analysis of higher education policy and non-policy texts and discourses through which tourism is represented. It deploys the Foucauldian notion of governmentality and disciplinary power to posit the simultaneous existence of several techniques and discourses that encompass neoliberal governance in tourism higher education in England. The concept of ‘government’ used here according to Foucault entails

... not only the legitimately constituted forms of political or economic subjection but also modes of action, more or less considered and calculated, that were destined to act upon the possibilities of action of other people (1994:241).

The starting point for the ensuing analysis is the distinction made by Foucault (1988) between two forms of control. That is, relations of force and relations of power. Foucault suggests that relations of force exclude the option for consent as they are outright imposed but at the same time difficult to sustain. On the other hand, relations of power entail some form of freedom from direct coercion and that those on whom power is wielded are free in the liberal sense of freedom, although they are somehow made to 'behave' in the desired ways. This in a sense describes what happens in liberal societies, where self-managing individuals and institutions like those of higher education operate under a regulated autonomy. Such individuals and institutions according to Foucault, manage themselves while their private freedoms are concomitantly made "subject to power" through the programmes and techniques of liberal governments (Foucault 1988:83-84).

One further explanation for this state of affairs is contemplated here. It draws upon the Foucauldian conceptualization of power as "meaning (s) in circulation" (Hollinshead 1999:13). This implies that a given power relation is possible in part because of its seemingly non-coercive, silent and secret way of operating through the everyday routines of a given social entity. This insidious extension of power to the mundane operations of an organization is what Foucault describes as

Disciplinary power [underpinned by] hierarchized, continuous and functional surveillance.... [that] became an "integrated" system linked from the inside to the economy and to the aims of the mechanism in which it was practiced...[This] power...is not possessed as a thing...[rather it] distributes individuals in this permanent and continuous field... This enables the disciplinary power to be both absolutely indiscreet since it is everywhere and always alert ...constantly supervises the very individuals

who are entrusted with the task of supervising...and absolutely discreet...for it functions in silence (Rabinow 1984:192).

At the heart of disciplinary power is its 'normalization' effect by which is meant its tendency to create particular subjects and objects, and ensconcing them in the privileged locus of a given regime of truth while systematically subjugating others. In order to realize this potential, disciplinary power somehow garners consent from the very individuals or institutions that bear its brunt, thus giving it a hegemonic status (Laclau and Mouffe 1985). It is this that highlights the discursively constituted ideological nature of tourism higher education. Thus the overarching theme from Foucault that is pertinent to an understanding of the manifestation of neoliberalism in tourism higher education is the view that the government is concerned partly with creating and maintaining autonomous individuals and institutions. Once established, the deployment of various governmental techniques culminates in subjecting the individuals and institutions so-constructed to the play of external forces while simultaneously permitting them to act as authors and subjects of their own conduct (Rabinow, 1984; also cf. Marginson, 1997; Hollinshead, 1999; Davies, 2006; Shore and Wright, 2000).

The paper argues that the 'governmentalization' of higher education makes possible through specific policies, the survival and entrenchment of particular discursive ideologies by continuously (re)defining what are thought to be 'important' values in higher education (cf. Foucault 1994). Such values articulated over time assume hegemonic status by 'partially fixing' the most dominant meanings perpetuated in higher education (Torfing 1999; Laclau and Mouffe 1985). But this does not in anyway suggest the docility of institutions and educators that provide tourism higher education, given the view that hegemony inherently connotes the existence of struggles (Laclau and Mouffe 1985; Eagleton 1991; Pickett 1996;

Howarth 2000). That is, for hegemonic articulations to be realized in practice, there must exist [at least?] two conditions including “the presence of antagonistic forces and instability of the frontiers that separate them” (Laclau and Mouffe 1985:136).

Three notable examples suffice to clarify the foregone assertion. First is an attempt by Tribe (2002) to move the debate on tourism education beyond its vocational emphasis through his concept of philosophic practitioner that attempts to introduce liberal emancipatory discourses to balance the predominant vocationalist perspective in tourism higher education. The second is a more recent contribution from Botterill and Gale (2005) on postgraduate and PhD education. Rather than accept and perhaps laud the orthodoxy of tourism (and very often management) studies that engulfs (much of?) postgraduate curriculum, they problematise the ‘situated knowledge’ that is often presented as an organic reality to the international classroom. They suggest the possibility of reformulating tourism knowledge to include a more diverse ‘situatedness’, with the prospects of enabling previously silent voices an opportunity to contribute to and thus create ‘new tourism knowledge’ (P.478). In a similar vein, Pritchard & Morgan (2007) in their chapter on ‘de-centering tourism’s intellectual universe’ proffer a critique of the discourse of knowledge production (in and about tourism) by pinpointing the role played by the tourism’s academic gatekeepers. They crucially suggest that “time has come to scrutinize just how this masculine, Anglo-Saxon, business-focused domination of the field of tourism has shaped its architecture of knowledge” (2007:17). The presence of such (minority?) critical perspectives within tourism studies highlight the role of antagonistic forces that in turn act as vanguards against complete dominance of a particular discursive ideological articulation (Torfing 1999).

This type of discursive analysis that draws on Foucault is not new to tourism studies. An influential work by John Urry (1990) in which he used the Foucauldian concept of the disciplinary gaze to conceptualize his notion of the tourist gaze serves as a key reference text. Meanwhile Keith Hollinshead recently offered a critique of the power of surveillance in tourism by explaining the ways in which the Foucauldian eye-of-power crucially acts through the organizations and agencies of travel and tourism as well as in tourism research (Hollinshead 1999). His analysis implicates tourists and those who work in tourism as participants in the regulation of the world and concomitant mastery of its socio-cultural and geographic environments while becoming subject to self-regulation.

The structure of this article is as follows. First the terms neoliberalism and managerialism are briefly examined as a way of introducing the literature from political economy and higher education (policy). Second the method of discourse analysis is explained. Then, drawing on the logics and concepts of poststructuralist discourse theory, it examines the under-researched ideological influences in tourism higher education in England. It distinguishes various manifestations of neoliberalism and managerialism in government policy and higher education institutions (HEIs). The final part constitutes the concluding remarks where the contribution of the study is discussed.

NEOLIBERALISM AND MANAGERIALISM

Neoliberalism is one of the most debated ideologies in both education and political economy (Apple 2001; Torres and Schugurensky 2002; Harvey 2005, 2006) but to what extent is it represented in and through tourism higher education in England? Neoliberalism encompasses a 'new' set of reconfigurations in social and political ideologies that struggle to create and fix hegemonic meanings of both educational and social issues (Apple 2001). Apple further adds

“...Its overall aims are in providing the educational conditions believed necessary both for increasing international competitiveness, profit, and discipline...” (Apple 2001:410).

Meanwhile for Harvey,

Neoliberalism is in the first instance a theory of political economic practices which proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by the maximization of entrepreneurial freedoms within an institutional framework characterized by private property rights, individual liberty, free markets and free trade (2006:145).

Marginson and Considine (2000) associate neoliberalism with the adoption of a management-like approach in handling the affairs of the public sector and the unprecedented interest in achieving efficiency and better performance. This perspective will later be described as managerialism, one of the many ways in which neoliberalism is operationalized. Some key features of neoliberalism are ‘competition’, ‘profitability’, ‘performativity’, ‘progress’, ‘entrepreneurship’, ‘individuality’, ‘economic rationality’ and ‘free’ market environment.

Within tourism studies, Burns (2004) alludes to a central feature of neoliberalism in his conceptual paper on tourism planning that offers a lucid critique of the traditional left/right politics (‘development first’ vs ‘tourism first’ respectively) that has dominated tourism planning. Prior to adapting Giddens’s ‘third way’ to politics as an alternative, Burns notes that the traditional right, framed by the values of neoliberalism, sees market forces as providing the only alternative (P.24). On a similar note, Clancy (1999) drawing mainly from contemporary theories in political economy posits a statist approach to development against a neoliberal approach to explain the dynamics in the Mexican tourism development over a period of 30 years. Clancy argues that inasmuch as neoliberal accounts of tourism dynamism in Mexico consider it a success story due to minimum protectionist barriers and the largely

private sector ownerships, such a transformation would be difficult to imagine without the activist role of the Mexican state.

Neoliberalism in higher education can be understood in terms of the emergence of a new policy consensus that lays emphasis on the relations between higher education and the economy (Lingard 2000). It embodies two main discursive strategies namely the strategies of legitimation and implementation (Apple 2001; Leonardo 2003). The strategy of legitimation can be linked to the unprecedented need for higher education to demonstrate its contribution to the economy and wealth creation above any other values ever associated with it (Peters 1992; Barnetson and Cutright 2000). The emphasis on 'individual choice' or the 'market model' to the exclusion of all other competing and alternative views is what gives neoliberalism its ideological character. The strategy of legitimation is then achieved through policy imperatives that continuously define the aims and values of higher education, where the logic of inclusion/exclusion (Laclau & Mouffe 1985) is very eminent. The other strategy entails the implementation of ideas legitimated at policy level at higher education institutions' level.

Managerialism is an example of a commonly encountered ideology that has been widely debated in higher education and one that has only been implicitly commented upon in tourism higher education, despite its omnipresence within this field. Newson describes managerialism in higher education as

The shift from collegial self-governance to managerialism as the dominant mode of institutional decision-making, one which links the programmatic activities of the university more directly to the control and influence of external constituencies like governments, the business community, funding

agencies and the like...a shift in the primary objectives of the universities from the creation, preservation and dissemination of social knowledge to the production, and distribution of market knowledge (1994:152).

Managerialism conjures up the image of universities as businesses as opposed to conventional sites of autonomous knowledge (Delanty 2001; Hoyle and Wallace 2005). Here universities increasingly have to replicate business-like practices whereby they have to compete with each other for students, the best professors, and also a share of the ever-diminishing state budget (Delanty 2001; Aronowitz and Giroux 1991). This state of affairs is becoming more and more evident in the mission statements of universities as well as brochures of specific programmes of study. Departments seeking to attract more students emphasize their strengths by depicting: the number of best professors; the scope of research in terms of general publications and on-going research by academics and research students; state-of-the-art facilities; external recognition; industry links; accreditations and/or affiliations with top professional bodies and high level of graduate employment. These are intended to demonstrate the competitiveness of provision to prospective students, academics and most importantly to the state and other external funding agencies. HEIs and specific departments lay emphasis on these issues to a certain extent because they are contained in the structure of the research assessment exercise (RAE) submission (Page 2003).

Subsequently, the most commented-upon example of managerialism in higher education and implicitly tourism higher education entails the introduction and thus existence to-date of a number of RAEs operationalized through a form of peer reviews (Willmott 2003; Page 2003). These RAEs according to Willmott encapsulate the pressure from the state to minimise the unit cost of higher education products such as knowledge, and knowledge workers while at the same time ensuring university research is more responsive to commercial and political

needs. Meanwhile Page (2003) intimates that one of the growing debates within public sector agencies that fund research in higher education in most countries is the requirement for greater accountability, transparency and measure to evaluate performance. This according to Barnett (1990) is reflected in the discourse that pervades higher education insofar as the state is concerned, that is,

There is a new emphasis on value-for-money, accountability, planning, efficiency, good management, resource allocation, unit costs, performance indicators and selectivity Subjects within the curriculum are favoured to the extent that they make a clear contribution to the economy: the sciences and the technological subjects are supported, even though they do not always find it easy to recruit students; the humanities and social science subjects try to prove their worth by, developing skills-oriented courses. (1990:25/26).

Nevertheless the “purpose of RAEs is to rate the ‘quality’ of research conducted in university departments and research units as a basis for determining the funding for research-oriented activity” (Willmott 2003:131; Page 2003; Tribe 2004). This implies that RAE performance indicators play a crucial role in delineating ‘good research’ that deserves funding, which in turn has implications for the inflow of research funding from the public sector (ibid).

Likewise, the performance of various universities and particular subjects has implications for staff motivation as well as student enrolment, particularly the tuition-fee paying students.

To this end, commentaries in the literature suggest marginalisation and invisibility of tourism research in the 2001 RAE (Botterill 2002; Tribe 2003) and also the 2008 RAE. In this regard, Botterill (2002) explains how the difficulties faced by academic staff conducting tourism research are compounded by the influences of the funding structures for research in UK higher education. Further pointing out that through the RAE, the internal debates on the

intrinsic worth of tourism studies became structurally determined, with the subsequent units of assessment (UoA) having implications for the distribution of government research funding for the universities around identified subject units (cf Page 2003). Botterill crucially notes that “the place for reporting tourism research within the structures of the RAE has never been clear. The guidance notes on submissions to the RAE 2001 failed to mention ‘tourism’ at all in any major subject listing ...” (2002:73).

While commenting on the earlier stages of the 2008 RAE, Tribe (2004), just like Botterill before him, noted “researchers in Leisure, Hospitality and Tourism (HL&T) will search in vain for an explicit mention of their fields of study in the 2008 RAE proposals. They are not to be found in the titles of any of the proposed UoAs” (2004:2). This is reminiscent of a conclusion drawn by Stephen Page on the previous RAEs that “Given the competitive nature of the RAE, the status quo will probably prevail and the overall outputs in Tourism may increase, but the status of Tourism research within the wider academic community is unlikely to change..., the current RAE [2001] does not serve Tourism well” (2003:622). It is worth noting that RAE and its various implications for tourism studies is outlined here to highlight one of the key features of managerialism, one that entails control and influence from external constituencies and the ensuing implications. Such an example points to the significance of positing the Foucauldian concept of disciplinary power, governmentality and also Laclau and Mouffe’s notion of hegemonic discourse as useful theoretical frameworks by which to reflect on the contemporary influences on tourism higher education.

Study Methods

This study deploys poststructuralist discourse theory that emphasizes the central role of language in constituting social reality (Jaworski and Coupland 1999) as its theoretical

framework. The term discourse encompasses multiple meanings and understandings (Hannam & Knox 2005) and it has multiple definitions and applications in social inquiry. Discourses may be defined as “those practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak” (Foucault 1972:49) which in turn define the limits of what can [and cannot] be said. Jaworski and Coupland (1999:3) have noted that “discourse is language reflecting social order but also language shaping social order and shaping individuals’ interaction with society”. Social reality is produced and understood through discourse, and social interactions would remain incomprehensible if references were not made to the [broader] discourses that give meaning to them (Phillips and Hardy 2002).

To operationalise the abstract definitions of the concept of discourse, the study deploys discourse analysis as a method of inquiry, and purposive sampling (Morse and Richards 2002; Tonkiss 1998) to select publicly available texts for analysis. According to Morse and Richards (2002), purposive sampling

...May involve choosing the “best” most optimal example of the phenomenon and the setting in which you are most likely to see whatever it is you are interested in...
Alternatively you may select a setting because it allows you to obtain examples of each of several stances or experiences (2002:67)

A valuable observation was drawn from Tonkiss (1998) who cautioned that a key requirement for data selection and collection under discourse analytic research is the identification of material that aptly gives insights into the research problem being investigated. Adding

The most important consideration in selecting your data is not the amount of material you gather; ... rather, the primary concern of the discourse analyst is to find data that

will provide insight into a problem. In this sense, a single speech or newspaper report or conversation can generate very fruitful themes for analysis. What matters is the richness of textual detail, rather than the number of texts analysed (Tonkiss 1998:252-253; see also Fairclough 1995, 2003).

Silverman (2005:55) further adds that, “textual analysis depends upon very detailed analysis. [And that] to make such an analysis effective, it is imperative to have a limited body of data with which to work”. With these sampling issues in mind, this study interrogates a limited number of higher education policy and non-policy texts, and prospectuses from selected universities to explain the discursive representation of neoliberalism and managerialism in England. The term text is used here to describe “data consisting of words and/or images which have become recorded without the intervention of a researcher (through avenues such as interviews)” (Silverman 2001:119). The focus is on written texts as a deliberate attempt to transcend the conventional approach in social (tourism) inquiry in which texts are useful insofar as they provide background information that in turn is used for the ‘real’ analysis (Silverman 2001).

When choosing texts, the general criterion for inclusion was that selected texts ought to have some broad concerns with higher education, or tourism education in England or the UK. This resulted in the inclusion of 15 specific texts grouped into four broad categories, namely government policy and related texts, national tourism and higher education organizations’ texts, tourism education resource text (book) and the final category covers prospectuses taken from the online course information of seven higher education institutions (HEIs) in England for the academic year 2006/2007. Details of the specific texts and the justification for their inclusion for analysis are contained in vignette 1.

(Vignette 1 to be inserted here).

Data analysis in this study drew insights from the theoretical perspective adopted for the study (post-structuralist discourse theory) as well as previous discursive analytic inquiries. The strategy of basing data analysis on theoretical propositions is a powerful aid in guiding analysis as it helps in pointing out where and on what should attention be focused (Robson 2002, Tonkiss 1998). In this respect, Tonkiss (1998) suggests that analysis ought to begin by initially selecting a number of themes and sections of data that somehow address the research objectives (see also Phillips and Hardy 2002). A noteworthy observation on description of analytic procedures in discourse analysis emanates from Wetherell and Potter (1992) for whom

Much of the work of discourse analysis is a craft skill, ..., which is not easy to render or describe in an explicit or codified manner. Indeed as the analyst becomes more practiced it becomes harder and harder to identify explicit procedures that could be called analysis (Wetherell & Potter 1992:55).

This in essence remains a major challenge and critique of discourse analysis as a method of inquiry, particularly when judged through the lenses of positivistic canons of conducting social inquiry (Walle 1997). Nevertheless discourse analysis in this study proceeded in two main ways that were pursued simultaneously. The first entailed identification of key themes (for instance ‘aims of tourism/higher education’ and ‘quality assurance in tourism/higher education’) articulated in the text (cf. Tonkiss 1998) and the second dealt with identification of discourses discerned from the texts (cf. Parker 1992, Fairclough 1995, Phillips and Jorgensen 2002). It involved a repeated reading of all the texts selected for this analysis and interrogating these for the type of discourses with implications for tourism higher education in England. The specific units of analysis encompassed selected words and word classes or

phrases, statements or sentences that were used to represent or construct the discourses identified in the literature (cf. Titscher et al. 2000). The term ‘unit of analysis’ is defined as “that unit which seems, to an observer, to be relevant to the particular text as a unit to be investigated...” (Titscher et al. 2000:34).

However Phillips & Jorgensen (2002) point out that a decision on where one discourse stops and where another begins is a very difficult one in social inquiry to the extent that is elusive in many theoretical perspectives on discourse analysis. They suggest that

We treat discourseas an analytic concept,... as an entity that the researcher projects onto the reality in order to create a framework for study. ... Delimitation can begin with the aid of secondary literature that identifies particular discourses... (2002:143-144).

With this observation, the focus initially was on the discourses that underpin (tourism) higher education in the study setting identified in the literature. The latter points to some defining characteristics of neoliberalism and managerialism as dominant discourses. This was the basis on which the units of analyses were selected. These defining units of analysis include terms such as ‘accountability’, ‘efficiency and effectiveness’ ‘competitiveness’, ‘research assessment exercise’, ‘performance indicators’, and ‘value for money’ (see for example Delanty 2001, Willmott 2003, Barnett 1990; Botterill 2002; Page 2003). This strategy of delimiting discourses with the help of secondary data was deployed throughout the analysis as will become apparent in the next subsection. It involved a simultaneous identification of known units of analysis or emergent units of analysis for which a literature search (in the case of the latter) led to delimitation of the particular discourses, and the ensuing discursive ideological analysis presented in the next subsection.

Furthermore, there was a deliberate attempt to interrogate texts for the main objects or actors constructed in these (emerging) discourses (cf. Phillips and Hardy 2002). For instance for texts that depict the discourse of managerialism as underpinning tourism higher education, the analysis further sought to know the objects or actors constructed in or through this discourse such as employers, HEIs (universities and colleges), students, educators and so forth and how they are constructed. The significance of identifying objects or actors was that it served to provide clues into the nature of power relations implicit in the texts and the possibility for theorizing such relationships.

Neoliberalism as a Governmental Technique in Tourism Higher Education

An analysis of the aims of both higher education and tourism higher education taken from policy and other texts was undertaken to examine the extent to which neoliberalism is manifested in this study. It must be noted that policy texts are presented here as serving the strategy of legitimation (Apple 2001) where they define aims and objectives and concomitantly identify areas that need 'special' attention. The aims and objectives contemplated by the Robbins Report initially articulate broad values in higher education. This can be seen in the response to the general question posed in paragraph 22 that is "to begin with aims and objectives - what purposes, what general social ends should be served by higher education?"(1963:6). Paragraph 23 on the same page responds to this question by suggesting that various areas of study that draw from eclectic sources or disciplines, tourism being of interest here, be allowed a place in higher education.

Paragraph 25 provides an entry point for and thus rationalizes the emphasis on skills training by presenting it as something that has for a long time been subordinated in

higher education. It also valorizes the perception of higher education in terms of future career prospects, arguing that it is something one should not be ashamed of.

...Certainly this was not the attitude of the past: the ancient universities of Europe were founded to promote the training of the clergy, doctors and lawyers; and though at times there may have been many who attended for the pursuit of pure knowledge or of pleasure, they must surely have been a minority (Robbins Report 1963:6).

The strategy here is to draw on history to defend the emphasis on skills and vocational fields of study in higher education while simultaneously vitiating any other counter claims. Such advocacy for skills draws attention to the fact that it was a 'mere' attempt to create balance in higher education that embraced the 'ivory tower' mentality (Barnett 1990). But the way in which 'skills' in higher education later accrued a wide field of meanings, associations and connotations came to surpass this original articulation which did not refer to skills any more, it became an articulation of something else, an ideology known as vocationalism. It must however be noted that vocationalism and skills training are not exactly synonymous; rather, the former encompasses the latter whilst not being reducible to it.

In the last part of paragraph 25 can be discerned the way in which emphasis on skills, career prospects and in essence vocationalism as an ideology, serves to articulate neoliberalist ideals. Thus the view that

... In our own times, progress - and particularly the maintenance of a competitive position - depends to a much greater extent than ever before on skills demanding special training. A good general education, valuable though it may be, is frequently less than we need to solve many of our most pressing problems (Robbins Report 1963:6).

In a Foucauldian sense, the articulation of skills as a particular objective to be pursued in higher education brings to the fore a distinct 'regime of truth' initially in higher education. Here, further policy statements begin to emerge and to legitimize not only 'skills' but also the relationship amongst 'skills', 'competition' and 'progress'. This, it is argued, is one way in which neoliberalism articulated through concerns for 'skills' and thus vocationalism, starts to feature initially in higher education.

Within the present context, the HMI Report (1992: 7) paragraph 16, points to the strong link between the aims of tourism and related courses and employment. This is seen in the sentence 'a common aim is to "equip students with the understanding and skill" required to be "effective managers"...' These concerns, particularly with skills become even more apparent, in the CNAA Review Report (1993) on Tourism Studies Degree Courses in the UK. Apart from pointing to the common sense view that 'degrees and postgraduate qualifications in tourism are "primarily vocationally oriented"' (CNAA 1993:1), paragraph 1.4 alludes to an important discursive strategy deployed in many programs. That is, the strategy of making reference to statistics or some other source of information from institutions with established authority as a basis to describe the aims and objectives of tourism programs. The CNAA Report then quotes a typical prospectus in paragraph 1.4 that makes initial reference to the government Department of Employment in describing the aim of the tourism course in question.

Given that the Department for Employment at that time was the national authority responsible for employment and skills *inter alia*, such a strategy connotes a response to 'national concerns', particularly at a time when the state agencies sought to address the high level of graduate unemployment (Botterill and Gale 2005). The strategy depicted in

paragraph 1.4 is also easily identifiable in contemporary prospectuses and it highlights the problematic of competition where universities and colleges compete strongly for applicants. This is necessary both as a means to meet policy objectives in increasing access to and widening participation in higher education and to cover budgetary deficits (Delanty 2001; Newson 1994; DES 1987). It necessitates the adoption of marketing strategies that can effectively 'sell' programs on offer in order to realize the enrolment targets necessary to sustain course provision.

A cursory investigation into the framing of three undergraduate programs from the mature disciplines of law, sociology and philosophy points to the difference with tourism in constructing course aims (vignette 2). For instance, London Metropolitan University states the aim of its sociology program as follows: "This course has been designed to give you an in-depth knowledge of sociology and contemporary social issues. It emphasizes the applied nature of sociological knowledge and inquiry... (Vignette 2). Meanwhile, London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) describes its undergraduate program in Philosophy, Logic and Scientific Method by emphasizing some central themes within the discipline of philosophy, with no direct appeal to any particular employer or professional body. Interestingly, it mentions service based industries (excluding tourism) as places where recent graduates have been employed. Finally, The University of Surrey's law program promises the students the prospects of tackling "fundamental questions facing society..." and also development of professional skills.

What is noteworthy from these two reports (HMI 1992; CNA 1993) and the course titles drawn from different universities that provide tourism programs (in vignette 2) is that the common thread is preparing students for work or management careers in the industry. For

instance there is no mention anywhere in the last two reports and in vignette 2 about ‘development of the powers of the mind’ or ‘cultivated’ students, which contrast with the aims of Sociology, Law (a predominantly vocational discipline) and Philosophy just described (vignette 2). Meanwhile the term ‘skills’ whether these are ‘in-depth skills’ or ‘skills required in travel and tourism operations’ or ‘problem-solving skills’ is prevalent in the tourism prospectuses interrogated in this study. In the same vein, the implied definition of tourism here seems to be that of a business in which the key players are the industry and the employers. This is construed as one way in which neoliberalism appears in tourism higher education.

Unlike the Robbins Report, paragraph 1.5 of the 1987 Education White Paper (DES 1987:2) alludes to “meeting the needs of the economy” and how “this aim...must be vigorously pursued”. This also points to a strategy that deploys public policies in legitimizing economic imperatives in higher education (Little 2005) through what Foucault (1994) might describe as a form of ‘governmental technique’. It results in to the partial fixation of the most dominant meanings that eventually assume hegemonic status (Laclau and Mouffe 1985; Torfing 1999). But to attain this sort of hegemony necessitates the constructing of a set of schema that juxtaposes some of the ‘new’ values being espoused along with concepts ‘naturally’ associated with higher education that seem innocuous (Wright 1989; Harvey 2006). Hence in paragraph 1.5, “achievement of greater commercial and industrial relevance in higher education”; is associated with “teaching, research, technology transfer and on occasions, help...with equipment and finance” as well as “... positive attitudes to enterprise which are crucial for both institutions and their students” (DES 1987:2). This could be mentioned as one context in which tourism higher education (perceived and) pursued mainly through the lenses of business and management framework can be understood.

An example from the literature deserves mention here, which is closely tied to the importance of tourism as a driver of a postmodern economy and its business and management situatedness in higher education. Describing knowledge in subjects such as tourism as a valuable commodity, Botterill and Gale (2005:477) observe that “higher education in general and tourism in particular has increasingly become politicized as a part of macro-economic policy and international relations”. Adding that this is a positive development for tourism studies, the tutors, and institutional managers *inter alia*, who have interest in controlling access to the commodity. They however point out that

“the pursuit of an intellectual basis for subject development becomes subject to increasing amounts of (distorting) commercial pressure. Locally, institutional economic reality drives a managerialist strategy; recruitment targets and income stream projections....tutors find themselves embroiled in achieving economic performance indicators and not intellectual projects” (2005:478).

This view is further reinforced in paragraph 1.6 through an implicit ‘carrot and stick’ mechanism where by it is stated “the government and its central funding agencies will do all they can to encourage and reward approaches by higher education institutions which bring them closer to the world of business” (DES 1987:2). Here appears another face of ‘governmental technique’ that attempts to use this policy to wield a certain form of power to induce HEIs into acting in the predetermined way. That is, to work in partnership with industry and commerce as a means to ensure the competitiveness of the economy and other benefits thought to be realizable from such partnerships. Paragraphs 1.5 and 1.6 connote the way in which neoliberalist ideals are legitimated and valorized in higher education, and why it may not be a surprise when a new field of study such as tourism begins to embrace such values to the exclusion of others.

However an account of tourism higher education in mainland China (Zhang and Fan 2005) and Hong Kong (Lo 2005) suggest there are deliberate attempts espoused by academics to embrace the neoliberal approach to tourism education. For example Wen Zhang and Xixia Fan make a number of suggestions for enhancing tourism higher education in China by focusing on issues such as the formation of subject association, enhancing the reputation of the discipline and effective teaching methods and so forth. A noteworthy suggestion with reference to this paper is the call for cooperation with industry through “offering tailor-made training programs and participating in consultancy and management of tourism enterprises” in return for “financial support from the industry...and that “such an educational system can optimize the allocation of resources and adapt to the law of the market” (2005:132-133). This particular example serves to highlight the importance of the definition of ideology deployed in this paper, that is, it can be externally imposed or self-imposed (Barnett 2003), a strategic approach to ensuring survival.

These views are reiterated in later policy reports whereby the Dearing Report crucially restates the key issues initially seen in the Robbins Report, and the role of competition from external forces as well as implications for the economy are once more well articulated as seen in paragraphs 23 and 24 (Dearing Report 1997). The 2003 Education White Paper (DfES 2003:8) makes reference to the Robbins Report and emphasizes the links between higher education, the economy, business and employment. These are captured under the subtitle on values, in paragraphs 1.1 under ‘national asset’ and ‘contribution to the economic and social well-being’; in 1.2 ‘teaching “educates and skills” the nation for a knowledge-dominated age’ and 1.3 ‘Working with business, it “powers the economy”’. But of course one aspect that seems to have found a special meaning in tourism higher education (cf Airey and Johnson 1998; Stuart-Hoyle 2003) is taken from 1.3, thus ‘in a... competitive world, the role of higher

education in equipping the labour force with appropriate and relevant skills...is central' (cf paragraph 24, Dearing Report 1997:20).

The values articulated in these policy and committee reports are construed in this study as the legitimizing techniques in government policy intended to re-structure higher education through an economic rationality and also inducements to work with industry. The overall goal here is to ensure higher education plays an important part in creating and enhancing the competitiveness of the economy. This implies an overt attempt at policy level to espouse neoliberalism as a dominant ideology in higher education, articulated with and/or through vocationalism and managerialism.

A remarkable example that showcases the entrepreneurial logic and external influence on tourism higher education through partnerships with employers and community suffices for illustration. This was traced to the MA in Tourism Business Administration offered by Birmingham College of Food, Tourism and Creative studies (now known as University College Birmingham), quoted at length here below.

...All of our courses are the result of close cooperation with employers and the community. We take care to consult large and small employers... when designing new courses and when renewing the operation of others. We even invite employers to help us make decisions on whether we should run particular courses. A long experience of working with employers has helped us to develop a responsive 'tailor made' service, in which the particular needs of individual (or consortia) of employers are met through specially designed courses...

Taken in the context of the policy imperatives to ensure higher education-industry links and also relevance of programmes to employers, this is a laudable move, perhaps not so unique to Birmingham. In describing the impact of government budget cuts in Hong Kong higher education, Ada Lo (2005) urges tourism education to adopt an approach similar to Birmingham's (just described). The most striking example here is the view that industry participates in

selecting candidates for hospitality and tourism programs, ...to help the educational institutions in selecting candidates with the appropriate attitude, personality and passion for the industry...Currently both universities offering degree programs are inviting industry executives to participate in panel interviews for the applicants (205:163).

This state of affairs is not easily discernible from prospectuses on sociology, philosophy and law, which make general reference to a broad understanding and application of their disciplines. The over reliance on external publics in the foregone examples is therefore seen as an attempt to fulfill the 'market relevance' of the programs (Koh 1995) and also a strategy for coping with budgetary cuts from the state. The choices resulting from such programmes reflect the key interests of the main external players in a way that challenges the idea of maturation of a field of study in higher education. A key understanding of maturation conventionally entails minimum (if at all) external pressure in defining and possibly revising what needs to be taught or discarded (Newson 1994; Barnett 2000). However, to proceed with these discussions, it is imperative to demonstrate how managerialism fits in to this complex picture.

(Vignette 2 to be inserted here)

Managerialism as a Form of Surveillance and Normalizing Discourse

To continue with the analysis, the paper looks at the role of the terms ‘performance’ and ‘competition’ identified previously to further explore the extent to which managerialism and neoliberalism are represented in tourism higher education. The salience of this observation can be traced in the work of the QAA, particularly its subject reviews (Peters 1992; Brennan and Shah 2000). For instance the stated purposes of subject reviews according to QAA (2001) Subject Overview Report for Hospitality, Leisure, Recreation, Sport and Tourism are:

To ensure that the public funding provided is supporting education of an acceptable quality, to provide public information on that education through the publication of reports, and to provide information and insights in order to encourage improvements in education. (QAA 2001:2).

This highlights Newson’s preceding description of managerialism in higher education through external influence among other things. It allows for the notions of ‘performativity’ and ‘competition’ to be explored as well as the manifestation of the inherent ideologies. Lyotard (1984: xxiv) uses the notion of ‘performativity’ to explain the discourse of business and management that are pivoted around “optimizing [a] system’s performance-efficiency”. As a crucial way of achieving its purpose, the QAA undertakes subject reviews described as follows:

Subject review is carried out in relation to the subject aims and objectives set by each provider. It measures the extent to which each subject provider is successful in achieving its aims and objectives.... Subject reviews ...cover the full breadth of teaching and learning activities...captured within a core set of six aspects of provision, each of which is graded on a four-point assessment scale (1 to 4), in ascending order of merit. The aspects of provision are: Curriculum Design, Content and Organisation;

Teaching, Learning and Assessment; Student Progression and Achievement; Student Support and Guidance; Learning Resources; Quality Management and Enhancement (QAA 2001:2).

This implies that HEIs inevitably become entangled in complex power relations with QAA and effectively the government and the general public, 'forcing' them to keep a watchful eye on themselves. In other words, HEIs become subject to the play of external forces, while simultaneously taking positions as authors and subjects of their own conducts (Foucault 1994; Davies 2006). This is compounded by the fact that the aims and objectives are set out by the provider, but these ought to reflect the 'core set of six aspects of provision' outlined by QAA, thus not completely as provider-instigated as it looks at the surface. It therefore seems appropriate to suggest that apart from the RAE mentioned previously, managerialism becomes manifest in HEIs through the discourse of quality, turning 'acceptable quality' in higher education into one of the main normalizing discursive formations through which it permeates in and through tourism higher education.

In a Foucauldian sense, it is where the power of surveillance becomes intricately woven into the aims and objectives pursued by HEIs against which they get judged and which in turn distributes them in this more or less permanent and continuous field (Hollinshead 1999; Rabinow 1984; Davies 2006). This is preconditioned by the two way review process that entails:

1. Preparation by the subject provider of a self-assessment in the subject, based on the provider's own aims and objectives, and set out in the structure provided by the core set of aspects of provision.
2. A three-day visit carried out by a team of reviewers. The team grades each of the aspects of provision to make a graded profile of the provision, and derives from that

profile an overall judgement. Provided that each aspect is graded 2 or better, the quality of the education is approved (QAA 2001:2).

The process connotes the pinnacle of performativity in that it encompasses an elaborate preparation by HEIs in terms of specially written scripts that cover the aspects of provision to be reviewed. This may well involve setting targets and working to achieve them in a way that may come to mimic quasi-legal frameworks intended to fulfill contractual performance obligations to funding agencies, the students and the general public.

However it is important to realize that ideologies may be imposed or willingly entered into (Barnett 2003). To illustrate the turns in the performative and thus competitive culture that results from this process of quality assurance, analysis of 'An International Handbook of Tourism Education' was found revealing. It encompasses an elaborate coverage of the key issues that preoccupy the QAA. This is found in the last three parts of the book under the section titles 'Teaching, Learning and Assessment'; 'Resources, Progression and Quality' and finally under the 'Postscript'. In all, there are fifteen chapters devoted to discussing these issues, (of which authors of nine chapters are from HEIs in England). But even more crucial is the fact that chapter titles closely reflect the six core aspects of provision on which the QAA subject reviews focus, apart from explicit references to QAA and the Dearing Report to explain the relevant issues. For instance, chapter 21 focuses on 'student experience', chapter 23 entails 'assessment', chapter 27 looks at 'teaching and research' all of which are the key areas of QAA's subject review.

Likewise, chapter 30 focuses on 'learning resources'; chapter 32 is devoted to 'quality assurance' and chapter 34 under postscript addresses 'practical issues for design, delivery, evaluation and resourcing of courses'. An important observation here is that unlike the

authors of the International Tourism Higher Education, similar emphasis on quality assurance emanating from external sources were not directly traced from the authors of Global Tourism Higher Education (that really only focuses on Australasia, Europe and North America). Instead, one notes the concerns expressed by academics on quality of programs, curriculum, resources and teaching among other issues, particularly by authors from Turkey, China, Hong Kong and Taiwan. Highlighting the coverage of features of quality assurance in these books serves to demonstrate the normalizing effects of managerialism. In other words, how these ideologies have been simultaneously imposed and embraced with some resistance that operates under the double function of mastery and submission (Davies 2006).

An example suffices. After a detailed discussion of quality assurance in chapter 32, Robbins notes in the conclusion that

The UK agenda is substantially set by the QAA to which institutions have, out of necessity, acquiesced. They have developed a “language” of quality which focuses on “standards” and “academic quality” placing the emphasis on student achievement and student experience, for which the QAA has developed techniques to judge and to measure. the lecturers’ response to their institution’s performance under Subject Review...is as strong an endorsement as one could reasonably expect, despite their criticisms over time, effort and stress that the process created. (Robbins 2005:467-468)

This is where discursive regularities emanating from the QAA avoid direct central regulation but determine the rules of the game, the forms and limits of what can be achieved so that HEIs are governed through remote control (Foucault 1972; Marginson 1997; Vidovich 2002).

These ideologies thus appear both inescapable and self-imposed. This stems from the realization that the outcome of performative undertakings for the purpose of quality assurance tend to create conditions of possibility for tourism higher education to gain credibility and acceptance both within higher education and also from the general public. This is the result of the requirement to publish review reports by the QAA as contained in this excerpt below

In addition to individual report of reviews, the QAA publishes subject overview reports at the conclusion of reviews in a subject... The subject overview reports are distributed widely to schools and FE colleges, public libraries and careers services. ... (QAA 2001:2).

The distribution of reports has been widely used as a marketing tool by various HEIs that provide tourism programs, depicting the difference in strategy, based on research or teaching. For instance the course website for Oxford Brookes mentions, 'teaching in the Department of Hospitality, Leisure and Tourism Management received an excellent rating in the last assessment by the Government's Quality Assurance Agency'. In essence, it gives the public information about the legitimated quality of its 'excellent' teaching across the entire department. Of course, as was shown in the preceding discussions, this is only one aspect of what QAA validates. London Metropolitan University website emphatically states 'our courses are regularly reviewed by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. In the most recent review our Business and Management provision [which also houses tourism programs] was awarded the best possible rating and is officially classed as "Excellent"'.

Meanwhile both LSE and the University of Surrey highlight their 5* rated research highly, with LSE declaring its quality assessment score of 22/24 with no discernible rhetoric strategy to 'sell' the program. In a nutshell, the discourses of quality and research assessment have seen institutions (un) consciously join in the 'competitive bidding' for public support which

in turn has implications for student enrolments/recruitment and funding. So that this act of widely distributing reports of the review - very good in a sense - seems to (un) intentionally support the 'long hands' of the media in constructing league tables that may be of disadvantage to some institutions and favorable to others. For instance league tables offer a distinct marketing advantage to the University of Surrey as seen in this statement from the course website that is, 'we are ranked 1st for Tourism Management in the Guardian League Table 2006'. This statement comes as a response to the question 'why study tourism management at University of Surrey'? This is bound to have an influence on the public in terms of choice of Tourism Management programs offered by University of Surrey compared to other HEIs. It would be interesting to see how a university rated differently on the same league tables develops its marketing strategy.

The league tables effectively (and unduly) influence the student and public perception in a fragile and highly commodified world where market interests are increasingly shaping much of everyday reality (Marginson 1997; Fitzsimons 2002; Marginson and Considine 2000; Davies 2006; Barnett 2003). This may also be one avenue through which HEIs offering the same range of programmes find themselves engaging in unprecedented competition with each other. What seems apparent then is that the type of information made available and the access to it shape the type of response from the public on quality of provision of programmes (Fitzsimons 2002). It is in this sense that neoliberalism is implicated as a dominant ideology represented in and through tourism higher education, where managerialism and vocationalism function directly and indirectly to operationalise its ideals.

CONCLUSION

This study has attempted to bring to the fore some concrete workings and instances of neoliberalism and managerialism represented in tourism higher education in England in order to highlight the crucial but subtle role of power in mediating the relationship between tourism higher education and the other institutions responsible for producing and disseminating texts analyzed in this study. It demonstrates that the new wave of changes in higher education require broad conceptualization and interpretation, necessitating a move away from narrow but important issues on curriculum, teaching and learning to broader issues related to power, ideology and discourse that have been well articulated in the sociology of knowledge, poststructuralism and political science *inter alia*. The issues discussed here therefore depict a wider problem in higher education although the empirical data is restricted to England/UK.

Competition amongst institutions for students, need to make courses relevant to industry, concerns over quality of provision are ‘universal’ issues in tourism studies and indeed in higher education in general. But the extent to which these issues pervade tourism, a relatively new field in higher education seems to surpass similar influences in mature disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. The paper offers an explanation of the influence of neoliberalism and managerialism that have until recently remained only implicit in tourism literature. This in turn suffices to reveal the silent power of these ideologies in delimiting what can and cannot be said. The paper suggests how it may be unwise to ignore the obvious and insidious influence wielded by them (Freeden 2001) on the everyday practices within tourism studies. The apparent driving force is changing government policy on higher education. The emphasis on students’ learning experiences (positive in a sense) and the juxtaposition of learning, teaching and research with funding all necessitate considerable attention from HEIs in attempting to fulfill these contract-like obligations (Sigala and Baum

2003). This is simply because excelling in these areas has implications for recruitment targets as well as winning public confidence and by extension a bid for funding, (Newson 1994). Tourism higher education in this study context demonstrates a strong commitment to ensuring the relevance of programs to students and end prospective employers.

This happens to be one of the paradoxes in which tourism studies is engulfed. It befits the dominant representation and perpetuation of tourism as a vocational field of study in higher education in England, underpinned by a business management framework (Stuart-Hoyle 2003; Airey and Johnson 1998). Such a paradox may be understood by drawing an example from elsewhere in which Clark (2006:138) while elaborating on the struggles of a new field of study in attaining a disciplinary status, notes that “being associated with a high status discipline such as mathematics was vital to computing [computer sciences] being taken seriously in the academy”. Within tourism higher education, Reichel (2005) offers an account of how tourism and hospitality programs at Ben-Gurion University in Israel ended up in the defacto faculty. He notes that “the link with the prestigious faculty of engineering sciences helped to position the department in terms of quality and emphasis on management issues” (2005:77). This paper perceives the ‘organic’ association of much vocational tourism programs with business and management in a similar light. That is, a means to ensure relevance of programs to students and employers as well as an (easier?) route to respectability within the largely conservative higher education academe. This perception is rationalized among other things by the observation that much tourism research end(ed) up under the unit of assessment for business and management, and the ensuing implications (Tribe 2003; Page 2003). This however does not discount the significance attached to vocational tourism programs with business management focus by educators, students and employers.

This being the case in England, the plausibility of the accounts given in this study must be seen in the sense of opening up an agenda for ‘progressive research’ (cf. Barnett 1990) in tourism higher education. Such an agenda holds up to the view that any dominant ideas or discourses can only partially fix the meanings of social reality (Laclau and Mouffe 1985) and a study such as this one and indeed other (minority) critical voices referenced here (Tribe 2002; Page 2003; Botterill and Gale 2005; Burns 2004; Pritchard and Morgan 2007) will always surface to articulate alternative views. Subsequently, the avenues for critical dialogue on the discursive ideologies in question and their implications for practice continue to remain an open possibility.

With this in mind, and also in recognition of the limitation of this study to England, the authors wish to invite academics in other world regions to explore the extent to which such discursive ideological influences impact upon tourism higher education. It would be useful to examine the extent to which government policies, local or global socio-economic and any other trends drive these influences, and how academics respond to these issues in different world regions. The investigations may follow a similar line of enquiry or an approach that is context-specific, with the possibility of drawing analytical/theoretical generalizations into the extent to which neoliberalism and managerialism have pervaded tourism higher education. A comparison with trends in other (mature) disciplines is bound to be enriching. The paper concludes by posing the question ‘to what extent has such a discursive ideological construction of tourism higher education in England or indeed elsewhere resulted in ‘respectability’ within the largely conservative higher education academe?’

Vignette 1: Details of Texts and Justification for their selection for analysis

Category one: Policy and Related Texts

The Robbins' Report was commissioned by the government in 1961 and published in 1963. It raised many issues of concern in higher education to, and their implications for different interest groups and institutions in the UK. Of interest to this study was among other things concerns raised over questions on whether narrowly vocational subjects should have a place in the university curriculum. This particular issue of vocational subjects and their place in university curriculum (broadening undergraduate curriculum) have had ramifications for tourism higher education in the UK (Airey 2005). Much has changed in higher education since the publication of this Report and some of these changes have been manifest in tourism higher education. This consideration resulted in the inclusion of the Robbins' Report for the final analysis, which focused on chapter II, paragraphs 13 to 40. The chapter covers the 'Aims and Principles' of full time higher education in Great Britain and a host of related issues deemed insightful for this study.

Also included for the present analysis was the Dearing Report of the National Committee of Inquiry in Higher Education (NCIHE) published in 1997. Like the previous Reports, it raises issues of concern in higher education to the government, institutions of higher education, individual members of society, students, public and the private sector and so forth. Of interest to this present study were: widening participation in higher education to previously excluded members of society; the contribution of graduates to the economy; students and learning; the nature of programmes; and, qualifications and standards in higher education. Tourism higher education is one area where statistics shows an unprecedented increase in student numbers in the last three decades (Airey 2005; Botterill and Gale 2005). For that reason, the Dearing Report was included as part of the texts analysed in this study, drawing mainly on some of the recommendations, (one of which has been the establishment of the UK's Quality Assurance Agency for higher education) but also other insightful paragraphs for interrogation.

The 2003 Education White Paper on "The Future of Higher Education" produced by the former Department for Education and Skills (DfES 2003). Highlighted in this White Paper is the observation that universities exist in an increasingly dynamic and competitive world that results into two main challenges they must address. First, the need for these Universities to make better progress in harnessing knowledge to the process of creating wealth. Secondly, to extend the opportunities of higher education to all of the population, irrespective of their personal and economic background. Some of the issues of interest to this study included: the link between higher education and business (industry), teaching and learning, expanding higher education, fair access and widening participation in higher education among others. Commentaries in the literature show that some of these issues have specific ramifications on tourism higher education (Airy 2005; Tribe 2003), although these commentaries do not explain the role of discourses in and/or through which these ramifications have been realized. Likewise, the White Paper also highlights some issues that initially appeared in the previous two Committee Reports into higher education, thus a good example of intertextuality (the latter describes "how texts draw upon, incorporate, recontextualize and dialogue with other texts (Fairclough 2003:17))in this study. This made the 2003 Education White Paper a part of the source data for this present analysis, where interrogations focused on some recommendations and specific paragraphs.

The 1987 Education White Paper on "Higher education: Meeting the Challenge" was considered for analysis, at a later stage of this study. This was based on the realization that some key themes in this study, particularly on increasing access to and widening participation in higher education, as well as concerns with quality and efficiency had been articulated in this paper. It meant later texts such as the Dearing Report and the Education White Paper for 2003 for instance were expounding on issues previously contained in this White Paper, which also drew on the Robbins' Report of 1963. Theoretically speaking, this happened to be a good example of theoretical sampling, intertextuality and the iterative nature of sampling in practice, hence its inclusion in the final analysis.

Category two: Tourism and Higher Education Institutions Texts

The Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) was until 1993, the largest single degree-awarding body in the UK outside the universities. Established in 1987, the Council's committee for consumer and leisure studies undertook several systematic reviews of all the degree subjects for which it was responsible. There were over 140 institutions offering first degrees and postgraduate level courses approved by the CNAA. The institutions involved included polytechnics, institutions of higher education, Scottish central institutions, colleges of art and various other colleges throughout the UK. This was abolished by the 1992 UK Further and Higher Education Act. Of particular interest to this study was the fact that many tourism studies degree courses in the former polytechnics, some of which are the new universities in England were being monitored, reviewed, validated and awarded by this body. It was thus felt a lot could be discerned from CNAA in terms of the authority vested in it. But perhaps more crucially, it seemed to be an avenue through which the status of tourism studies in HEIs (in the past and at the present) could be put in perspective. This study therefore included for analysis a report on the "Review of Tourism Studies Degree Courses" published by the CNAA in 1993.

Quality and standards in schools and within higher education outside the universities in the UK has been until recently the province of Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) since its establishment in 1839 (Lee and Fitz 1997). This implied that HMI had responsibilities both in considering and advising on the quality delivery of the curriculum. In this regard there have been a series of publications by HMI on different themes concerned with higher education. One such publication that was considered for inclusion in this study was on the theme "Higher Education in the Polytechnics and Colleges: Hotel, Catering

and Tourism". The report published in 1992 describes and assesses the provision of these subject areas in polytechnics and other colleges, as well as the local authority sectors of higher education. Some of these former polytechnics are the new universities or the so-called post 1992 universities in the UK. Some issues in this report such as: the link between colleges and industry in planning courses; programmes providing good balance between theory and practice; the strong vocational commitment amongst teaching staff and students to the hotel, catering and tourism industries all reflect some of the existing debates in tourism higher education. These also point closely to government policy pronouncements on higher education in the whole country. This publication was therefore considered an important resource in addressing the objectives set out for this study.

The government established the QAA in 1997, and since then, it has the responsibility of assessing the quality of higher education in England and Northern Ireland under the terms of contract with the Higher Education Funding Council for England. Of interest to this study was the idea of quality in tourism higher education, an issue with which tourism higher education like any other programme of higher education is pre-occupied. It was of interest to this study to interrogate the meanings and values attached to socially constructed concepts such as "quality" and how this in turn facilitates a discernment of the discursive ideologies inherent. On this basis, the "Subject Overview Report for Hospitality, Leisure, Recreation, Sport and Tourism" published by the QAA following the 2000-2001 quality assessment exercise was included for analysis. This, it was envisaged would be crucial to revealing the discursive nature of tourism higher education in the study context.

Category three: Tourism Higher Education Resource Text

This book reflects the current thinking on some of the key themes in this present study. This includes concerns with the curriculum, teaching and learning, resources, progression and quality. These key themes have found a dominant expression in particularly policy related texts and other national and tourism higher education texts such as CNA and QAA. Given its recent date of publication at a time when this study was being contemplated, it was considered worthwhile to investigate the discourses inherent and the overall implications of the way different texts emanating directly from tourism higher educators pronounce themselves on tourism higher education in the study context. This text was therefore included in the final analysis for this study.

Category Four: Prospectuses from Higher Education Institutions in England

This last category included a selection of prospectuses of various universities and colleges of higher education that offer tourism at undergraduate and taught postgraduate levels in England. The prospectuses are the most readily available public documents that describe key features of a given programme of study. The previous studies on the aims and purposes of tourism education in the UK (Airey and Johnson 1998) drew mainly from prospectuses. The latter were regarded as reflecting both explicitly and implicitly the various discourses that construct tourism higher education as presented to international, national and local audiences. In this light, 11 prospectuses were earmarked for analysis, but only 6 were included in the final study, based on the relative ease with which information was downloadable and suitable for editing. An important discriminating criterion was to ensure both pre and post 1992 universities were included, the latter of which are in the majority in terms of provision of tourism programmes in the UK. The final list of prospectuses analysed in this study were drawn from: Birmingham College of Food, Tourism and Creative Studies (now referred to as University College Birmingham) (<http://www.bcftcs.ac.uk>); London Metropolitan University (www.londonmet.ac.uk); Oxford Brookes University (www.brookes.ac.uk); University of Surrey (<http://www.surrey.ac.uk>); University of Brighton (<http://www.brighton.ac.uk>); London School of Economics and Political Science (<http://www.lse.ac.uk/>) and University of Teesside (www.tees.ac.uk).

Vignette 2: Aims and Objectives of Programs from Selected Prospectuses

Purpose of BA (Hons) (BA CertHE) DipHE Entrepreneurship in Travel and Tourism at University of Brighton

The course prepares students for the unique challenges they will face in the start-up and management of small businesses within the travel and tourism sector. Skills required in travel and tourism operations are integrated with administrative and problem-solving skills essential to the management of small businesses. In addition, students are able to learn the concept, development, marketing and business planning techniques that will enable them to develop the necessary entrepreneurial skills for success.

Purpose of Bsc (Hons) Tourism Management at University of Surrey

The degree is designed for students who wish to understand and make a career in one of the largest Sectors of the world economy. High-level study of Management and business is combined with opportunities to develop understanding and insights into the complex range of business, social and cultural issues raised by tourism.

Aims of BA (Hons) Leisure and Tourism Management at University of Teesside

It's designed to produce graduates with an understanding of business, specialist knowledge of the leisure and tourism industry and good communication skills. You'll examine the social, economic and political issues which influence leisure and tourism related organisations in terms of their activities and decisions made by their managers. You'll also gain the ability to apply what you've learnt to 'real world', practical management situations.

Applied Social Sciences: Sociology (Bsc Hons Single, Joint) at London Metropolitan University

This course has been designed to give you an in-depth knowledge of sociology and contemporary social issues. It emphasizes the applied nature of sociological knowledge and inquiry, and focuses on providing a practical knowledge of sociological methodologies and research approaches. You will also have extensive opportunities to choose specialist areas such as the sociology of cities, ethnicity and race. The course aims to enable you to own and apply sociological perspectives, concepts and research methods in order to understand contemporary society, social relations and social data.

<http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/ug-prospectus/courses-08-09/sociology.cfm>

Philosophy, Logic and Scientific Method at London School of Economics and Political Science

Studying philosophy means engaging with some profound and fascinating questions; questions that any inquisitive and critical thinker will find her or himself asking at some point in her or his life, but which many non-philosophers do not pursue in depth. Some of these questions are:

- How does science generate knowledge? What distinguishes knowledge from superstition, ideology or pseudoscience?
- Can we hope to have as exact a knowledge of humans and human society as scientists seem to have of electrons and planets; and can the methods of the physical sciences be applied to psychology, sociology, etc? Or does the existence of consciousness and free will call for a different kind of knowledge and different kinds of methods of investigation when dealing with humans?
- What does morality require? What reasons do we have to act as morality requires?
- What does it mean to say that we have 'free will'? What type of freedom of the will is required for moral responsibility?
- Is death bad for the person who dies?

Recent graduates have gone on to work in the areas of media, financial services, management consultancy, and education, and have also proved very successful in gaining entry to postgraduate programmes.

http://www.lse.ac.uk/resources/undergraduateProspectus2008/courses/Philosophy_Logic_and_Scientific_Method/Default.htm

Why study Law at Surrey?

Law at the University of Surrey is both challenging and rewarding. As a law student you will tackle the fundamental questions facing society, develop your understanding of key areas of English and European

Law and investigate and evaluate ideas like fairness, justice and equality. You will be provided with a stimulating learning environment that blends traditional and modern teaching methods. Not only

will you be challenged to understand the law, but you will also be encouraged to apply it and to

develop your professional skills. The School of Law is particularly proud of its long tradition of providing students with legal work placements as part of their study and of its links with the local legal profession.

www.surrey.ac.uk/law

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