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Curriculum writers remaking Malaysia's higher education space: Internationalising or transnationalising dual degree programs

Mien Wee CHENG
Bachelor of Science with Education (Hons), University of Malaya, Malaysia
Master of Education, University of Malaya, Malaysia
Master of Arts in Work Based Learning Studies, Middlesex University, United Kingdom

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Abstract

The dual degree programs between Malaysian and British universities made me wonder about their meanings and effects on Malaysia's higher education. Limited opportunities for public higher education and state reforms have allowed foreign curricula into Malaysia. Malaysia's higher education is also part of wider reforms for a South East Asia 'higher education space'. This research is a critical inquiry into Malaysia's higher education that is informed by the sociology of curriculum. The notion of 'social space' draws on comparative education and policy studies that suggest regionalisation and cross-border processes 're-spatialise' education. However, this re-spatialisation is understood in different ways. Some describe it as internationalisation of higher education. Others suggest it produces forms of transnational higher education. How is Malaysia's cross-border higher education reform 'international' and/or 'transnational'? The re-spatialisation of higher education in Malaysia becomes visible through cross-border initiatives like credit transfers, twinning, and dual degrees. These initiatives began, after Malaysia's independence from Britain and with the subsequent formation of Malaysia in 1963, when education reforms focus on using Malay language and curriculum for nation-building. For its multi-ethnic society, these reforms presented ethnically-based educational opportunities and disadvantages. These challenges along with global financial crises made Malaysia liberalise its higher education, paving the way for cross-border reforms.

Extant research on Malaysia's higher education has focused mainly on means-ends questions that inform policy and governance with limited attention to curriculum. My thesis addresses this gap by drawing on the sociology of curriculum and focusing on the relation between text and context that makes 'curriculum'. Here, the 'curriculum writing' process unveils how people translate and transcribe their experiences and understandings in knowledge building. Their cultures and histories present a knowledge building space that embraces both objective structure and social experience. Time is

another critical element as Malaysia's contemporary higher education space is connected to its past and future. These considerations provoke questions about the spatial character and cultural trajectories of Malaysia's cross-border higher education space in globalising times. Hence, my main research question is 'how and with what effects does the making of cross-border dual degree programs re-spatialise higher education in Malaysia'.

This thesis reports curriculum writing at Malaysian private universities and establishes the cultural space where dual degree curriculum is produced and how its purpose and/or conditions are understood. Ethnography reveals curriculum writers navigating the social, cultural and political contexts framing Malaysia's higher education. Their realities entailed 'commercialising higher education', benchmarking the British', and 'opposites coming together'. Malaysia's higher education space is also characterised by multiple dichotomies. The 'conflicted-ness' and 'hybrid-ness' of this space came through metaphors like 'David and Goliath' and 'marriage of unequals'. Yet, curriculum writers resolved to 'bridge-the-gaps' and 'work-through-opposites'. Their collective attributes and implications, based on common purposes and affiliations, cut across national borders and show transnationalism emerging in Malaysia's higher education space.

This thesis argues that Malaysia's higher education space is neither strictly national nor international. Instead, a new 'hybrid' characteristic arises from 'local/national' and 'global/international' intersecting and blurring the borders between Malaysian and British ways of doing higher education. This re-spatialisation of Malaysia's higher education is unique, extends beyond its colonial legacies, and indicates the complexities of higher education reforms in globalising times.

Declaration

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at any university or equivalent institution and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

Signature: ……………………………

Name: MIEN WEE CHENG

Date: 20 August 2019

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> *"I will give thanks to you, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds." (Psalm 9:1)*

Publications and conferences during enrolment

Journal articles

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List of Abbreviations

ACCA   Association of Chartered Certified Accountants

ASEAN   Association of South East Asian Nations

COPPA   Code of Practice for Programme Accreditation

COPIA   Code of Practice for Institutional Audit

EHEA   European Higher Education Area

HEIs   Higher education institutions

ICAEW   Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales

MEB(HE)   Malaysia Education Blueprint (Higher Education)

MQA   Malaysian Qualifications Agency

MQF   Malaysian Qualifications Framework

NAB   National Accreditation Board

NHESP   National Higher Education Strategic Plan

PHEIA   Private Higher Education Institutions Act

SEA   South East Asia

UC   University college

UNESCO   United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Chapter One

Globalising Malaysia's Higher Education

1.1   Introduction
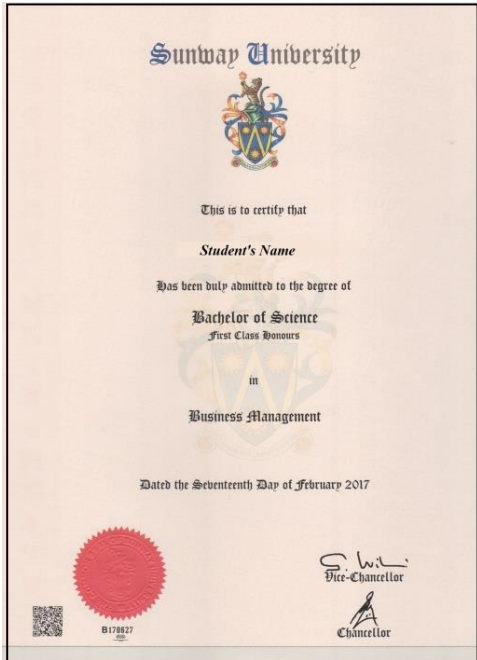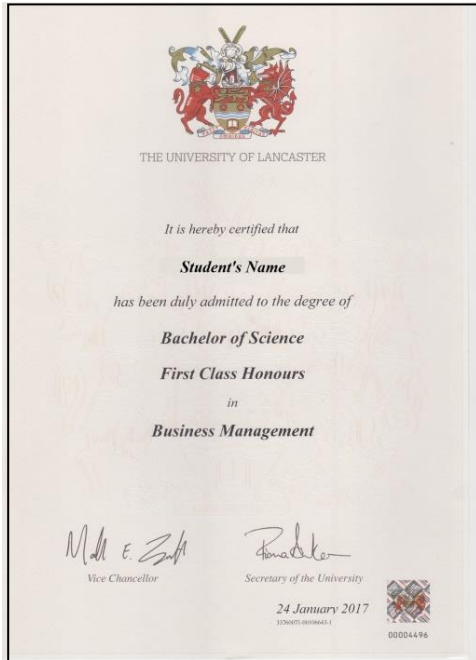
It was Friday, 1 October 2010. I was in a hotel ballroom packed with approximately 400 people. Most were proud parents and excited graduands. I was there as representative of a Malaysian private college to witness the graduation ceremony of Sunway University College. At this Malaysian private university college's ceremony, all graduates who had completed dual degree programs offered jointly by Sunway and its British partner, Lancaster University, would receive their testamurs. That day's ceremony was for the third cohort of 160 undergraduates who had enrolled, learned, and graduated from the Sunway-Lancaster dual degree programs.

The graduation platform was similar to that of other ceremonies I have attended. However, there were two Chancellors standing on that platform. One presented the certificates from Malaysia's Sunway University College, and the other from Britain's Lancaster University. Every dual degree graduand who walked across that platform received two scrolls, one from each Chancellor. That graduation ceremony in 2010 was the first time I witnessed a graduand receiving two testamurs simultaneously from two different universities in the same awards ceremony. I was intrigued by what I saw and began asking questions about these dual degree programs that are delivered in Malaysia.

At that ceremony, I was seated with guests from various higher education institutions, just in front of graduands' parents and families. I could not help but overhear a few of them chatting about the testamurs awarded by Lancaster University. They sounded happy as they talked about their children receiving an 'internationally recognised' British qualification. My curiosity about these dual degrees programs grew

as I sat through that ceremony. Was this graduation ceremony public proof of 'internationalisation of higher education' in Malaysia because local universities were linked with foreign universities? Or, was there something else happening here when programs are stretched across two universities, two countries, and two national contexts and their academic and professional cultures. So, what are these cross-border dual degree programs designed to do? How are they made? What do they mean to the academics and students involved? In what ways has higher education in Malaysia changed, and why?

My interest in finding the answers to these questions motivated me to pursue this doctoral study and think more deeply about the spatial character and cultural trajectory of higher education in globalising times. In particular, I wondered how policy and curriculum reforms now make it possible to offer 'cross-border' dual degree programs in Malaysia, and with what implications for Malaysia's higher education? Searching for answers in existing literatures showed that research on Malaysia's cross-border higher education has mainly focussed, to date, on means-ends questions that inform policy and governance. Little attention has been given to curriculum or sociological perspectives on cross-border higher education in Malaysia. Thinking about the students' and their families' aspirations, and how these could be associated with the Malaysian and British qualifications they received, I found myself wondering what lay behind those two testamurs that dual degree graduates received (See Figure 1). Did they respresent different educational territories or did they mark out aspects of a novel higher education landscape?

Testamur by Sunway University, Malaysia:	Testamur by Lancaster University, UK:

Note: Reproduced with permission from Sunway University.

Figure 1:
Sample testamurs of the dual degree program in Business Management by Sunway University and Lancaster University

1.2   Background and contexts

1.2.1 Globalising higher education.

Higher education across the world today is said to be changing due to globalising trends that increase student mobility and other flows of ideas, people and goods at global, regional, and local levels (Marginson, 2006; OECD, 2012; Sidhu & Christie, 2014). In South East Asia (SEA), leaders from the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) are calling for greater harmonisation in their higher education practices to

create a shared higher education space with common credit transfer systems and quality assurance structures. These developments are said to be inspired by European regionalisation (Sirat, 2009, 2012). Malaysia, a founding member of ASEAN, also aspires to develop as a high income nation and become a regional education hub in the near future (M. O. H. E. Malaysia, 2011, p. 43; PEMANDU, 2010, pp. 476-477). To achieve these goals, the Malysian government has narrowed the gaps that once existed between public and private higher education institutions (HEIs) in terms of differences in access, language of instruction, academic loads and assessment methods (M. N. N. Lee, 1999a; Tham, 2011; Wan, 2007), and employability of graduates (Cheong, Hill, Fernandez-Chung, & Leong, 2016; H.-A. Lee & Abdul Khalid, 2016).

Through the 20th century, nation-states defined the nature, purpose and organisation of their education systems and structures in ways that were contained by national borders and framed by their territorial border regimes. These territorial borders, although restrictive, were permeable to the movement of ideas, processes, programs, and people. However, by the turn of the century, globalising economies and cultures were increasing the inter-connectedness of contemporary social life, and processes and exchanges in the economic, political and cultural spheres (Held, McGrew, Goldblatt, & Perraton, 1999; Sassen, 2003; Waters, 1995). Globalising higher education reforms embraced a wide range of cross-border initiatives that included travelling policies, novel regulations, communication webs, and social partnerships that affect the development of higher education cultures, curriculum, programs and awards. These studies suggest that globalising reforms shift the higher education systems of nation-states from 'national' to 'global' priorities and scales (A. Green, 1997; Ozga, Seddon, & Popkewitz, 2006; Priestley, 2002).

1.2.2 Higher education in Malaysia.

Malaysia is a multi-ethnic country in SEA. Malays form the majority in its population, followed by Chinese and Indians. Its early education reforms, as an

independent nation-state emerging from British colonial rule in the late-1950s, were focused on nation-building. The government used Malay language and curriculum to develop national identity and regulated opportunities to higher education subject to an ethnically-based quota system. As part of nation-building, public universities prioritised the recruitment of Malays and this prompted the expansion of the private higher education sector to cater for the needs of Chinese and Indians in the country.

Since the 1990s, Malaysia has liberalised its higher education and now permits cross-border higher education like credit transfer, twinning, and dual degree programs between local private institutions and foreign universities. The government initially endorsed cross-border higher education to counter the adverse effects of the global financial crises in the mid-1980s and mid-1990s, and later to participate in the wider higher education reforms occurring regionally and globally (M. N. N. Lee, 2004a; Welch, 2013). The increasing numbers of Malaysian private HEIs collaborating with foreign universities in cross-border developments dislocated the country's established space of higher education from its historical and national positions. These cross-border higher education initiatives also attract foreign professionals, academics, and students with different cultures and practices which also impinged on the higher education experiences of Malaysian students and academics (Knight & Sirat, 2011; Tham & Kam, 2008). As such, Malaysian higher education comprises both public and private sectors which have evolved over the past three to four decades. Public and private universities in Malaysia are driven by different sets of motivation and governance imperatives, and they display different relationships to the state.

The idea that higher education reforms are creating an emerging SEA 'space of higher education' draws on research in comparative education and policy studies. It suggests that the processes of regionalisation and cross-border reforms have the effect of remaking or 're-spatialising' national education systems. However, this re-spatialisation process is understood in different ways based on disciplinary inclination. Some scholars describe cross-border higher education in Malaysia based on links with other countries and cultures as an 'internationalisation of higher education' (Knight,

2008; M. N. N. Lee, 1999a; Sarjit, Sirat, & Azman, 2008; Tham & Kam, 2008). Others suggest that this higher education reform produces emergent and novel forms of 'transnational higher education' (Huang, 2007; McBurnie & Ziguras, 2001; Sidhu & Christie, 2014; Sirat, 2006). Can these higher education reforms in Malaysia be both international and transnational at the same time?

This academic debate about ways of understanding the cultural character of cross-border higher education prompts me to investigate the effects of dual degree programs that are developing between Malaysian and British universities in Malaysia. Was the graduation ceremony I attended in 2010 an internationalisation of Malaysia's higher education, where the integrity of Malaysian education and the meaning of a testamur from a Malaysian private university college is sustained on its own? Or, was the graduation ceremony the public face of a more complex transnational re-spatialisation and re-culturing of higher education in Malaysia?

Cross-border initiatives can be complex because the 'things' (people, ideas, programs) that go across national borders carry particular habits, traditions, and expectations. The 'things' from the British higher education system that cross Malaysia's national borders come in contact with and rub against the established concepts, methods and practices that distinguish Malaysia's national higher education regime. Similarly, concepts, methods and practices of Malaysian higher education encounter those 'things' that travel from Britain. So how do these Malaysian and British 'things' engage and interact, with what effects and what are the consequences or novel outcomes that are produced? How does this Malaysian-British 'inter-weaving' and 'interconnected-ness' affect the cultural character of Malaysia's higher education? Is the contemporary space of Malaysia's higher education national, international, or transnational?

1.3 Research aims and approach

1.3.1 Research aims.

My objective in this study is to understand the effects of globalising higher education reforms on Malaysia's higher education and curriculum. In particular, I am interested to know how are Malaysia's cross-border higher education programs 'international' or 'transnational' forms of higher education. Over the years, state higher education reforms in Malaysia have endorsed private higher education and permitted the development of cross-border higher education programs in the country. I want to find out how Malaysia's contemporary cross-border higher education curriculum is being remade in the recent decade as seen in the dual degree programs between Malaysian and British universitieies. I am curious about the people involved in making these dual degrees, what are their processes like, and how are their effects on the cultural character of Malaysia's higher education space as the country transitions from national to global.

1.3.2 Research questions.

As such, this study is about how Malaysia's higher education space is being changed or 're-spatialised' . My overarching research question is:

How and with what effects does the making of cross-border dual degree programs re-spatialise higher education in Malaysia?

I focus this research by examining processes of curriculum-making in dual degree programs between Malaysian and British universities. Asking who and how curriculum writers design and develop dual degree curricula provides a window into dual degrees as a particular emergent form of cross-border higher education. It also reveals detailed

backstories about the processes of curriculum writing that produce dual degree curricula. Analysing the dual degree curriculum writers' narratives allows me to consider whether this re-spatialisation of Malaysian higher education through curriculum formed by Malaysian and British universities is best described as an 'internationalising', 'transnationalising' or another kind of 're-culturing' of Malaysian higher education. The following sub-questions organise this research:

a. What is the historical trajectory of Malaysia's higher education policy and how does curriculum culture the higher education space?

b. Who and what make cross-border dual degree programs in Malaysia and with what effects on curriculum writing?

c. How do processes of curriculum writing re-culture dual degree programs and with what effects on the spatialisation of Malaysia's higher education?

1.3.3 Curriculum as 'text-context'.

To date, research on Malaysia's higher education has focused mainly on policy and governance, using technical and rational perspectives that give limited attention to curriculum. My study addresses this gap in the literature by drawing on the sociology of curriculum which understands 'curriculum' as an effect of people's histories (their 'being'), experiences (their 'knowing'), and practices (their 'doing'). This curriculum theory framework explains curriculum as a historical 'representation' of these people, what they believe or expect, and how they experience or respond in particular contexts or situations (B. Green, 2010; Pinar, 2004). Curriculum as a representation of knowledge constructed from peoples' histories, experiences, and practices become curriculum realities through the 'transcription' of their contexts into curriculum texts (Da Silva, 1999; B. Green, 2010; Kemmis, 1993). This sociological understanding of curriculum helps me to unravel the complex meanings and tenuous relationships embedded in the knowledge building that is mediated through curriculum texts. I approach the

curriculum as a cultural space that becomes knowable as curriculum writers selectively communicate what and how they know as they transcribe their experiences, situations and realities (contexts) into dual degree programs.

Therefore, I trace in this study the processes of 'curriculum writing' to understand how curriculum writers make cross-border dual degree curriculum in Malaysia. I use ethnography and documentary research to show who the curriculum writers are, what they know and experience, and how they work or respond to their situations. Ethnography allows me to surface taken-for-granted assumptions and the operations of power and control in Malaysia's higher education (Madison, 2005; Mills & Morton, 2013). I conduct in-depth interviews with the curriculum writers, who make the dual degree programs in Malaysian private universities, and construct individual profiles of them to establish their backgrounds, beliefs, experiences, and practices. I analyse the narratives from their interviews in the light of relevant public and confidential documents that reveal the policy and curriculum context of higher education in Malaysia to generate answers to my research questions.

1.3.4 Researcher's profile and interest.

This study is interesting and important to me because of my personal experiences and professional work. Growing up in the 1960s and 1970s, I attended public schools where English was the language of instruction. As a Malaysian-Chinese, I worked very hard in school to obtain good grades because the ethnic-based quota system in place made it very competitive for Chinese and Indians to get into public universities. Out of my sixth-form (grade 12) peers, less than 10 percent managed to further our studies at public universities. The others had to opt for vocational training or further their studies abroad. Those experiences made me aware of the need for more higher education opportunities in my country for all Malaysians regardless of ethnic backgrounds. My experiences of studying at a public university were quite different from public schools. Whilst most of my school-mates were Chinese and Indians, most of my university course-mates were Malays. Lectures and assessments were also in Malay

(although there was the option of writing half the final examinations in English). I completed my Bachelor and Master degrees at the same public university but, throughout my time there, I met very few foreign students. These observations made me wonder about my country's higher education and how it is similar to or different from other countries.

I began my teaching career as a temporary (supply) teacher at a public school. However, the need for permanent employment took me into the private education sector where I have been employed for more than 30 years. During this time, I worked in two private colleges and was involved in the teaching and administration of their cross-border programs with British and Australian universities. My interest in the academic structure and delivery of twinning and distance education programs translated into research projects for my Master in Education and Master of Arts studies. My doctoral study continues this line of inquiry research into cross-border higher education reforms in Malaysia, and in the SEA region. I contribute to the current lack of knowledge in the sociology of education and curriculum about higher education in Malaysia and SEA, with a view to developing more education opportunities for all people in this region.

1.4   Scope and contributions of the study

This is a qualitative study, informed by the sociology of curriculum, on the nature and effects of cross-border higher education reforms in Malaysia. It is not a comparative study of Malaysian and British higher education policy or curriculum practices. Although there are references to globalisation and internationalisation, my study is not about the globalisation or internationalisation of higher education as institutional trajectories. I investigate the cross-border higher education reforms in Malaysia's private higher education sector but not similar developments in the public sector. This is because cross-border dual degree programs in Malaysia currently involve the private universities and are not found in public ones although the latter collaborate with foreign universities

in credit transfer and joint degree arrangements. Parts of my thesis indicates ethnic-bias, educational inequalities and the politics of difference in Malaysia's higher education. However, I do not address these issues in detail as they fall beyond the scope of this study which focuses on processes of curriculum writing. These aspects can, nonetheless, be picked up in future research.

My study is significant for several reasons. Firstly, it uses historicised curriculum theory to understand higher education in Malaysia and, in particular, how 'curriculum writing' contributes to Malaysia's cross-border knowledge building work. Curriculum writing involves people's knowledge and experiences about the past, present, and future (Pinar, 2004; Yates & Grumet, 2011). It traces the 'entanglements', due to the 'present' as 'history' in education, between local and foreign education regimes, academic disciplines, and cultural practices (Barbousas & Seddon, 2018; McLeod, Sobe, & Seddon, 2018). It locates the social 'connections' that link people at the Malaysian and British universities. As I have not come across any study of higher education in Malaysia that employs this sociological approach, my thesis contributes to the growth of social science research into higher education in Malaysia.

Next, my investigation of the 'intersection' between globalising higher education reforms and Malaysia's contemporary higher education curriculum involves the notions of changing 'spaces' and 'times' (Leander, Phillips, & Taylor, 2010; Marginson, 2010; McLeod et al., 2018; Seddon, 2014a, 2014b). These 'space' and 'time' concepts help explain the history of making curriculum in Malaysia's private higher education and how it differs from processes of making curriculum in public higher education, which tends to reference the national space primarily due to government policy. However, since the introduction of the Malaysia Education Blueprint for higher education or MEB(HE) the approach in public higher education curriculum making has shifted with emphases towards the global and the international. I discuss the MEB(HE) further in Chapter Four. Nonetheless, studies involving 'space' and 'time' in higher education have only emerged in the last decade. Therefore, my study is a timely contribution to developing knowledge in this area.

Finally, my research findings offer insights into the implications of cross-border higher education but seen through the lens of a Malaysian researcher. This positioning means my research combines the lived experiences of someone in a developing country and the academic understandings produced through an Australian university where research paradigms reflect the lens of a developed country. There is also a growing body of post-colonial research which is reflective about its relationship with Western knowledge traditions and the binaries of East and West (Chen, 2010; Said, 1994). Hence, my researcher perspective means I contribute to research that is relevant and written for policy makers and curriculum workers in Malaysia and in other post-colonial countries engaged in cross-border higher education.

1.5   Overview of thesis structure

Chapter One: Globalising Malaysia's Higher Education

This chapter introduces the study and the need to understand the nature and effects of higher education reforms in Malaysia. It states the research questions and purpose of the study, and outlines what 'curriculum' means as a key concept and how it informs the research methodology. The chapter also notes the researcher's positionality and the scope and contributions of this thesis.

Chapter Two: Knowledge Building Work and Space

This chapter reviews relevant literatures at the nexus between global studies, higher education research and curriculum studies. It traces comparative education literatures on globalising higher education and draws out the debate on cultural space of higher education in terms of international and transnational perspectives. It situates this research in the sociology of curriculum, and suggests curriculum theory as a way of understanding the history of higher education in Malaysia and how cross-border curriculum writing is re-spatialising it. It discusses 'transnationalism', as hybrid cultural formation associated with migration of peoples and cultures, blurring the borders

between 'national' and 'international'. Approaching the academic debate about internationalisation and transnationalisation of higher education through these literatures foregrounds relational views of space and 'space-time' effects on knowledge building that becomes visible through curriculum writing.

Chapter Three: Research Design

This chapter presents the research design that organises this study. It outlines the philosophical understandings that underpin the research methodology and why ethnography offers a useful perspective on curriculum writing in post-colonial Malaysia. It explains the research methods used in this study and how I approached the in-depth interviews and review of documents. It also explains the selection of research sites, recruitment of participants, data collection and analyses. The analysis of data rested on the development of individual profiles and used narrative analysis to generate the research findings that are presented and discussed in the next three chapters. This chapter considers the ethics, validity, and reliability aspects of this qualitative study.

Chapter Four: Historicising Malaysia's Higher Education Space

The findings discussed in this chapter address my research question on the historical trajectory of policy and curriculum in Malaysia's higher education space. It explains how shifts in policy and curriculum reforms from 'consolidation' to 'liberalisation' and 'internationalisation' have constructed social and cultural boundaries that create the dichotomies of 'public-private', 'local-foreign', and 'national-international' in Malaysia's higher education space. This chapter suggests how 'space-time' effects have changed Malaysia's social and institutional histories, and how curriculum cultures its higher education space.

Chapter Five: Who and What Make Dual Degree Curricula

This chapter presents the Malaysian and Anglophone curriculum writers, who develop Malaysian-British dual degree programs, as two distinct social categories. Each

profile is based on the analysis of their interview transcripts to show how their knowledge building is rooted in particular histories and cultures, and inflected by current conflicts and dilemmas. Their metaphors of 'David and Goliath' and 'marriage of unequals' reveal the tensions, cultural differences, and practical politics in Malaysia's cross-border knowledge building space. The curriculum writers' realities, which are discussed with reference to three distinct themes, confirm the dual degree curricula as unique representations of these curriculum writer's 'being', 'knowing', and 'doing'.

Chapter Six: National, International, or Something New

This chapter discusses my final research question. It documents how curriculum writers understand internationalisation of higher education in their cross-border dual degree curriculum writing. Findings show Malaysia's higher education space is neither national nor international but a new 'hybrid' space due to the intersections of local/Malaysian and foreign/British ways of 'experiencing' and 'governing' higher education. These findings suggest an emergent 'transnationalism' is reframing, remaking and re-spatialising Malaysia's knowledge space.

Chapter Seven: Transnationalism Remaking Malaysia's Higher Education

This chapter brings together the findings on the effects of cross-border dual degree curriculum writing on the cultural character of Malaysia's higher education. It concludes that cross-border knowledge building in Malaysia is blurring national borders and reconfiguring the boundaries between local/national and global/foreign, and producing transnational spaces that are culturally complex and politically tensioned. It argues that a new 'transnational' optic be used to explain the emerging character of Malaysia's higher education space, and makes recommendations for further research.

Chapter Two

Knowledge Building Work and Space

2.1 Overview

2.1.1 Literature review.

This literature review chapter brings together research in global studies, higher education research, and curriculum studies. I trace the comparative education literatures on globalising higher education to draw out debates about the cultural character of higher education spaces in terms of international and transnational perspectives and how they connect to discourses on higher education in Malaysia. I review the literature on curriculum theory and appraise how this is a way for me to understand the history and emerging higher education curricula in Malaysia. I include in my literature review how sociologists and cultural theorists comprehend space and 'space-time' effects. This chapter shows how the academic debate on internationalisation and transnationalisation of higher education, when seen through the lens of curriculum, reveals relational views of space and 'space-time' effects on knowledge building which becomes visible through the work of curriculum writing. This conceptual framework informs my study and orients the research methods and data analyses that I use to address my research aims and questions.

2.1.2 Globalisation and higher education.

Malaysia's higher education has evolved, over the past six decades, from being a colonial legacy of the British to having national identity and advancing indigenous language and knowledge. However, in the past ten years or so, the state's focus has been on developing both its public and private higher education sectors in terms of

increasing local and foreign student enrolments, and improving research capacities and institutional recognition for global competitiveness (M. O. H. E. Malaysia, 2011; Ministry of Education, 2015). The objectives spelt out in the Ministry's National Higher Education Strategic Plan (NHESP) and Malaysian Education Blueprint (MEB) on higher education outline how the state comprehends global shifts and its desire to stay abreast with changes. Malaysia's contemporary higher education presents diversity in terms of types of institutions and responses to globalisation that have re-spatialising consequences and which bring novel spaces into view.

As such, globalisation is not just a generalised phenomenon but a dynamic process as expressed by a country's particular histories and political configurations (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, p. x). The social embeddedness of higher education regimes becomes evident as nation-states are challenged by concurrent globalising and internationalising shifts, and as countries respond to these processes in ways that depend on their local histories and cultural dispositions (De Wit, 2011; Kress, 1996; Leask, 2009). To understand the cultural character of Malaysia's contemporary space of higher education means grasping its national and colonial histories as well as the effects of globalising higher education on it as an emerging postcolonial society (Hoogvelt, 2001; Tikly, 2001). The de-contextualising of Malaysia's higher education also involves discourses about the decolonising of Malaysian knowledge and society (Wan, Abdul Razak, & Lim, 2015; Wan, Sirat, & Abdul Razak, 2015).

Studies of global higher education reforms show that the spread of neoliberal globalisation has tied education and curriculum objectives more closely to the demands of the global economy. This means educational values are reconceptualised through policies and practices that reflect market values more than community and cultural values (Clarence, 2011; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). Scholars who view globalisation through this lens of capitalism and neoliberalism explain changes in education policy and curriculum as effects of flows in trade, capital, ideologies, enterprise, and workforce (Marginson & Considine, 2000; Rao, 2009; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). As such, Dale (2000b, p. 4) highlights that the clearest effects of globalisation on education policy and

curriculum arise from the *"consequences of states' reorganisation of their priorities to make them more competitive"*. In other words, the processes of economic globalisation blur the boundaries of nation-states and destabilise national authority in curriculum decision-making (Gough, 2003, 2004).

However, the concept and process of globalisation are not only understood in terms of capital and finance, images, information, and ideologies but also through increased levels of mobility amongst people and across cultures (Burbules & Torres, 2000; R. Cohen & Kennedy, 2007; Rizvi, 2007). This cultural globalisation becomes visible In educational processes and practices as increased tendencies towards policy borrowing and transfer, harmonisation as in Europe's common higher education space, and shared reviews of 'trends' and 'best practice', like those proposed by the World Bank and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (Dale, 2000a, 2000b; Lingard & Rizvi, 1998; Skilbeck, 1990). In describing these processes of cultural globalisation, some scholars suggest that there are common spaces and shared regions which are 'connected' and 'entangled' as worldwide systems and networks. These connected entanglements form and change according to the pattern of global shifts and flows in social, cultural, economic, and political realms (Marginson & Considine, 2000, p. 47; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, p. 24).

Changes in these spheres of human life in one part of the world can have implications for other groups of people and different kinds of institutions (Castells, 1996; R. Cohen & Kennedy, 2007; Held et al., 1999; Robertson, 2005). The greater 'interconnected-ness' between peoples across the world affects their ways of living and functioning in a broad range of activities, and is exacerbated by advances in transportation, technology, and telecommunications. For example, the advent of the Internet and its rapid progress in form, function, and reach have made academics and students increasingly networked and interdependent for various purposes (Brown, 2005; Castells, 2002a, 2002b, 2010). The Internet is a culture and, just like academic culture, it connects people and builds communities for education, enterprise, social movements, and politics (Castells, 2002a, pp. 333-334).

Another aspect of global connection and communication in higher education is the prominence of English as the global *lingua franca* or 'commonly used language' (R. Cohen & Kennedy, 2007; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). English is the international language in higher education because 80 to 90 percent of the world's academic papers in recent decades have been written in this language (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, pp. 176-177). Studies also indicate that globally, although the people in large economies like China and India speak Chinese and Hindi respectively, the number of people speaking English as their first language will likely double by 2050 and English will remain the dominant language in the foreseeable future (R. Cohen & Kennedy, 2007). The Internet and its functions are also developed predominantly in the English language and online resources are mainly in English as well, although they are available in many languages (Castells, 2002a, 2002b; Lohmann, 2006). Recent studies of higher education and graduate employability in Malaysia confirm that proficiency in the English language is linked to enhanced opportunities for employment (Cheong, Hill, Fernandez-Chung, et al., 2016; Cheong, Hill, & Leong, 2016; Cheong, Hill, Leong, & Zhang, 2018; Fernandez-Chung, Cheong, Leong, & Hill, 2014). Although this situation may change in the future, Welch (2013) contends that the English language is an important language for higher education in South East Asia (SEA) even though not all of SEA countries have been colonised by Britain. These global studies of higher education provide a context for my study of Malaysia, a postcolonial and developing country in SEA, and its higher education reforms in the 21st century.

2.1.3 Higher education in Malaysia.

There are different forms and levels of discourses on globalisation in higher education. The literatures include understanding its neoliberal ideologies that focus on new social and economic ways of freeing up markets and trades across the world to ways in which peoples across the world respond to it (Apple, 2000; D. G. Smith, 2003). Globalisation and higher education reforms have oriented Malaysian universities towards neoliberal economic approaches. They attempt to address and balance the

challenges posed by globalisation, on one hand, and Malaysia's multi-ethnic social fabric on the other (M. N. N. Lee, 2000, 2004a; Rao, 2009). Its neoliberal economic policies coexist with affirmative action policy that maintains a pro-Malay ethnic balance in the country's economic, political, and educational spheres. The state has to manoeuvre between the aspirations of both the market and local ethnic identities in order to balance the conflicting agendas of globalisation and affirmative action (Rao, 2009). In this way, Malaysia's higher education has been influenced by global trends such as the massification, marketisation, bureaucratisation, and internationalisation of higher education (M. N. N. Lee, 2013, 2016; M. N. N. Lee, Sirat, & Wan, 2017). These globalising practices such as international benchmarking, greater use of English, striving towards world-class universities, and cross-border higher education developments create homogenising forces that move higher education institutions in Malaysia into alignment with Western ones (M. N. N. Lee, 2013; M. N. N. Lee, Sirat, et al., 2017).

Over the past three decades, cross-border higher education in Malaysia has grown in terms of number and types of programs through credit transfer, twinning, branch campuses, and dual degree arrangements. Some scholars attribute this growth to economic downturns, like the global financial crises of the mid-1980s and mid-1990s, as well as a response to the increasing demand from local and foreign students for more higher education opportunities (M. N. N. Lee, 1999a, 1999b; Tan, 2002; Welch, 2013). The state's implementation of the Private Higher Education Institutions Act (PHEIA) in 1996 made way for liberalisation and privatisation of higher education in the country. Allowing liberalisation, including local delivery of foreign universities' curricula, has been effective in stemming the country's foreign currency losses and has attracted more foreign students into Malaysian institutions (M. N. N. Lee, 1999a, 2004a, 2006; Mok, 2011; Tan, 2002).

These practical trends underpin an academic debate about the significance of 'globalisation' and 'internationalisation' in Malaysian higher education. Many studies of Malaysia's higher education and cross-border higher education do not differentiate between globalisation and internationalisation of higher (Arokiasamy, 2011; Gill, 2006;

M. N. N. Lee, 1999a, 2000, 2004a; Mok, 2011; Rao, 2009; Sarjit et al., 2008; Tan, 2002). Some argue that globalisation has made education a tradeable commodity and that global trade agreements aggravate tensions associated with Malaysia's already contested ethnically-based policies and practices in higher education (Arokiasamy, 2011; McBurnie & Ziguras, 2001; Mok, 2008, 2011; Rao, 2009; Ziguras, 2003; Ziguras & McBurnie, 2008). Others who investigate Malaysia's higher education and cross-border reforms in the context of internationalisation of higher education generally focus on processes that bring together 'inter-national' and 'inter-cultural' dimensions (Abdul Aziz & Abdullah, 2014; Knight, 2008; Knight & Sirat, 2011). These terms 'internationalisation' and 'globalisation' create different narratives of higher education in Malaysia. Their meanings create contexts that have different implications for Malaysia's higher education processes and practices. It is this conflicted context that frames my research. However, the crux of my study is not the definitions of these terms but, rather, their effects as colliding contexts which affect Malaysia's cross-border higher education reforms and how they move towards a globalised future.

When searching the literatures on cross-border higher education in Malaysia, I found several studies that discuss the country's governance and regulation of private higher education through state legislations and quality assurance frameworks (Fernandez-Chung, Leong, Hill, & Cheong, 2011; Mok, 2011; Sirat, 2010; Tham, 2011). I also came across a few studies that look into the effects of legislation that changed the language of instruction in the country's public institutions from English to Malay (Cheong, Hill, & Leong, 2016; Gill, 2006; Ha, Kho, & Chng, 2013; Puteh, 2010), and how the outcome of those reforms affected employability of Malaysian graduates from public and private sector higher education institutions (Cheong, Hill, Fernandez-Chung, et al., 2016; Cheong et al., 2018; Fernandez-Chung et al., 2014; Wan & Sirat, 2018). These studies indicate tensions and lack of collaboration between public and private higher education sectors, and concerns that Malaysia's public higher education outcomes might limit graduate employment.

To date, these studies of higher education reforms in Malaysia have approached education and curriculum from technical and rational perspectives with the intention of informing policy and governance. There has been little attention to sociological aspects of Malaysia's higher education curriculum. Yet the growth of cross-border higher education in Malaysia raises many questions about these curricula. For example, who are the people that write the curriculum? What are their processes for materialising cross-border higher education curricula in Malaysia? How do their experiences as curriculum writers affect Malaysia's higher education, and with what implications in the present and for the future? I have not come across any study that investigates Malaysia's cross-border higher education and reforms through the sociology of curriculum lens, and this is the gap in the literature that my study addresses.

2.2 International and transnational positions

The emergence of new players, partnerships, modes of delivery, and regulations in cross-border higher education has resulted in different types of programs like credit transfer, distance learning, twinning, and dual degree programs. The current literature on these cross-border higher education programs in Malaysia approach two perspectives. Some scholars describe them as 'internationalisation of higher education' (Abdul Aziz & Abdullah, 2014; Knight, 2008; Knight & Sirat, 2011; M. N. N. Lee, 1999a; Tham & Kam, 2008). Others suggest that they are forms of 'transnational higher education' (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2001; Mok, 2011; Sidhu & Christie, 2014; Sirat, 2006; Tan, 2002; Ziguras, 2003). How are they both international and transnational at the same time? What is happening in Malaysia's contemporary space of higher education? Are the Malaysian-British (M-B) cross-border dual degree programs best explained as 'internationalising' or 'transnationalising' Malaysia's higher education space? The following sections discuss what the two positions mean, how they differ, and what effects and implications they have.

2.2.1 International perspectives.

Studies of internationalisation are not new, but the focus on internationalisation of higher education soared around the early-1980s. Portes (2001) and Enders (2004), for example, explain internationalisation as concept and terminology in terms of greater cooperation between states and in processes and activities across state borders. According to Knight and De Wit (1999, p. 29), the traditional rationales driving internationalisation of higher education are social, cultural, political, academic, and economic. Knight (2004, 2013) explains internationalisation of higher education as the process of integrating the international, intercultural, and global dimensions of higher education into institutional purposes, functions, and services including teaching and research. In her research, the term 'intercultural' describes the diversity of cultures that exist within countries, communities, and institutions (Knight, 2003, 2004, 2013). Van der Wende (2007, pp. 275-276) talks about internationalisation of higher education as the systemic and sustained efforts to make higher education more responsive to the requirements and challenges of globalising societies, economies, and markets. A few scholars writing on Malaysia's cross-border higher education programs and higher education reform explain its 'internationalisation' as forms of commercialisation and marketisation of higher education (Knight, 2008; M. N. N. Lee, 1999a, 2013; Tan, 2002; Tham & Kam, 2008). Accordingly, Knight (2008, p. 48) suggests that the internationalisation of higher education for Malaysia in the 21st century shows *"a discernable shift away from the social and cultural rationales toward economic and commercial interests"*.

Most literatures on internationalisation of higher education curriculum are based on case studies in the Western world. Research on the internationalisation of Malaysia's cross-border higher education curriculum is fairly limited. Edward, Crosling, Petrovic-Lazarovi and O'Neill (2003, p. 183) studied an Anglophone university's efforts to internationalise its undergraduate curricula in Business for cross-border delivery in Malaysia and showed how guidelines designed by that university steer its curriculum. They defined how the curriculum might be internationalised and how these definitions

present challenges that must be translated into a strategy for curriculum delivery. In a subsequent study of the same university's curriculum internationalisation in six core Business discipline subjects, which were part of a foundation program for off-shore delivery, reveals both 'opportunities' and 'challenges' for curriculum change, with resistance from academic staff as the major challenge (Crosling, Edwards, & Schroder, 2008). A study by Clifford (2009), across all offshore campuses of an Australian university, shows academic's engagement with internationalisation of curriculum was affected by disciplinary understandings. Academics in the 'hard' or 'pure' disciplines were resistant to engaging with discourses of internationalisation, but those in other disciplines recognised the need to contextualise knowledge and consider multi-cultural environments.

A few studies on internationalisation of higher education by universities in Asia and SEA inform us that their 'internationalisation' involves the process of 'Westernisation' or mimicking the West (Chan, 2013; Huang, 2007; Welch, 2013). For example, Chan's (2013, p. 43) examination of the challenges in internationalising higher education in East Asia acknowledges that it is *"undeniable that (the) more internationalised institutions in East Asia are converging to Western style, particularly in pursuit of world-class status"*. He argues that internationalisation of higher education is causing Asian universities to adopt Western practices and standards which may go against the Asian values embedded in these societies. In another study that explores the characteristics emerging in Malaysian universities from the interactions between Western academic models and traditional or local cultures, the scholars maintain that globalising practices such as international benchmarking, greater use of English, striving for world-class university status, and involvement in cross-border programs create homogenising forces at the institutional level that converge Asian universities towards Western universities (M. N. N. Lee, Sirat, et al., 2017, p. 28).

In summary, 'internationalisation' when associated with higher education and curriculum is a broad and encompassing construct. Its meanings refer to cross-border processes and activities that mix up and integrate curriculum. For example, in the dual

degree programs between Malaysia and Britain these processes and activities are influenced by their different national and institutional histories and because their curriculum workers have unique biographies and cultures. Internationalisation has the effect of making the 'inter-national' and 'inter-cultural' dimensions of curriculum more responsive to the needs of global societies and markets. In summarising the literature on internationalisation of curriculum, Joseph (2012, pp. 241-242) identifies three main lines of inquiry: (i) the 'economic rationalist' aspects of educational capitalism and markets; (ii) the 'integrative' nature and intercultural dimensions of existing curriculum; and, (iii) the 'transformative' effects of critical understandings of various pedagogic enquiries. In navigating this literature on the internationalisation of curriculum with reference to cross-border higher education in Malaysia, I draw in particular on Rizvi and Walsh (1998, p. 11) who highlight the 'politics of difference' that is emerging with globalising times:

> *"Internationalisation of curriculum is more than just a response to emergent global conditions. It is a framework of values and practices oriented towards a heightened awareness and appreciation of the politics of difference as the basis for developing the necessary skills and literacies for a changing world."*

2.2.2 Transnational perspectives.

There are some studies on Malaysia's cross-border higher education programs that use the term 'transnational higher education'. Many of these studies adopt this term based on its use by the UNESCO and Council of Europe (2000) to describe programs in which the learners are located in a country other than the one in which the awarding institution is based (Apple, Kenway, & Singh, 2005, p. 95; McBurnie & Ziguras, 2001, p. 86; Ziguras, 2005, p. 95). In differentiating 'transnational' from 'international', Knight (2006, pp. 39-40) considers the former as simply the mobility of education programs and/or providers between countries. However, she acknowledges that this simple definition cannot differentiate collaborative or co-developed cross-border

education activities – like joint, double/dual, and multiple degree programs – from the independent or stand-alone cross-border education activities like international branch campuses and franchises. By contrast, Portes (2001) differentiates between the concepts of 'international' and 'transnational'. 'Transnational', he explains, pertains to activities associated with different situations, sources, and scales of activities that are initiated and sustained by non-state actors, either as organised groups or networks of individuals across borders.

Studies of human migration were the first to highlight the significance of cross-border developments in creating novel 'transnational' spaces and cultures. According to Yeoh, Willis, Abdul-Khader, and Fakhri (2003, pp. 208-209), 'transnational social spaces' emerge when people in different places become connected through social and symbolic ties that enable the transfer of various forms of capital including intellectual capital. Schneider (2013, p. 481) uses 'transnationalisation' to describe 'sets of cross-border processes' and emphasises the fluidity, change, and diversity of ties and interactions that occur across the borders of nation-states. Transnationalisation, as concept, also connotes the sense of 'place' or 'locality' in relation to the actors involved and these are often understood or referenced as 'local' (or 'home') and 'foreign' (or 'host') in the literatures on transnational higher education (Fernandez-Chung et al., 2011; Knight, 2005a, 2005b; McBurnie & Ziguras, 2001).

The positional and perceptual effects of transnationalism indicate that the transnational perspective, associated with the construction and reconstruction of 'place' or 'locality', comes along with 'social experience' (Schneider, 2013; M. P. Smith, 2001; Vertovec, 1999, 2009). Hence, these understandings of transnational 'social spaces' help us comprehend how people can belong simultaneously to more than one country and/or culture and how they remain connected to others across the globe (Rizvi, 2011, p. 180). As Smith (2001, pp. 3-4) argues, the transnational optic or perspective is a useful 'bifocal' because it allows the 'local' (national/home) and the 'global' (foreign/host) to be framed in ways that do not set up binary opposites. By implication, nation-state's transnational practices can be viewed as 'mutually constitutive'.

2.2.3 Emergent transnationalism.

In the globalisation era, the meaning of 'transnationalisation' captures the re-spatialising effects of proliferating ties and interactions that reach across nation-state borders and other social and cultural boundaries. As Rizvi (2011) explains, the idea that transnational spaces are 'social spaces' enables us to comprehend how people who are separated by great distances remain connected and continue to engage and interact. In this context, Gough (2003, 2004) envisages the emergence of transnational higher education spaces in which scholars from different localities collaborate by reframing their knowledge traditions and negotiating each other's contributions to collective work. However, Rizvi (2011, p. 180) warns that the transnational space is also a 'de-territorialised' space which has contradictions, dilemmas, and risks that arise from peoples' multiple, dynamic, flexible and networked affiliations in that space. He also stresses that these uncertainties, in turn, shape our experiences of the cultural diversity and inter-ethnic relations in that space.

Vertovec (2009, p. 3) extends this 'transnational' perspective to include practices in communities, citizenship and migration, capital flows, governmental and non-governmental organisations, politics, services, social networks, families and identities. He uses the term 'transnationalism' to describe the ongoing and multiple ties and interactions that link non-state actors and/or institutions across the borders of nation states based on their shared interests, beliefs, and agenda (Vertovec, 1999, p. 447; 2009, p. 3). Other scholars trace transnationalism through ties and interactions that are being forged and sustained across diverse geographical, cultural, and political borders (Briggs, McCormick, & Way, 2008; Casinader, 2017; Vertovec, 1999, 2009; Yeoh et al., 2003). For example, Casinader (2017) uses 'transnationalism' to explain how the conflicts between local and colonial cultures and education in a former British colony offered some marginalised groups in a foreign land opportunities to activate their 'across national-borders' dispositions.

The concept of ' transnationalism' highlights the emergence of hybrid cultural formations that unfold through communities, citizenship, institutions, social networks, spaces and cultures (Appadurai, 1996; Briggs et al., 2008; Castells, 1996; Dunn, 2010; Rizvi, 2011; Yeoh et al., 2003). The ways in which people move geographically and form linkages with different places produce a cultural hybridity that is part of transculturalism (Casinader, 2016, 2017). Studies reveal that this new 'hybridity' challenge education and how people build curriculum (Dimitriades, 2009; Somerville & Perkins, 2003). In the case of Malaysian higher education, hybridity between public and private universities in terms of governance and management of programs and curriculum, teaching and learning, research and services has been highlighted (M. N. N. Lee, Wan, & Sirat, 2017).

Applying transnationalism provokes me to reflect more deeply about Malaysia and its higher education. While its higher education is generally identified with the nation-state, the country is a former British colony and also the place where migrants from China and India over several centuries have settled down and now call this place their home. In this sense, Malaysian transnationalism is not a new '21st century specific' feature but is an historic cultural formation that also affects the cultural character of Malaysia's higher education space in contemporary times.

2.3   Curriculum

2.3.1 Curriculum as a focusing device.

In this study, I use the concept of curriculum to focus my research into Malaysian higher education. However, the meaning of 'curriculum' is abstract and complex and can be understood in different ways (Pinar, 2004, pp. xiii-xvi; Posner, 2004, p. 5). In most Malaysian education situations, curriculum refers to specifications of what should be taught, to whom, how, when and where. In this sense, curriculum refers to the process of 'program planning' which considers decisions and activities about what is to be learned, how the learning is to take place, who the learners and teachers are, and what

the education is for (Wilson & Cervero, 2010, p. 53). Curriculum is also central to the politics of education because different groups have their particular interests and views about curriculum content, teaching strategies and assessment processes which regularly inflame public debate (Barnett & Coate, 2005, p. 163). I approach this diversity of views by identifying three key dimensions of curriculum research that focus, respectively, on the 'intended', 'enacted' and 'experienced' curriculum (Print, 1993; Van den Akker, 2004).

According to Van den Akker's (2004, p. 3) typology of curriculum representations, the 'intended' curriculum represents the vision, rationale, or 'ideal' underlying the curriculum and such intentions as written or specified in formal documents and materials. The 'ideal' part of the intended curriculum is concerned with 'whose' and 'what' perspective is being considered. Furthermore, curriculum intentions are subject to endorsement by external parties like government, industry, and professions. The 'enacted' curriculum is what gets implemented or shaped by the resources available, experience and expertise of the teachers/lecturers involved, and their interpretation of what was intended. Often, this is about the teaching and learning processes or 'curriculum-in-action'. Finally, the 'experienced' curriculum refers to what students experience through planned activities and opportunities when the intended curriculum is enacted. My focus in this study of M-B dual degree curricula in Malaysia is on the 'intended' curriculum. I examine the 'intentions' of curriculum writers as a way of understanding the contexts and complexities of higher education in Malaysia, and how curriculum writers from Malaysian and British universities work together to create cross-border curricula.

It is also important for this study that I contrast two ontological positions concerning what curriculum is about. Firstly, the rationalist (positivist) understanding of curriculum that follows the 'Tylerian' (Tyler, 1969) perspective. Rationalists base their curriculum decisions on technical and pragmatic considerations such as the adequacy and validity of objectives, contents, assessment methods, and standards (Posner, 2004, p. 5; Wilson & Cervero, 2010, p. 53). Some would include instructional strategies used as

well. The rationalist's view suggests a means-ends approach in that curriculum workers *"must determine the destination before deciding on the route they should take"* (Posner, 2004, p. 16). Secondly, the constructivist (subjectivist) understanding which conceives curriculum as social construct and as 'lived' experience that involves peoples' interactions with their personal beliefs, interests, values, perceptions, and decisions (Franklin, 1999, p. 476; Karseth & Sivesind, 2011, p. 70; Pinar, 2004, p. 57; Posner, 2004, pp. 113-114; Young, 2008, p. 2). Constructivists argue that setting objectives, organising and disseminating content, and using tools to assess learning make no sense unless they consider the contexts of 'why' and for 'whom' (Franklin, 1999, pp. 475-476; Seddon, 1989, pp. 2-3). Their theoretical perspective on curriculum study foregrounds how people make sense of the world (Davis & Sumara, 2010, p. 488; Posner, 2004, pp. 61-63). The historical, cultural, social, and political perspectives influence curriculum through processes that select, organise, and distribute knowledge through education (B. Green, 2003, 2010; Pinar, 2004; Young, 1998, 2008).

The constructivist's perspective is elaborated by Pinar (1994) as *'currere'*. This method reconceptualises curriculum from explicit course objectives by highlighting more implicit and complicated conversations that one has with oneself through reflections and self-understandings and as one becomes mobilised or engaged in pedagogy. Expounding this point, Pinar (2004, p. 57) argues that curriculum conceived as *'currere'* involves not only the study of autobiography, history, and social theory but also the serious study of psychoanalytic theory. He suggests that curriculum is a knowledge framework based on our autobiographical reflections of what we choose to remember about our past, what we believe about the present and what we hope for the future, and that these collectively shape our self-understandings and realities (Pinar, 2004, p. 20). Similarly, Grumet's (1981, p. 115) earlier work describes curriculum as 'collective story' and what an older generation chooses to tell the younger generation. To Davis and Sumara (2010, p. 488), the constructivist curriculum is *"more a path laid while walking rather than a pre-selected route"* which echoes Pinar's notion of *'currere'* and counters the rationalist's view.

These commentaries on constructivism foreground the ongoing sociological and cultural processes of 'meaning making' which entails the constant recovery and reformulation of people's embodied histories (Davis & Sumara, 2010; Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, & Taubman, 1995; Yates & Grumet, 2011). I use this constructivist approach in examining the 'intended' curriculum to understand how a cross-border curriculum making process unfolds, who the curriculum workers are, and how they experience and make sense of their world and work. The sociology of curriculum offers me a way of focusing on the effects of globalising higher education reforms in Malaysia by examining how curriculum writers in Malaysian private universities make cross-border dual degree curricula with their British partner universities.

2.3.2 Curriculum inquiry and theory.

Curriculum does not exist or happen in isolation because people are not isolated from their social, cultural, political and historical contexts (Connelly & Xu, 2010, p. 326; Schubert, 1992, pp. 236-237). This is an important point to note for this study as the M-B dual degree curriculum is materialised by curriculum writers at Malaysian and British universities, with different social and cultural settings, and subject to dissimilar systems of higher education. Curriculum inquiry or theory is about taking these contexts into account. This is because curriculum theory is not only about practice but also context, and context does not only justify the significance of the topic of inquiry but is part of the topic (Connelly & Xu, 2010, p. 327).

Curriculum studies are often nationally distinctive as they are informed by governmental policies and priorities and have to respond to particular national histories, cultures, and problems (Pinar, 2004, pp. 93-94). Within these contexts, curriculum studies in recent decades have emphasised the importance of understanding the construction and dissemination of knowledge in terms of its meanings in culture, economics, and politics (Apple, 2004 ; Pinar, 2003; Posner, 2004; Young, 2008). The constructivist's perspective highlights questions on how best to understand the tensions, dilemmas, and contradictions that are at the heart of curriculum inquiry (B.

Green, 2010, p. 452). Some scholars exploring the different framings for curriculum inquiry and critical education studies in the modernism-postmodernism debate emphasise the importance of understanding curriculum as representation of people's contexts and interplay of power (B. Green, 2010, pp. 452-453; Laclau, 1993, pp. 277, 280-281; Young, 2008, p. 6).

Also, Pinar (2004, p. 23) describes curriculum inquiry or theory as understanding the 'complicated conversations' of people engaged in self-reflexive interdisciplinary study that is situated in the intersections of self and society, local and global, and academic subjects and everyday life. He describes curriculum theory as the autobiographical and theoretical truth-telling that articulates the educational experiences as lived by people involved, and that speaks from their subjective experiences of history and society and the inextricable inter-relationships that structure educational experiences (Pinar, 2004, p. 25). This comprehension of curriculum theory directs me to draw out from curriculum writers their social, cultural, and historical reflections to help me understand how M-B dual degree curriculum is materialised and with what effects on Malaysia's higher education.

The key word that underpins curriculum theory is 'experience', and this suggests subjectivity, culture, identity, and activity (B. Green, 2010, pp. 451-452). The multiple perspectives (constructivism), meanings (interpretivism), and relationships (interactionism) in curriculum theory tell me that I can understand the history and culture of Malaysia' higher education curriculum and its reforms by investigating who the curriculum writers are, and examining their personal histories, social profiles, and cultural experiences. The literature review also shows that the terms 'curriculum theory', 'curriculum history', and 'curriculum inquiry' are often used interchangeably to draw out the different perspectives and broad dimensions of education that come together in practice in the formation of curriculum. Each of these terms gives me a nuanced way of talking with the curriculum writers involved about specific events, dictates, or authorities which have affected how they make their cross-border dual degree curricula in Malaysia.

2.3.3 Curriculum writing the 'text-context'.

Having mapped the field of curriculum studies and identified the focus of my study on the intended curriculum, I discuss in this section the study's representational approach through curriculum writing. I review how curriculum writers' intentions and situations, i.e. contexts, become represented as text in their 'curriculum as text' (Kemmis, 1993). Contemporary socio-cultural discourses make a case for understanding curriculum as 'representation', in that curriculum is the consequence of the politics of change and involves the subjectivities 'in' and 'for' curriculum as a specific form of social engagement and political praxis (B. Green, 2010, pp. 451-452). In describing curriculum as representation, we highlight the intrinsic aspects of curriculum work and the embeddedness of social, cultural, and historical relationships within it. For example, the public school curriculum represents how government and society determine what knowledge is needed by future generations and their decisions are inflected by social, cultural, and nation building priorities (B. Green, 2010; Kemmis & Fitzclarence, 1986; Lundgren, 1991).

Green (2010, pp. 452, 455) argues that the problem in 'representation' lies in understanding the processes of knowledge 'production' and 'reproduction' in curriculum, and because curriculum is constructed from peoples' realisations which are dependent on their particular situations, knowledges, relationships or 'contexts'. People's inherent subjectivities, conscious and unconscious thoughts, perceptions, biases, and understandings of the world become knowledge in curriculum based on the use of language and text. In other words, curriculum presents the critical forms of social, cultural and political engagements involved in production and reproduction (i.e. 'text') and it links theory and practice to existing customs and traditions (i.e. 'context'). The 'text-context' comprehension of curriculum takes on the view that it is not knowledge but its 'transcription' or 'text' that is real (Da Silva, 1999; B. Green, 2010; Kemmis, 1992). Furthermore, it is about 'power' rather than the facts about 'reality' that make things 'true' (Hall, 1997, p. 2). The representation of power in curriculum theory leads to the

notion of curriculum as 'political text' (B. Green, 2010; Kemmis, 1992, 1993; Laclau, 1993).

Schubert (1992, p. 238), in describing curriculum theory as the 'process of becoming', explains that curriculum writing is how curriculum workers take on assumptions, engage in educational situations, clarify needs and interests, and project different courses of action and probable outcomes. He says their 'becoming' is the process of their 'knowing' and 'doing', and that these are consequences of being immersed in particular contexts together with continuous reflections and re-conceptualisations of experiences. Their practitioner's lore comprises their traditions, experiences, and beliefs that provide important perspectives and expressions that become incorporated into curriculum as text (B. Green, 2010). The relation between 'text' and 'context' in curriculum is particularly helpful for this study as it pins down a focused line of inquiry, within the broad understanding of curriculum, that provides a framework for me to investigate how M-B dual degree curricula are materialised through curriculum writing. It is a way of understanding how cross-border 'curriculum-as-text' is made in Malaysia as representation of 'national versus foreign' or 'local versus global' higher education reforms. As such, I can approach an understanding of the curriculum writers' knowledge frame in investigating who they are, what they know, how they work, and why. And, I can examine their dual degree 'curriculum writing' as a means of unveiling the cross-border knowledge building processes and practices in Malaysia to know how these are changing the culture (re-culturing) and spaces (re-spatialising) of its higher education.

2.4   Knowledge space and boundary work

The literatures on curriculum also embody scholarly views that consider curriculum as a changing social space of learning and that support the imagery of curriculum as 'knowledge space' (Gough, 2000, 2003; Seddon, 2014b). This understanding of curriculum as social phenomenon encompasses the notions of 'space-

time', 'shifting cultures', and 'lived experiences' (Leander et al., 2010; Marginson, Murphy, & Peters, 2010; McLeod et al., 2018). I discuss in this section a review of the literatures on 'space' and the effects of 'space-time' on higher education and knowledge building that become visible through curriculum writing.

2.4.1 'Spaces' and 'borders' of education.

The relational view of space explains 'space' as a product of cultural, social, political, and economic interactions, imaginings, desires and outcomes that are given meaning through human endeavours (Singh, Rizvi, & Shrestha, 2007, p. 197). Similarly, Clifford's (1997, p. 54) anthropological concept of space explains that space is *"never ontologically given but is discursively mapped and corporeally practised"*. In other words, space comprises not just objective structure but also social and personal experiences. According to Lefebvre (1991), space is established through social relations and is also constitutive of them. He argues that space is multi-dimensional, produced through three interrelated processes and that each has the physical, social, and cultural dimensions. He denotes these processes as: (i) spatial practices or 'perceived spaces' which refer to the patterned routines of material and social practice; (ii) representations of space or 'conceived spaces' which signify the ideological, symbolic, and representational practices that make space knowable and actionable, potentially reproducing, legitimising, or contesting that space; and, (iii) spaces of representation or 'lived spaces' which is how space is experienced by people. In this sense, educational thinking is not only about the material and symbolic aspects of everyday life but also about the realm and effects of experience. Lefebvre's three-fold view of space offers a framework that captures and allows us to research the conflicts and tensions experienced in many educational practices (Brooks, Fuller, & Waters, 2012, p. 7; Thomson, 2007, p. 113).

The study of space also incorporates the ideas of 'borders', or 'boundaries', and 'contact zones' and their connections with the cultures and powers from within and without (Haig-Brown, 2001; Pratt, 1999; Somerville & Perkins, 2003). The 'contact zone'

is conceived as the space where peoples who are geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and as a *"zone of possibilities and perils"* because of the *"unequal power relations that are lived out"* in that space (Pratt, 1992, p. 4). The literature explains that new 'possibilities' emerge in the contact zone and that they include 'hybrid productions', which take on the politics of difference and dependencies from both sides of the border (Pratt, 1999, p. 156; Somerville & Perkins, 2003, p. 255). The contact zone is a contested space because people get to know one another in unfamiliar settings and may break down hierarchical differences as well. An Australian research project on collaboration between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in education revealed that contact zones are constructed in different ways for different people, and their boundary work depends on those constructions and the differing political investment of their positions (Somerville & Perkins, 2003, pp. 260-261). This research explains that the work of 'border crossing' happens when people in this space mediate their personal stories and how they are translated into written texts in the public domain.

This zone of cultural contact and its hybrid possibilities are also conceptualised as the 'third space' which focuses on mobility, fluidity, and the hybridity of this space (Bhabha, 1994; Soja, 2011). Throughout the 1990s and 2000s, sociologists and cultural theorists described a world in motion (Bauman, 2005, 2013), with rapidly changing social, relational, and spatial structures of societies (Brenner, 1999, 2004), and with weakening or dissolving boundaries (Sassen, 2005, 2013). This world is seen to be made up of flows (Appadurai, 1996) and networks (Castells, 1996, 2002a, 2010), and where space is being de- and re-territorialised (Rizvi, 2011; Scholte, 2005). These concurrent processes of globalisation and internationalisation challenge 20th century concepts of borders and boundaries that delineate 'nation-states'. These spatial configurations reveal how 'scale' and the 'nested layering of territories' re-spatialise education across national, sub-national, and supra-national layers (Robertson, Bonal, & Dale, 2002, p. 475). The notion of scale also highlights the way various activities occur within different layers, texturing the space of education as one layer becomes dominant over another,

and as layers are 'fixed' by social processes such as legal codes, official networks, and state regulations. Seddon (2014a, p. 27) explains that contemporary globalising processes re-scale the historical, national, political, and social formations of these spaces by de-nationalising the national territory and intensifying the spatialisation of state power at sub-national and supra-national scales with significant implications for education. She argues that this re-scaling of state and educational spaces is not a top-down or bottom-up politics of education, but rather unfolds through contact zones as political and sociological boundary work is realised by actors and processes that are differently positioned or scaled.

Robertson (2007a, 2011) suggests spatial analysis and boundary work are helpful concepts for understanding the scales at which education happens and the levels where it is being mobilised in novel ways through national and sub-national institutions, and supra-national agencies. Instead of approaching border analysis with reference to rigid physical boundaries, which are associated with territorial states and concerns about security and sovereignty, this growing body of work argues for more critical engagement with borders (Robertson, 2011; Rumford, 2006; Sassen, 2013; Seddon, 2014a, 2014b). This analytical shift draws upon a range of disciplines like history, sociology, and education to look beyond 'nation-state-centric' research and capture new spatial politics that are associated with de-territorialised ('re-spatialised') spaces, transnational networks, virtual communities, and global mobilities (Rumford, 2006, p. 160).

I use these insights into boundary work to surface the re-spatialisation of culture and power in Malaysia's cross-border higher education and to explain their effects on Malaysia's higher education. Focusing my study on cross-border dual degree curriculum making between Malaysian and British universities allows me to visualise Malaysia's cross-border higher education knowledge space, its national borders and the cultural boundaries that unfold through contact zones. Recognising this fluidity helps me consider the presence, mixing, and flows of dissimilar cultures, histories, and power levels. The 'contact zone' is that space where curriculum writers from Malaysian and British universities, with their distinct social, cultural and historical attributes come

together and 'rub' against each other. The curriculum writers' knowledge building work materialises the dual degree curricula by drawing on their knowledge bases and experiences, and also their institutions' histories and priorities which are anchored in the higher education regimes and governance systems of two separate nation-states.

Is there a new 'possibility' or 'production' arising in this zone of cultural contact in Malaysia? If so, what is it? Currently, the literature on the social history and boundary work of Malaysia's cross-border higher education space is scarce. There is some research on higher education policies and how power is practised or shared in relation to higher education access and policy making in Malaysia (Joseph, 2006; Milner, Abdul Rahman, & Tham, 2014; Sirat, 2005; Tham, 2011). However, there is a gap in the literature on how history, culture, and power are brought together and make a space for cross-border knowledge building work.

2.4.2 'Space-times' of education.

The literature on globalisation presents a world made up of dynamic social spaces. However, the blurring borders that accompany cultural and economic changes, the advent of new technologies, and different forms of mobility and communication entangle 'time' as well as 'space'. Research on higher education reforms and globalisation show how space is established through people's involvement in a particular place, and through the practices, rules, norms and ideas that they come to share. In similar ways, time organises people's experiences and their sense of rhythm and pace that structure their formal and informal learning. Both space and time are vectors of our world because together they structure our understandings and embody our subjectivities of the world (Marginson, 2010, p. 123).

As McLeod (2017, pp. 13-14) highlights, all sociological investigations of educational topics and problems are framed by time because they gesture to a past and speak to a future. She elaborates this point by explaining that *"the present does not stand apart from the past or the future"* (p. 15), and *"how the past is remembered is remade in the present"* (p. 17). In other words, both the vectors of space and time

structure the way we live and learn (Leander et al., 2010; Marginson, 2010) as well as form our subjectivities and temporalities (McLeod, 2017). 'Space-time' is a construct that is continually conditioned by experiential events and, in turn, changes our subjective potentials (Marginson, 2010, p. 118). 'Space-time' also locates the interplay between political, sociological, and cultural processes that remake education spaces over time (McLeod, 2017; McLeod et al., 2018). Seddon (2014b, p. 11), in rethinking the sociology of education, explains the importance of identifying the 'space-times' of education as both space and time toggle peoples' experiences of relationalities, spatialities, and temporalities. In short, the 'space-time' of education recognises how space and time entangle and congeal through educational contexts.

The 'space-times' of higher education in Malaysia are affected by the circumstances at that time. In the 1960s and 1970s, the higher education reforms addressed a newly formed, independent, nation-state. Its curriculum development focus in those early years was mandated with reference to the country's nation-building priorities. These national priorities shifted when private cross-border higher education programs emerged around the 1980s and expanded through the 1990s and 2000s. These shifts indicate how 'space-time' effects influence the way curriculum workers act and respond. How curriculum writers act in cross-border dual degree programs in Malaysian private universities depends upon the way they grapple with people's social, cultural, and political orientations on a moment by moment basis.

In this study, informed by the sociology of curriculum, I am not only concerned with the present, but also the past and the future, of Malaysia's higher education. I am interested to understand the intersections of historical and sociological imageries and how they materialise in dual degree programs. This research is about writing the 'present' in Malaysia's higher education as 'history' by grasping the dynamic effects of these social-spatial, historical, and political dimensions that frame, form and filter its educational present (McLeod, 2017; McLeod et al., 2018). As such, my study calls for renewed historical sociology and novel forms of comparative education to provide

insights and practical explanations for Malaysia's higher education reforms in globalising times.

2.4.3 Colonialism and Europeanisation.

The literatures on curriculum inquiry also highlight postcolonial theory as a useful tool for me to interrogate the spatial character of Malaysian higher education, and to illuminate the relations of power and culture that are embedded in its curriculum (Hickling-Hudson, 2010; Tikly, 2001). The prefix 'post' in postcolonialism is both temporal and epistemological. Therefore, 'space-times' of Malaysian higher education bear links with and are consequence of its colonial past. While Malaysia is now a postcolonial country in SEA, its colonial histories date back several centuries and involve the Portuguese, Dutch and British. The latter's colonial rule of almost two centuries was briefly interrupted by the Japanese invasion and occupation of Malaya and British Borneo (Sabah and Sarawak) between 1941 and 1945 as part of World War II (WWII). The Japanese imperial army's brief rule involved a propaganda for 'co-prosperity' between Asian countries that is free from Western/European colonisation and domination (Akashi & Yoshimura, 2008; Iriye, 2014). However, the end of WWII in 1945 returned Malaya, Sabah and Sarawak to British administration. Malaysia became a sovereign nation-state in the early-1960s. Nonetheless, the colonial effects of British rule and Japanese Occupation are said to influence Malaysian policy making like its 'Look East Policy' (Hussain, 2010). To understand the cultural character of Malaysia's higher education space means taking into account how postcolonial countries engage with the global consequences of the European empires (Hickling-Hudson, 2010) and the 'space-time' effects involving both colonial and national histories along with the effects of contemporary globalising education reforms (Hoogvelt, 2001; Tikly, 2001).

Colonialism brought together communities from vast distances into a single political space, which were controlled and coordinated by a central system of imperialism. Colonial education equipped ex-colonies with a template for building their education. That education space became a site for developing international networks in

economics, culture, and politics in the modern and postmodern periods, and a seedbed for local resistance to contemporary global forces; the intellectuals and revolutionaries during periods of national liberation struggles were products of colonial education (Tikly, 2001, pp. 157-158). Colonial education was also instrumental in the globalisation of English for education (Marginson & McBurnie, 2004; D. G. Smith, 2003). Overall, the literature indicates colonial education to have significant effects on postcolonial developing nations.

Colonialism is also associated with 'whiteness' or a position of cultural dominance born out of the history of European expansion (Dimitriades & McCarthy, 2001). It reveals 'Europeanisation' as a process for the construction, diffusion, and institutionalisation of formal and informal rules, procedures, paradigms, shared beliefs and norms, which were Europe's way of doing things (Onursal Besgul, 2012; Uluslararasi, 2012). According to Novoa and Lawn (2002, pp. 1-2), the idea of a European educational space that arose from the imagery of 'Europe' as a supra-national public space of education was created by cross-border governance, networks, and cultural and economic projects. Lawn (2001, 2002) argues that education space became 'borderless education' because of globalising geographical and conceptual borders in education. Similarly, Robertson's (2011, p. 281) work on spatial politics explains that the novel forms of bordering that form educational spaces, like the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), are generated by globalising processes and boundary work. This suggests the re-bordering is linked to a re-ordering of social relations and identities that are realised through these spaces. This 'boundary thinking' is a decolonising move because borders which, in the past were seen as singular and existing at the borderline of politics, are now multiple and diffused throughout societies (Robertson, 2011, p. 283).

Malaysia is a founding member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). It participates in ASEAN's agenda to harmonise higher education systems and frameworks of member countries and form a common SEA higher education space. This move 'softens' and 'blurs' the geopolitical or territorial boundaries between Malaysia

and other member countries. According to Sirat (2009, 2012), ASEAN's plans to harmonise and integrate the higher education systems of SEA countries and create a common space of higher education is inspired by the development of regionalism in Europe's higher education and the formation of the EHEA. This observation is not surprising as countries in SEA, with the exception of Thailand, are former colonies of European imperial masters which comprised the Portuguese, Dutch, French, and British. Robertson's (2007b, 2010) work on Europe/Asia regionalism in higher education also indicates Europe's explicit intention to developing stronger Europe-Asia relationships and secure a European presence in Asia. These 'space-time' effects of colonialism and Europeanisation are contexts of Malaysia's contemporary higher education policy and curriculum reforms. In other words, postcolonial theory helps me understand curriculum making in cross-border M-B dual degree programs because applying postcolonial perspectives disrupt conventional views on, or decontextualise, various aspects of curriculum.

2.5   Summary

The aim of this study is to explain the re-culturing and re-spatialising of Malaysia's higher education in globalising times. Contemporary education research indicates that countries respond to education and curriculum reforms in ways that are unique to their histories and cultures (Franklin, 1999; B. Green, 2010; Pinar, 2004). To understand Malaysia's contemporary space of higher education means grasping its national and colonial histories, as well as the effects of globalising education on it as a postcolonial society (Hoogvelt, 2001; Tikly, 2001). As such, I focus my study on finding out who are the people involved and what are the processes that make the cross-border dual degree curricula in Malaysia, and what are their effects on the cultural character of its higher education space. The literature indicates two cultural positions on Malaysia's cross-border higher education, where its space-times are understood as international or transnational. These representations frame my angle in this study which traces how the

making of cross-border dual degree curriculum internationalises and/or transnationalises Malaysia's higher education.

The sociology of curriculum literature explains that curriculum is conceived as people represent and transcribe their contexts. This understanding of curriculum as 'autobiographical text' tells us that it is people's transcription and writing that produces a text that portrays their 'real' meanings (Davis & Sumara, 2010; B. Green, 2010; Kemmis, 1993). This focuses my understanding of curriculum on how people's lives, beliefs, and biographies influence what they select as knowledge and skills, and how these are put together to form curriculum (Pinar, 2004; Young, 2008). Using curriculum theory to frame this study offers a way of unearthing the cultures and histories embedded in Malaysia's higher education (Karseth & Sivesind, 2011; Pinar, 2004; Young, 2008). It also foregrounds 'curriculum writing' as a conceptual lens to draw out from the curriculum writers how their making of cross-border dual degrees internationalises and/or transnationalises Malaysia's higher education.

Approaching my research question through these relational space-times offers me a window into cross-border dual degree programs between Malaysian and British universities that are offered in Malaysia. It is a vantage point from which I investigate curriculum writing as a 're-colonisation' by the British or a 'mix' of Malaysian (national/indigenous) and British (international/foreign) ways of doing education. I also consider whether there is something else happening in Malaysia's space of higher education that cuts through the old binary between colony and nation, and is, perhaps producing 'transnationalism' as a new hybrid cultural formation (Vertovec, 1999, 2009). These questions and gaps in the sociology of curriculum literature and research on Malaysia's higher education warrant my study which addresses how cross-border dual degree curriculum writing in Malaysia is re-culturing and re-spatialising its higher education.

Chapter Three

Research Design

3.1 Qualitative research approach

As outlined in Chapter One, I carried out this study to understand the cultural character of Malaysia's contemporary higher education space by investigating the effects of making cross-border dual degree curricula on the spatialisation of its higher education. The study aimed at addressing a few key research questions. What is the historical trajectory of Malaysia's higher education policy and curriculum reforms that have endorsed private higher education and allowed cross-border programs to materialise in the country? Who and what make these cross-border dual degree programs in Malaysia? How are their curriculum writing processes understood and with what implications for Malaysia's higher education? To answer these questions meant finding out who are the dual degree curriculum writers in Malaysia and understanding their knowledge building practices as well as Malaysia's higher education policies and governing processes.

3.1.1 Theoretical and conceptual frameworks.

Following the literature review, I conducted this study informed by the sociology of curriculum. I used curriculum theory to frame my approach in examining the curriculum writers' social histories, beliefs, and experiences and how these affect their knowledge building work that materialised the cross-border dual degree curricula (Gundem, Karseth, & Sivesind, 2003; Pinar, 2004; Young, 2008). The literature explains that who the curriculum writers are (their 'being'), what they experience and understand (their 'knowing'), and how they work in education (their 'doing') are

contextualised and represented in their 'curriculum-as-text' (B. Green, 2010; Kemmis, 1993). As such, my research methodology entailed having in-depth conversations with the curriculum writers involved and analysing their stories and narratives to determine their experiences, processes, and practices that made the Malaysian-British (M-B) dual degree curricula that are delivered in Malaysia.

The literature also explains curriculum as 'knowledge space' (Gough, 2003; Seddon, 2014b). This understanding of curriculum brings to focus the relational effects of 'space' and 'time' on Malaysia's higher education as the country traverses from its 'colonial' past, through a 'nationally-oriented' present, and towards a 'globalising' future consequent to higher education reforms occurring locally and internationally. Approaching the academic debate about the internationalisation and/or transnationalisation of higher education in Malaysia through these literatures foregrounds the effects of its social histories and 'space-times' on knowledge building work that become visible through curriculum writing. As such, I used 'curriculum writing' as conceptual lens to surface the 'text-context' meanings (Da Silva, 1999; B. Green, 2010; Kemmis, 1992, 1993) and 'space-time' effects (Leander et al., 2010; Marginson, 2010; McLeod et al., 2018) that are embedded in Malaysia's cross-border knowledge building work.

Additionally, the literature on research methods in education offers critical theory as a means of examining and interrogating the social constructions of curricula (L. Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011, pp. 26-27, 31). Employing critical theory approach in this study meant asking questions about who defines knowledge, what ideological interests do they serve, and how is power produced and/or reproduced through higher education. It highlights how curriculum writers' ways of taking on knowledge, going about their higher education practices, and working with their British university counterparts influenced their cross-border dual degree curriculum writing. This meant my research strategy had to focus on what the curriculum writers say, analyse their words and expressions and interpret their stories and experiences to make sense of the historical, social, and cultural aspects of Malaysia's higher education and cross-border

reforms. My research strategy also involved examining the information contained in public documents and curriculum writers' personal documents, treating the latter confidentially according to their relevance and appropriateness.

Overall, my qualitative research project was based on interpretivist epistemology and constructivist ontology (Bryman, 2012, p. 380). I inductively developed the patterns of meanings as I moved through the research process and as I observed and analysed the curriculum writers' responses and viewpoints (Bryman, 2012, p. 36; Creswall, 2012, p. 9). Figure 2 outlines the research framework and design of this study. It employed curriculum history and critical theory to frame its theoretical perspectives, and ethnography and documentary research as its qualitative research methodologies. The research methods in this study comprised in-depth interviews and document reviews together with narrative and profile analyses.

Sociology of Curriculum	_Theoretical Perspective_	_Methodology_	_Methods_
- Interpretivist (epistemology) _- Constructivist (ontology)_ _- Inductive_	_- Curriculum theory/history_ _- Critical theory_	_- Ethnography_ _- Documentary research_	_- In-depth interviews_ _- Document reviews_ _- Narrative and profile analyses_
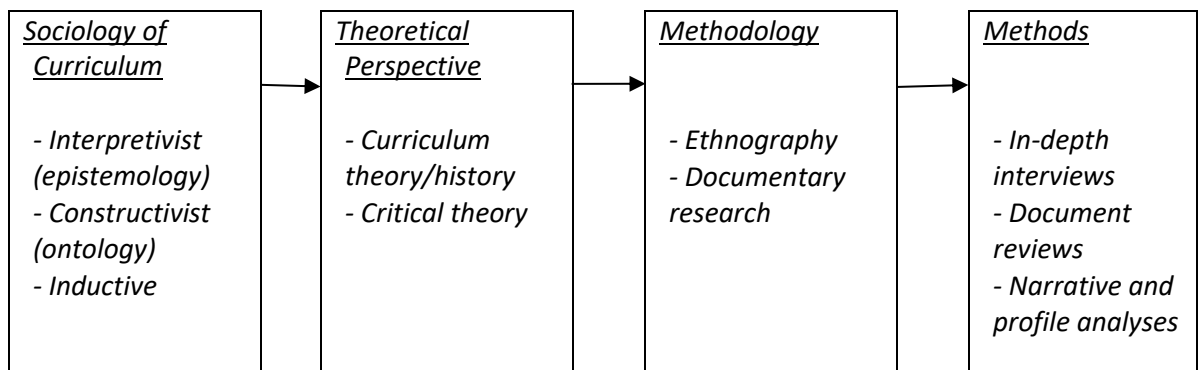
Developed based on: i. Crotty (1998), ii. Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2007; 2011; 2018), and Bryman (2012)

Figure 2. **Curriculum research framework and design**

3.1.2 Ethnographic research.

Ethnography is the systematic and descriptive study of peoples and cultures together with their customs, habits, and differences (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Murchison, 2010). Ethnography applied in educational research provides a way for

researchers to follow and understand practices and changes in education and curriculum because it communicates the stories, events and experiences that matter (Mills & Morton, 2013, p. 2). Accordingly, Murchison (2010, pp. 12-13) highlights that:

> *"Ethnography also allows the researcher to observe and to experience events, behaviours, interactions, and conversations that are the manifestations of society and culture in action. … Ethnography allows the researcher to examine how people's actions compare to what they say about their actions in ideal situations and their thoughts or opinions on particular topics."*

In this study, I used ethnography as research methodology because it allowed me to immerse myself in the curriculum writers' settings, listen to what they say (or not say), observe how they express their thoughts, and ask them questions about how they comprehend their situations (Bryman, 2012; Crotty, 1998; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). The ethnography approach was important for this study as it directed my questions and deepened my analysis of the curriculum writers' narratives, vocabularies and expressions that they used to explain their what's, how's, and why's (Madison, 2005, p. 12) in making their cross-border dual degree programs between the Malaysian and British universities. Employing ethnography in this study emphasised not only the importance of in-depth analysis but also ethical considerations and good research practice in carrying out qualitative research.

3.1.3 Documentary research.

Documentary research refers to investigations that make use of documents and texts as source materials as well as the process of conceptualising, using, and assessing documents (Bryman, 2012; J. Scott, 2006). Employed alongside ethnography, documentary research is a major form of social research methodology that is widely used in education (McCulloch, 2004; J. Scott, 2006). Therefore, apart from using interviews and observations to gather information about the curriculum writers, I also

reviewed documents and examined information from different sources that were either public or personal in nature to grasp the full meanings and contexts of higher education in Malaysia. The documents I perused came from multiple sources. They ranged from public documents and openly presented information like state legislations, ministry circulars, and websites of institutions to private or personal items contributed by the participants in this study. They also comprised electronic (soft-copy) and print (hard-copy) forms. Documentary research methodology is important and formed an integral part of my research process because documents stand in 'dual-relation' to human activity in that they transmit ideas and influence the course and nature of human activity (Prior, 2003).

There were a few important points for me to consider as I conducted my documentary research. Firstly, it was important for me to ascertain the origin or source and background of the document and information examined (McCulloch, 2004). I placed effort into establishing the credibility of the documentary source and the reliability of its contents as evidences of the matters being investigated (Bryman, 2012, p. 544). The availability of online and virtual documentary sources through the Internet made locating and accessing information from the public domain fairly easy. However, these online sources of information also required greater scrutiny and confirmation on its accuracy and legitimacy. Overall, documentary research provided this study with valuable information about Malaysia's higher education policies and curriculum requirements and about the M-B dual degree programs together with the Malaysian and British universities involved in materialising them.

3.1.4 Narrative inquiry.

In the literature review, I discussed Pinar's (1994, 2004) presentation of *'currere'* which explains curriculum as an autobiographical text. The focus of '*currere'* is on understanding educational experiences of the individual as reported by the individual. Similarly, Clandinin and Connelly (2000, p. 19) explain educational experience and narrative inquiry as follows:

> *"Experience happens narratively. Narrative inquiry is a form of narrative experience. Therefore, educational experience should be studied narratively."*

Gubrium and Holstein (1997, p. 146), in their book entitled *'The new language of qualitative method'*, describe narratives as:

> *" … accounts that offer some scheme, either implicitly or explicitly for organising and understanding the relation of objects and events described. Narratives need not be full-blown stories with requisite internal structures, but may be short accounts that emerge within or across turns at ordinary conversation, in interviews or interrogations, in public documents, or in organisational records."*

In other words, narrative inquiry begins with experience as expressed in lived and told stories (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 40). I used narrative inquiry in this study to convey how the knowledge of curriculum writers is held and formed, and to offer a way for how it can be studied and understood in this research project.

Understanding education and educational studies as forms of experience leads us to appreciate 'narrative' as the best way for researching and representing experience. According to Clandinin and Connelly (2000, pp. 4, 18), narrative is both the phenomenon under study and the method of study. In fact, they argue that narrative thinking is a key form of experience and is part of the phenomenon of narrative. This means that the analysis of narratives has to do with eliciting and analysing data that is sensitive to the sense of temporal sequence that people, as teller of stories about their lives or events around them, detect in their lives and surrounding episodes and inject into their accounts (Bryman, 2012, p. 713). For these reasons, Watson (2006, p. 510) asserts that *"people construct narratives and narratives construct people"*.

Hence, for me to understand the lives and experiences of the curriculum writers narratively meant I had to develop an understanding of the resources from which their narratives were constructed and the ways in which they were applied. The idea that narrative is something that is 'constructed' also connotes the element of 'fabrication'.

However, Watson (2006, p. 511) argues that it is the very quality of 'made-up'-ness that can reveal 'truths' about the ways individuals interpret events and the choices in their lives. In this study, my empirical narrative inquiry involved gleaning and analysing the information from interviews with curriculum writers and from relevant public and personal documents.

3.2   Research methods and data collection

Following the above discussion, the research methods in my study comprised in-depth interviews and document review together with analyses of the narratives contained in both. The focus of my study was on the curriculum writers at Malaysian private universities who work with counterparts at the British universities to materialise their cross-border dual degree curricula. I worked on analysing and understanding who these curriculum writers are, what they experience, how they go about their cross-border knowledge building work, and why so. As such, my in-depth interviews with these curriculum writers formed a significant part of the data collection and analysis for this study. I also developed individual profiles of the curriculum writers based on information from their interviews. I analysed their profiles and interview narratives to surface who they are, not as individuals but as social categories.

In order to cross-check and validate the information garnered from the curriculum writers, I also extended my interviews to include a few Ministry officials from the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) or Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA). I enquired of them their experiences and understandings of Malaysia's higher education reforms and policy making processes and agenda. The Ministry officials were not the focus of my study. Nonetheless, the information and perspectives they provided on state higher education policies and reforms helped my triangulation and analyses of data.

3.2.1 Interviews as data source.

The rich data gathered from in-depth, focused, interviews with the curriculum writers helped me to get to know their backgrounds, experiences and beliefs. Based on the data collected, I worked out how different aspects of their backgrounds and experiences were interconnected in order to understand who they are, how they work, and why (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Schubert, 1992). Data collection in focused interviews can be influenced by interview conditions and the relationship or interaction between researcher and participants (Atkins & Wallace, 2012, p. 160; Bryman, 2012, p. 582; L. Cohen et al., 2011, pp. 363-364). As such, I paid attention to the appropriateness of questions asked, methods of conducting the interviews, and modes of recording the participants' responses. With these efforts, all interviews were conducted smoothly and effectively and dependable data was collected from all participants.

As explained, the participants in this study comprised curriculum writers from Malaysian private universities and a few Ministry officials from the MQA. Hence, I prepared two sets of interview guides; one for each group of participants (see Appendix A1 and Appendix A2). The interview guides were semi-structured to give me flexibility to steer the conversations with these participants in ways that would allow opportunities for further questions, and to probe and clarify as necessary. The relatively flexible nature of semi-structured interviews has the capacity to provide insights into how these participants viewed their worlds (Bryman, 2012, p. 471).

Based on the literature review, the interview guides for the curriculum writers focused on five main areas (as listed below). I prepared a few likely questions for each area to facilitate the interviews and conversations with the curriculum writers and to draw out relevant information for each area. The five areas comprised the following.

i.   Curriculum writers and their roles and work in cross-border higher education
        in Malaysia:

Knowing the curriculum writer's biography is important in this study. As Pinar (2004, p. 25) explains, curriculum articulates people's lived experiences and is informed

by their autobiographical notions and social beliefs. As such, I asked the curriculum writers questions about their personal, educational and professional backgrounds. I enquired about what they do, and how they became involved in the dual degree programs in Malaysia. I was interested in their past and present experiences and about their beliefs and values that framed their work in education.

ii.   Character and complexities of Malaysia's cross-border higher education space:

Spatial analysis helps us conceptualise the scales or levels in which cross-border higher education is being practised and mobilised in Malaysia (Robertson, 2011; Robertson et al., 2007). Also, the concept of 'scale' facilitates my understanding of the national, sub-national (institutional), and supra-national (international) layers of Malaysia's higher education space (Robertson et al., 2002). Spatial changes in form and movement reflect changes in social structures and relations (Brenner, 2004), and the reconfiguring of state, society, and relations (Sassen, 2006). Hence, I asked curriculum writers about matters and/or priorities that influenced how they make their dual degree programs. Whose knowledge went into the dual degree curricula; theirs, their British counterpart's, or someone else's? What institutional or state policies, rules and regulations did they work with in making their dual degree programs? What was working with their British university counterparts like? What were the challenges encountered, and why?

iii.   Effects of Malaysia's cross-border higher education space on curriculum writers and what they do:

The interview conversations with curriculum writers probed to understand the effects of their situations and experiences of Malaysia's cross-border higher education on their work as curriculum writers. What did the higher education situations (priorities, dilemmas, conflicts) encountered mean to them? How did these situations and experiences affect their work? How would they describe their dual degree curriculum

writing process? Questions were asked to elicit from them their perceptions and feelings about any social, cultural, or political pressures that they encountered in their cross-border higher education and curriculum work in Malaysia.

iv. Curriculum writers' ways of addressing the complexities in making cross-border dual degree curricula in Malaysia:

The social view on curriculum conceives it to be a form of social and critical engagement with the production and reproduction of knowledge, and that its expression as 'text' links people's knowledge to their practices and customs or 'contexts' (B. Green, 2010, p. 452). This percept offers a way for me to examine how cross-border curriculum in Malaysia is formed as representation (text) of the curriculum writers' ways of connecting their 'knowing' and 'experiencing' to what they do and how they respond (context). As such, I asked curriculum writers how they responded to the priorities, conflicts, and challenges they faced in making their dual degree curricula. How did they reconcile the differences and conflicts encountered, and what did those situations mean?

v. Curriculum writers' understanding of internationalisation of higher education in Malaysia:

The literature informs that internationalisation of higher education is a broad and encompassing construct and most views are of the Western world. I was interested in what internationalisation of higher education meant to curriculum writers who made the cross-border dual degree programs between Malaysian and British universities? How did they perceive 'national-ness' and/or 'international-ness' in Malaysia's higher education? How were the foreign partner universities identified? What were their views on using English to deliver the cross-border dual degree programs? Asking the curriculum writers all these questions and examining their responses helped me unravel how their beliefs, biases, and experiences culture the dual degree curricula in Malaysia.

3.2.2 Documents as data source.

In this study, I examined documents from both official (public) and personal (private) sources. Personal documents comprised items belonging to the curriculum writers like their letters, emails, meeting notes, diaries, and work files. A few curriculum writers shared with me their personal documents and these were handled carefully and confidentially. All personal documents were reviewed with the permission of the owners. The public documents I examined included state legislations, government or ministry documents including policies, reports, letters and circulars. Most of the public documents I worked on were produced by the MOHE, MQA, and related government agencies like the National Council on Higher Education and the Performance Management and Delivery Unit (PEMANDU). Other public documents by the MQA like the 'Program Standards for Business Studies', 'Code of Practice for Program Accreditation (COPPA)', and the register of government-approved undergraduate programs were also reviewed. I focused on cross-border dual degree programs in Business and related disciplines as these were common to all Malaysian private universities offering dual degrees (see Table 1). The review of these state documents provided information on the processes for approval, accreditation, and governance of private higher education programs in the country.

The review of public documents also encompassed information by foreign or international accreditation bodies like UK's Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) and the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA). Most of the documents by local and foreign agencies could be accessed via the Internet. I was careful and checked the authenticity of websites and online sources and ascertained the credibility and accuracy of information obtained. Importantly, I analysed the information contained in these documents for factual contents and underlying themes.

In my review of public and personal documents, the contents of every document was perused in tandem with other documents. This was done because the 'inter-connectedness' or 'inter-textuality' between documents can form part of the context or background to the writing of other documents (Bryman, 2012, p. 555). The information

provided by curriculum writers through their diary entries, meeting notes, and compilation of work memos was helpful and constructive for my study. There were records of the issues raised and discussed in meetings, reactions by different parties, and decisions made or actions taken which gave me insights into the challenges, conflicts, and belief systems of the people involved. The types of personal documents I examined were varied. One curriculum writer shared with me his collection of emails between him and his counterpart at the British university which contained disagreements and unpleasant exchanges between the two parties. Another curriculum writer's dossier of letters from the MQA and MOHE showed the state regulations on private higher education programs in the country to be strict and inflexible. A third curriculum writer's journal was enlightening as it contained his thoughts, feelings and frustrations about his work as he developed courses for his Malaysian university college (UC)'s dual degree programs with a British partner university. Finally, there was one curriculum writer's archive of her Malaysian UC's program records and her own work files which showed how her UC's plans to offer dual degree programs were fixed on particular Western universities. Through careful and detailed analyses of these documents, I was able to draw out the underlying social, cultural, and political realities of the curriculum writers and the institutions involved.

In my examination of public documents, like annual reports by Malaysian and British universities and state policies and regulations on higher education, I paid careful attention to the choice of language and how messages were conveyed. This is because such public texts have been written with the prospect of scrutiny by others in mind. According to Atkinson and Coffey (2011, p. 79), the 'documentary reality' of official and public documents is a separate reality that should not be taken as 'transparent representations' of an underlying organisational or social reality. My review of the state's legislations, policy documents, and official reports concerning education in Malaysia provided a longitudinal analysis of how higher education has evolved over time in the country. However, I was not able to access particular official documents like MQA's review and recommendations on the delivery of the dual degree programs

between Malaysian and British universities in the country although they exist. The analysis of such documents could shed more light on the issues examined in this study.

3.3   Research sites and participants

3.3.1 Site selection.

In this study, I was interested to understand how cross-border programs like the M-B dual degrees internationalise and/or transnationalise Malaysia's higher education. My focus was on knowing the experiences and perspectives of curriculum writers at particular Malaysian private universities which make these programs with their British partners. Hence, prior to conducting any interview, I needed to identify which are the Malaysian universities to be selected as sites for recruiting suitable participants. Associated with this was the important step of determining the selection criteria and strategies for recruiting these participants.

I surveyed all Malaysian private universities to find out which offer cross-border undergraduate programs with dual awards from foreign partner universities. I found that Malaysian private universities worked only with British universities to deliver cross-border dual degree programs. At the time of this study, there were four Malaysian private universities offering M-B dual degree programs. The common dual degree offered by all four is the undergraduate program in Business and related subject areas. The four Malaysian private universities are the following:

a. Asia Pacific University
b. Nilai University
c. Sunway University
d. Taylor's University

All four private universities are located in and around the same city, i.e. Kuala Lumpur, which is Malaysia's capital. Table 1 lists the Malaysian private universities that were identified for this study, together with the names of their respective British partner universities and the dual degree programs offered in Business and related subject areas. My research plan was to recruit curriculum writers from all four Malaysian private universities to participate in this study. Upon receiving ethics approval from the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC) on 13 September 2013 (see Appendix B), I wrote to the Vice-Chancellors (VCs) of all four Malaysian private universities requesting for permission to invite their curriculum writers to participate in the study. Samples of my 'request for permission' letter are included as Appendix C1 and Appendix C2. The VCs of two Malaysian private universities granted permission for me to do so (see Appendix D1 and Appendix D2).

As explained earlier, I enlisted the participation of a few Ministry officials from the MQA to gather more complete information about Malaysia's higher education system and governance. Their responses were also used to cross-check and validate my data analyses of curriculum writers' interviews and documents. The British universities, collaborating with these Malaysian private universities in dual degree arrangements, were not included in this study.

Table 1:
List of dual degree programs in Business and related fields by Malaysian and British universities

Names of Malaysian and British universities	List of dual degree programs and title of awards
Asia Pacific University of Technology & Innovation*(Malaysia) and Staffordshire University (UK) *Formerly known as University College of Technology & Innovation (UCTI)	School of Business & Management: B. A. (Hons) in Business Management B. A. (Hons) in Business Management with specialism in: - E-Procurement B. A. (Hons) in International Business Management B. A. (Hons) in Marketing Management B. A. (Hons) in Human Resource Management B. A. (Hons) in Tourism Management B. A. (Hons) in Media Marketing B. A. (Hons) in Accounting and Finance B. A. (Hons) in Accounting and Finance with specialism in: - Forensic Accounting - Taxation - Forex and Investments - Internal Audit
Nilai University (Malaysia) and Oxford Brookes University (UK)	Faculty of Business: B. A. (Hons) in Accounting and Finance B. Business Administration (Hons) B. Business Administration (Hons) in Finance B. Business Administration (Hons) in Human Resource Management
Sunway University (Malaysia) and Lancaster University (UK)	Sunway University Business School: B. Sc. (Hons) Accounting and Finance B. Sc. (Hons) Business Management B. Sc. (Hons) Business Studies B. Sc. (Hons) Global Supply Chain Management B. Sc. (Hons) International Business B. Sc. (Hons) Marketing B. A. (Hons) Entrepreneurship
Taylor's University (Malaysia) and University of West England (UK)	Taylor's Business School: Bachelor of Business (Hons) B. B. (Hons) International Business and Marketing B. B. (Hons) Banking and Finance B. B. (Hons) Finance and Economics B. A. (Hons) Accounting and Finance B. Sc. (Hons) Actuarial Studies

Information retrieved online on 18 August 2015 from the following sources:
(a) Sunway University - from https://university.sunway.edu.my/subs/bsc-b-studies (b) Taylor's University – from https://university2.taylors.edu.my/business/why-business-taylors/dual-award; (c) Asia Pacific University - from http://www.apu.edu.my/our-courses/undergraduate-studies/business-management-marketing-tourism-media; and (d) Nilai University – from http://www.nilai.edu.my/undergraduate-studies

3.3.2 Recruitment of participants.

As outlined above, the participants for this study were recruited based on a set of selection criteria. These criteria were established to ensure that individuals with suitable and sufficient experience were selected for this study. The criteria were as follows:

i.   Nature of work in cross-border higher education programs:

Curriculum writers recruited for this study have to be full-time staff at the Malaysian university concerned. They have to be involved in planning and developing the curricula for its cross-border dual degree program/s in Business and/or related subject areas. Asides program planning and/or curriculum development, their work may include course delivery like lecturing, tutoring, or supervising students in the dual degree programs. The Ministry officials were selected based on similar criteria. I looked for their involvement in policy making, program approval, curriculum review and accreditation matters related to cross-border higher education in the country.

ii.   Extent of experience in higher education in Malaysia:

Local curriculum writers must have at least one year's experience working in their respective roles involving cross-border dual degree programs in Malaysia. Foreign curriculum writers must have at least two years' experience or engagement in cross-border dual degree programs in Malaysia. The same criteria applied to the recruitment of Ministry officials.

Following the above selection and recruitment procedures, the participants identified for this study comprised the following:

a   12 curriculum writers from Malaysian private universities; they included academics and senior academics, and a few of them held additional responsibilities such as being program administrators or course leaders; and,

b   Three Ministry officials from the MQA; all were senior officers overseeing the regulation of private colleges and universities and the approval and accreditation of cross-border higher education programs in the country.

The curriculum writers recruited from two Malaysian private universities comprised both local (Malaysian) and expatriate (foreign) academic staff. Among the 12 curriculum writers recruited, there were seven Malaysians and five expatriates. One of the expatriate curriculum writers had worked in one of the non-participating Malaysian private universities; when he was there, he developed courses for its dual degree program with the relevant British partner university.

To avoid any recruitment bias and to ensure that the pool of curriculum writers comprised suitable individuals, I requested help from the two Malaysian private universities' VCs to identify among their staff members those who fit the study's selection criteria. To all potential participants, I sent my research invitation packs. The packs contained copies of the explanatory statement (which outlined the purpose, expectations, and anonymity aspects of the study), interview guide (with sample interview questions), and consent form. The explanatory statements for curriculum writers and Ministry officials and the consent form are enclosed at the end of this thesis as appendices E1, E2, and F respectively.

Potential participants were asked to reply directly to me on their interest and agreement to participate in this study. In this way, the participant recruitment process provided anonymity and confidentiality to all participants. By having a clear set of selection criteria and enlisting help from within the Malaysian universities, quality

participants in terms of their knowledge and experience of cross-border higher
education in Malaysia and contribution to making M-B dual degree curricula were
recruited for this study. Table 2 lists the participants recruited according to their 'names'
(in alphabetical order), their nationalities or countries of origin, and a brief description
of their roles and experiences with regards cross-border higher education in Malaysia
and in other countries. The 'names' of participants have been replaced by pseudonyms
to preserve their anonymity.

Table 2
List of participants and brief biodata

No.	Name	Nationality / Country of origin	Roles and experiences in cross-border higher education (CBHE) and dual degree (DD) programs in Malaysia
Curriculum writers (pseudonyms):			
1.	**Chandra Sen**	Malaysian	- Has more than 20 years' experience in Malaysian CBHE; he has worked as lecturer and administrator in UK universities' cross-border twinning programs and as lecturer in an Australian university's branch campus in Malaysia - Has at least 8 years' experience in developing and delivering courses in Human Resources and Management in DD programs between Malaysian and British universities
2.	**Edward (Ed) Jones**	United Kingdom	- Has been involved in Malaysian CBHE since 2001; he began working in Malaysia as senior administrator of a British university's cross-border twinning program with a Malaysian private college - Has about 8 years' experience working in a Malaysian private university's collaboration with a British university to develop DD curricula in Business and Computing
3.	**Fred Tan**	Malaysian	- Has more than 10 years teaching and administration experience in CBHE involving an Australian twinning program in Malaysia - Since 2011, has been teaching Accounting

			in DD programs offered by Malaysian and British universities - He was part of the academic team at the Malaysian private university to develop the DD in Marketing with the British partner university
4.	**Harry Porter**	United Kingdom	- Has worked in Malaysian CBHE since 2001 when he was lecturer and program advisor for a British university's twinning program with a Malaysian private college - Between 2011 and 2014, he was involved in developing Business and Computing courses for a Malaysian private university's DD programs with its British partner university; he also teaches in the DD programs
5.	Jay Rajan	Malaysian	- His career of more than 20 years in Malaysian private institutions has involved CBHE; he taught Law in cross-border twinning and distance learning programs - Since 2008, he has been teaching in DD programs in Business and related areas at a Malaysian private university working with a British partner university - Between 2010 and 2013, he developed two Law courses for the Malaysian private university's DD with the British university
6.	Jerry Hall	British	- Has more than 20 years' experience as lecturer and administrator of CBHE programs in Malaysia - Since 2006, he has developed and delivered courses in Computing and Business IT in cross-border programs at a Malaysian private university - He wrote the Business Information Systems and Business IT courses for a Malaysian university's DD programs with a British university
7.	Joe Lim	Malaysian	- Has worked as lecturer and administrator in a Malaysian private university's cross-border DD program with a British university from 2006 to 2012 - Has about five years' experience in developing and delivering courses for the

			Malaysian university's DD program with a British university
8.	John Smith	New Zealand	- Has worked at two Malaysian private universities; between 2009 and 2015, he was lecturer and administrator of cross-border DD programs with British universities - He wrote Marketing courses for both Malaysian universities' DD programs with British partner universities, in Business and related areas
9.	**Molly Chong**	Malaysian	- Has worked, since the mid-1990s, in CBHE programs at Malaysian private colleges and universities; almost 20 years CBHE experience - Has developed cross-border twinning and credit transfer programs with Australian, UK, and US universities - She developed courses for Malaysian-British DD programs in Business, Management, Business Studies, and Accounting and Finance
10.	Penny Loo	Malaysian	- Has approximately 15 years' experience working as lecturer and administrator in CBHE programs at a Malaysian private university - Since 2009, she has been teaching and developing Business Information Systems and IT courses for the Malaysian private university's undergraduate and postgraduate DD programs in Business and Computing with a British university
11.	Susan Wong	Malaysian	- Since the mid-1980s, she has been teaching Accounting courses in cross-border twinning programs at a Malaysian private college; has approximately 30 years' experience in CBHE as lecturer and program administrator - From 2011 to 2012, she was involved in planning and developing the DD curriculum for a Malaysian private university and its British partner university

12.	**Tom Cooney**	United Kingdom	- Has been involved in Malaysian CBHE since the early-1990s as senior administrator for an Australian twinning program at a Malaysian private college - Between 2006 and 2011, he developed Management-related courses for the initial DD program in Business and Management between a Malaysian private university and a British university
Ministry officials (pseudonyms):			
1.	Helena Rodrigues	Malaysian	- Has worked in Malaysian private colleges offering CBHE programs for more than 13 years before joining the MQA in 2008 - As senior officer at MQA, she was responsible for quality assurance on private HEIs, CBHE program approvals and accreditation matters, and was involved in setting-up MQA's program standards committees
2.	Mohamad Abdul	Malaysian	- Worked with MOE's National Accreditation Board (NAB) from 1998 to 2007, before NAB became the MQA; he served the MQA until his retirement in 2013 - Approximately 15 years experience supervising and managing NAB's/MQA's accreditation processes on Malaysia's CBHE programs with foreign universities
3.	Simon Chin	Malaysian	- He joined NAB in 2001 and has worked in CBHE program approvals and accreditation matters for more than 10 years - Since 2012, he was senior officer in MQA's policy and curriculum departments and has worked on CBHE policy matters in relevant MOE/MOHE committees

3.3.3 Pilot interviews.

I piloted the interview guide for curriculum writers twice to ensure effectiveness in the questions prepared and appropriateness of the words and phrases used. I employed the interviews with a 'data-generating' purpose and not as a 'data-gathering' process. As such, I paid attention to my interaction with every participant during the interview to ensure that it was appropriate and allowed each participant's voice to be articulated and captured (Baker, 2004; Freebody, 2003). The first pilot interview was with an academic who was not included in this study because her involvement and experience with the dual degree program was slightly less than a year and she was with the Psychology department and not the Business department. The second pilot interview was with a curriculum writer involved in the dual degree program in Business Studies. This was taken as the first field interview conducted for this study. Atkins and Wallace (2012, pp. 89-90) recommend that data produced from the first interview conducted in a research project, as the pilot or practice interview, be used as data for the research and to improve subsequent interviews. These pilot or initial interviews helped me to spot my mistakes, review the clarity of my questions, and improve the effectiveness of my questioning and conversation techniques. The interview guide for Ministry officials was not piloted as it was very similar to the one used with curriculum writers.

3.3.4 Carrying out field interviews.

Through the field interviews, I captured the participants' narratives that conveyed their constructed accounts of their worlds to me. I observed and listened carefully to the curriculum writers talk about their experiences, what actually happened, and how they responded so that I could get closer to how they perceived their work and worlds (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). As Fontana and Frey (2005, p. 695) explain, their narratives are *"historically, politically, and contextually bound"*. The one-to-one, in-depth, interviews with the participants were conducted at their preferred times and

locations. All the curriculum writers interviewed agreed to be audio-recorded. During the interviews, I helped them feel comfortable and unthreatened by the interview process so that their oral accounts would be clear and accurate and undoubted or disputed on methodological grounds (L. Cohen et al., 2011; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). As it turned out, all the participants were familiar with the research interview process and the interviews went smoothly.

Generally, the participants did not need much prompting to talk about their knowledge, experiences, and feelings about cross-border higher education in Malaysia and their work in dual degree programs involving the British universities. I made observatory notes on the participant's responses, body language, engagement, emotions (expressed or suppressed), and enthusiasm levels with the questions posed or issues discussed. Some of the participant's statements (quotes), silences (long pauses), and points of contradiction and/or confusion helped me to make more nuanced interpretations of their responses. I was deliberate in making both audio-recordings and observatory notes as these helped to ensure accuracy when transcribing the interviews. I did not want to rely on note-taking alone as it would be difficult for me to write down everything the participants said as well as note their body language and expressions. I was also not comfortable with using audio recordings alone as technology may fail me and it could make some participants feel self-conscious or inhibited. There were no video recordings for this study.

I conducted all the interviews personally, and they took more than six months to complete. However, the entire process was a worthwhile one. I carried out the first interview in October 2013 and the final one was completed in April 2014. I planned for each interview to take about 60 minutes and most of them took approximately that length of time. However, there were two interviews that were quite engaging and informative and each went on for slightly more than 90 minutes. Most of the responses gathered were quite clear although some aspects of the information collected were complicated and a few responses were unexpected. Three curriculum writers told me they enjoyed the interviews because it gave them the opportunity to reflect upon their

work and what it meant to them. Carrying out these in-depth interviews personally brought me closer to understanding these curriculum writers in terms of their biographies, experiences, and beliefs in cross-border knowledge building work.

The data gathering and analysis of interviews and documents were not separate stages within this study. They were the ongoing parts of my overall research project. Figure 3 summarises the key steps in the qualitative research process of my study.

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│  1.  Formulate research question(s)         │
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│  2.  Selection of relevant sites and subjects:          │
│  -   Identify appropriate institutions and recruit      │
│      suitable participants                              │
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│  3.  Collection of relevant data:                       │
│  -   Interview design and conducting interviews         │
│  -   Documentary research                               │
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│  4.  Interpretation of data:                            │
│  -   Analysis of interview narratives and profiles      │
│  -   Qualitative document analysis                      │
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│  5.  Conceptual and theoretical work:                   │
│  -   Curriculum theory and critical inquiry             │
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│  6.  Writing up findings/conclusions                    │
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Adapted from Bryman, A. (2012), Social research methods (4th ed.). Oxford University Press, p. 384.

Figure 3. **Steps in the qualitative research process of the study**

3.4 Data analyses and interpretations

A challenge in narrative inquiry is the work of transitioning from 'field texts' to 'research texts', i.e. moving from data collection in the field to analysing data for meanings and findings (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. xiv). Additionally, data analysis in ethnographic research involves making sense of the particular social worlds of the participants and the relationships and practices within (Atkins & Wallace, 2012, p. 163). In this section, I discuss how I transcribed, coded, and analysed the curriculum writers' narratives to interpret how they experienced and understood their knowledge building work that materialised the cross-border dual degree programs in Malaysia. I also explain how information on the curriculum writers' personal and professional biographies was used to develop their individual profiles.

3.4.1 Transcribing and coding for data analysis.

I transcribed and coded the interview data as soon as possible after each interview was completed. This was done so that I could accurately capture the participants' responses in their audio-recordings and tie them to my observations in freshly made field notes. I took approximately eight months, from November 2013 till June 2014, to complete all the required transcription work. All completed transcripts were returned to the participants concerned for their vetting and approval.

Transcribing the interview narratives was arduous work. On average, I took approximately six hours to transcribe the contents of an hour's interview. Accurate transcription was important to retain the information collected and to get the most meaning out from the text. In transcribing and analysing the interview data, I did not treat the language, phrases, and text articulated by participants as separate words or sentences but as collections of expressions with meanings and interconnections. Meanings were not developed in isolation but rather in relation to the social, cultural, and historical contexts of the curriculum writers and their environments.

The next step in my data analysis was the coding of the qualitative data. The qualitative data coding process has been criticised for 'fragmenting' the data because conventional coding involves cutting and pasting, and having chunks or fragments of data from interview transcripts being 'plucked away' for analysis. The concern here is that such process removes the data from its source, social setting, and narrative flow. I overcame this concern by carrying out the coding process with computer assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) as this approach together with narrative analysis help mitigate data fragmentation (Bryman, 2012, pp. 565, 577-578).

I used NVivo as the CAQDAS package to assist me in coding and interrogating the qualitative data. Also, based on Lofland and Lofland's (1995) guide to qualitative analysis, I applied the following questions to develop appropriate codes for my data analysis:

− What does the item of data represent?

− Of what area (or topic) is this item of data an instance?

− What question about a topic does this item of data suggest?

− What is happening?

− What do participants say they are doing?

To sharpen my understanding of the data and issues contained within the participants' narratives, I listened to their interview recordings and read their transcripts multiple times. Together with the review of documents and field notes, I picked out key words, repeated terms, or significant remarks made by the participants. The terms, ideas, and topics emerging from the information collected were pieced together as part of the qualitative data coding process. A set of codes (based on terms, topics, or themes) was generated to guide me in interpreting the data and theorising possible relationships or logics within the data. Initially, codes were generated without thinking too much about the number of codes created and certain data (words, phrases, quotes) were coded in more than one way. It was important that all interesting and relevant points were not missed. As the interview process progressed and included more

participants, I reviewed my initial set of codes in relation to the increased amounts of data collected. Also, my coding and data analysis work considered a few more questions like the ones below.

– Were there two or more words or phrases being used to describe the same phenomenon; if so, the repetitions or overlaps were removed.

– Did some of the codes relate to particular concepts or categories in extant literature; if so, the appropriate terminology as cited in the literature was used instead.

– Were there connections between the codes? Did some participants think that one thing was associated or caused by another; if so, these connections were coded.

By the end of the interview process, I had reviewed the set of codes or categories of ideas (themes) several times, and refined them against the information collated from all the completed transcripts. This coding process became a part of my qualitative data analysis as it involved me thinking about the meaning of the data, and reducing the rich and vast amounts of data to concise and coherent categories (Bryman, 2012, p. 577; Miles & Huberman, 1994, pp. 44, 286).

3.4.2 Analysing narratives and themes.

In analysing the interview transcripts, I focused on locating stories, experiences, and accounts of events as told by the participants. My challenge in analysing the participants' stories and responses was in teasing out themes and meanings from within their narratives. Reviewing the literatures, I found no clear-cut rules on how qualitative data analysis should be performed. According to Bryman (2012, p. 565), working through the rich, unstructured, qualitative information captured in participants' narratives is like *"finding a path through the thicket of prose that makes up data"*. He describes narrative analysis as:

"… an approach to the elicitation and analysis of data that is sensitive to the sense of the temporal sequence that people, as providers of accounts (often in the form of stories) about themselves or events by which they are affected, detect in their lives and surrounding episodes and inject into their accounts. With narrative analysis, the focus of attention shifts from 'what actually happened?' to 'how do people make sense of what happened?' The last point can be expanded to 'how do people make sense of what happened and to what effect?', because stories are nearly always told with a purpose in mind – there is an intended effect." (Bryman, 2012, p. 582)

As I analysed the curriculum writers' narratives for emergent themes, I went back-and-forth through all the interview transcripts. I reflected on the information gathered, searched for consistent ideas or topics across their narratives, confirmed the codes I developed, and delved into the connections between them (if any). I considered the curriculum writers' responses introspectively and checked if the ideas and topics contained within their narratives related with existing literature or were something new. These reflective steps allowed me to do two things; (a) confirm the coding or categorising of the vast amounts of unstructured information, and (b) distil the information into a few emergent themes. I was mindful that the process of extracting key themes from the curriculum writers' narratives rested on my reading of the information, awareness of the research questions, the investigative lens used, and the coding strategy employed.

I understood that constructing themes and drawing conclusions based on what the curriculum writers said required subtle and thoughtful interpretation. I worked meticulously and methodically to capture, analyse, and present the information collected, and to interpret the curriculum writers' responses fairly and accurately. I was mindful of the contents, meanings, and emotions contained in their responses. Minimising my subjectivity and bias in the analysis and presentation of data is an important aspect of qualitative research (Atkins & Wallace, 2012, pp. 223-224). Here, the literature review provided me with a few approaches to perform my data and thematic analyses. I found using NVivo helpful for my narrative and thematic analyses as

the software enabled me to identify key words or phrases and recurring ideas or topics in an objective manner.

Analysing the narratives for themes also involved the synthesising and ordering of information. I employed the 'framework' approach outlined by Bryman (2012, pp. 579-580) for analysing themes, and I constructed a few matrices based on emerging key themes and sub-themes. The themes and sub-themes were developed based on recurring information, texts, and patterns that surfaced from the interview transcripts, field notes, and documents. Figure 4 is an example of a matrix following the framework approach on a particular sub-theme, i.e. 'preference for British education or qualification', that emerged from my data analyses. Asides replacing participants' real names with pseudonyms, the term 'UK University' was used instead of the British universities' actual names.

Sub-theme – 'Preference for British education or qualification'				
Interview areas / Curriculum writers	Curriculum writers' backgrounds	Curriculum writers' understanding of cross-border higher education in Malaysia	Effects of Malaysia's higher education on curriculum writers and their work	Curriculum writers' understanding of internationalisation of higher education in Malaysia's cross-border higher education
1. Chandra S.	*"I have exposure to British education and teaching … I had taught UK twinning degree programs in private colleges and the University of London's degree programs … These are very British-oriented."*		*"… the thinking by the people here is that we must change and follow what UK University says … But UK University has difficulty understanding why Compulsory subjects must be added into the curriculum (here) because they don't have these over there."*	
2. Edward J.	*"I was one of the few people (here) who knows about British education because*			*"Historically, internationalisation has been largely driven by British or*

	on my previous experience …I managed a lot of the ERASMUS and TEMPUS projects with dual and joint degrees across a number of countries in Europe … now you might begin to see part of the pattern here!"			*American and the use of English language ... Most books and references are by British or American authors."*
3. Fred T.	*"I may be biased … I think my first language is English."*	*"UK degrees are definitely what the Malaysian market is looking at."*	*"UK University's Management School is one of the top in the UK … So, you can just imagine, we have to collaborate with them."*	
4. Harry P.	*"The academic staff here have had quite a lot of their education in the UK and they are bringing that back here."*		*"Coming up with the qualifications and classifications at this end, we want to make sure that we're in line with UK University … It means we're developing programs which closely resemble the standards of those at UK University."*	
9. Molly C.	*"Most lecturers have been educated in America, Britain, or Europe … there's tendency for them to want the Western ways."*	*"Somehow in this part of the world, the premium is still on British university for undergraduate studies."*	*"… to benchmark our standards, it was really a great help in moving the standards of teaching and curriculum here to the standards of UK University."*	
12. Tom C.		*"We get parents asking if their child does the dual degree here, can they transfer to UK University after the first year … See what I mean?"*		*"This is what the mothers and fathers out there want … It's the lure of a UK or foreign degree."*

Source: Adapted from Bryman, A. (2012). Social research methods (4th ed.). Oxford University Press, p. 579.

***Figure 4.* Framework approach to analysing sub-themes and themes in narratives**

Using the framework approach, Figure 5 is another matrix that illustrates how I identified and confirmed key themes based on the sub-themes derived earlier. For example, I indicate under the key theme of 'Benchmarking the British' (i.e. Theme II in Figure 5) the sub-theme 'preference for British education or qualification' (as underlined text) which was identified earlier.

Areas of analyses			Personal profiles *(Who they are)*	Institutional priorities *(Where they work)*	Curriculum writing practices *(How they work)*	Orientations in higher education *(What they know)*
Curriculum writers	Key themes:	Sub-themes:				
Local (Malaysians)	Theme I: Commercialising higher education		*- Limited public higher education opportunities* *- 'Product' of cross-border higher education reforms*	*- Enterprise priorities (orientation)* *- Being 'market oriented'; building 'marketable' degree programs*	*- Addressing 'opportunities' in private higher education* *- Offering what the market wants*	*- Education as enterprise* *- Recognising 'opportunities' in the 'gaps'*
	Theme II: Benchmarking the British		*- Personal experience of British/Western higher education*	*- Concern over lack of faith in local programs (products)* *<u>- Preference for British education or qualification</u>* *- Start/continue working with British partner university*	*- Follow British practices; stick with British partner's ways* *- Wanting British partner's help* *- Having Western focus; bias towards Western resources*	*- Better recognition and employment prospects with British or Western qualifications*
	Theme III: Coming together of 'opposites'		*- Best of two worlds* *- Locals proficient in English*	*- Adapting Asian versus Western ways of education and up-bringing*	*- Like 'David and Goliath'* *- East meets West; Asian versus European ways*	*- Conflicts between Malaysian and British regimes* *- Dealing with dissimilar*

				- Need to address 'gaps' in knowledge and systems	cultures and frameworks - One country, two systems
Foreign (Expatriates/ Anglophones)	Theme I: Commercialising higher education	- Pioneering M-B dual degrees for branding and overcoming competition	- Building new university's brand and recognition - Responsive to market needs - Shift from being 'retailer' to 'manufacturer' of higher education	- Shift from being 'facilitators' to 'authors' of cross-border higher education programs	- Business of higher education
	Theme II: Benchmarking the British	- Bringing European higher education experience to Malaysia - Introducing European models or methods	- Grow through British sponsorship - Guided by British methods and traditions	- Familiarity with European higher education - Deferring to the familiar; stick with British traditions - Availability of Western resources	- British qualifications more globally recognised compared to Malaysian
	Theme III: Coming together of 'opposites'	- Recognise importance of cross-border higher education experience - Practitioners with cross-border higher education expertise	- Dissimilar histories and priorities	- Addressing differences (gaps) between Malaysian and British/UK institutions - Locals to 'step-forward' and 'wean off' foreign support	- Reconcile differences and conflicts between two systems - Serving multiple 'masters', e.g. British partner, QAA, and MQA

Source: Adapted from framework approach to thematic analyses in Bryman (2012), Social research methods (4th ed.), p. 579.

***Figure 5.* Thematic analysis of Malaysian and Anglophone curriculum writers' narratives**

3.4.3 Analysing participants' profiles.

This study comprised 12 curriculum writers at Malaysian private universities whose work included making dual degree curricula with British partner universities. The 12 curriculum writers comprised seven locals and five foreigners. The foreign curriculum writers were all Anglophones; three were from Britain, one from Ireland, and another from New Zealand. According to Connell (2002, p. 167), the contemporary activities of our globalising world involves the integrating of economies, communications, and mobility of peoples and all these have made the understanding of intellectual workers as social groups relevant. There is much to learn from understanding who the curriculum writers are and how they are unique as social groups. As such, I gathered information from their narratives about their personal and professional biographies and developed individual profiles for all curriculum writers based on the following.

- Who they are (the person);
- Where they work (their institutional backgrounds);
- How they work (their curriculum writing practices); and,
- What their experiences of Malaysia's cross-border higher education are (their orientation)

In this way, each individual profile served as the curriculum writer's pro-forma or vignette. Collectively, these curriculum writers' pro-forma knit together in particular ways their personal trajectories, experiences, and views on cross-border higher education and making dual degree curricula in Malaysia. My analysis of these curriculum writers' profiles revealed that they belonged to two distinct social groups or categories, i.e. as 'Malaysians' and 'Anglophones'. These two social categories of Malaysian and Anglophone curriculum writers are not intended to be representative samples of the larger populations of curriculum writers in Malaysian private universities. Rather, they are groups that are similar enough in social character to offer relevant information and useful insights into the social, cultural, and historic forces that impact their work in cross-border dual degree curriculum making in Malaysia. Results from the analysis of

these curriculum writers' profiles are used to support and strengthen that from the narrative and thematic analyses of their responses.

Six curriculum writers' individual profiles were identified for more detailed analysis and discussions in Chapter Five. These curriculum writers are the ones listed 1 to 4, 9 and 12 in Table 2; for ease of reference, their 'names' have been bolded. These curriculum writers' profiles were selected for more detailed discussions because they represent quite distinct backgrounds and also because of their depth of knowledge and experience in Malaysia's cross-border higher education.

3.5   Qualitative research considerations

In this section, I discuss the concerns of qualitative research in terms of the validity, reliability, and trustworthiness of claims made as well as need for ethical considerations. I also discuss the strengths and weaknesses of this study taking into consideration my particular positionality in it as a sociology of curriculum researcher.

3.5.1 Validity and reliability.

The validity (credibility) and reliability (transferability) of findings are important touchstones of qualitative research in education. I addressed these requirements of qualitative research in this study by pursuing good research practice throughout, ensuring richness in the information collected, approaching relevant groups of participants, and cross-checking information from the different sources (L. Cohen et al., 2011, pp. 133-134). To validate my data analyses and research findings, I cross-checked information gathered from several sources which included interviews with curriculum writers and Ministry officials and reviews of public and personal documents (L. Cohen et al., 2011, pp. 141-143). Cross-checking information from different sources is important because I have to determine which particular responses or pieces of data can be treated

as reliable or trustworthy. This cross-checking, or triangulation process, ensured accuracy and consistency in my data analyses and improved confidence in my findings.

Trustworthiness is another important criterion for evaluating qualitative studies. This study involved in-depth interviews with 12 curriculum writers to draw out from them how and what they know and experience about making cross-border dual degree curricula in Malaysia, and to analyse how these affect the cultural character of its higher education space. Therefore, my preoccupation in this qualitative study was on the depth rather than the breadth of information gathered from the curriculum writers that came with detailed analyses of the narratives contained in interviews and documents. I focused on picking up the nuances in narratives, cross-checking important pieces of information for accuracy, and identifying any relationships or interconnections between sets of data. These steps contributed to this study meeting the validity, reliability, and confirmability criteria in qualitative research (Bryman, 2012, p. 390). The findings from my data analyses are reported and discussed in chapters Four, Five, and Six.

3.5.2 Research ethics – access, consent, and confidentiality.

Ethnographic research ethics requires that I obtain official permission from the institutions concerned to invite their staff members to participate in my study (Atkins & Wallace, 2012, pp. 149-150; Bryman, 2012, pp. 84-85). As indicated earlier in Section 3.3.1, I obtained ethics approval from MUHREC prior to commencing this study. To access the participants appropriately, I had asked for permission and assistance from the Malaysian universities' VCs to disseminate my research invitation packs to their suitably experienced staff. Obtaining the VCs' permission helped me to get past the institutions' 'gate-keepers' as well as locate and recruit the right participants for this study. Prospective participants were given comprehensive information in the Explanatory Statement for them to make informed decisions on whether to participate or not. MUHREC's Consent Form for low risk projects was used for this study (see Appendix F). The Consent Form explained the research purpose and process along with participant's rights to privacy and withdrawal from the study. Obtaining every

participant's informed consent demonstrated respect for their autonomy to make objective decisions on participating or withdrawing. Informed consent was also important in this study because I am a full-time employee at a Malaysian private college. Hence, getting the participants' informed consent eliminated concerns of any 'unequal relationship' or 'uncomfortable feeling' they may have with me as the researcher or with the study.

This study treats Malaysia's cross-border higher education as the unit of analysis. As such, participants were not identified with particular universities but considered as a population of curriculum writers to obscure their identity. Participants' personal information such as their names, age, and job titles are not disclosed and their responses disguised by the use of pseudonyms. I explained to all participants how data would be collected and managed for confidentiality and anonymity. The participant recruitment strategy described in Section 3.3.2 also ensured participant's anonymity. I was mindful to handle all information gathered from the participants' interviews and documents confidentially and respectfully.

3.5.3 Strengths and weaknesses.

There are several strong points about this study. Firstly, the study's theoretical perspectives are framed by historicised curriculum theory (Pinar, 2004; Young, 2008) and its investigations into how globalising higher education reforms re-culture Malaysia's higher education employed the social understanding of curriculum as the research lens (B. Green, 2010; Kemmis, 1993). This approach surfaced the curriculum writers' experiences, biases, interests and concerns and how these together with their knowledge building processes culture the cross-border curricula materialised between Malaysian and British universities for delivery in Malaysia. Such knowledge or understanding about the cultural character of Malaysia's higher education cannot be gained from the technical and rational research methods employed to date.

Another strong point of this study is the use of ethnography as one of the research methodologies. Malaysia's higher education and cross-border reforms are complex phenomena involving wide ranging circumstances, non-obvious dimensions, and complex and contested social and cultural considerations. Ethnography addresses these challenges and complexities by interrogating the participants' language, expressions, practices and belief systems and drawing out their insider's perspectives and understandings through their narratives, thoughts, and behaviours (Murchison, 2010, pp. 12-13, 28). This ethnographic approach helped me to distil patterns and themes from the curriculum writers' narratives about how they navigated their social, cultural, and political contexts and what they drew from their personal and professional resources.

My positionality as researcher in this study also presents both strengths and limitations. I am the study's 'ventriloguist-in-dialogue' because I examined and transmitted the information garnered with neutral and apolitical stance (Madison, 2005, pp. 8-9). Yet, the interpretivist and constructivist positions in ethnographic work meant I elicited from the curriculum writers their deeper meanings and inter-relationships to explain more precisely their understandings of particular periods or situations in Malaysia's higher education. The data analyses may be influenced by my personal orientations. Hence, these aspects of ethnographic research are often criticised as being subjective and making findings less generalisable (Bryman, 2012, p. 406; L. Cohen et al., 2011, p. 169).

Documentary research, which is the other research methodology used in this study, also has its strenghts and weaknesses. The strong point about documents is that they are integral parts of our daily lives; they are records of our past and present and provide information for the future. However, the weakness of documentary research lies in the need to ascertain the credibility of the source of the document and its reliability as evidence (Bryman, 2012; J. Scott, 2006). Although public documents can be easily accessed, I have to pay attention to the choice of words and how messages are conveyed because they have been written for open scrutiny. As explained earlier, the

'documentary reality' in public documents may be different from the 'underlying realities' of the particular communities or institutions written about (Atkinson & Coffey, 2011, p. 79). The curriculum writers' personal documents, on the other hand, have been written for their individual purposes. Hence, personal documents have high degrees of validity because they provide in-depth and genuine insights into the authors' thinking, believing, and acting. However, not every participant in this study shared with me their personal documents for review. Hence, some important pieces of information, views, or expressions may have been missed or not fully captured or represented in this study.

In making an account of the strengths (usefulness) and weaknesses (limitations) of this qualitative study, I also wish to note Cilliers' (2005, p. 264) thoughts about the presence of limitations in research and knowledge. He says:

> *"The fact that our knowledge is limited is not a disaster; it is a condition for knowledge. Limits enable knowledge. Without limits we would have to incorporate life, the universe and everything into every knowledge claim we make and that is not possible. Limiting frameworks make it possible to have knowledge (infinite time and space). At the same time, having limits means something is excluded, and we cannot predict the effects of that exclusion."*

3.6   Summary of research process

This is a study informed by the sociology of curriculum. My research strategy in this study was to elicit from curriculum writers of cross-border dual degree programs by Malaysian private universities their experiences and understandings of higher education reforms and the effects of their curriculum writing on the culture of Malaysia's higher education space. The knowledge that becomes selected and endorsed as curriculum are inflected by curriculum writers' cultural understandings and practices, which are rooted in Malaysian histories and traditions, and by the rules and ideas embodied in their contexts and resources. As such, I focused this study on in-depth interviews with 12 curriculum writers at Malaysian private universities together with the review of related

public and confidential documents. The interviews and documents provided the narratives for my detailed analyses to surface the embedded assumptions, taken for granted meanings, and the social, political and economic imperatives that affect knowledge building work in Malaysia. The curriculum writers' individual profiles were also analysed to reveal who they are as social categories, identify their unique characteristics, and explain how their attributes and practices culture cross-border curriculum writing. The data analyses and results reported and discussed in chapters Four, Five, and Six provide answers to my research sub-questions as outlined in Chapter One.

Some of my preliminary inferences from this study, from the early stages of my data analyses and thematic formulations, were presented at two peer-reviewed conferences. They were the European Conference on Educational Research (ECER) in September 2014 and the European Association for International Education (EAIE) Conference in September 2015. I considered the feedback from researchers at these conferences in the subsequent stages of my data analysis. Following these conferences, I published a paper based on part of this study with the European Educational Research Journal (EERJ) in June 2017. I also presented parts of my study's results and findings at the 6th World Curriculum Studies Conference, organised by the International Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies (IAACS) in December 2018, as I worked on writing up my thesis chapters. Overall, the process of continuous review and reflection from presenting at conferences and writing papers helped me to change and refine some of the initial themes which culminated as findings and conclusions for this study.

Chapter Four

Historicising Malaysia's higher education space

4.1 Overview

4.1.1 Education history and policy contexts.

A country's history and policy contexts have bearings on what and how its education and curriculum are materialised (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Rizvi & Walsh, 1998). As outlined in Chapter One, Malaysia is a postcolonial developing country in SEA. Its colonial history dates back to the 16th century when parts of what is now Malaysia were first colonised by the Portuguese, followed by the Dutch, and finally the British. There was also a brief period of occupation by the Japanese during WWII. Of the three European colonial masters, the British ruled Malaysia for the longest time and over a period that spanned approximately 180 years, i.e. from the 1780s till 1957 when it became a sovereign state. Literature informs us that postcolonial developing nations in a globalising world respond in education and curriculum reforms in ways that are unique to their histories and cultures (Hoogvelt, 2001; Tikly, 2001). Studies also indicate that historical ties and colonial influences can find their way into aspects of people's life in postcolonial developing countries (Dimitriades & McCarthy, 2001; Hoogvelt, 2001; Tikly, 2001). In Malaysia, asides the use of English for education and commerce are the effects of the 'British system' on Malaysian laws and railway lines to name a few.

Therefore, understanding the history of Malaysia's higher education policy reforms and their effects on its higher education curriculum and space is complex and involves a wide range of factors and actors. It means examining and grasping the country's historical, social and political contexts as well as understanding the people and institutions involved together with their practices and priorities (Rizvi, 2007; Rizvi &

Lingard, 2010). As such, this Chapter reports and discusses my results and findings from the narrative analysis of state and public documents as well as curriculum writers' personal documents and interviews. I do this to explain how Malaysia's higher education policy and curriculum reforms have been inflected by historical, political, economic, and social shifts that have occurred over time in this country. This Chapter addresses my research question about the historical trajectory of Malaysia's higher education policy and how curriculum cultures its higher education space.

4.1.2 Malaysia's higher education policy space.

Present discourses in education emphasise that the policy making space is socially constructed by a wide range of actors and positions which contribute particular meanings and consequences to the work of policy making (Brooks et al., 2012). The relational view of space helps us understand Malaysia's policy space as 'lived space' and as the product of its history, culture, politics, social and economic interactions (Lefebvre, 1991; Singh et al., 2007; Thomson, 2007). Policy makers involved in educational reforms have to engage with the processes and struggles at local, national, and global levels and these have bearings on their education policy making and implementation work as well (Ball, 2006; Levin, 2010; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). Moreover, the factors that drive educational policy reform do not operate in the same way in all nation-states and globalising contexts can bring about 'policy borrowing' between nation-states due to the transfer of ideologies and cultural shifts happening across the world (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010).

As such, it is important in this study that I draw out from the narratives contained in documents and from in-depth interviews with curriculum writers information about the contexts and realities that frame Malaysia's higher education policy making and curriculum considerations (Bryman, 2012; Riessman, 2004). As explained, these contexts have effect on how cross-border dual degree curricula are materialised between Malaysian and British universities for delivery in Malaysia. Where

appropriate, I include information and narratives sourced from my interviews with Ministry officials to help me establish more accurate interpretations of Malaysia's history and policy situations. The results and findings from my narrative analyses of documents and interviews are presented as two key areas: (i) 'narratives of governance' which are based on what state legislations, public policy, and institutional documents say; and, (ii) 'narratives of practice' which are based on what the curriculum writers (and Ministry officials) say.

4.2   Narratives of governance

4.2.1 Laws and regulations.

The public policy documents I examined in this study consist of state legislations and reports, circulars, letters and articles by the Ministry of Education (MOE) and/or Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) and related institutions like the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA). In reviewing these documents, I was mindful that they have been written by skilled professionals for particular purposes. Their 'documentary reality' is not necessarily the 'transparent representation' of underlying institutional or social reality (Atkinson & Coffey, 2011, p. 79). Nonetheless, examining their texts and narratives is important because it offers a longitudinal assessment of what Malaysia's higher education history and contexts were about and how policies were constructed in and for those situations.

There are a few key legislations for governing higher education and cross-border higher education in Malaysia. They include the Education Act 1996, which has been enacted with oversight for all levels and sectors of education in Malaysia, together with particular laws and statutes governing either public or private higher education or both. The legislative documents reviewed for the purpose of this study are the following:

i.   Education Act 1996 (Amendment 2006) or Act 550

ii. Private Higher Education Institutions Act 1996 (Amendment 2009) or Act 555

iii. National Council on Higher Education Act 1996 or Act 546

iv. National Accreditation Board Act 1996 or Act 744

v. Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 (Amendments 1996 & 2012) or Act 30

vi. Malaysian Qualifications Agency Act 2007 or Act 679

The implementation of the first two legislations paved the way for the liberalisation of higher education in Malaysia. Essentially, the Private Higher Education Institutions Act (PHEIA) 1996 is about regulating the establishment and operation of private HEIs in the country. The Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) Act 2007 covers both public and private HEIs. However, in reality, the MQA Act applies mainly to private HEIs as most public HEIs operate autonomously (M. O. H. E. Malaysia, 2011, p. 21).

4.2.2 Malaysia's changing education contexts.

Prior to Malaysia becoming a sovereign nation-state, the Malay states (also known as the Federation of Malaya) had been under British rule for almost two centuries. On 16 September 1963, the Malay states, Borneo states of Sabah and Sarawak, and Singapore came together and Malaysia was formed. However, Singapore became a separate country on 9 August 1965. Malaysia's multi-ethnic populace comprises three major groups; the *Bumiputera* (Malays and indigenous peoples) form the majority, followed by the Chinese and Indians. At the start of this study, Malaysia's population was reported as comprising 67.4% *Bumiputera*, 24.4% Chinese, and 7.4% Indians (Mahari, 2011, p. 7; Malaysia, 2012, pp. 29-30).

Over the past six decades of Malaysia's existence as an independent nation-state, three distinct phases in higher education policy and curriculum reforms can be identified. I found each phase to be tied to particular social, economic, or political situation or policy agenda that was prevailing in the country at that time. As such, I refer to them accordingly as the phases of 'consolidating', 'liberalising', and 'internationalising' higher education in Malaysia. In the following three sections, I

explain what these higher education reforms and policy changes are about and how they enabled the state to address the social and economic situations during these particular periods. These reforms produced either the higher education outcomes as intended by the state or brought about new challenges and conflicts for higher education in that space and time.

4.2.2.1 Consolidating for nation-building (1960s to mid-1980s).

The education priority of the newly-formed government in the early-1960s was aimed at building national identity for its multi-ethnic population through 'one system of national education' for all (Cheong, Hill, & Leong, 2016, p. 74; Mohamad Zaini, 2014, p. 138). This period in Malaysia's education history has been dubbed by some as the 'consolidation era' (M. N. N. Lee, 2004a), and it was the consequence of the Razak Report (1956) and Rahman Talib Report (1960). Both reports recommended to the state to focus on having a common 'Malayan-oriented curriculum' with Malay as national language and medium of instruction for all levels of education in the country. The narratives in the Rahman Talib Report on this matter pronounce the following:

> *"Recommendation (for) orientation of all schools to a Malayan outlook by the introduction of common-content syllabuses …" (Rahman Talib Report, 1960, p. 12)*

And,

> *"Development of the Malay language with the intention of making it the National Language of the country and as language of instruction … (as) representing firm steps in the process of giving the National Language its rightful place in the education system." (Rahman Talib Report, 1960, p. 14)*

During this period, the key theme in education policies was to have a single, national system of education and to replace the English language with Malay. The Education Act 1961, constructed on this theme, led to Malay replacing English at all levels of education throughout the country by the mid-1980s (Puteh, 2010).

A sad event in Malaysia's history is the 'ethnic riot' or 'blood bath' of 13 May 1969, a political crisis attributed to new postcolonial socio-economic disparities (Gomez, Jomo, & Esman, 1999; Jomo & Wee, 2003). Following this event, involving sectarian violence, the 1970s period in Malaysia's history was steeped with inter-ethnic differences and tensions (Jomo, 2005; Jomo & Wee, 2003). The government attributed these tensions to the economic inequalities between the three major ethnic groups. In particular, it was about resentment by the Malay of domination by the Chinese in business and capital as the former were mostly involved in agriculture and the latter engaged in trade and industry (Jomo & Wee, 2003, p. 442). The government addressed these tensions by implementing a two-decade long policy agenda, called the National Economic Policy (NEP), aimed at eliminating ethnicity or race-identification by economic function and geographical location and restructuring the socio-economic status of the *Bumiputera* (Jomo, 2005; Malaysia, 1971). The following narrative from the NEP (Malaysia, 1971, p. 6) illustrates the government's perspective on its society and its economic distributions at that time:

> *"A Malay farmer coming to town, even with increased income, felt somewhat alienated, somewhat an outsider, simply because he saw so few Malays in the shops, restaurants and factories in the town. And so might the Chinese and Indians when going into a Malay dominated agricultural area."*

The Education Act 1961 and NEP 1971 became the affirmative action for the state to implement an ethnic-based quota system that promoted *Bumiputera* enrolments in public higher education (Chin, 2001, 2009; Mok, 2011). The practice of ethnic quotas, based on Malaysia's ethnic composition, limited non-*Bumiputera* students' access to public higher education and this resulted in many academically qualified non-*Bumiputera* students unable to enter public universities (Cheong, Hill, & Leong, 2016; Chin, 2009; M. N. N. Lee, 1999a; Tan, 2002). At that time, private institutions were mainly vocational in nature and they were 'second-chance' and

'second choice' schools for those who could not get into public HEIs because of the ethnic quotas (Cheng, 1997; Tan, 2002; Wan, 2007).

The state's restructuring of Malaysia's multi-ethnic society by increasing educational opportunities for *Bumiputera* students and replacing English with Malay caused students with means to opt for overseas higher education but at a price for families concerned (Cheng, 1997; M. N. N. Lee, 1999b; Tan, 2002). In 1985, there were 15,000 Malaysian students studying in local HEIs compared with 68,000 studying overseas, especially in the UK, USA, and Australia, and the majority of these students were privately funded Chinese and Indians (Tan, 2002, p. 8). The state's vigorous implementation of ethnic quotas also caused a steep fall in the proportion of Chinese in public universities which plummeted from 49% in 1969 to 30% in 1985, whilst *Bumiputera* enrolments increased correspondingly from 29% to 63% (Tan, 2002, p. 8). This trend continued into the mid-1990s when the MOE reported that only a third of qualified candidates can access public HEIs (Cheng, 1997, p. 3).

The limited places in public higher education for non-*Bumiputera* students and the rising demand for higher education did not go unnoticed by the private sector. By the late-1980s, there was a surge in the number of local private HEIs offering programs tied to foreign qualifications (Cheng, 1997; Cheong, Hill, & Leong, 2016; Tan, 2002). These local private HEIs had to partner with foreign HEIs because the Essential Higher Education Institution Regulation (EHEIR) 1969 prohibited Malaysian private HEIs from granting their own academic awards. Examples of programs franchised by UK institutions to Malaysian private HEIs included distance and open learning programs like the University of London's Law degree (LLB), professional accounting certifications by the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) and Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), and professional qualifications by UK's Engineering Council.

In the mid-1980s, Malaysia was hit by a global financial crisis. This exacerbated the state's need for capacity building and providing more opportunities for local higher education. To reduce the high costs of overseas education, local private HEIs were

allowed to work with foreign HEIs and offer their curricula through cross-border credit transfer and twinning arrangements. The initial cross-border twinning arrangements were termed '1+2' and '2+1' programs as the first number denotes the year(s) of study at the local (host) HEI and the second number that to be completed at the foreign (home) HEI. The first few cross-border undergraduate twinning programs in Malaysia, by UK and Australian universities, commenced in 1986. These were the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Accounting and Finance by UK's Middlesex Polytechnic and the Bachelor of Commerce by Australia's RMIT University at Malaysia's KDU College and Metropolitan College respectively (Cheng, 1997, p. 7).

4.2.2.2 Liberalising for capacity building (late-1980s to mid-2000s).

Student enrolments in Malaysia's public and private higher education sectors grew in the 1990s, doubling from 157,940 in 1990 to 316,614 in 1995 (see Table 3). Around the mid-1990s, Malaysia encountered another major financial crisis. This time, it was the Asian currency meltdown which caused the Malaysian currency to be severely devalued. The government responded with policy changes to allow Malaysian students studying abroad to return home and complete their studies locally so as to reduce the country's financial burdens and foreign exchange losses (M. N. N. Lee, 1999a; Sirat, 2006). It relaxed state controls over private HEIs, which by then had outnumbered the public HEIs, and allowed them to deliver foreign HEIs' curricula entirely (M. N. N. Lee, 2004a). For example, cross-border twinning programs shifted from the '1+2' and '2+1' modes to '3+0' and '4+0' modes which meant foreign universities' undergraduate programs of three or four years' duration can be fully delivered in Malaysia. The state repealed the Education Act 1961 to enact the Education Act 1996 together with the PHEIA 1996. The University and University Colleges Act (UUAC) 1971 was amended as well. These legislative manoeuvres were necessary for the state to corporatise its public universities and privatise higher education and to accommodate the delivery of foreign curricula in the country. These actions have significant impact on Malaysia's higher education in several ways.

Firstly, the PHEIA 1996 is the 'watershed' legislation for liberalising Malaysia's higher education and it frames how foreign HEIs' curricula can be delivered in the country (Fernandez-Chung, 2006; Sirat, 2009; Tan, 2002). Its implementation means that higher education in Malaysia is not limited to the national 'Malay-oriented' curriculum as prescribed under the Education Act 1961. Malaysians can now access foreign universities' curricula more easily due to the lower costs and greater accessibility of locally conducted cross-border collaborative programs. The majority of private HEIs conduct these cross-border programs in English and this raised concerns on whether this practice disrupts the country's nation-building and socio-economic development agenda (M. N. N. Lee, 1999a; Sirat, 2006). As such, high-level approvals and strict regulations are imposed on the delivery of foreign curricula in Malaysia. Article 38(1)(b) in the PHEIA 1996 mandates that the prior approval of the Minister of Education, or Higher Education, must be obtained if private HEIs wish to conduct any collaborative program with foreign HEIs.

Secondly, the PHEIA 1996 reverses the state's earlier regulation that Malay be the only language of instruction for higher education in Malaysia. Section 41 of the PHEIA permits private HEIs to conduct foreign curricula in languages other than Malay provided the Minister's approval is obtained, but maintains that Malay is the official language for public and private higher education in the country (Malaysia, 1996b, p. 33). If private HEIs do not use Malay for instruction, they must offer Malay language as a 'compulsory subject' to preserve the sovereignty of the national language. The other 'compulsory subjects' required by the Education Act 1996 (Malaysia, 1996a, p. 43) are Malaysian Studies and Islamic Studies (for Muslim students) and Moral Studies (for non-Muslims). I discuss further, in sections 4.2.3.2 and 4.3.3.1, the reasons for 'compulsory subjects' to be included into private HEIs' curricula.

Thirdly, Section 44 of the PHEIA 1996 permits private HEIs having the status of 'university', 'university college', or 'branch campus' to confer their own degree awards. Private HEIs in Malaysia must be invited by the Minister to upgrade to university college (UC) or university status. The legislation also provides that the Minister can invite

foreign universities to set up branch campuses in the country. In 1998, Australia's Monash University was the first foreign university to establish an 'international branch campus' in Malaysia and it offered undergraduate studies in economics, commerce, and computer science (M. N. N. Lee, 1999a, p. 146). In that same year, there were seven private universities and 415 private colleges versus 10 public universities and six public polytechnics in the country (M. N. N. Lee, 1999a, p. 140). Other branch campus universities were established soon after and they included Australia's Curtin University and Swinburne University in 1999 and 2000 respectively, and UK's Nottingham University in 2000 as well.

Malaysia's private higher education sector grew rapidly during this period. The number of private HEIs in the country increased more than four-folds from 156 in 1992 to 707 in 2002 (M. N. N. Lee, 2004a). Student enrolments in private HEIs also increased correspondingly. In 2001, the student numbers in private HEIs almost matched that in public HEIs and by 2010 the former's enrolments exceeded the latter's (see Table 3). I provide these enrolment data not for quantitative analysis but to indicate the growth of private and cross-border higher education in Malaysia. Also, these enrolment data show Malaysia's private higher education sector shifting from being the 'second choice' that it was in the 1970s to becoming the 'preferred choice' in the 2010s.

Whilst enrolment statistics of public and private HEIs are available from the MOE and MOHE, I could not obtain the break-down in enrolments by ethnicity. Given that students would prefer enrolling into public HEIs to enjoy lower fees, the enrolment data suggest that the majority of enrolments in private HEIs are non-*Bumiputera* students. As such, some studies touch on the issue of 'ethnic polarisation' because the majority of students placed in public HEIs are *Bumiputera* whilst the bulk of students enrolled in private HEIs are non-*Bumiputera* (Cheong, Hill, & Leong, 2016, p. 78; Chin, 2009, pp. 171, 178). The Ministry officials I interviewed confirmed that the majority of students in public HEIs are Malays and that in private HEIs are Chinese and that the numbers reflect the size of the respective ethnic populations.

In short, my analysis revealed the PHEIA 1996 to have 'two-pronged' effect. On one hand, its 'institutional policies' allow local public and private, including foreign, HEIs to operate side-by-side. Public HEIs deliver local curricula in Malay and students are pre-dominantly *Bumiputera* while most private HEIs offer foreign curricula in English and students are mainly non-*Bumiputera*. On the other hand, the PHEIA's 'curriculum policies' require the structure of private HEIs' curricula to be similar to public HEIs. As a result, the PHEIA 1996 produced social and cultural boundaries in Malaysia's higher education space with 'public-private' and 'local-foreign' divides beginning to emerge.

Table 3
Total student enrolments in higher education institutions in Malaysia, 1985-2015

Year / HEI	1985	1990	1995	2001	2005	2010	2015
Public	86,330	122,340	189,020	304,628	307,121	462,780	540,638
Private	15,000	35,600	127,594	270,904	258,825	541,629	580,928
Total	101,330	157,940	316,614	575,532	565,946	1,004,409	1,121,566
Difference between public & private HEIs	71,330	86,740	61,426	33,724	48,296	-78,849	-40,290

Sources: (a) Lee M.N.N. (2004b), *Private higher education in Malaysia*, p. 21; and (b) Malaysia's education statistics by the Educational Planning and Research Division, Ministry of Education, i.e. from (i) *Higher Education Indicators (2009-2010)*, p. 7; (ii) *Higher Education Indicators (2011-2012)*, p. 13; and (iii) *Higher Education Statistics 2015*, p. 17.

To steer the country's rapidly expanding private higher education, a National Council on Higher Education was established. The National Accreditation Board (NAB) was formed in 1996 to oversee the academic standards and assure the quality of public

and private HEIs. The NAB was replaced by the MQA in 2007. The latter implements the Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF) for approval and accreditation of higher education programs, and the Malaysian Qualifications Register (MQR) to classify national qualifications and benchmark standards for international recognition (M. O. H. E. Malaysia, 2008b, p. 1). My analysis of the Ministry's regulations on program approval and accreditation show that it focuses on the framing of curriculum conditions or structures for the delivery of foreign or cross-border higher education programs in the country. The Ministry requires foreign or cross-border programs to comply with the national higher education framework or MQF which includes conditions for preserving the sovereignty of the Malay language and local (indigenous) curricula. My analysis of the policy narratives indicates the country's social (ethnic), economic (financial), and political situations as the backstories for the state to amend its post-independence legislations and construct new ones to liberalise its higher education and respond to global events and changes. The policies on liberalising the country's higher education also include an internationalisation agenda.

4.2.2.3 Internationalising for global competitiveness (late-2000s to mid-2010s).

Since the late-2000s, the Malaysian government has been emphasising the importance of internationalising the country's higher education for global competitiveness. In 2007, the MOHE launched the National Higher Education Strategic Plan (NHESP) to support the government's aims of making the country a developed nation and an international education hub (M. O. H. E. Malaysia, 2011, p. 6). The priorities articulated in the NHESP include: (i) widening higher education access to enable larger proportions of the workforce to attain tertiary qualifications; (ii) improving the quality of teaching and learning through curriculum improvement and use of English; and, (iii) internationalising the country's higher education by collaborating with foreign HEIs, increasing foreign student enrolments, and enlisting foreign expertise in

local institutions (M. O. H. E. Malaysia, 2011, pp. 16, 33, 43). The MOHE articulates the goal of internationalising the country's higher education as follows:

> *Internationalisation is the fifth thrust of the National Higher Education Strategic Plan which aims to elevate higher education institutions towards becoming institutions of world repute. The target of this thrust is for Malaysia to become an international hub of excellence for higher education ... Internationalisation programs such as the exchange of academic staff, students, study programs and international collaboration serve as catalyst to enrich interaction, experience and exposure of students from local HEIs into the global arena. (M.O.H.E. Malaysia, 2011, p. 43)*

The NHESP's narratives show that its purpose and meaning of 'internationalisation of higher education' include 'improving the reputation' of local HEIs and 'benchmarking' them against foreign HEIs according to the universities ranking criteria used by the Western world (M. O. H. E. Malaysia, 2011, pp. 46-47). The university ranking systems named for benchmarking purposes are the Times Higher Education (THE) and Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) that are conducted by UK-based organisations. The NHESP narratives also suggest Malaysia's higher education, including cross-border programs, as 'commodities' that can be developed and promoted to bring more foreign students into the country which in turn enable local institutions and the state to generate foreign income (M. O. H. E. Malaysia, 2011, pp. 43, 46).

In 2014 to 2015, a review was made of the NHESP that involved various stakeholders including university academics and administrators, university Board members, Ministry staff, industrial bodies, students, parents, and members of the public. The outcome of that review was the establishment of the Malaysia Education Blueprint for higher education or MEB(HE) for 2015-2025. The MEB(HE) conceptualises ten shifts or action steps for Malaysian higher education to take in order for Malaysia to become a high-income nation and international education hub. Among the steps are plans for increasing access to higher education, expanding research outputs, and improving the position of Malaysian universities in global rankings.

Prior to that, in 2010, the government had introduced the Economic Transformation Program (ETP). The ETP stresses the importance of promoting higher education for economic growth and calls upon the private higher education sector to be the country's 'catalyst for growth' (PEMANDU, 2010, pp. 20, 480). Among its recommendations are to internationalise the country's higher education, expand local programs for export, and develop the country as a global education hub (PEMANDU, 2010, pp. 476-477). In this context, the delivery of foreign universities' curricula through cross-border arrangements is considered as 'internationalisation of higher education' because this brings foreign students into the country. Malaysia's internationalisation policy is more about bringing international students for revenue rather than for intercultural competencies and understanding. The Ministry's data on foreign students enrolled in Malaysian public and private HEIs appear to support these views. The enrolment of foreign students in the country has increased since the 2000s, and the majority of them are enrolled in private HEIs (see Table 4). Brochures produced by Malaysian private HEIs which offer cross-border higher education programs with UK, US, and Australian universities describe these programs as 'international' and that the 'benefits' to students include the opportunity of obtaining foreign qualifications at lower costs and without having to go abroad.

Table 4
Total foreign student enrolments in higher education institutions in Malaysia, 2007-2015

Year HEI	2007	2008	2009	2010	2014	2015
Public	14,324	18,495	22,456	24,214	32,842	33,396
Private	33,604	50,679	58,294	62,705	74, 996	88,665
Total	47,928	69,174	80,750	86,919	107,838	122,061
Percentage foreign students in private HEIs	70.1	73.4	72.2	72.1	69.5	72.6

Another interesting development during this period is the upgrading of private colleges to university college (UC) and/or university status. For example, Sunway College became Sunway UC in 2004 and Sunway University in 2010, and Taylor's College became Taylor's UC in 2005 and Taylor's University in 2010. The upgrading of local private HEIs is permitted under Article 44(2) of the PHEIA 1996. All UCs and universities have to build their own 'home-grown' programs and they can confer upon these programs their own degree awards. However, the UCs and universities must cease offering the curricula of foreign universities which they have been doing in the past through franchise or twinning arrangements. This regulation was iterated in a MOHE letter dated 12 August 2004 which was shown to me by one of the curriculum writers.

Interestingly, the cross-border dual degree programs between Malaysian private universities and foreign (British) universities also emerged around the same time. The first Malaysian-British (M-B) dual degree program in Malaysia commenced in 2007; it was the Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Accounting and Finance between Malaysia's Sunway University College and UK's Lancaster University (QAA, 2010, p. 1). More M-B dual degree programs followed thereafter (see Table 1 in Chapter Three). This prompts me to ask if these M-B dual degree programs are part of the Malaysian private universities' strategies for internationalising their 'home-grown' programs. If so, how is it and what is involved?

By 2014, Malaysia's 509 private HEIs which comprised 70 universities and 34 UCs far exceeded the 143 public HEIs that included 20 universities (M. O. E. Malaysia, 2014, pp. 34-35). Among the 70 private universities are 13 foreign branch campus universities of which six are from the UK, three from Australia, and one each from the Netherlands, Singapore, China, and Egypt. All private universities in Malaysia, with the exception of Al-Azhar University from Egypt, conduct their programs in English. As most private

universities in Malaysia use English to deliver their programs, it is not surprising that approximately 70 percent of foreign students in Malaysia are enrolled in the private sector (see Table 4). As the NHESP explains, the use of English for instruction attracts foreign students and positions Malaysia as provider of international education (M. O. H. E. Malaysia, 2011, p. 44). The state's policy narratives on internationalising Malaysia's higher education indicate that the state responded to globalisation and internationalisation of education in ways that involved reorganising its national and institutional priorities to make the country more globally competitive.

4.2.3 Policy reforms and curriculum outcomes.

4.2.3.1 *Local versus foreign higher education curriculum.*

The course of Malaysia's higher education policy reforms through its phases of 'consolidation' (for ethnic integration) to 'liberalisation' (for capacity building) and 'internationalisation' (for global competitiveness) resulted in different types of HEIs and curricula emerging in its higher education space. As mentioned earlier, the public HEIs deliver local 'Malay-oriented' curricula while many private HEIs engage in various cross-border arrangements and offer foreign universities' curricula in English. The PHEIA 1996 opened up Malaysia's higher education space and shifted the state's policy and curriculum focus from its earlier 'one system' of national education for all to a 'liberalised system' with concurrent delivery of local and foreign curricula. This resulted in public and private HEIs operating side-by-side, but with limited collaboration or connection between them. The implementation of the PHEIA 1996 also means that private HEIs in Malaysia are regulated differently from public ones (Sirat, 2010).

Growth of the private higher education sector, particularly from the mid-1990s onwards, increased the numbers and types of foreign higher education programs in the country. The range of cross-border higher education curricula expanded from the earlier established credit transfer, twinning and franchise arrangements to more recent branch campus and dual degree programs. The data show that these foreign curricula come

mainly from Western or Anglophone universities. Cross-border arrangements with Eastern or Asian universities are limited by comparison. Nonetheless, the clear outcomes of Malaysia's liberalisation of higher education reforms are the rapid expansion of its private higher education sector and the increase in numbers and types of foreign curricula being delivered in the country. As the construction and dissemination of foreign curricula involve mainly Malaysia's private higher education sector, it became 'different' and 'separate' from its public sector. The dichotomies of 'public-private' higher education and 'local-foreign' curricula expanded further and increased in significance in Malaysia's higher education space.

4.2.3.2 Common framework to harmonise public and private.

While the Education Act 1996 and PHEIA 1996 open up Malaysia's higher education space and allow the building and delivery of foreign curricula in the country, they also require private HEIs' curricula to incorporate 'national-ness' and comply with the national higher education framework. As mentioned earlier, private HEIs which do not use Malay in their programs have to offer 'Malay' as a 'compulsory subject' in their programs. Sections 41 and 43 of the PHEIA 1996 outline these requirements as follows:

> *41(4): If any course of study or a substantial part of any course of study in any private higher educational institution is conducted in any language other than the national language, the national language shall be taught as a compulsory subject for the students following such course of study in such language.*

And

> *43(1): All private higher educational institutions shall teach such compulsory subjects which shall be determined by the Registrar General.*

Additionally, Article 43 of the PHEIA 1996 also requires Malaysians in private HEIs to achieve a pass grade in the 'compulsory subjects' in order to graduate from their programs of study. The specific requirement reads as follows:

43(3): In the case of students who are citizens of Malaysia, a pass in compulsory subjects specified in paragraph 43(1), at a level determined by the Registrar General, shall be a prerequisite to the award of a certificate, diploma or degree of the private higher educational institution or of any University, University College, higher educational institution, whether public or private, or professional body, within or outside Malaysia, consequent upon a course of study or training programme conducted by the private higher educational institution jointly or in affiliation, association or collaboration with such University, University College, higher educational institution or professional body.

Based on my narrative analyses of documents and interviews, I found that the reasons for including these 'compulsory subjects' are related to incorporating 'national-ness' into private HEIs' curricula and aligning the private higher education sector with the public sector. My review of private universities' brochures on the cross-border dual degree programs that they offer showed that students have to take 'compulsory subjects' so that they develop 'nationalism' and 'citizenship'. The MOHE, subsequently, changed 'compulsory subjects' to 'general studies in early 2013. In a Ministry circular (written in Malay) dated 27 June 2013, private HEIs were informed that they can develop their own 'general studies' curricula provided that they cover four specific areas. In simple translation, the four areas specify the learning outcomes for students as *"(i) appreciating local philosophy, values and history, (ii) mastering soft-skills, (iii) broadening students' knowledge about Malaysia, and (iv) developing practical competencies in community service and extra-curricular activities"*.

The Ministry officials, when asked about the 'compulsory subjects' or 'general studies', explained that they are meant to make private HEIs' curricula 'more similar' to that of public HEIs in terms of 'core contents'. They informed that the 'core contents' in public HEIs' curricula include Malay language, Islamic civilisation, ethnic relations, and nationhood. They also explained that these core areas or contents are meant for all students in public HEIs, i.e. locals and foreigners alike. On 1 September 2013, the Ministry made it compulsory for all local and foreign students at private HEIs in Malaysia

to *"undertake general studies as a prerequisite for the award of their certificate, diploma, advanced diploma or first degree"*.

What the Ministry officials told me was similar to what I read from the Ministry documents. For example, the NHESP describes the implementation of 'compulsory subjects' and 'general studies' as ways for private HEIs to embed 'national-ness' and 'citizenship' into their curricula, follow the country's national higher education framework, and reduce the differences between private and public higher education systems (M. O. H. E. Malaysia, 2011, pp. 53, 61). Also, a consistent theme throughout the PHEIA 1996 is that private HEIs must adopt the practices of public HEIs and the former needs to obtain the approval of the Minister where they differ.

Efforts by the state to harmonise private and public HEIs' curricula are also evident through other higher education regulations and procedures. For example, the Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF) is the state's national framework for regularising the curricula and awards of all public and private HEIs and it spells out the 'common' criteria for approval and accreditation of higher education programs (M. O. H. E. Malaysia, 2008a, p. iv; 2008b, pp. pp. 1-2). An important MQF criterion for approval and accreditation of undergraduate programs is the 'academic load' which is determined and stated as 'credits' (or 'credit hours'). The academic load of all undergraduate programs in Malaysia, with the exception of Medicine and Dentistry, must add up to at least '120 credits' (M. O. H. E. Malaysia, 2008b, p. 14). However, the way academic loads or credits are computed differs between countries. The MQF specifies 40 hours of notional learning to one credit but the UK system equates 10 hours of notional learning to one credit (M. O. H. E. Malaysia, 2008b, p. 5). Presently, there is no formal academic load equivalency between the Malaysian and UK higher education systems. Another document which provides evidence of state efforts to align the academic practices and curricula of private and public HEIs is the Ministry's Code of Practice for Program Accreditation (COPPA) for private HEIs. This document was developed according to the 'Code of Practice for Quality Assurance in Public Universities of Malaysia 2002' (Ministry of Higher Education, 2009b, p. 7).

Overall, the review and analysis of documentary narratives highlight that there is 'divided-ness' and 'conflicted-ness' in Malaysia's higher education space in terms of the disparities between public and private HEIs' curricula. As explained, the PHEIA 1996 allows private HEIs to be established and foreign curricula to be delivered in the country but requires private HEIs' foreign curricula to incorporate 'national-ness' and follow the national higher education framework. These requirements are to ensure that private HEIs' curricula do not differ too significantly from the public HEIs. Following this, the NHESP articulates the state's goals of making Malaysia a developed country and an education hub and calls for internationalisation of higher education in the country (M. O. H. E. Malaysia, 2011, pp. 16, 33, 43). However, the curricula of foreign HEIs must conform with the state's national higher education framework. Literature informs that internationalisation of higher education is about integrating 'inter-national' and 'inter-cultural' dimensions into curriculum (Knight, 2004, 2013), and benchmarking local education processes and outcomes with international best practices (Van Der Wende, 2001, 2007). As such, the state's policies on harmonising the country's private and public higher education sectors appear to conflict with those aimed at internationalising its higher education

4.2.3.3 Benchmarking the West.

To make Malaysia an education hub, the Ministry's emphasis in the NHESP is on internationalising its higher education and encouraging local institutions to collaborate with foreign institutions including supra-national agencies like the World Bank, UNESCO, and the European Union (EU). The NHESP describes internationalisation of higher education for the country as *"growing local higher education institutions to world repute"*, *"recruiting international students and staff"*, *"promoting international collaborations"*, and *"working with international accreditation agencies"* (M. O. H. E. Malaysia, 2011, pp. 43-46). In this context, the NHESP and other related documents make reference to pursuing the higher education practices of Western countries, especially that of Europe and UK, for purposes of accrediting, benchmarking, and

internationalising the country's higher education curricula. The other documents include the Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF), the Code of Practice for Program Accreditation (COPPA), and the Code of Practice for Institutional Accreditation (COPIA).

In the MQF, the 'international' and 'worldwide' standards mentioned are benchmarked against Western frameworks *"such as those of England, Wales and Northern Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and Europe"* (M. O. H. E. Malaysia, 2008b, p. 2). The MQF narratives indicate Malaysia's high regard for the European Union (EU)'s framework and system of higher education. This is reflected in the following:

> *The European Qualifications Framework is the umbrella framework for European Union countries, and is accepted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) at the Lisbon Convention, which includes signatories from Europe, Canada, the United States, Israel, Australia and New Zealand. Therefore, the MQF facilitates communication with this and the various frameworks and higher education systems of major countries worldwide …. to manage the increasing complexity of education and training systems and to forge collaboration in cross-border education. (MOHE, 2008b, p. 2)*

My findings from analysing the narratives in Malaysian higher education policy documents show that the state turns to Western and/or Anglophone higher education systems and practices in pursuing 'international' standards and benchmarks. As mentioned earlier, the Ministry refers to criteria set by UK-based organisations like Times Higher Education and Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) when evaluating and rating local universities. There is little reference made in terms of assessing or following the higher education practices of countries in the East or in Asia. I came across brief mentions of Eastern/Asian institutions in the COPPA and COPIA documents which listed the accreditation agencies in Hong Kong and India alongside many from the Western countries (Ministry of Higher Education, 2009a, p. vii; 2009b, p. vii). I find this 'gap' or 'discrepancy' intriguing because Malaysia is situated in SEA and its people share similar Asian or Eastern social and cultural beliefs and practices.

Overall, my analysis of the policy narratives on Malaysia's higher education indicates a complex and conflicted space. For example, the MQA and MQF focus on harmonising the public and private higher education sectors by making the curricula and qualifications of both as similar as possible. However, the NHESP and ETP narratives call for internationalisation and diversification of higher education through wider adoption of foreign curricula in English, increased collaboration with foreign institutions, and benchmarking international best practices. These differing orientations and conflicting policy focus suggest tensions and dilemmas for Malaysia's higher education.

In summarising this section on the narratives of governance, I return to some related literatures. As discussed, education in postcolonial countries can be complicated by the interplay of 'local-global' and 'past-present' relationships due to the economic, political, and cultural dimensions in education. Arguably, education outcomes in postcolonial settings may be neither homogenised (polarised) to the West as predicted by the convergence hypothesis nor pluralistic (localised) as envisaged by the divergence hypothesis (Tikly, 2001). Instead, an intermediary outcome is possible because of nation-states' changing politics and because they respond by enacting policies that either help or hinder the impact of 'local-global' and 'past-present' relationships (Tikly, 2001, pp. 169-170). These are important points for me to bear in mind as I continue to analyse and discuss the results and findings of this study. Also, the discourses on globalisation and internationalisation involve 'travelling' ideas and practices (Connell & Wood, 2002; Seddon & Levin, 2013) and the 'mimicking' or 'borrowing' of policies (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010) occuring between nation-states. How is Malaysia's cross-border higher education space a part of such flows and negotiations of ideas, practices, and policies between participating countries and supra-national agencies? I continue this line of inquiry into the next section in reporting the analysis and results from several curriculum workers' narratives.

4.3   Narratives of practice

4.3.1 Curriculum writers and Ministry policy makers.

For me to grasp more fully the historical trajectory of Malaysia's higher
education policy reforms and their effects, I also examined the curriculum writers' and
Ministry officials' narratives to understand what they say and why. Going through their
interview narratives helped me to establish the contexts in which particular policies
were constructed and the conditions or complexities related to their implementation. In
examining what the curriculum writers (and Ministry officials) said, I was able to work
out which particular policies and why they affected Malaysia's public and private higher
education, how they changed over time and with what effects on curriculum writing.

The curriculum writers' comprehension of Malaysia's higher education policy
reforms and their effects on knowledge building work are influenced by their particular
histories, situations, experiences, and resources (Rizvi, 2000; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). In
this sense, their responses form the 'narratives of practice' that inform me about
Malaysia's past and present social, cultural and political contexts and how Malaysia's
higher education may unfold into the future. I analysed their narratives of practice to
confirm the 'his-stories' in the paths taken by higher education policy reforms in
Malaysia and if the curriculum writers encountered similar experiences of consolidating,
liberalising, and internationalising higher education as revealed through the
documentary research discussed earlier. The narratives of practice reveal curriculum
workers' perspectives on how Malaysia's higher education policy and curriculum
reforms affect the culture of its higher education space in terms of 'national-ness' or
'local-ness' and 'international-ness' or 'foreign-ness', and of conflicts or dilemmas of this
space.

4.3.2 Experiencing Malaysia's higher education shifts.

The group of 12 curriculum writers comprised seven Malaysians. In describing their educational backgrounds, most of them talked about their experiences in school and at university. In this section, I highlight a few Malaysian curriculum writers' stories to cross-check and validate my findings reported earlier that were based on analysis of documentary narratives.

In the late-1960s, Molly enrolled as an undergraduate student at the University of Malaya which was the only public university in Malaysia at that time. Susan, Chandra and Fred were in primary school in the early-1970s while Joe, Penny, and Jay began schooling in the mid and late-1970s. Molly completed her entire education in English. However, most of the rest went through their primary school education partly in English and secondary schooling mostly or completely in Malay. This was the consequence of the 'national language policy' (Education Act 1961) rolling out in the 1970s and 1980s to make Malay the language of instruction for all levels of education. Molly's narratives highlight the state's early, post-independence policy changes which focused on nation-building and bringing together the vernacular education that was practised by the different ethnic groups. She recalled briefly the country's early education reforms as follows:

> *"At that point of time, and during the developmental years in the 60s, our country's focus was on independence and so forth. Then in the 1970s, after the first decade of the developmental years, with the merging nationalism, the demand for university education was more than the places available. And, families struggled but would send their children to more developed countries for their studies due to limited opportunities locally."*

Susan is Malaysian-Chinese. She left home in the late-1970s to pursue undergraduate studies abroad. She recounted her experience of not getting into public university despite completing her secondary education with good grades. Her family worked hard to send her abroad for further studies. She said:

> *"I was not so fortunate as I couldn't get into a local university. My parents sent me to New Zealand because university education there was free at that time. I completed my degree in Commerce at University of Auckland and I worked there for a few years. I returned to Malaysia in the late 80s, and I was fortunate to get a job quite quickly to teach Accounting at a private college."*

The timing of Susan's return to Malaysia coincided with the period when private and cross-border higher education were expanding. This was when private HEIs began to offer foreign programs in English. A few curriculum writers referred to the PHEIA 1996 as 'Ministry's policy' that permits teaching and assessing students in English. Molly described the transitions in higher education and how different types of cross-border higher education curricula began in Malaysia as follows:

> *"Initially, the private sector colleges were allowed to run the '1+2' or '2+1' twinning programs to ease the demand for higher education by the public education sector. The existing public universities just couldn't cope with the insatiable appetite that we have for higher education … Then, the financial crises in the 90s made the government change its policy to allow '3+0' or '4+0' programs. Now students could finish their degrees in Malaysia rather than go overseas for 1 or 2 years as was the trend before. Further development was in the late 90s to 2000s when the government further liberalised higher education by allowing the setting up of foreign campuses. At this stage, colleges can convert or be upgraded to university colleges and can give (out) their own degrees."*

A few curriculum writers talked about the government's focus on internationalising the country's higher education and how this affected local universities and their work. Chandra's remarks below highlight the state's call to private HEIs, through the NHESP, to internationalise its programs and increase international enrolments and collaborations. He said:

> *"The government's current focus in the 21st century is to make our degree programs more internationalised. We work with our UK partner in dual degrees for this purpose which we believe is what attracts local*

and foreign students. And I understand our UK university partner wants to work with us as part of their internationalisation strategy as well!"

The curriculum writers' and Ministry policy makers' accounts confirm that Malaysia's higher education policy reforms, over the past six decades, have gone through several changes and phases. They inform that post-independence policies focused on consolidating education with the aim of bringing together the different ethnic groups. However, particular global events and outcomes caused existing policies to shift and made way for new policies that prioritised the liberalisation and internationalisation of higher education.

4.3.3 Aligning private with public higher education.

According to the curriculum writers, and Ministry officials, an important component in Malaysia's higher education policy reforms from the mid-1990s onwards relates to efforts by the state to align the curricula by private and foreign HEIs with that of public HEIs. I report and discuss two areas of differences between public/local and private/foreign HEIs' curricula, along with relevant MQA regulations, as encountered and highlighted by the curriculum writers. They are as follows.

4.3.3.1 National 'compulsory subjects' for private/foreign curricula.

The curriculum writers understood that state laws require them to include 'compulsory subjects' or 'general studies' into the dual degree curricula between their Malaysian and British universities. They know that incorporating 'compulsory subjects' is part of MQA's requirements for the approval and accreditation of their cross-border dual degree programs. Based on the contents of the 'compulsory subjects', they perceived the Ministry's purpose in enforcing this rule is to align private and foreign universities' curricula with that of public universities. As explained earlier, private HEIs' curricula are in English and cater to mainly non-*Bumiputera* students while public HEIs'

are in Malay and provide essentially for *Bumiputera* students. Chandra has worked in Malaysian private HEIs' cross-border higher education programs since the mid-1990s. He explains his position on 'compulsory subjects' as follows:

> "We inform our UK partner university that, basically it is MQA's requirement which we have to fulfil. And the 'compulsory subjects' teach our students Malay language, and Malay and Islamic studies which students in the public universities have to learn. But this is not required by our UK partner. And so, they are concerned that the number of subjects or academic load over here is increased tremendously as a result."

The Ministry officials' explanation on 'compulsory subjects' was interesting. Simon described the Ministry's policy on 'compulsory subjects' or 'general studies' (called *'Matapelajaran Umum' or MPU* in Malay), for private HEIs as steps to 'nationalise' and 'standardise' the higher education curricula across the country. He explained:

> "The 'Mata Pelajaran Umum' applies to all bachelor degree programs and it's about the national agenda by the Ministry. The goal of the MPU is for students to understand the nation, culture, and ethnic relations in the Malaysian context. The MPU is also about developing students' soft skills. MPU contents are covered by the public universities. They already have courses that include these contents. This way, the bachelor degree programs by public and private universities are more standard(ised)."

Another Ministry official, Mohamad, explained that the Ministry is also concerned that the use of English in the private higher education sector would, over time, impede the growth of *'Bahasa Melayu'* or the Malay language. He said:

> "These cross-border programs threaten the growth of Bahasa Melayu because these programs teach in English. All the degrees by private institutions are done in English. This can threaten the growth of Bahasa Melayu. This is my personal opinion too."

4.3.3.2 Fixing undergraduate curricula at '120 credits'.

The curriculum writers understand that the curricula of private universities in Malaysia, whether local or foreign, must comply with the country's national higher education framework as spelt out in the Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF). The common challenge which they highlighted pertains to MQF's, and therefore MQA's, requirement that the academic load for undergraduate studies (excluding Dentistry and Medicine) be '120 credits'. They explained that the difficulties lie in matching the '120 credits' required by MQA with the requirement of UK's QAA of 90 to 100 credits for the same level. Again, the curriculum writers believed this requirement to be the state's way of 'standardising' local and foreign undergraduate curricula, and fixing their academic loads and duration of studies to be the same.

The Ministry officials' explanations align with the curriculum writers' understandings. Simon said, *"This '120 credits' policy is to standardise undergraduate curricula"*. Mohamad and Simon described the 'early' cross-border higher education programs in the country, prior to implementing the PHEIA 1996 and MQA Act 2007, as 'unregulated'. They explained that since 2007, all private HEIs delivering foreign curricula in Malaysia must follow the MQF. In offering some background context to why the state has made the policies for approving and accrediting foreign programs 'stricter', Mohamad said:

> *"In the mid-80s, cross-border programs became very popular. The Minister of Education allowed private colleges to collaborate with foreign universities and the numbers of private colleges increased greatly during this time. Then, the private institutions were quite free to do as they wished whereby they didn't have to follow our guidelines or rules. They can bring whatever programs from the parent country or university over here to Malaysia. Whether it's 90 credits or 100 credits for an undergraduate degree, we would still say OK to them even though our guidelines say it must be 120 credits. But, this is not the case now. Now, they must add relevant subjects to make (up) the 120 credits. They have no choice. Either they follow or they will not be approved to run the program."*

The Ministry officials viewed MQA's firm rule on '120 credits' for private universities' undergraduate degrees as necessary. They explained that private and public universities' curricula should be 'similar' in terms of academic load. Mohamad clarified:

> "Why '120 credits' for private universities? Well, we felt that it was not fair that students studying in the local public universities take 120 credits whereas students in twinning and other foreign programs take only 100 credits or even less. Why should students in twinning programs do less? We consider this unfair. We must make sure that the students in private institutions study the same number of credits as students in public institutions."

4.3.4 Malaysia's quest for 'international'.

The curriculum writers, and Ministry officials, also talked about the state's internationalisation agenda as expressed in the National Higher Education Strategic Plan (NHESP). Ministry officials described the NHESP as MOHE's decade-long policy agenda that supports the government's mission to make Malaysia an 'international hub' for higher education. To achieve this goal, local public and private HEIs are encouraged to follow the best practices and standards of well-ranked foreign HEIs so that Malaysian programs and qualifications gain international recognition. It also targets to increase foreign student enrolments in the country. The Ministry officials clarified that the MOHE does not prescribe to local HEIs which foreign institutions to benchmark or collaborate with, and that their general advice to local HEIs is for them to work with 'well-ranked' and 'reputable' foreign HEIs. According to Simon, this means *"to work with universities with good standing on the Times Higher Education table"*. Both Simon and Helena referred to the 'Times Higher Education' (THE) and the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) world university ranking systems when they talked about what local universities can do to benchmark international best practices in higher education. Helena added that the Ministry would often look at the higher education reforms made by Western and European countries as they are 'noteworthy'. She elaborated as follows:

"I refer to arrangements between European countries under The Bologna Process. They are designed to ensure comparability in higher education standards and qualifications and joint degrees. We should follow what is recognised as international standards, like Bologna or EU standards, and higher education reforms which include joint development of undergraduate programs for student exchange and mobility."

When asked about collaborations with Asian universities, both groups of curriculum writers and Ministry officials acknowledged that these were far fewer than Western ones. Helena said, *"Our public universities do partner with universities in Thailand and Indonesia, but these are not grand"*. The Ministry officials' inputs on this matter confirm the observation that there is far less collaboration between Malaysian and Asian HEIs as compared to Western/Anglophone ones. On the whole, the 'narratives of practice' affirm the trajectory of Malaysia's higher education policy and curriculum as complex yet comprising distinct phases on nation-building, and liberalising and internationalising its higher education. These phases involve the interplay of many factors including the country's historical and national contexts, global higher education changes, institutional priorities, and people's lived experiences along with the workings of power within education spaces and over time.

4.4   Summary

The course of Malaysia's education policy reforms over the past six decades, from the time it became an independent nation-state to the present, affects what and how higher education curricula are made in the country. While the state's early formulation of its higher education policies focused on national priorities and local situations it has, over time, shifted to the need to respond to global challenges and events. I explain the trajectory of Malaysia's higher education policy as involving three distinct phases and that each phase is tied to particular higher education priorities occurring locally and globally. These three phases involve: (i) 'consolidation' to bring

together Malaysia's multi-ethnic society through education, (ii) 'liberalisation' to expand local capacity for higher education and reduce the impact of global economic downturns, and (iii) internationalisation to make Malaysia's higher education programs and qualifications competitive.

As literature informs, 'curriculum' is social knowledge space (Gough, 2000, 2003; Seddon, 2014b) and product of people's lived experiences, beliefs and expectations (B. Green, 2010; Pinar, 2004; Young, 2008) unfolding with the changing 'space-time' effects of education (McLeod, 2017; McLeod et al., 2018). Malaysia's higher education policy and curriculum reforms that have occurred alongside state efforts to nationalise, liberalise, and internationalise higher education have produced 'foreign' and 'global' characteristics that are distinct from the 'local' and 'national' attributes that have existed prior in its higher education space. The dichotomies of 'local-global', 'national-international', and 'public-private' affect the culture of Malaysia's higher education space.

In Table 5, I summarise the historical trajectory of Malaysia's higher education policy reforms and map its phases of 'consolidation', 'liberalisation', and 'internationalisation' of higher education against corresponding curriculum outcomes and cultures. I highlight the emergence of 'public-private', 'local-foreign', and 'national-international' dichotomies as the effects of Malaysia's higher education changing over time.

Table 5

The course of Malaysia's higher education policy reforms and its effects on curriculum outcomes and cultures (1960s to 2010s)

Period	Policy reforms	Curriculum outcomes and cultures
1960s	i. <u>Education Act 1961</u>: - Postcolonial, nation-building agenda; 'one national system' of education and 'one language' of instruction - Malay as national language and language for instruction in all levels of education ii. <u>Essential Higher Education Institution Regulation 1969</u>: - Private HEIs cannot award degrees	**Consolidating education**: - **National** curriculum to bring together local ethnic groups and merge the widely practised vernacular school arrangements - Provisions for higher (further) education were undeveloped; only one public university (continuation from British legacy) and private institutions were mainly tuition or vocational centres.
1970s	iii. <u>New Economic Policy (NEP) 1971</u>: - Restructured Malaysia's society; increased *Bumiputera* participation in economic functions and in higher education iv. <u>Universities and University Colleges Act (UUCA) 1971</u>: - For establishment and governance of all universities, university colleges, and HEIs in the country	**Expanding public and private higher education**: - Mid-1970s; access to four public universities - **Public** institutions offer **national** 'Malay-oriented' curriculum - **Private** institutions offer vocational education **in English** with awards mainly by **foreign** institutions - Ethnic divide; public HEIs for *Bumiputera* and private HEIs for non-*Bumiputera* students
1980s		**Introducing cross-border higher education**: - Local private HEIs and foreign HEIs collaborate to offer cross-border programs through credit transfer, distance learning, and partial twinning ('1+2' and '2+1') arrangements; programs **in English** with awards by **foreign HEIs** - Growing demands for higher education and mid-1980s global financial crisis spurred **growth of private higher education** sector
1990s	v. <u>Education Act 1996</u>: - Education Act 1961 amended to address global financial crises and	**Liberalising higher education**: - Allows full delivery of foreign curricula in English

	increasing demand for higher education - Malay remains the official language for all HEIs; English allowed with Minister's approval - 'Compulsory subjects' introduced; Malay language, Malaysian Studies, and Islamic/Moral Studies vi. <u>Private Higher Education Institutions Act (PHEIA) 1996</u>: - Allows full delivery of foreign curricula in the country; foreign programs must include 'compulsory subjects' - Private university colleges and universities can award degrees vii. <u>National Accreditation Board (NAB) Act 1996</u>: - Approves and accredits private and/or foreign HEIs' programs, and monitors private HEIs' operations	- Private and foreign HEIs' curricula must include 'compulsory subjects' - Full twinning ('3+0' and '4+0') programs and branch campuses of foreign universities launched - Late-1990s; access to 10 public universities versus seven private universities - Concerns over curriculum differences between public/local and private/foreign HEIs; e.g. difference in language of instruction (Malay versus English) and academic loads (120 credits or less) - Dichotomies of **'public-private'** and **'local-foreign'** appear
2000s	viii. <u>Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) Act 2007</u>: - Replaces the NAB Act 1996 - Establishes the Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF) and Malaysian Qualifications Register (MQR) - Regulates both public and private HEIs ix. <u>National Higher Education Strategic Plan 2020</u>: - Phase 1 (2007-2011)	**Harmonising private and public higher education curricula**: - National higher education framework for approval and accreditation of private and foreign HEIs' curricula; e.g. private and foreign universities' curricula must follow '120 credits' rule similar to public universities **Internationalising higher education**: - To increase foreign enrolments and collaboration with foreign HEIs, and develop as an international education hub

| 2010s | - Phase 2 (2012-2016)

x. <u>Malaysia Education Blueprint (Higher Education), 2015-2025</u>:
- outlines higher education shifts for Malaysia to become a developed nation | - In 2013; 'General studies' replace 'compulsory subjects' in line with public HEIs' focus on holistic education and life-long learning
 - In 2016; access to 20 public universities versus 75 private universities (including 13 branch campuses of foreign universities)
 - Distinct dichotomies of **'public-private', 'local-foreign',** and **'national-international'** |

This sociology of curriculum study into the making of cross-border dual degree curricula in Malaysia and its effects on re-spatialising its higher education involves knowing about the country's education histories, contexts, and trajectories. Of equal importance is to understand the curriculum writers, i.e. who they are, what they know, and how they go about making their contemporary dual degree curricula (Pinar, 2004; Yates & Grumet, 2011; Young, 2008). This is the focus of my next chapter as I investigate who and what make the cross-border dual degree programs in Malaysia and with what effects on their curriculum writing.

Chapter Five

Who and What Make Dual Degree Curricula

5.1   Overview

5.1.1 Who make dual degree curricula.

In the previous Chapter, I discussed my analyses and findings following what policy documents and curriculum writers say about Malaysia's history and policy contexts and its higher education reforms. However, this social science study into how cross-border dual degree curricula in Malaysia culture its higher education space extends beyond knowing the country's history and policy contexts. It requires that we also understand who the people and what the circumstances are that make cross-border curricula in Malaysia. Curriculum is defined not only by government priorities that emphasise national, social and economic development but also by globalising imperatives and how people within national spaces respond to these shifts and flows (Yates & Grumet, 2011). As such, in this Chapter, I examine who the curriculum writers are, how they understand their social and political contexts, and what assumptions and experiences they bring into their curriculum writing (Pinar, 2004, 2003; Yates, 2010; Young, 2008).

This Chapter demonstrates how the profile analysis surfaced the curriculum writers as two distinct social categories. It also shows how 'curriculum writing' as the investigative lens revealed curriculum writers' knowledge building to be rooted in their particular social histories and cultures, and inflected by current conflicts and dilemmas. This Chapter is about my research question on who and what make cross-border dual degree programs in Malaysia and with what effects on curriculum writing.

5.1.2 Curriculum writers' profiles and categories.

As explained in Chapter Three, I constructed the curriculum writers' individual profiles from their interview narratives. I analysed their profiles to understand their social histories, cultural orientations, and educational settings and how these aspects influence their curriculum writing. I present the curriculum writers' profiles according to: (i) who they are, i.e. the person; (ii) where they work, i.e. their institution; (iii) how they work, i.e. their curriculum writing practice; and, (iv) what they understand about cross-border higher education in Malaysia, i.e. their orientation.

The profile and narrative analyses indicate that the curriculum writers belong to two distinct social categories, i.e. Malaysians and Anglophones. Both categories have similarities as well as differences with one another. They are similar in that both categories bring with them Western resources from their upbringing and/or backgrounds in education. They also face similar challenges in terms of working with local authorities and regulators when making their cross-border dual degree programs. However, Malaysian and Anglophone curriculum writers differ in terms of their social views and work cultures as revealed in how they deal with conflicts and approach the regulators and/or British university counterparts.

In this Chapter, I report and discuss the profiles and narratives of three Malaysian and three Anglophone curriculum writers. They have been selected for their depth of knowledge and experience in cross-border higher education and dual degree programs in Malaysia. Pseudonyms preserve the curriculum writers' anonymity, and the label 'British University' replaces the actual names of the British universities involved. Findings from the profile and narrative analyses highlight differences, complexities, and tensions present in Malaysia's higher education space. They also reference the curriculum writers' contexts through distinct themes that explain curriculum writing as outcomes of who the curriculum writers are (their 'being'), how they understand their education contexts (their 'knowing'), and what their work is like (their 'doing'). The Malaysian and Anglophone curriculum writers' profiles and narratives are reported and discussed under sections 5.2 and 5.3 respectively.

5.2 Malaysian curriculum writers

The Malaysian curriculum writers presented in this Chapter are Chandra Sen, Fred Tan, and Molly Chong. Like other Malaysians in this study, they grew up attending Malaysian public schools. Owing to the country's national language policy, as explained in Chapter Four, Molly's schooling was entirely in English but for the others was partly in English. The Malaysian curriculum writers bring along some Western/Anglophone resources from their academic and/or professional studies and postgraduate training. They are senior academics at the Malaysian private universities offering M-B dual degree programs. Findings show they view British universities as 'more established' compared to Malaysian universities and they are comfortable to 'follow the British' in higher education matters. Malaysians want the British partner to 'show-the-way' in how to go about making their dual degree curricula. They also encountered difficulties working with their British university counterparts due to differences in work cultures and approaches in doing education and curriculum. Their responses also highlight conflicts and challenges associated with Malaysian regulator's requirements and their private universities' enterprise priorities. Generally, Malaysian curriculum writers prefer to play-by-the-rules, 'submit' to authority and not challenge the status-quo.

5.2.1 Chandra Sen.

5.2.1.1 The person – growing through private education.

Chandra is Malaysian-Indian. He had hoped to pursue further studies at a public university. However, the lack of places due to the state's ethnic quota system prevented him from doing so. Financial constraints also prevented him from studying abroad. He opted for vocational studies at a private community college, which he explained as follows:

"It's not easy to get into public universities in those days. And so, my first qualification was a Diploma in Accounting from Kolej Tunku Abdul Rahman way back in the early-80s. Then, I started my career in Accounting which was not what I hoped for either, but that was the only option available to me at that point in time."

Wanting to upgrade his qualifications, Chandra studied part-time at a private institute whilst working full-time until he obtained qualifications in Accounting and Human Resources from related UK professional bodies. Then, he joined a private college and became a lecturer and program administrator. The private college was, at that time, expanding its cross-border twinning programs with UK and Australian universities. He recalled:

"Cross-border higher education in Malaysia in the 1990s was growing rapidly. Twinning programs were mushrooming! I taught in several UK degree programs in Business like the University of East London's programs and the University of London's external programs. My responsibilities included managing these programs as well.

At the time of interview, Chandra was involved in teaching and writing courses for the dual degree programs between his Malaysian university college (UC) and a British university. He found the experiences which he garnered from teaching in the UK twinning programs helped him build the dual degree curricula. He elaborated:

"When I joined this university, it was at the early stages of the dual degree programs. I became involved and was asked to write different courses for the program. And so, I've written several courses and they were based on my experience from the UK twinning programs and based on what I thought would be the appropriate curriculum."

5.2.1.2 The institution – new university's enterprise priorities.

Chandra's Malaysian private institution had been running cross-border twinning programs with UK and Australian universities prior to becoming a UC. When it achieved UC status, it became concerned that it would not be able to attract students to enrol

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based on the merits of its own 'home-grown' degree programs. Chandra admitted that he and some colleagues also felt anxious about having to develop the degree programs on their own. Explaining the situation, Chandra said:

> *"As a newly formed university college, we were not allowed to continue delivering foreign collaborative or twinning programs. We have to develop our own home-grown programs. We were unsure about how to do this, what to teach, and if we would get the student numbers. We were faced with the challenge of developing and selling our own programs."*

To Chandra, the newly formed Malaysian private UC's priorities included making its programs 'attractive' and 'marketable' to students. Soon after becoming a UC, its senior management decided to partner with a British university to endorse its home-grown programs and award British degree qualifications alongside its own. Chandra believed that the Malaysian private university's enterprise concerns and priorities were the reasons for its M-B dual degree programs. He explained as follows:

> *"It was quite a top-down approach taken by management when the dual degree programs were introduced. And this was related to the importance of student numbers which was often drummed into us. And, the need to compete with other institutions for students is very important too. I think these were the reasons why we started the three dual degree programs in Business."*

Chandra surmised that his newly established Malaysian private university *"has multiple challenges"*. He iterated them as the need to *"develop our own curricula, attract more students, respond to market situations, and assist lecturers in developing courses"*. Describing the situation as 'stressful' for him and his colleagues, he said:

> *"When the college became a university, it was quite a sudden change, and that put a lot of strain on all of us ... We had to determine what we want for our curriculum, make it marketable, and streamline it to suit what students want and all that. It was stressful for all of us."*

5.2.1.3 Curriculum writing practice – follow British ways.

Chandra felt 'lost' when he started writing his courses for the dual degree programs. He described his Malaysian university as 'new' and 'inexperienced' and the British partner university as 'established' and 'well-ranked'. He was disappointed by the lack of assistance and guidance by his British university counterparts to him on developing his courses. He felt that he had to resort to what he knew or had learnt from teaching in past UK twinning programs. He described his curriculum writing experience as follows:

> *"I was exposed to British education and teaching when I taught the UK twinning programs. Some of my colleagues (here) were educated in the UK and Australian systems. All of us are doing the work based on our own experiences. There was no guidance or samples given by British University. In a sense, we didn't know what it is like at the UK side. I had taught in UK Business degree programs in other colleges. And much of the experiences from there helped me in drawing up the curriculum over here."*

Initially, Chandra designed his courses with a lot of content and assessments because he believed these would benefit his students. However, his British university counterparts labelled his efforts as 'over-teaching' and 'over-assessing'. He was frustrated not knowing how to set exam questions to assess his students more effectively, and manage large classes. Eventually, the British partner university understood what the academic staff at the Malaysian university needed and offered them training in relevant areas. Chandra found the training offered by the British partner beneficial to him and his work. He explained:

> *"After a few years, British University finally looked into giving professional training to the lecturers here. British University began sending their staff over here to train us. They began teaching our lecturers here to become professional teachers. So, the whole idea of how to develop curriculum, how to ensure that the program and module objectives and learning outcomes match, and so on, all these things became clearer to us through the training."*

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The British partner university encouraged academic autonomy. Yet, Chandra was inclined to use Western/UK theories, models, and case studies in his courses. His familiarity with Western/UK resources is tied to his professional training and postgraduate studies. He had learned them before, and used them in teaching past UK and Australian twinning programs. Chandra believed that his colleagues at the Malaysian university did the same because of their respective education and training from the West. He spoke about their tendency to 'follow the British' as follows:

"People here think we must follow what British University does or says. Although our British counterparts tell us that we can explain to them why we want to do certain things (differently), etcetera, but we would still follow (them) … Because this is what our students and market want. Our dual degree curriculum is very much UK-centric. It is our program. We developed it. But, we're very much aware that it's about British University."

Reiterating his Malaysian private university's priorities, Chandra justified:

"Our students and employers want proficiency in English and Western knowledge and practices. And UK is quite the preferred. So, we offer it".

5.2.1.4 Orientation in higher education – working with conflicting regimes.

To Chandra, the major challenge in his dual degree curriculum work was the reconciling of differences between the Malaysian and British systems of higher education. Associated with this situation are the conflicting requirements of both states' quality assurance agencies, i.e. the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) and the UK Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). He lamented:

"MQA's style of structuring the curriculum is different from that of QAA. MQA's expectations are different from QAA's. So, we had to explain over lengthy sessions with British University about MQA's differences. For example, they had difficulty understanding why 'compulsory subjects' must be added into the curriculum because they don't have these over in UK. Another area of difficulty faced is the semester-system over here compared with the term-system over there.

British University begins the academic year in September and works through till the middle of the next year with a long break in summer. Here, we have three semesters a year with no long breaks."

Chandra also highlighted how differences between MQA's credit hour and QAA's grade classification systems impact grading schemes, pass marks, and classification of awards between the Malaysian and British universities. He explained his challenge as follows:

"The people over here have difficulty understanding how the points are calculated over there in the UK, and vice versa. It took a while for both parties to figure out what to do. It is tricky and messy work. And, it's like we have to please two gods!"

The need to resolve these differences caused tensions and unhappiness between curriculum writers at the Malaysian and British universities. Chandra said, *"The people over on the other side cannot understand the different demands by the Ministry and expectations of students here"*. Chandra felt that his British university counterparts imposed their requirements on him and others at the Malaysian private university without understanding the latter's situation. He was annoyed that the people at the Malaysian university were the ones having to make the changes. He declared:

"Often, we needed to go back and rework parts of the program and exam questions. This caused a lot of heartache and headache among the lecturers here. We felt very unhappy that we are the ones going back and forth all the time."

Chandra also felt unhappy with the way his British university counterparts responded to him. He elaborated:

"We know that our major challenge is meeting the higher academic expectations of British University. But the kind of words they used made us feel very humiliated and very unhappy. The statements they used were very hard hitting."

5.2.2 Fred Tan.

5.2.2.1 The person – 'product' of cross-border programs.

Fred is Malaysian-Chinese. Like Chandra, he was not able to get into the public universities available at that time. Neither was he able to go abroad for further studies. He took up part-time professional studies in Accounting whilst working full-time. He considered English to be his 'first language' because he uses it most. Fred has a broad range of experiences in cross-border higher education, ranging from being a student in it to lecturing and administrating an Australian university's twinning program in Malaysia. Outlining his experiences, he said:

> "My involvement with cross-border education or degrees started with the twinning arrangements. Firstly, I obtained my Master of Finance degree from RMIT through its twinning at that time with Malaysian Institute of Management. Then, I was involved in teaching Victoria University's twinning program here for almost ten years. I was also its head of program for a while. And now, I'm involved in teaching and developing courses for dual degrees with British University."

Fred's PhD training and qualification were through collaborative arrangements between a Malaysian private college and an Australian university as well. He added:

> "You can say I'm a product of the cross-border arrangements in Malaysia. I have benefited both personally and professionally from them".

In terms of the dual degree programs by his Malaysian private university, Fred's role as senior lecturer and acting head of its department of Accounting and Finance makes him part of the university's curriculum group. He developed courses in Accounting for its M-B dual degree programs. He found his postgraduate studies and academic work with the Australian universities 'helpful' for this work. He explained:

> "When I moved to this university's Business school, it was already delivering dual degree programs with British University. I'm familiar and comfortable with this concept. I studied locally for my degrees

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*from RMIT and Victoria University, and I've taught in them as well. And
so, I develop the dual degree curriculum here using what I have learnt
in working with the Australian universities. These experiences are
helpful for the work I'm doing now."*

5.2.2.2 The institution – focus on Western collaborations.

As Chapter Four informs, Malaysia's Private Higher Education Institutions Act
(PHEIA) 1996 allows private universities to grant degree awards based on their own
('home-grown') curricula and not on another (foreign) university's curricula. Fred's
Malaysian private university wanted to continue working with its partner universities in
the US, UK, and Australia. It also believed that students in Malaysia want these
universities' qualifications. Fred explained:

> *"We have to take cognizance of the fact that there is a market for
> cross-border higher education programs in Malaysia. We also
> recognised the market's preference for education and qualifications
> from the West."*

Fred's narratives revealed his Malaysian university's 'pro-Western' disposition.
The university pursued collaborations in academic exchanges and joint research with
universities in the US, UK, and Australia and not with universities in Asia. Fred explained
that this was because the university's management viewed universities in the West as
more established. He also believed that this disposition influenced the university's
decision to build dual degree programs with a British partner university. He elaborated:

> *"From the Malaysian perspective or mindset, the management always
> wants something Western to back it up and I guess that's what the
> Malaysian market wants as well. The preference for Western brands
> does influence our curriculum decisions and business plans."*

As a new private university in Malaysia, its priorities included increasing enrolments and
developing programs to attract more local and foreign students. According to Fred:

> *"We definitely want to attract local and foreign students to enrol with us. In designing our curriculum, we focus on market demands and whether we can actually sell our program and get students to enrol. This university is not known yet. And, the market still wants qualifications from top universities in the West."*

According to Fred, the Malaysian private university's dual degree curricula is 'home-grown' because *"the genesis of the dual degree program was from within this institution"*. Nonetheless, he would incorporate Western elements and British contents, in particular, into the courses he developed. He clarified that this was not due to the British partner's insistence. Instead, he wanted his students to be knowledgeable about Western theories and practices and to improve their international mobility in terms of employment and further studies. Fred explained how he and his colleagues laboured to incorporate into their dual degree curriculum in Accounting and Finance the topics covered in professional examinations by UK's Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) and Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW). He believed that including these 'UK features' into the M-B dual degree curriculum made it 'attractive' and 'marketable' to students, employers and sponsors.

5.2.2.3 Curriculum writing practice – like 'David and Goliath'.

Fred found working with his British university counterparts challenging. He felt that there was little or no support from them. He was also disappointed that the 'more established' British university did not guide the 'less established' Malaysian partner. He perceived his counterparts at the British university as 'not interested' in his work and 'not wanting' to work with him. He explained his challenges as follows:

> *"We didn't really work with one another on a lecturer-to-lecturer basis, especially at the start. And, if you are dealing with people who are more open and more cooperative you find that things will work better. But if you are dealing with someone who is perceived to be of higher standing than you, then you have a problem ... British University is a large public university and the people there are not necessarily interested in what we do"."*

Fred considered his British university counterparts as 'unequal partners' and 'higher-up academics'. He acknowledged that he had much to learn from them. Nonetheless, he found working with them 'difficult' and 'daunting' because of the disparities between them. Fred's sense of being 'unequal' to his British university counterparts was exemplified in his use of the 'David and Goliath' metaphor to illustrate their relationship. Fred saw himself as the 'little David' and his counterparts as the 'giant Goliath'. He elaborated:

> *"Some of the early developments were very tumultuous and turbulent simply because it was like 'David' dealing with 'Goliath'. The Goliath is the Management school at British University. Over here, we're all David's, you know. Being a Goliath, they probably have never heard of this little David in Malaysia. They don't appreciate our need to focus on what the market here wants. It's about understanding our situation and the different markets (here). That's important."*

Fred explained that the British university's lack of respect and understanding of the Malaysian university's needs and challenges affected him and his work. He believed his colleagues at the Malaysian university felt the same. He described the unhappiness they felt as follows:

> *"I was told that in some of their exchanges, the people at British University were fairly unpleasant. It's really very condescending. It's very much a master-and-servant type of relationship … There are bad days when I get very nasty emails. I guess I try to respond most diplomatically because it affects the work."*

5.2.2.4 Orientation in higher education – different systems and views.

A phrase which Fred used often in his accounts on cross-border higher education work and experiences was *"we're very different"*. He kept referring to the differences between the Malaysian and British higher education and quality assurance systems as part of the challenges he encountered. Explaining the differences, he said:

"We have to work simultaneous on the differences between our higher education systems and frameworks. We're very different. The challenge for us is in meeting the different requirements of MQA and QAA at the same time. Our curriculum is designed by the people here. It is very different from British University's. We have to follow our local academic regulations and structures. We're very different in our academic calendars too. We deliver our program over three semesters whereas they deliver it over two terms in a year. This has implications on curriculum and quality assurance. We face problems because our systems are very different."

Fred also highlighted how the Malaysian and British universities have different viewpoints and priorities. He gave the example of how both universities wanted more students enrolled in their dual degree programs yet their approaches towards this goal were different. The Malaysian university worked on increasing marketing efforts while the British university focused on raising academic standards. Fred presented the dissimilar views and responses of people at the two universities as follows:

"With British University, it's always about standards and quality. We are concerned about curriculum features or benefits to market and promote enrolments. British University wants more students too. But they focus on quality and raising standards. We're very different in how we see things."

5.2.3 Molly Chong.

5.2.3.1 The person – best of two worlds.

Molly is Malaysian-Chinese, and one of the few among her peers to enter a Malaysian public university. She completed her Bachelor and Master degrees there, and progressed to a university in London, UK, for her PhD studies. Molly's career of working in Malaysian public and private HEIs has spanned four decades. She has taught in both public and private universities, managed undergraduate and postgraduate programs, and worked in projects for transnational organisations like the World Bank, Commonwealth Secretariat, and UNESCO. Molly spent two decades working at a

Malaysian public university before joining the private higher education sector where she was engaged in teaching and developing undergraduate and postgraduate cross-border higher education programs.

At the time of interview, she was senior academic at a Malaysian private university with responsibilities for developing dual degree programs with its British partner university. She wrote four courses for its M-B dual degree program in Business. Molly considered herself fortunate to have experienced *"the best of two worlds"*, i.e. Malaysian (local) and British (foreign) higher education. She described the 'local-foreign' and 'public-private' contrasts in Malaysia's higher education as *"both interesting and challenging"*.

5.2.3.2 The institution – preference for British.

The Malaysian private college where Molly worked became a UC in the mid-2000s. Like other Malaysian private universities, it had to cease offering the curricula of its foreign partner universities and begin developing and delivering its own curricula. According to Molly, this was problematic because most of the academic staff at the new UC did not have to develop their own courses before. She said the UC's management was also concerned that its academics do not know how to go about developing undergraduate programs that would attract students to enrol and/or be recognised by others. Describing these concerns, she said:

> *"Following the government's proviso, the UC had to introduce its own degrees. But there was the fear that if we introduced our own degrees, would there be any takers? There is the fear that local products will not sell. And so, there was this concern about the faith in local degrees in relation to recognition by foreign universities and also by potential employers."*

Molly considered the Malaysian UC 'entrepreneurial' and 'quick' in collaborating with an established British university to offer dual degree programs. Recalling how the partnership between the Malaysian UC and British university came about, she said:

> *"Soon after we were upgraded to UC, the Board decided that we should partner with an overseas university but the requirement was that it should be well-ranked. Somehow in this part of the world, the premium is still on British university for undergraduate studies. Therefore, we narrowed our search to British universities."*

Molly elaborated on the lack of confidence in local programs and demand for British qualifications. She felt that these concerns were what prompted her Malaysian UC to find a British partner university for dual degrees. She stressed the importance of this point with the following analogy:

> *"There is this fear that local Malaysian education, just like Malaysian products, will not sell. It's just like Philips light bulbs made in England are better than those made in Malaysia! The preference here is for British universities."*

Molly also attributed the Malaysian UC's preference for a British partner to two additional factors. To begin with, all the Board members received their tertiary education from UK and Australian universities and were familiar with Western higher education systems. Next, she believed that Britain's influence over Malaysia's higher education system has remained over time. She believed this was partly due to historical reasons and partly to continued social and commercial ties. She elaborated as follows:

> *"The British universities have continued links with Malaysia through research and certain professors. And, our colonial heritage had a role to play as well. Apart from the brief period when Thatcher was Prime Minister and Mahathir said 'Don't buy British', we have been close to one another. All these factors come into play and made it more likely for dual degrees between British University and our university to take off."*

Molly's Malaysian UC had explored dual degree collaborations with a few Australian and American universities. However, it found the British universities and higher education system *"more suitable and of better fit"*. Here, Molly's narratives show Malaysia's pro-British preference to be due to the historical trajectory of its higher education policy and

curriculum as a postcolonial that continues to be shaped by colonial constructs even as curriculum writers work through local demands and cultural politics along with the need to respond to external globalising pressures.

5.2.3.3 Curriculum writing practice – East meets West.

Having worked with Western universities and transnational agencies, Molly did not encounter major difficulties in working with her British university counterparts. Nevertheless, she said, *"We don't always see eye-to-eye and getting both sides to agree isn't always easy"*. Molly explained that Malaysian academics tended to 'over-teach' and 'spoon-feed' students whereas their British counterparts wanted students to be more 'independent' and 'resourceful'. Malaysians were also criticised for doing too much 'chalk-and-talk' and 'rolling-out-facts' and not enough 'inquiry-based' teaching and 'interacting' with students. Believing that these differences and disagreements are rooted in Eastern and Western ways of learning and upbringing, she explained:

> *"It's the way students are brought up and it begins from the home.*
> *That's why students from the West are much more inquisitive than*
> *ours. In the Asian context, it is always about quietly studying, don't ask*
> *questions, and your elders know best. But in the West, they go to the*
> *other extreme of questioning everything! So it's really about changing*
> *how we think and accepting that we do things differently."*

However, Molly stressed that the old adage of *"East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet"* was no longer true in Malaysia. She attributed this change to the cross-border higher education work between local and Western HEIs in Malaysia. Molly considered it beneficial to bring together Eastern and Western elements when developing her courses for the dual degree programs. However, she described her Malaysian UC's dual degree curricula as *"skewed towards the West"* and gave reasons for it being so. She explained:

> *"We did introduce elements from local contexts which is important*
> *because most of our students will be working locally and regionally.*
> *But the resources on Asian contexts are limited. There is little research*

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done by local academics, and especially in the private sector. So, there was no alternative but to adopt the Western materials. And, there is British University's curriculum to consider as well."

Moreover, many academic staff at her Malaysian UC had received their education and training from Western/Anglophone universities. Molly believed it was 'natural' for them to build their dual degree curricula based on what they knew or were familiar with. She said:

> *"Most lecturers here have been educated in America, Britain or Europe, and Australia. There is the tendency for them to use whatever they have learnt from there in teaching here. Most of them would be using texts from the West. For these reasons, we tend to follow the West."*

Molly stressed that building the M-B dual degree curricula meant fulfilling both Malaysia's and UK's systems of higher education and quality assurance. She considered the differences presented by the two systems as 'significant' and 'dilemmatic'. Using MQA's '120 credits' criterion for undergraduate curricula versus UK's QAA requirement of less credits, she explained:

> *"This '120 credits' is the biggest issue faced in collaborative programs. Why is it an issue? Because our collaborative partner in the UK has to follow its own QAA and we have to follow our MQA. So, here you have one program and two sets of requirements by two different agencies."*

Elaborating on the conflicts and challenges in constructing the dual degree curriculum between her Malaysian UC and its British partner, she continued:

> *"It's like we have 'one country, two systems' because we have one program with two systems acting side-by-side. It is not easy to run these programs as you have to take into consideration not only measures by your British partner but also the local requirements. And, MQA and QAA curriculum requirements are quite different!"*

5.2.3.4 Orientation in higher education – tackling 'gaps' and 'opportunities'.

Molly discerned that cross-border higher education in Malaysia *"is really about commercialisation of higher education"*. She believed this was so because cross-border programs by private HEIs emerged in response to particular needs, gaps and opportunities in Malaysia's higher education space. She explained:

> *"You must understand that there was, and is, demand for higher education and a void to be filled by Western education and qualifications made affordable locally. Private higher education institutions mushroomed in this country to offer various cross-border higher education programs because of this demand."*

Molly explained the high value Malaysian parents place on Western education and qualifications. She told stories of how they sent their children to the UK, US, and Australia for further studies. She recalled them telling her, when the global financial crises happened in the mid-1980s and mid-1990s, that they were "*bleeding and coughing out blood to pay the high fees for children studying overseas"*. According to Molly, the private HEIs recognised these 'gaps' which affordable Western/Anglophone programs can fill. They seized these 'opportunities' by making relevant cross-border higher education programs available in the country.

Another 'gap' highlighted by Molly, and its associated 'opportunity', concerns the professional development of academic staff at the Malaysian private UC. She explained this point as follows:

> *"We know the gaps between British University and us. I can see British University as partner coming on board to improve our practices and standards. And, the fact that we were able to move faster was mainly because British University was our catalyst for change. It helped us in moving our standards of teaching and curriculum, not to the standards of British University because that would take time, but really, to set us in the right direction to go in curriculum development and in teaching and learning."*

Molly appreciated the professional development programs organised by the British partner for staff at the Malaysian UC. These programs taught them about the British university's academic practices and how they teach undergraduate students.

To Molly, building the M-B dual degree curricula involved bridging the gaps between the Malaysian UC's capabilities and British university's expectations and resolving the disparities between MQA and QAA requirements. Albeit these challenges, she was convinced that working with the British partner's standards and practices would elevate the same for the Malaysian UC. She admitted:

> *"In working with British University, we are realistic and pragmatic about our gaps. British University requires certain standards and we all have to meet those standards. This is good because, in the end, British University being the more established partner can pull us up from a lower level to a higher level."*

Overall, I summarise my analyses and findings on Malaysian curriculum writers' narratives as follows. First, Malaysian curriculum writers believed cross-border dual degrees in Malaysia came about due to lack of access and faith in public higher education and preference for British education and qualifications. They revealed the elements of 'commercialising higher education' and 'following the British' in Malaysia's cross-border programs. Next, they highlighted the gaps and differences between Malaysian and British institutions and higher education systems which complicate their cross-border knowledge building work. The curriculum writers on both sides also differ in terms of how they view education and go about doing curriculum. Their metaphors, like 'David and Goliath' and 'East meets West', surface the 'conflicting' and 'dilemmatic' nature of Malaysia's cross-border higher education space. These findings tell us that who the Malaysian curriculum writers are (i.e. their social histories, beliefs, and expectations) and what they experience (i.e. different systems, and conflicting requirements) affect their curriculum writing that produce the cross-border dual degrees (B. Green, 2010; Pinar, 2004; Young, 2008).

5.3   Anglophone curriculum writers

The three Anglophone curriculum writers presented in this section are Edward (Ed) Jones, Harry Porter, and Tom Cooney. They confirm the demand for higher education in Malaysia and preference for British education and qualifications. The Anglophones differ from Malaysians in terms of their cultural orientations and curriculum writing logics. They identified differences between Malaysian and British higher education systems as their major challenge in making M-B dual degree curricula. Socially, the Anglophones are more direct and assertive in their dealings with regulators and with their local colleagues and British university counterparts. Nonetheless, like Malaysians, they were inclined to adopt the British way of doing higher education.

5.3.1 Ed Jones.

5.3.1.1 The person – experienced in European higher education.

Ed is British and has worked at the same Malaysian private UC for more than 15 years. His senior academic and management roles at the UC included responsibilities for planning and developing its dual degree programs with his British alma mater. Ed completed his undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications at this British university and worked there for almost ten years in its ERASMUS and TEMPUS programs with European HEIs. He described himself as *"having first-hand experience of cross-border programs in Southeast Asia and Europe"* because he was directly engaged in some of the cross-border higher education reforms in both regions. Ed believed that his knowledge and experience of TEMPUS and ERASMUS programs and UK QAA requirements were 'valuable' to his work in building the M-B dual degree programs at the Malaysian UC. Outlining his cross-border higher education experiences, Ed hinted that some of Europe's higher education reforms are beginning to emerge in SEA and Malaysia. He said:

"I became involved here because I was one of the few people who actually know about other parts of the world because of my previous experience. So, I got involved in developing links. Initially, those links were to support transfer students. In Malaysia, it was the '2+1' and '1+2', and things of that nature. In other countries, there were different models and different ways of doing it. I managed a lot of the ERASMUS and TEMPUS projects where we have the dual and joint degrees across a number of countries in Europe. And now, you begin to see part of the pattern here!"

5.3.1.2 The institution – building brand and recognition.

Like other new Malaysian private universities, Ed's private UC was concerned that its home-grown curricula would not be marketable. Ed explained, *"As a new and young university, we needed to compete with other better known universities"*. As such, his Malaysian UC was eager to develop its brand and improve the recognition of its awards. He elaborated:

"Being private, we are particularly focused on local and international student recruitment. When we became a UC, it was obvious that our institution was an unknown entity. We weren't known at all. Who would want on their parchment or certificate something which no one knows about? In order to get market credibility, which continues to this day, we had to find ways of doing so."

For this purpose, Ed mooted the idea of 'co-badging' the Malaysian UC's home-grown degrees with equivalent awards by his British alma mater which was already one of the UC's collaborative partners. Believing that his British university's 'good reputation' would lend credence and recognition to the Malaysian UC's programs and awards, he said:

"When you've got a dual degree from a British partner, which is well established and that has international links, then the recognition is greater. Recognition of our qualifications is paramount to students, especially international ones who take the transnational awards back to their home countries for employment. They are interested in whether their degrees are recognised by companies and institutions in their own home countries."

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Ed believed that the Malaysian UC should emulate universities from the West as they are at the forefront of knowledge creation and innovation. He argued:

"So, where is most of the innovation coming from? It is coming from the West. That's where most of the books and references and scholarship come from. This part of the world has yet to develop that body or wealth of knowledge to draw upon. Where does most of the Intellectual Property reside? In simplistic terms, most of the new curriculum and innovation are coming from the West."

In this context, he pointed out that all the cross-border dual degree programs by Malaysian private universities involved British universities because *"the British have strong brand and reputation in education"*.

5.3.1.3 Curriculum writing practice – familiarity with European models.

Ed spear-headed the development of the Malaysian UC's M-B dual degree curricula based on the European cross-border models he had worked with. Having worked in his British alma mater's joint and dual degree programs with a few European countries, he was comfortable to adopt similar approaches for the Malaysian UC's dual degrees. He elaborated as follows:

"I looked at the projects that we used to do under TEMPUS and ERASMUS. UK QAA had clear definitions on what these programs were and the difference between the dual and joint degrees in particular. I already had the experience of running these within the frameworks of ERASMUS and TEMPUS. So, I approached British University and said, 'Could we consider a dual degree for these degrees of ours?'"

Ed talked about the large numbers of local and foreign students enrolled in British qualification programs in Malaysia. He believed that British programs were popular because of people's social histories and existing ties. He explained:

"Many of these things are explained by history and relationships rather than grand plans. We wanted to continue working with British

University as we've already been doing in twinning programs which
were quite popular. The logical thing for us was to work with the
familiar, and we knew British University. You get into a situation where
you develop with a partner because you are familiar with them and
they are familiar with you. And when we looked to alternative
partners, they couldn't give us what we wanted, basically."

Ed used the terms 'familiar', 'comfortable' and 'relationship' several times when he talked about building the dual degree programs. He also highlighted that a 'good number' of academic staff at the Malaysian UC were educated at British or Western universities. Ed admitted that their dual degree curricula contained more British or Western resources, compared to local, because of their backgrounds:

"Although we strive to have good balance of local and foreign contents
in our courses, invariably much of the contents are drawn from British
or European or Western sources ... It rather depends on the
backgrounds of the people developing it. If someone has a British
degree, it would be inclined to be more British. I was quite comfortable
to use and adapt from what I already knew."

5.3.1.4 Orientation in higher education – reconciling differences and conflicts.

Ed described his Malaysian and British universities as having *"dissimilar backgrounds and objectives"*. He contrasted the 'new' Malaysian UC, which began as a private college in the 1990s and granted degrees only since early-2010s, to his 'established' British university with origins dating back to the early-1930s. He knew the Malaysian UC's objective in working with the British university was to leverage upon the latter's reputation and expertise. Conversely, the British university's interest in collaborating with the Malaysian UC was to expand its population of international students. Coming together to build cross-border dual degree curricula was the 'common ground' for achieving their respective goals. Ed likened their dual degree collaboration to a 'marriage' because it involved working with differences and conflicts. He explained:

"The two are distinctively different institutions. But, it's like a marriage.
There are the differences but we also try to work together for common

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gain. As institutions, we are different. And the people within are also different. We think and act differently. Again, like a marriage, it is ongoing and evolving. I think this is a marriage of convenience because there are beneficial outcomes that are mutually reaped by both parties."

Ed related the challenges encountered when his colleagues at the Malaysian and British universities worked together that highlighted their different social characteristics and work cultures. Having worked in Malaysia for almost two decades, Ed found his Malaysian colleagues 'prepared-to-agree' with the British counterparts or someone more senior. He remarked:

"If somebody senior says 'do this', my Malaysian colleagues would do it! We can debate on all sorts of local cultural reasons for that. I would say most local staff would not want to put their heads above the parapet for fear of being shot at. But, the British staff would put their heads above the parapet and not be shot at!"

Ed wished his Malaysian colleagues were more confident and bold in their work. He observed them to not 'make-a-stand' on their preferred position because they did not want to 'make trouble'. He would encourage his Malaysian colleagues to voice their opinions and show ownership over their curriculum. He continued:

"Though we have to discuss and develop the curriculum with British University but the degree is ours and not linked to what they offer. The locals must speak up and not be passive. I tell them to take what British University says as 'inputs' and not 'instructions'."

Ed felt that a significant part of his work involved reconciling differences between the Malaysian and British universities and their higher education systems. A major dilemma he encountered was in scaling the pass marks for undergraduate studies. The MQA requires a pass mark of '50' whilst QAA sets it at '40'. Furthermore, their methods for determining undergraduate award classifications are different. MQA computes a 'grade point average (GPA)' based on the average of all exam scores

throughout the undergraduate years but the QAA classifies undergraduate awards based only on the exam scores of the penultimate and final years of study. Ed lamented:

> *"This is a major problem in our dual degrees. Whose regulations or requirements do you follow? Which do you use for the award of your degrees? We are constantly dealing with multiple conflicts and constantly fixing the differences between MQA and QAA. In principle, we have agreed to follow a common set of regulations but the reality of achieving this is difficult or near impossible!"*

5.3.2 Harry Porter.

5.3.2.1 The person – cross-border expertise.

Harry is British and received his undergraduate and postgraduate education in Britain. He worked briefly in Malaysia in the early-2000s, teaching in a British university's postgraduate twinning program at a Malaysian private college. He returned to Malaysia in the late-2000s, to work in a Malaysian private university's dual degree programs with the same British university. Harry taught and developed courses for their M-B dual degrees in Malaysia. His experience in cross-border higher education has spanned approximately 25 years and involved collaborations between HEIs in the UK and Asian countries. Relating his cross-border higher education experiences, he said:

> *"I worked in a university in London for 11 years and then at British University for about 14 years, and throughout both I was doing their international work all the time. At the second university, I did collaborative work with Malaysia, and quite a lot in the Middle East and South Africa, and some in China. I was a British university's external examiner to a college in South Africa, and did the same in Greece, Sri Lanka, India, China, and Hong Kong as well. So, I have reasonable idea about some of the cross-border education work going on by universities in the UK."*

Harry believed his *"fairly extensive experience in British universities' collaborative programs"* augured well for his work in developing the M-B dual degree curricula. He

was excited to contribute in cross-border programs because *"this is happening elsewhere too with different countries, universities, and people collaborating in higher education".*

5.3.2.2 The institution – from 'retailer' to 'manufacturer'.

Harry's Malaysian private university was formerly a private college offering foreign universities' twinning or franchised programs. In achieving university status, it had to develop its own curricula and award its own degrees. Harry stressed that the 'changed roles' affected not only the institution but also its academic staff. He said the Malaysian institution's position shifted from being a 'retailer' (distributor) to 'manufacturer' (maker) of education programs. He described the changes for the Malaysian institution as follows:

> *"It was no more just a satellite delivering someone else's programs. It's now the manufacturer of education rather than just a retailer of it. There is a big difference from that point of view!"*

Harry pointed out that an institution can change its name overnight but changing people's knowledge, skill-sets, and attitudes takes more time. He observed that the Malaysian university's major challenge, in becoming a university, was in transforming the way its academic staff thought about themselves and their work. He explained:

> *"It takes quite a long time for people to become comfortable with making their own decisions and making changes on what goes into the curriculum. And the people here need more academic ownership of the curriculum making process. The 'maturing' in academic processes takes time. It will take a period of time for a change in mindset in staff members."*

Harry's description of the Malaysian private institution as 'retailer' and 'manufacturer' revealed his sense of its enterprise nature and commercial priorities. He said, *"As a new university, we have to focus on what we could do and what students and employers want".* Harry observed that students and employers in Malaysia *"show*

preference for UK education and qualifications". He also emphasised that the Malaysian university was *"proud to establish UK higher education standards and traditions in its programs"*. He understood the Malaysian university wanted its academic staff to learn the British partner's best practices and standards and incorporate them into their home-grown programs.

5.3.2.3 Curriculum writing practice – deferring to the 'familiar'.

Harry emphasised that the M-B dual degree programs at his Malaysian university emerged out of necessity rather than readiness. In developing his own courses, he was guided by his experiences of higher education in the UK and its cross-border curriculum reforms. However, he empathised with his local colleagues at the Malaysian university because they were not sure how to go about developing their own courses and degree programs. He explained the situation as follows:

> *"The duals have sort of evolved from franchises. When you are running franchises, you are basically given the curriculum, the styles of assessment, and largely the types of materials to use. That's an easy way to get going because a lot of it is dictated to you. When you become a university, you do need your staff to be thinking for themselves. And, they should want to bring their work into the curriculum. There's a sort of transition from what you were doing before in franchises and moving into determining for yourself what you want to do."*

Quite a few of Harry's local colleagues were educated in the UK and had taught in UK and Australian twinning programs in Malaysia. Nonetheless, he noticed that they were 'uncomfortable' when developing their dual degree courses alongside more experienced counterparts from the British university. Harry felt strongly that his local colleagues should rely on their own academic strengths and interests instead of allowing their work to be influenced by the British partner's resources and demands. Believing that his Malaysian colleagues should 'step forward' and have 'ownership' of their curricula, he said:

"I told them to take control of their local curriculum and allow in their knowledge and expertise. There is a difference in developing the curriculum ourselves. It's based on what we're able to do, and taking that forward and taking responsibility for it which I think is difficult for some locals. Well, maybe it's not difficult but it just takes time for people (here) to adjust because we are no longer just following a given pattern or system but we are now responsible for it. As a university, this is what we should be doing."

Harry attributed his Malaysian colleagues' willingness to defer to the British partner's requirements and methods to 'familiarity'. Past and existing cross-border higher education ties between Malaysian and British HEIs have made British higher education a familiar and well regarded thing to locals. And, though British higher education methods and processes are different from Malaysian's, the local staff *"are used to following what the British partner wants"*. Harry concluded:

"You have to look at the history. And, because all the twinning programs started off as franchises by the UK universities more than 20-odd years ago. From about the early-1990s to the mid-2000s, almost all the franchises here were UK universities' degrees. And when this institution became a university college was when the dual degrees with our British university partner started … The people here are familiar with British universities. There are no plans to work with universities from other countries on dual degrees."

5.3.2.4 Orientation in higher education – serving multiple 'masters'.

Harry has heard his Malaysian colleagues call the British partner university the 'master' and describe their relationship as 'master and servant'. Concerned by the locals' perspective, he said:

"I do not agree with the 'master' way of doing things. As a new institution, the people here might get pulled into that because they want to have the international curriculum and so they will agree to whatever the partner wants. We have had many heated discussions with the partner, and we will continue to academically disagree. It has to be collaborative rather than somebody trying to lord over the other".

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Harry acknowledged, however, that *"the dual degree programs do involve multiple stakeholders"*. He described cross-border higher education programs as 'complex' compared to domestic or on-shore programs because the former involved greater financial implications and accountability to more regulatory bodies. Elaborating on this, he said:

> *"Cross-border higher education programs have to be permitted by the ministries and regulators on both sides and they must be viable to the partner institutions involved in terms of attracting adequate local and international enrolments. We must know what the market here wants, what students want to study, and what industries want. So, the MQA and QAA, the UK and Malaysian institutions and industries, they are all key stakeholders. You can call them the 'masters' if you like."*

Harry also described putting together the M-B dual degree programs as 'challenging' and 'tricky' because it involved working with *"very different people and their cultures, and almost opposing sets of requirements by MQA and QAA"*. He explained MQA's and QAA's dissimilar ethos and approaches with the following:

> *"The QAA is there to make sure that the universities are complying and doing things properly. Its focus is on their curriculum objectives and outcomes. The QAA is hands-off from that point of view. It is the observer, if you like, rather than the judge. The MQA is more prescriptive about what you can do, what you can have in your modules, and about methods of delivery and the balance between lectures, tutorials, and contact hours. Things are far more prescriptive here than what happens in the UK."*

The disparities between the two state systems presented multiple challenges. Harry recounted his 'nightmare' in resolving the differences in 'contact hours' and 'classification of awards' between the Malaysian and British universities. His account underscored not just the technical differences between Malaysia's and UK's higher education systems but also their distinct philosophical underpinnings. Harry found the Malaysian system focused on 'regulations' and 'processes' whilst the British system was

concerned with 'accountabilities' and 'outcomes'. He illustrated the disparities and dilemmas through the following:

> *"There's a difference in the number of learning hours for a module or a set piece of work. In the UK, it's the learning outcomes that are important - these we need to achieve at the end of the degree. But, the MQA would stipulate how we do things, and that what we do must be the same as the public universities including the local requirements on contact or learning hours, etcetera. This straight-jacket approach by the MQA is probably the biggest hurdle we face."*

And,

> *"British University has its own way of calculating the awards. We make sure that we, by sticking to regulations of both QAA and MQA, come up with the same award classification as British University's. It would be uncomfortable, to say the least, if our students graduated following an award classification that is different from British University's! We have to work with two sets of regulations and make sure that students studying in the dual degree program come out with the same award classification at the end. Believe me when I say this is more complicated than it sounds!"*

Harry considered himself knowledgeable in cross-border higher education matters and skilled in cross-cultural work. Yet, he found making the dual degree curriculum between the Malaysian private university and British public university 'complicated' and 'tricky' due to different social norms, and opposing higher education regimes and institutional priorities. He concluded, tongue-in-cheek, *"It is impossible to serve multiple masters!"*

5.3.3 Tom Cooney.

5.3.3.1 The person – pioneering M-B dual degrees.

Tom grew up in the UK and completed his undergraduate and PhD studies at UK universities. He began his academic career at a British university before venturing to

Australia where he assumed academic and research positions at several universities. By the late-1990s, he was a senior academic at a university in Melbourne and was involved in its cross-border twinning programs in Business with a Malaysian private college. Tom left Australia in the mid-2000s to work at the Malaysian private college as its director for academic programs and international partnerships.

When the Malaysian college attained UC status, Tom initiated discussions on dual degree programs between the Malaysian UC and a few British universities. The concept of dual degrees between Malaysian and foreign universities was new. Hence, Tom encountered multiple challenges when he proposed the M-B dual degree programs to the Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE). He explained the complexities and how he managed to obtain the Ministry's approval as follows:

> *"I went to the Ministry several times to discuss this. And, they said that they do not approve of any degree scroll that has two logos on it. They said that's a joint degree and they don't approve of joint degrees. At that time, we didn't have the distinction between dual or joint degrees in any sophisticated way. I thought well let's see what they say to something that is a Malaysian degree validated by a British university. I went to see the Head of LAN, which is now MQA, and I said to him that I was thinking of starting a Malaysian degree which will be based upon British syllabus but it would be a local degree validated by British University. I said there will be a certificate from the local university and a certificate from British University. And he said, 'Not a problem'!"*

Tom was pleased that his Malaysian private UC's M-B dual degree program was among the first to be approved by the MOHE.

5.3.3.2 The institution – growth through British sponsorship.

Tom's Malaysian private UC had been conducting cross-border collaborative programs with Australian and UK universities for a few decades. When it became a UC, its senior management wanted to continue working with Australian and/or UK universities and their degree awards. Tom understood the new UC's aspirations. He planned for the Malaysian UC to partner with an established British university in the

dual degree programs so that the former could learn from the latter and be associated with its good reputation. He explained:

> "We had to build our brand and it's something that all universities are doing now. The tie-up with British University was the start of a good thing. And, we also had to have a product that sells. British education and qualifications are premier and preferred by many Malaysians."

Tom's idea of M-B dual degree programs was based on his knowledge of universities in Britain, Ireland, and Australia. He explained how some of these universities developed via 'sponsorship' by other more established universities:

> "Sponsorship isn't new. I draw upon the history of Trinity College Dublin back in the 16th century. It was founded and was sponsored by Cambridge. Cambridge would give its authority for its degrees to be recognised because the degrees of Dublin and Cambridge were interchangeable. This means that if you got a degree from Dublin you could get the same degree from Cambridge by incorporation. And this still exists today. They needed to have a 'big brother' if you like. Sydney University sponsored what became the University of Newcastle. The University of New South Wales sponsored what became Wollongong University. And Melbourne University in more recent times sponsored for a while Ballarat University. So, sponsorship of this kind isn't a declaration that an institution was not good enough to offer its own degrees. It's just a very sensible technique for people to accept that your degree is as good as a degree of a more established university."

Tom believed that having an established British university sponsor the Malaysian private UC via dual degrees would endorse the latter's curricula and qualifications. Developing the dual degree curricula with the British university would also help academic staff at the Malaysian UC improve their knowledge building skills. Tom was confident that 'British sponsorship' would advance the Malaysian UC because of Malaysia's British colonial past and identity. He rationalised:

> "The dual degrees are continuing a tradition that goes back to the British times. There is empathy in Malaysia with the British style of education."

5.3.3.3 Curriculum writing practice – led by British traditions.

As the Malaysian UC's academic staff worked with the British university on their dual degree curricula, they realised they lacked certain knowledge building skills and experience. For example, they were uncertain about how to develop and deliver their courses, and assess students' learning. Tom acknowledged the disparities between what the British university expected and what local academic staff could do. The British university advised people at the Malaysian UC to align their teaching plans and delivery methods with theirs and academic staff to be research active. Tom said:

> *"There were mixed feelings. And, you can only interpret it as fear that we are not able to come up to a standard that we knew was high. You have to acknowledge the fact that the British are very much in the fore."*

Realising the Malaysian UC's challenges and needs, the British partner university eventually offered assistance. Tom elaborated:

> *"British University knew we are not up to their standards, and in terms of our numbers of staff with PhDs. So, they would help our staff through mechanisms like joint PhDs. And to get us up to speed with the teaching quality at British University, they brought in their enhancement of teaching and learning seminars for the staff here to learn about university teaching methods."*

The Malaysian UC followed the British university's curriculum processes which included setting up various curriculum committees and boards of studies. The British university also appointed external examiners to evaluate the Malaysian UC's degree programs and examinations. Tom continued:

> *"Our curriculum would be mapped against British University's and the extent of the curriculum would be dictated by British University. This is a good thing because it assures that British University's quality traditions are established in the dual degrees".*

Tom also acknowledged that the resources used in building the dual degree curricula *"had to be quite British-centric because local resources were lacking"*. He viewed the Malaysian UC's adoption of British methods and resources as necessary and to intervene in the Malaysian UC's curriculum building capabilities. Tom resolved:

> *"This is our degree and we have to begin developing the expertise for getting our own stamp on the degree. (But) for now let's go with British University because their tradition is already in place here. And it was fortuitous that British University stepped in to develop our staff."*

5.3.3.4 Orientation in higher education – business of higher education.

Tom affirmed that the demand for private higher education in Malaysia was due to limited opportunities in the public sector and the appeal of Western-Anglophone qualifications. He described the private sector as *"entrepreneurial in offering cross-border higher education programs"*. Explaining how Malaysian private HEIs are funded mainly through students' fees, Tom was concerned that their programs are regarded as 'commodities' and their resources have to be channelled to marketing activities that increase student numbers. He elaborated:

> *"Malaysia's cross-border higher education is generally driven by bottom-line and can be characterised by competition and lowering standards because of the fear of losing students and hefty fees … The landscape is highly competitive and aggravated by increasing numbers of private universities and ongoing cross-border higher education developments."*

Tom's newly established private UC has to compete with other more established private and public universities in the country. His Malaysian UC's decision to present a British university's award alongside its own for its home-grown programs was aimed at countering the keen competition in its higher education space. Explaining the effects of the British university's brand and reputation, he said:

> *"The frustration is that people do not necessarily look at our local degree for its academic quality. They look for the product's brand*

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recognition … Even students in their First Year studies here want
options to transfer to British University. You have to face the facts. This
is what the mothers and fathers here want. In other words, it's the lure
of a British or Western degree. They look for the brand recognition. It's
frustrating but you have to accept it."

He also gave the example of how the Malaysian UC's undergraduate curriculum in Accounting and Finance incorporated courses required by two UK professional accounting bodies. Tom concluded:

"What's selling this degree and why student numbers are growing is
because of British University's name and also the ICAEW and ACCA
brands being part of it. These names make the product sell, and that's
the important point".

In summary, the details and nuances in the Anglophone curriculum writers' narratives on making cross-border dual degree curricula and higher education in Malaysia are consistent and congruent with the Malaysian curriculum writers. Findings from the combined narrative analyses, of both categories of curriculum writers, confirm that the way they do dual degree curriculum writing is inflected by who they are, their personal and social histories, and their beliefs and experiences (Pinar, 2004; Young, 2008). Findings confirm Malaysia's higher education space as complex and dilemmatic, and tensioned by 'public-private', 'local-foreign', and 'Malaysian-British' divides. The analyses also surfaced the contexts that affect the making of M-B dual degree curricula in Malaysia and their effects on curriculum writing. This is discussed further in the next section.

5.4   What make dual degree curricula

As literature informs, curriculum is representation of who are the people involved, and their practices and contexts (B. Green, 2010; Pinar, 2004; Pinar et al., 1995; Yates & Grumet, 2011). To understand their curriculum in 'practice' and 'context'

is to recognise the part culture plays in 'practice-context' (Connelly & Xu, 2010) and the social-anthropological effects of space and 'space-time' (McLeod, 2017; McLeod et al., 2018; Seddon, 2014b) as integral to what affects curriculum writers and their work. In other words, to know 'what' ('practice-and-context') make cross-border dual degree curriculum in Malaysia is to understand the effects of culture and space-time on their curriculum writing. Analysing the curriculum writers' narratives, as explained in Chapter Three (see Figure 5), surfaced their practices and contexts which I present as three key themes. They are: (a) commercialising higher education; (b) benchmarking the British; and, (c) coming together of 'opposites'.

5.4.1 Commercialising higher education.

The curriculum writers comprehend the 'enterprise' nature of Malaysia's private higher education space. The common expressions they used when describing Malaysian private colleges' and universities' priorities and actions included *"making programs students want"*, *"increasing enrolments"*, *"building brand/reputation"*, and *"overcoming competition"*. They believed the cross-border higher education programs in Malaysia expanded because they met both local and foreign students' interest in Western/Anglophone higher education and qualifications. Curriculum writers like Molly, Fred, Ed, and Harry believed that the cross-border higher education reforms attracted not only foreign students but academics as well to Malaysia. The Anglophone curriculum writers in this study acknowledged that they came or stayed on in Malaysia because of the opportunities presented to them through cross-border collaborative programs.

These curriculum writers' description of Malaysian private HEIs as 'enterprise oriented' is not entirely new or surprising. A few studies on Malaysian higher education and its responses to changes in global trade, capital, and innovation have explained its cross-border higher education reforms as 'massification' and 'marketisation' of higher education (M. N. N. Lee, 2016; M. N. N. Lee, Sirat, et al., 2017; Rao, 2009). Similarly, Marginson's (2000) study on Australian universities also recommends that the contemporary or modern university be understood as 'academic enterprise' or

'enterprise university'. Nonetheless, this study's findings confirm 'commercialising higher education' as an important reality and characteristic of Malaysia's cross-border higher education curriculum space involving Malaysian and British universities. As Ed surmised, *"Our dual degrees with British University thrive because they're what the students and market wants".* This finding hones our critical understanding of Malaysia's cross-border higher education space and its cultural orientation in contemporary times.

Although cross-border higher education reforms in Malaysia began and were fuelled by the global financial crises of the mid-1980s and mid-1990s, they continued to expand into the 2000s and 2010s. The country's more recent types of cross-border higher education reforms include international branch campuses and the M-B dual degrees. These developments promote academic mobility in terms of increased flows of students and academics engaged in international education and exchanges. Curriculum writers like Molly, Ed, and Harry explained that their respective British partner universities wanted the cross-border dual degree arrangements in Malaysia because they viewed them as means of expanding their network of international students and improving diversity. Their observations confirm that changing higher education priorities in contemporary times culture the types and nature of collaborations across the globe.

5.4.2 Benchmarking the British.

Another set of 'practice- context' affecting cross-border curriculum writing in Malaysia relates to curriculum writers' belief that 'British is best' and inclination towards 'British' ways of doing higher education. Although the options for Western higher education in Malaysia include programs from Australia and US, the curriculum writers described British higher education and qualifications as 'preferred'. This 'pro-British' orientation in Malaysia with regards higher education matters can be attributed to several reasons. Curriculum writers like Molly and Tom credited Malaysia's pro-British culture to its colonial past which involved the British for almost two centuries. The space-time effects of colonial connections explain how some British influences find their way into people's life in Malaysia as a postcolonial country (Dimitriades & McCarthy,

2001; Hoogvelt, 2001; Tikly, 2001). However, M-B dual degree curriculum writing in Malaysia involves not only Malaysians but Anglophones as well. The latter do not have the same colonial attachments to the British. As such, Malaysia's pro-British culture in higher education must be explained by reasons beyond colonial histories.

Studies of higher education in Asia and SEA have indicated tendencies by institutions in this region to 'mimic the West' (Chan, 2013; Huang, 2007; Welch, 2013). Similarly, this study provides findings in support of following or benchmarking the British in Malaysia's cross-border higher education. First, we know that curriculum writers' knowledge building work is influenced by their educational backgrounds and experiences. The Malaysian and Anglophone curriculum writers have experienced education and training by British/Western institutions. Most of them have worked in either cross-border higher education programs by British/Anglophone universities and/or in Western/Anglophone parts of the world.

Next, their experiences are also influenced by the effects of globalisation that mobilise people and programs, and promote exchanges of ideas across the world (R. Cohen & Kennedy, 2007; Marginson et al., 2010; Urry, 2000). Globalising higher education has brought about greater flows of foreign academic staff, knowledge and resources to Malaysia. On this point, Anglophones like Ed and Harry brought to Malaysia's higher education their expertise from cross-border collaborative programs happening in other parts of the world like Europe's Bologna Process. They introduced in Malaysia what they know as 'common practices' in British/Western institutions. In Tom's case, he introduced to Malaysia the idea of 'university sponsorship' as practised by established UK and Australian universities in support of newer ones.

The curriculum writers also based their curriculum writing decisions on the academic materials and references available to them. The lack of local (indigenous) academic resources made the Malaysian curriculum writers turn to what they knew, or had learnt before, and were able to easily access. The Malaysian and Anglophone curriculum writers wanted to include local/indigenous knowledge and case studies into their dual degree curricula with the British universities. They could not as local academic

resources were scarce. As such, the curriculum writers' orientation towards British/Western resources was tied to their easy access to academic materials in English and not merely to the colonial ties with the British.

Lastly, the curriculum writers' orientation towards British higher education practices and using English is their way of organising their curricula to be more globally competitive. They believed students and parents in Malaysia prefer British/Western education and qualifications as these are more widely recognised in employment and further studies. All curriculum writers associated British/Western higher education with greater global, social, and economic mobility. As literatures inform, English is used in higher education because it is the *lingua franca* or language for international communication and academic works (R. Cohen & Kennedy, 2007; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Welch, 2013). These curriculum writers' responses align with other studies that explain nation-states making changes to their national education and curriculum to address global needs (Dale, 2000a, 2010). They also support findings that link English proficiency to enhanced employment opportunities in Malaysia with multi-national corporations and private companies (Cheong, Hill, Fernandez-Chung, et al., 2016; Cheong, Hill, & Leong, 2016; Cheong et al., 2018).

5.4.3 Coming together of 'opposites'.

This study also surfaced the 'gaps' and 'differences' between curriculum writers at the Malaysian and British universities, the universities themselves and their respective state higher education regimes. The metaphors used by curriculum writers like 'David and Goliath', 'master and servant', and 'marriage of unequals' illustrate the conflicts and complexities in Malaysia's cross-border dual degree curriculum space. They indicate that there are challenges and dissensions when peoples of different cultures, backgrounds and practices come together in cross-border higher education reforms. Similarly, the expressions 'East meets West' and 'one country, two systems' highlight the 'opposite-ness' between Malaysian and British universities and their higher education systems. They point to the conflicts and tensions between curriculum writers

at Malaysian and British universities as they work in making M-B dual degree curricula. For example, the Malaysian curriculum writers were unhappy and frustrated with their British counterparts due to differences in Eastern and Western work cultures and their differing approaches in teaching-learning and social interactions. The differences between Malaysia's (MQA) and UK's (QAA) higher education requirements also make cross-border reforms between the two countries 'tricky' and 'messy'. Furthermore, the dissimilar institutional backgrounds and priorities of the Malaysian private universities and British public universities contributed to additional tensions and dilemmas.

The literature on curriculum theory or inquiry underscores the importance of understanding the cross-border curriculum between Malaysian and British universities as representation and organisation of power (Da Silva, 1999; B. Green, 2010; Young, 2008). The curriculum writers' metaphors suggest British 'superiority' in this matter, and this draws on the politics of knowledge (whose knowledge) and control (who decides) in the relationships between people at the Malaysian and British universities. Studies on curriculum as knowledge space and boundary work also emphasise the need to recognise the presence, regulation, and flow of power (Robertson, 2011; Seddon, 2014a, 2014b). The coming together of 'opposites' and the interplay of power in Malaysia's cross-border higher education space influence its spatial character and culture.

This study shows that cross-border dual degree curriculum writing represents the effects of different peoples coming together with their disparate contexts and practices that become 'intertwined' or 'entangled' in the process. The discourses on globalisation also stress on the multiple and concurrent cross-national, cross-cultural flows and networks occurring between nation-states in contemporary times that shape our 21st century world (Dale, 2000a, 2010; P. Scott, 2000; Urry, 2000). Therefore, this study's findings expose the 'interconnected' yet 'conflicted' nature of Malaysia's cross-border higher education space. They provide a glimpse of how different cultures and contexts entangle in ways that produce the conflicts and tensions associated with globalising higher education reforms in today's world.

5.5 Summary

This Chapter presents the curriculum writers who make the cross-border M-B dual degree curricula in Malaysia as two distinct social categories, i.e. Malaysians and Anglophones. Their knowledge building is rooted in their particular social histories and cultures, and inflected by current conflicts and tensions arising from differences between the higher education regimes of nation-states and reforms happening in different parts of the world. The answer to what make cross-border dual degree curricula in Malaysia is found in curriculum writers' practices and contexts that entail the effects of culture, space and space-time. Malaysia's cross-border knowledge building space in globalising times is about 'commercialising higher education' as response to market needs and changes, 'benchmarking the British' for wider global recognition, and involving 'opposites coming together' that create the complexities and conflicts characteristic of today's cross-national and cross-cultural networks. Also, this study's findings on who and what make M-B dual degree curricula in Malaysia reveal that cross-border higher education reforms in Malaysia are not due to its colonial histories alone. Instead, findings indicate something 'new' happening in Malaysia's space of higher education. What is 'new' is discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter Six

National, International or Something New

6.1 Curriculum writing and culture

This Chapter addresses the final research question of this study which is about how curriculum writing processes re-culture dual degree programs and with what effects on the spatialisation of Malaysia's higher education. As discussed in earlier chapters, global events and Malaysia's liberalisation of higher education have allowed foreign curricula into its higher education space through cross-border higher education reforms. The cross-border or cross-national higher education programs, like the M-B dual degrees, disrupt Malaysia's national higher education. They also involve local and foreign curriculum workers and institutions with their own unique practices and processes. Curriculum inquiry accounts for both context and practice, and culture is an integral part of this 'practice-context' because culture is both the source and solution in experiential matters (Connelly & Xu, 2010, p. 327). Current literatures suggest two cultural positions on the cross-border higher education reforms in Malaysia. They are: (i) 'transnational' for mobility of people, programs, and ideas across national borders (Mok, 2011; Tan, 2002; Ziguras, 2003), and (ii) 'international' for including cross-cultural, inter-national, and global dimensions (Huang, 2007; Knight, 2012; Tham & Kam, 2008). How adequate are these positions in explaining the cultural character of Malaysia's cross-border dual degree programs in contemporary times?

In this Chapter, I report and discuss how curriculum writers in the M-B dual degree programs in Malaysia understand 'national' and 'international' in their higher education work and experiences. I examine the cultural character of Malaysia's cross-border higher education through their curriculum writing that materialise these dual degree programs. This study's findings show cross-border curriculum writing processes

culture the dual degree programs in ways that remake and reframe Malaysia's higher education. They suggest an emergent transnationalism, associated with people mobility and global interconnectivity in education and cultural contexts (Rizvi, 2011; Vertovec, 2009) re-spatialising Malaysia's higher education.

6.2 Notions of 'national-ness'

6.2.1 A matter of compliance.

As explained in Chapter Four, the Private Higher Education Institutions Act (PHEIA) 1996 permits Malaysian private HEIs to conduct foreign curricula and/or develop their home-grown curricula and use languages other than Malay. However, these curricula and awards must follow the Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF) and be approved by the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA). The MQA, in accordance with the MQF, requires academic loads in private universities' undergraduate programs be '120 credits'. It also requires private universities to teach 'compulsory subjects' (or general studies). The curriculum writers believed that these rulings are aimed at reducing the differences between private and public universities' curricula. Susan Wong believed this was true based on her three decades of experience working in Malaysia's cross-border higher education programs. She explained, *"This is true because the public universities use Malay and conduct courses that are very similar to the compulsory subjects"*. To Susan, MQA's requirement that all students in private HEIs take up compulsory subjects was aimed at reducing the 'divide' between private and public HEIs. She stressed:

> *"We have to force (our) foreign students to take the compulsory*
> *subjects which include Malay language and Malaysian Studies. This is*
> *part of the Ministry's rulings and it makes our curriculum similar to*
> *public universities whereby local and foreign students have to learn*
> *Malay and local stuff. All students must pass these compulsory subjects*
> *in order to graduate and get their degree certificates. This is the way to*
> *make our degrees not too different from the public universities."*

Jerry Hall is Anglophone. He has worked in the same Malaysian private HEI's cross-border higher education programs for almost 15 years. He, too, believed that MQA imposed the requirements of '120 credits' and 'compulsory subjects' on private HEIs to align their curriculum reforms and practices with public HEIs. He said, *"This is the government's way of standardising public and private sectors and reducing comparisons and competition between the two"*. Jerry elaborated:

> *"There's a sort of battle between public and private, a sense of silent competition between public and private universities, if you like, which is perceived through our working with MQA panel members who review and accredit our programs."*

The 'compulsory subjects' in cross-border undergraduate degree programs account for approximately nine credits in the overall total of '120 credits'. Although the number of 'national' credits is not a lot, all curriculum writers expressed unhappiness over these MQA regulations. They understood 'national' in their dual degree curriculum writing to mean adherence to state regulations and following public universities' academic loads and assessment methods.

6.2.2 Lack of indigenous resources.

The curriculum writers' narratives also indicate that the M-B dual degree curricula were skewed towards Western/Anglophone information and resources due to the scarcity of local Malaysian/indigenous knowledge. In making their M-B curricula, they wanted to include research-based information about Malaysian businesses, practices, and case studies. Molly explained that this was difficult because:

> *"There is little research done by local staff especially in the private higher education sector. And so, we had no alternative but to take from Western contents and resources"*.

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Susan also commented on the lack of local intellectual outputs as follows:

> *"With regards research, we're only just beginning. There's some
> funding set aside for research and we do collaborative research with
> other universities. But this depends on our researchers here and how
> fast and how much we develop in this area."*

The Anglophone curriculum writers' responses tallied with their Malaysian colleagues' comments about the lack of local or indigenous resources. Ed said he and his colleagues wanted to create 'balance' between local and foreign contents in their M-B dual degree programs in Business. However, the dearth in Malaysian/indigenous resources was the reason they adapted from Western and/or British materials. He elaborated as follows:

> *"In developing our dual degrees, we wanted a balanced mix of both
> local and international contents. But right from the beginning, when
> we developed the curriculum, because of limited local case studies,
> business applications, and research based information, we had to
> contextualise other materials in the sense of 'Malaysianising' them. For
> example, in our Law module, although there are differences between
> British Law and what is practised in Malaysia, we worked on the
> similarities so that the module was contextualised in that way."*

Harry and Tom gave similar explanations. Overall, the curriculum writers' narratives inform us that 'national-ness' in the M-B dual degree programs merely meant compliance with the country's national higher education framework.

6.3   Notions of 'international-ness'

6.3.1 'British/Western' means 'international'.

As outlined in chapters Four and Five, the start of the dual degree programs between Malaysian and British universities was when the Malaysian private colleges became universities. In the process of developing and delivering their own curricula, the

curriculum writers recognised the need to make their 'home-grown' curricula 'internationally recognised' so that local and foreign students would enrol. Susan recalled her experience as follows:

> "I thought to myself, if we offered our own degrees, would anyone enrol? Who would send their child to us when nobody knows our standards? We needed an international partner who is strong enough to give us guidance and credibility. This is where British University comes in."

At the time of interview, Joe Lim's Malaysian private university college (UC) had just attained full university status. It also partnered with a British university to improve its home-grown curricula in terms of international appeal and recognition. He explained:

> "The reason for developing the dual degree with British University was because our institution felt that it needed a more established and international university to lend us credibility and mentor us because we were at that time a new university college and we've only just become a university."

Molly's Malaysian university college (UC) was the same. It sought to collaborate with British universities because it perceived British higher education as 'reputable' and 'international'. The dilemmas encountered by Susan, Joe, and Molly were similarly experienced by the other curriculum writers. Their new private UCs or universities had turned to British/Western universities to 'internationalise' their home-grown curricula because they believed local and foreign students in Malaysia associate the British/Western 'brand' of higher education with 'international' recognition or reputation. Ed and Jerry also talked about a survey conducted by their Malaysian private university on students' perception of foreign university qualifications. The survey showed the majority of local and foreign students preferred Western higher education qualifications, with British/UK ones above others, because they associated British/Western higher education with 'quality' and 'international recognition'.

As such, both Malaysian and Anglophone curriculum writers considered their dual degree curricula as 'international' due to the British/Western aspects involved. For example, Jerry described his Malaysian UC's dual degree curricula as 'international' because it involved the British partner university's name and inputs. He explained:

> *"It is 'international' plainly because of British connections and inputs. The British or UK brand equates to internationalisation in higher education."*

Comparable expressions to the one above by Jerry were found in the narratives of other curriculum writers. Harry said, *"Inputs from British University helped our university college to internationalise faster"*. Jay quipped that *"British University's name and degree certificates accord international status to our programs and degrees"*. And, Ed summarised that:

> *"Because you've got a dual degree from a British partner which is well established and that has international links themselves, then the internationalisation and recognition is greater."*

A few curriculum writers informed that their Malaysian private universities had explored dual degree collaborations with American and Australian universities. However, these were not successful because the higher education systems or quality assurance frameworks in these countries do not allow joint or dual awards through validation of curriculum. Ed confirmed as follows:

> *"We were interested to work with Australian universities but the problem was that they were not able to offer dual degrees because of their Australian Universities Quality Agency or AUQA. Our dual awards are with British University although in most of the academic benchmarking work that we do, we do so mainly with UK universities but also some with other Australian and US universities."*

Overall, the curriculum writers equated the presence of 'British/Western' elements or symbolisms in their home-grown curricula to having 'international-ness'.

Susan articulated this perception with two interesting examples. The first relates to the employment of *'Mat Salleh'* (or 'white-person' in Malay) as academic staff. She believed this augured well for internationalising her Malaysian UC's home-grown curricula. The second was specific to the appointment of a *'Mat Salleh'* vice-chancellor at her Malaysian UC. She said:

> *"When we started on our home-grown programs, I recall the management announcing the appointment of a few 'Mat Salleh' academics to teach in our own degree programs because students and parents would want that. Having 'Mat Salleh' teach in our university college and our programs means we are more international in that sense."*

> And,

> *"When we built our curriculum, we wanted to make sure that our curriculum is internationalised, that it meets British standards. I think our dual degree is a form of internationalisation because we have British University as partner. And, I think my institution is probably a lot more internationalised compared to others because we even appoint a Mat Salleh as our VC and we have a few Mat Salleh faculty members from UK and Australia. If you look at us, we're probably one of the more advanced ones in internationalisation."*

Susan's references to *'Mat Salleh'* were interesting because she did not associate their 'whiteness' with colonial dominance or supremacy alone. Instead, she linked 'whiteness' to positions of becoming or being 'international'. Her responses indicate Malaysia's higher education encountering the processes of constructing, diffusing, and institutionalising the formal and informal rules and beliefs on 'internationalisation' in ways that are similar to 'Europeanisation' (Lawn, 2002; Onursal Besgul, 2012; Uluslararasi, 2012). By this, I mean the 'international' space of the dual degree curriculum is one associated with cultures and networks crossing borders.

    In short, the upgrading of Malaysian private colleges to UCs and/or universities meant a stop to their direct delivery of foreign universities' curricula. Yet, the curriculum writers at the newly formed Malaysian private universities found themselves resuming

or maintaining collaborations with British universities and working with more Anglophones (*Mat Salleh)*. The Malaysian universities developed new ways to achieve or foster 'international-ness' in their dual degree programs. And, the curriculum writers believed that 'British-ness' in their dual-degree curricula is synonymous to 'international-ness'.

6.3.2 'British/Western' for recognition and mobility.

As discussed in Chapter Five, the Malaysian and Anglophone curriculum writers were familiar with Western or British systems of higher education because of their own backgrounds in education and work. Their experiences made them want to incorporate British/Western higher education 'brand' and 'standards' into their home-grown curricula. Nonetheless, they also believed that the British universities' dual awards enhanced their students' chances for further studies, employment, and migration. They believed their M-B dual degree curricula prepare students for further studies and/or employment abroad because they focus on similar learning outcomes, teaching resources, and assessments as their British university counterparts. Jay Rajan has worked in cross-border higher education programs, including M-B dual degrees, for two decades. He elaborated as follows:

> *"We simulate British University and make our dual degrees rather similar to theirs in terms of the areas of study as well as the experiences. These things take a long time to come to fruition but they are happening. And that's quite important for our students' studies and qualifications to be recognised for work locally and abroad and for their experiences to count as relevant wherever they work."*

Similarly, Susan described efforts to benchmark the 'British system' or incorporate 'UK standards' into the dual degree curriculum as *"moving in the right direction for improving students' global outlook and mobility"*. Molly commented along similar lines about her work in developing the dual degree curriculum. She remarked:

> *"I say our dual degrees are more internationalised because we collaborate with British University. This means we have to focus on developing our students' attributes in terms of their English and communication skills, critical thinking, and problem solving. We focus on these aspects to make them more ready for work locally and abroad."*

John Smith has worked in both Malaysian public and private higher education sectors. Drawing upon his decade-long experience of working in Malaysian universities, he found the British/UK brand of higher education popular in Malaysia because *"people associate it with wider recognition and better employment prospects"*. He elaborated as follows:

> *"The nature of the market here for undergraduate degrees is UK-centric, not even Australian-centric. I think if you ask most people if they prefer Australian or UK degrees, they will say they prefer UK degrees. So far, UK degrees are still regarded as better … Students tell me that they will potentially do better when they have qualifications from UK universities to show for it, (and) especially when you are marketing to foreign students. At this point in time, a fully Malaysian degree with no seal of approval from a UK or possibly an Australian university probably isn't very marketable."*

The notion that 'international-ness' is tied to people's mobility in studies, work, and social lives was apparent in most curriculum writers' narratives. Ed's responses underscored similar points. He recognised that most students enrolled at his Malaysian private UC were not after the local qualifications but the British university's qualifications instead. His following statement illustrates the importance of recognising student flows and knowledge transfers occurring across borders and between nation-states, and acknowledging and endorsing the learning that is happening in present times. He said:

> *"As we recruited more students we realised that students were not interested in whether their degrees are recognised by the local MQA or not. Instead, they are interested in whether their degrees are recognised by companies and other universities, especially foreign*

students who need the recognition in their own home countries. This is where British University's validation and certification are perceived valuable to students"

Stories by other curriculum writers like Molly, Susan, and Tom were congruent. They talked about how they worked with UK professional accounting bodies, like the ICAEW and ACCA, to endorse their home-grown curricula in Accounting and Finance. They stressed how these professional endorsements made their programs 'popular' and 'marketable' as their graduates could find employment in many countries, and Commonwealth ones in particular.

6.3.3 Western, not Eastern, orientations.

A few curriculum writers narrated the efforts of their respective private universities to 'co-badge' their home-grown programs with dual awards by British universities. Ed told the story of how the founder of his Malaysian private university drove all over Great Britain, and 'knocked on the doors' of many British universities, before finding one to partner with. Molly and Tom said the senior management staff of their Malaysian private university travelled to many well-known universities in the UK, US, and Australia for the same purpose until they found a British partner university. Molly claimed that *"without British University's dual award, attracting students into our home-grown programs would be quite difficult"*. Susan remarked similarly as follows:

> *"Frankly speaking, foreign students don't want a degree from Malaysia because we are such a small developing country. The foreign students who come to private institutions here are all looking for a twinning or dual degree program with a university from the Western developed world."*

Penny Loo has worked in Malaysia's cross-border higher education programs for 15 years. The following is her considered response about local and foreign students' preference for British/Western qualifications compared to Asian/Eastern ones. She said:

"The market we have here is still looking at UK or Australian universities. And, we have to understand that and respond to what the market demands or wants. As such, we're not looking so much towards working with any Asian university at the present moment. "

As a British expatriate in Malaysia, Jerry was interested to work with other Asian universities. However, his Malaysian private university does not have formal links with any Asian university. He elaborated:

"We're not making conscious effort to include Asian components or elements in our dual degrees. We have not considered Asian universities as potential partners for our undergraduate degrees either. There is some discussion going on for postgraduate level studies but not undergraduate. And for now, we're not looking at teaching any part of our curricula in other languages."

Overall, the curriculum writers did not give specific reasons for not pursuing cross-border higher education programs with Asian/Eastern universities. According to John, Malaysian private universities respond to what students or the market wants. He concluded that students in Malaysia currently prefer higher education programs from the West and that are conducted in English. He added:

"From our observations and records, if students go abroad for further studies, they tend to choose universities in the West. Most of them choose to go to universities in the UK, US, and Australia. We don't have many students choosing to further their studies in the Eastern parts of the world. There are a few, but not many."

As the curriculum writers' profiles show, most of the academic staff in Malaysian private universities received their education or training from the West or locally but in English. Molly highlighted that although some academic and management staff at her Malaysian private UC attended primary vernacular schools, all of them moved on to

tertiary education in English. Their pro-Western backgrounds affect the UC's strategic directions. She continued:

> *"All our Board members and senior management, and most of our lecturers have actually been educated in British institutions or American ones, or a combination of both, or Australian institutions. I would safely say that none of them were educated in an Asian institute, say in Japan or Korea or the top universities in China. None of them are alumnus of these universities. It's important to know where your stakeholders are educated. These have been influential factors in determining who our collaborative partners are."*

Many curriculum writers highlighted that their main source and bulk of academic references and teaching-learning materials were from the Western world. Tom opined that *"the West dominates in the global context as the main resource for education, research, and innovation".* Ed stressed the same as he contrasted knowledge production from the East and the West. He concluded:

> *"Most of the books, references, and scholarships are coming from the West. And although the East is expanding, this part of the world has yet to develop that body or wealth of knowledge to draw upon."*

6.3.4 English as international *'lingua franca'.*

In speaking with the curriculum writers about how they internationalise their dual degree curricula, they invariably touched on the use of English. Most of them referred to English as the 'international language'. Jerry said the use of English 'internationalised' his Malaysian university's dual degree programs. He explained as follows:

> *"To internationalise our curriculum, we introduced English language modules into our programs. We have to because 70% or 80% of the documentation around the world is in English. Whether we agree it should or shouldn't be, the fact is, it is. If we teach our programs in another language, students who need to be globally ready would not*

be able to cope with the vast amount of documentation that currently exists in English. Our use of English for teaching and research is endorsed by British University. This can't be helped. English is the international language for business and communication."

Fred is Malaysian but considers English to be his first language. Although most Malaysians speak more than one language and Malaysian public universities use Malay, he maintained that *"our English-speaking institutions are more international and progressive"*. Harry shared the same view as he stressed the following:

> *"English is the international language. In order to compete internationally, people need to work together on an international basis and we need to have a common language where we can communicate. It could be French but it happens to be English most of the time."*

As highlighted in section 6.3.2, curriculum writers also linked students' employability and mobility to their proficiency in English. Again, their understanding was tied to English being the 'international language' for commerce, education, and research. Jay explained:

> *"English is widely used and accepted as the international language in education, business, and so on. And because of the need to have mobility for these young people, because they want to work in countries like Australia and wherever, so the choice of where they want to work or study determines the language."*

Molly believed the use of English by private universities in Malaysia distinguished its graduates from those from public universities. She said:

> *"The private universities' collaborative programs with foreign universities are in English. This makes their graduates more ready for work locally and abroad and has shifted the equality between graduates from private and public universities."*

The above results are not new discoveries. Nonetheless, they strengthen findings from other studies which indicate that English is linked with enhanced opportunities for higher education and employment (Cheong, Hill, Fernandez-Chung, et al., 2016; R. Cohen & Kennedy, 2007; Tan, 2002). They also align with findings from studies that describe English as 'international *lingua franca*', or commonly used language, for higher education and that education systems across the world emphasise using English above other languages (Marginson & McBurnie, 2004; Pennycook, 1995; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010).

In short, the findings presented in this section clearly show British/Western influence on the culture of Malaysia's higher education space. This may be explained in part by Western dominance over the world through the 19th and 20th centuries in education, economics, and social reforms. British/Anglophone influence in Malaysia can be attributed to Malaysia's colonial past, and the fact that the British Empire had covered many parts of the world through commonwealth trade centres and maritime routes (Bown, 1992; Casinader, 2017). However, I argue that these explanations alone are inadequate for Malaysia given its multi-ethnic populace that comprises people with familial roots and cultural ties involving China, India, and other parts of the Eastern world. The curriculum writers made little reference to the effects of China, India or other parts of Asia on culturing their curriculum writing. Where they did, it was to confirm the lack of influence on their knowledge building work. Instead, the curriculum writers' narratives revealed their unique understandings about what 'internationalisation' means in their dual degree curricula which affected their curriculum writing and the re-culturing of its higher education space. I discuss these unique perspectives and insights in the next section.

6.4   New meanings and position

In addition to understanding internationalisation of higher education in cross-border dual degree curriculum writing as embracing British/Western elements and using English, the curriculum writers also discerned that it was about 'learning from each

other', 'bridging gaps', and 'finding common ground'. Their responses showed the 'coming together of opposites', and the 'merging' or 'entangling' of Malaysian and British cultures, ideologies, and politics of education which frame new spaces and meanings in Malaysia's higher education. In this section, I discuss how curriculum writers' contemporary understandings of internationalisation of higher education explain the blurring of borders between Malaysian and British higher education regimes and the overlapping of curriculum writers' social spaces. The effects of 'blurring borders' and 'overlapping spaces' between nation-states re-spatialise Malaysia's higher education and make new 'de-territorialised' spaces that are shaped by people's unique contradictions, dilemmas, and networked affiliations (Rizvi, 2011; Robertson, 2011).

6.4.1 Learning from each other.

6.4.1.1 Challenging professional growth.

As noted in Chapter Five, the curriculum writers talked about the tensions and difficulties they encountered in working with their British university counterparts. Nonetheless, they acknowledged that the process of making their home-grown curricula internationalised meant they had to go through some degree of professional learning and growth. They also iterated that their Malaysian private universities pursued cross-border dual degree programs with the British universities because the former wanted to learn the latter's ways of doing higher education. Joe expressed the challenges and conflicts he experienced as follows:

> *"Developing the dual degrees with British University was not easy. But, I suppose our institution needed it. We needed a foreign and more established university to mentor us because we are a new university college. Academics at British University showed the way in terms of better ways of teaching, assessing, and improving academic standards. They are also familiar with dual and joint degree structures and can help us with their methods to build staff expertise and resources. We needed to learn what to do and British University is a good fit for that (purpose). It has the experience and reputation. There were challenges but we learned a lot in following what they do."*

Penny admitted the same. She was conscious of the 'learning' and 'changing' on her part and for her Malaysian private university. Reflecting on her observations and experiences, she said:

> "I think working with British University is challenging but we have the opportunity to learn from people who have more experience. The people there have experience writing courses and teaching, and we're still learning. So, they are good models for us to work with and for us to develop the kinds of culture and ethos that we want to have as our university grows internationally. I mean, we are developing our own but we need to learn and start somewhere and that's the value of this relationship. And, they have not been selfish with what they have and how they share."

Some curriculum writers (like Chandra, Molly, Susan, and Tom) also talked about the formal training and professional development courses offered by their British partner universities. Chandra appreciated these 'learning opportunities'. He explained:

> "British University shares with us the same staff development programs it has for its own staff. We were exposed to the whole idea of how to develop our curriculum, how to set our course objectives, learning outcomes, and assessments. I feel I have gained professionally from such learning opportunities."

6.4.1.2 Learning 'both-ways'.

The curriculum writers described the two universities and people involved in the dual degree programs as 'learning' from each other. Susan believed that she was learning from her British university counterparts and vice versa because:

> "… it's not that we learn from British University all the time. Sometimes British University also learns from us because they want to internationalise. Also, it's not that they have the expertise over there all the time. We have certain expertise over here as well."

Molly considered it beneficial for her Malaysian university to work with the British partner university and to learn the latter's best practices. However, she found their dual degree curriculum making process was one in which *"both parties learn from each other"*. She explained:

> *"Where British University came in was to have their people who specialise in certain areas comment on our curriculum and an external professor assess our curriculum as well. Where it's felt that we could change or adapt we did. So, there was learning in the process … There are times when they also learn from us. In the case of our degree in Accounting and Finance which has nine exemptions from ACCA as well as exemptions from ICAEW, which is even more prestigious, British University was interested to know how we did that. And so, we learn from each other. This is why I say this is an internationalisation model to follow".*

The curriculum writers' narratives revealed several situations where the 'learning' they experienced in making the dual degree curricula was not 'one-sided' but 'both-ways'. Referring to his British university counterparts, Chandra said, *"They became more aware of the higher education needs in this region through working with us"*. Penny responded in a similar way. She gave the example of how her British university counterparts developed more empathy for her work and understanding what Islamic financial practices mean in Malaysia. She said:

> *"I would say the learning is both ways because I can see that they are beginning to understand why we do things in certain ways over here. There are differences between Islamic countries and non-Islamic countries in terms of what's allowed and not allowed in financial practices and services. And clearly, there's a lot more going on over here in Islamic finance. British University finally adopted the stuff we are doing here in Islamic finance into their degree programs in the UK."*

Molly's perspective on internationalisation of higher education in her dual degree program was about *"both Malaysian and British universities working together and aligning with each other"*. She elaborated:

> *"British University comes periodically for visits. The lecturers and professors, they roll up their sleeves, go into the classrooms to teach, show our local lecturers how to teach, observe how our lecturers are teaching, and the same goes with how we assess students. They have their set of expectations but they also try to understand the situation here. So, the partnership does not start and end with the signing of a paper agreement. Instead, it's really a lifelong education process between the two partners. To me, this is truly what internationalisation is about. It's not just about what's on paper but it's about working together collaboratively, side-by-side. To me, to reach that is the Shangri-La of collaborations."*

Tom considered the British partner university's sponsorship and validation of his Malaysian UC's home-grown curricula as a means of internationalising the latter's curricula. He explained:

> *"I believe that if we are to offer credible degrees to students from here and other countries, then, we would have to get a sponsor with international standing. And this means both parties would have to go through all the processes and changes together. And we're doing this with British University. This is how internationalisation of higher education happens here."*

The above accounts by curriculum writers indicate that their sense of internationalisation of higher education in making their cross-border curriculum was about 'coming together' and 'learning both ways' with their British university counterparts. They highlighted different situations which showed that 'learning' was not only on their part but also for their British university counterparts. Both Malaysian and Anglophone curriculum writers admitted that challenges existed in their work with the British university counterparts due to different work cultures and ways of doing higher education. Nonetheless, they also acknowledged that the processes of learning, accommodating, and adapting were ongoing between all parties. This sense of 'learning from each other' in their curriculum writing process affects and cultures the M-B dual degree programs that they build together.

6.4.2 'Opposites' coming together.

6.4.2.1 Linking different knowledges and skills

The Malaysian and Anglophone curriculum writers' stories about dual degree curriculum writing and working with British university counterparts revealed the need to deal with multiple 'opposites'. Fred's metaphor of 'David and Goliath' and Ed's use of 'marriage of unequals' to illustrate their curriculum writing experiences presented the 'opposites', 'differences' and/or 'gaps' they encountered in their cross-border dual degree curriculum space.

One important 'opposite' relates to Malaysian curriculum writers' view of themselves as 'novices' in building and owning their curricula. The Malaysian curriculum writers, on the whole, have limited knowledge and experience in building their own programs. With the exception of Molly, the other Malaysians have been 'facilitators' of UK and Australian universities' curricula offered in Malaysia. Chandra, Jay, and Penny narrated their sense of being 'new', 'inadequate', and 'non-expert' in curriculum making as compared to their British university counterparts. They regarded their British university counterparts as 'knowledgeable' or 'experts'. They described their own learning as 'steep' and 'challenging' when they became involved in their Malaysian private universities' dual degree programs with the British universities. According to Jay:

> *"I have taught for 20 years in a college setting. There, you taught someone else's program. The curriculum and the assessments come from whoever has ownership of that program. My role then was just to deliver, to teach, the program. You don't give inputs into how the program is designed and how the assessments were arrived at. That's the extent of our involvement in that system."*

Jay recalled feeling 'unsure' about how to go about developing his courses and assessing his students. He described the work of developing courses for his Malaysian private UC's dual degree programs with the British partner as 'not easy' and 'challenging'. He continued:

"Now, we're asked to input into curriculum design, assessments, and so on. To me, from the onset, to do the curriculum design and development was not easy. It was challenging because we were never trained to do these things. Previously we just teach and now, suddenly, we are asked to design the curriculum, to design the assessments, to grade, and to do all the other quality assurance processes. This is a challenge for us."

Chandra shared Jay's sentiments. He recalled the day when he was told he had to develop courses for his Malaysian private UC's degree programs. He said, *"I felt I was being thrown into the deep end".* He believed his challenges in making cross-border dual degree curriculum with his British university counterparts were compounded by their lack of knowledge and understanding of the situation in Malaysia. He continued:

"I believe they could be asking 'who are these people in Malaysia' and 'why do they need help in setting their learning outcomes and assessments'. The statements they made about us were very hard hitting, (and) the kind of words they used made the lecturers here feel very humiliated and very unhappy."

6.4.2.2 Linking institutions of different standings

The second 'opposite' relates to the reputation, status or ranking of the Malaysian and British universities involved. Both Malaysian and Anglophone curriculum writers described their Malaysian and British universities as 'very different'. Chandra analogised the differences between his Malaysian and British universities and their conflicts in working together as akin to *"fitting a round peg and a square hole"*. Yet they came together to collaborate in cross-border dual degree programs because of their own reasons or particular purposes. All curriculum writers talked about their Malaysian private universities wanting the British partners to help them build their home-grown programs and make them more globally competitive and recognised. With regards the British universities, the curriculum writers attributed their interests in collaborating to wanting to improve their international standing, reputation, and student enrolments. Chandra summarised his views as follows:

*"We needed British University to help build our home-grown degrees
and make them more internationalised for local and foreign students.
And I understand British University wanted to work with us as part of
their internationalisation strategy. But I don't think everyone at British
University welcomed the idea. Well, maybe the senior management did
but not all the academics there."*

Penny perceived the same. She viewed her Malaysian private UC's dual degree collaboration with the British university as a means of 'internationalising' her home-grown curricula. She believed that linking the local degrees with the British university's awards made the former more 'marketable' to local and foreign students. She explained:

*"Our intention is to make our degrees more international and
marketable to foreign students. I think internationalisation means
working with well-known foreign universities. When we work with
British University, we learn from them how to make our curriculum
international. British University gives us feedback on what we can do or
change. We know we're not yet on par with British University, and we
have a long way to go on that. But I think following what British
University is doing is helpful (for us) as their degree programs attract
students from all over the world."*

The Anglophone curriculum writers also described internationalisation of higher education in their home-grown curricula as 'linking with' and 'leveraging upon' the work of more established foreign universities like their British partners. Harry considered his 'new' Malaysian UC's collaboration with an 'older' and 'established' British university as beneficial to the former because:

*"Internationalisation doesn't happen overnight. And so, it's excellent
that through these partnerships we can have internationalisation
happening in our programs. I think the idea of dual awards does mean
that you can effectively catapult through the history of education and
benefit more quickly from what others have achieved rather than
trying to do it without an international partner. Internationalisation
probably means leveraging on other's higher standards, and from that
point of view, makes it worthwhile for the local institutions."*

Tom considered the dual degree programs materialised by his Malaysian private UC and its British partner university as *"forms of internationalised higher education in Malaysia"*. He described internationalisation of higher education as *"ways of extending beyond local borders"* and *"working with foreign elements to produce outcomes that are different from what locals can achieve by themselves"*. In this context, he argued that making the cross-border dual degree curricula was internationalising Malaysia's higher education because it involved people at both Malaysian and British universities working through the requirements of two dissimilar higher education systems and producing something 'new' which neither university possessed originally. Tom opined:

> *"Our dual degree programs with British University are internationalising higher education in Malaysia. They are without a doubt. I say this because internationalisation is about institutions deciding to go beyond their present borders into the world at large, and into areas where they perceive they have something different to offer to students. The way people go about internationalisation here is to bring in foreign universities to set up campuses or partner with them in their programs. In working with British University, I believe we have brought about internationalisation quite successfully through our dual degree programs."*

6.4.2.3 Merging dissimilar regimes and methods

The curriculum writers also talked at length about the disparities between their Malaysian and British universities and among state regulators like the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) and UK's Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). Their differences in terms of policies, processes and approaches presented challenges and dilemmas for their curriculum writing. Harry reiterated the contrasts between the MQA and QAA:

> *"The MQA is very different from the UK QAA. For example, the MQA focuses on details like number of learning hours. But to QAA, it's the learning outcomes that are important. The dual degree learning outcomes have to be the same here as they are in the UK. And, provided we keep that in mind, how we get there does not have to be*

the same … Malaysian universities have had less history and, therefore,
the MQA is more hands-on. They make quite detailed requirements of
what they expect you to do and would stipulate that private
universities be the same as public universities. On the other hand, UK
universities are fairly autonomous and in control of what they do.
Hence, the QAA is hands-off. They are observers, if you like, rather than
judges."

Chandra related his experiences in resolving the 'opposites' between MQA and QAA as analogous to *"pleasing two gods"*. He also described solving the disparities and bridging the gaps between the Malaysian and British systems of higher education and quality assurance as *"tricky and messy"*. He gave the example of how he had to match the Malaysian assessment and awards system which is based on 'cumulative grade point averages' (CGPA) with the British system of 'honours classifications'. He outlined the problem faced in aligning the two systems as follows:

"At the end of the day, it's not about fulfilling one (system) or the other
but both! Our problem now is with the grading and awards system. We
have to follow MQA's CGPA mode, and we have to align with British
University's honours classifications. This is really tricky and messy work.
Let me tell you - it's a real challenge!"

Ed experienced similar difficulties. He nuanced how resolving the differences between MQA and QAA requirements posed challenges for his dual degree curriculum work. He said:

"We had to work out the differences and find ways to fulfil both MQA's
and QAA's requirements. Working out the differences is tricky, I must
say, because the MQA and QAA both look at things quite differently.
But because we want British University's presence in our degree
programs, and their inputs and awards alongside ours, we have no
other option. We have to find a way to make it work. And we did."

This study's findings indicate that people at the Malaysian and British universities, in coming together to make their dual degree programs, encountered many

challenges and difficulties. However, their common or collective purpose and plans made them look for the 'middle ground' where both Malaysian and British regimes can operate alongside each other. More specifically, they had a 'common' or 'shared' space whereby both co-existed by finding 'new' ways to accommodate each other's conflicting philosophies, rules, and practices.

6.4.2.4 Mixing of local and foreign

As Malaysian and Anglophone curriculum writers work with each other and with their British university counterparts, they bring into their curriculum writing space their respective knowledge bases, social orientations, cultural beliefs and practices which 'mix' and 'rub' with one another's. As discussed in Chapter Five, the Malaysians and Anglophones are two distinct social categories. Each has their own ways of knowing and acting in educational situations. For example, Malaysians tend to be 'less vocal' in expressing their opinions and more inclined to 'follow' or 'submit' to their British university counterparts' demands as compared to the Anglophones. However, in working together, the Anglophones also encouraged their Malaysian colleagues to be more confident about their own abilities, assertive in what they want to do, and not defer to the British university counterpart all the time. Jerry declared:

> *"I tell my Malaysian colleagues that they are quite able to build their own courses. And we do discuss how to go about it as well. British University has certain expectations. But it's not for them to tell us what to do."*

Working together in their cross-border curriculum writing, the Malaysian and Anglophone curriculum writers and their British university counterparts became more aware of each other's dissimilar belief systems, work cultures and situations. While the Malaysians found working with their British university counterparts was 'not easy', they accepted their circumstances as opportunities to learn and develop in academic matters. Susan remarked:

"When we work together, well you know, the Mat Salleh are quite different. They would challenge how we do things. They sometimes tell me to change how I do my work! It is difficult working with them but I suppose in the longer term I will develop myself to be a more international academic."

The curriculum writers' accounts revealed the 'mixing' and 'merging' of beliefs, ideas, and cultures happening in their cross-border curriculum writing space. Molly said her Malaysian university's management wanted its academic staff to follow the British partner university's methods and processes. However, she was certain that such efforts did not make them more like their British university counterparts. Instead, she described both parties as 'equally affected' and that they learned about each other through working together. She mused:

"Following how British University wants us to do things hasn't made us like them. I think both sides are being equally affected as we make the shifts to bridge the gaps we have."

Overall, the curriculum writers considered the inter-national and cross-cultural 'changes' and 'mixes' that occurred in their knowledge building work with the British university counterparts as internationalising their dual degree curricula. Harry and Ed attributed the internationalisation of their dual degree curricula to the involvement of foreign/Anglophone academics like themselves and their ongoing work with academic staff at the British universities. As Ed surmised:

"The dual degree curricula are internationalised because they are built through efforts by Malaysian and UK academics working together and learning about each other's areas of specialism and research. I would think that this is the difference compared to public universities in Malaysia where it's likely that academics from predominantly the same ethnic group are involved in building the curricula, even though they do take on ideas and contents from different sources."

In summary, the curriculum writers' narratives show that their curriculum writing that make the cross-border dual degree programs involves the coming together of 'opposites'. These 'opposites' comprise peoples from different social backgrounds and nation-states with disparate sets of knowledge and skills, expertise, and reputations. They also include dissimilar higher education regimes and practices. Together, they produce conflicts and tensions in Malaysia's higher education curriculum writing space. Nonetheless, the Malaysians and Anglophones continue to work with their British university counterparts due to common goals or shared plans. The curriculum writers consider their work involving these 'opposites' as internationalising Malaysia's higher education. These elements in their curriculum writing process affect and culture the cross-border dual degree programs they make in Malaysia.

6.5   Hybrid 'transnational' space

6.5.1 Merging spaces and blurring borders.

This study's findings reveal the M-B dual degree curriculum in Malaysia as knowledge space formed by the 'coming together', 'mixing' and 'overlapping' of dissimilar cultures, processes and practices in higher education by different peoples, institutions and nation-states. The notions of 'scales' and 'layers' in our understanding of space allows us to visualise the M-B dual degree curriculum space as comprising 'national', 'sub-national', and 'supra-national' levels (Robertson et al., 2002). As shown in Figure 6, the M-B dual degree curriculum can be depicted as that 'intersectional' space formed by the overlapping of Malaysian and British 'national' spaces of higher education, and the Malaysian and British institutional 'sub-national' spaces. There is also the 'supra-national' level of higher education space formed by international or multi-national agencies with global reach such as professional accreditation bodies like ACCA and ICAEW.
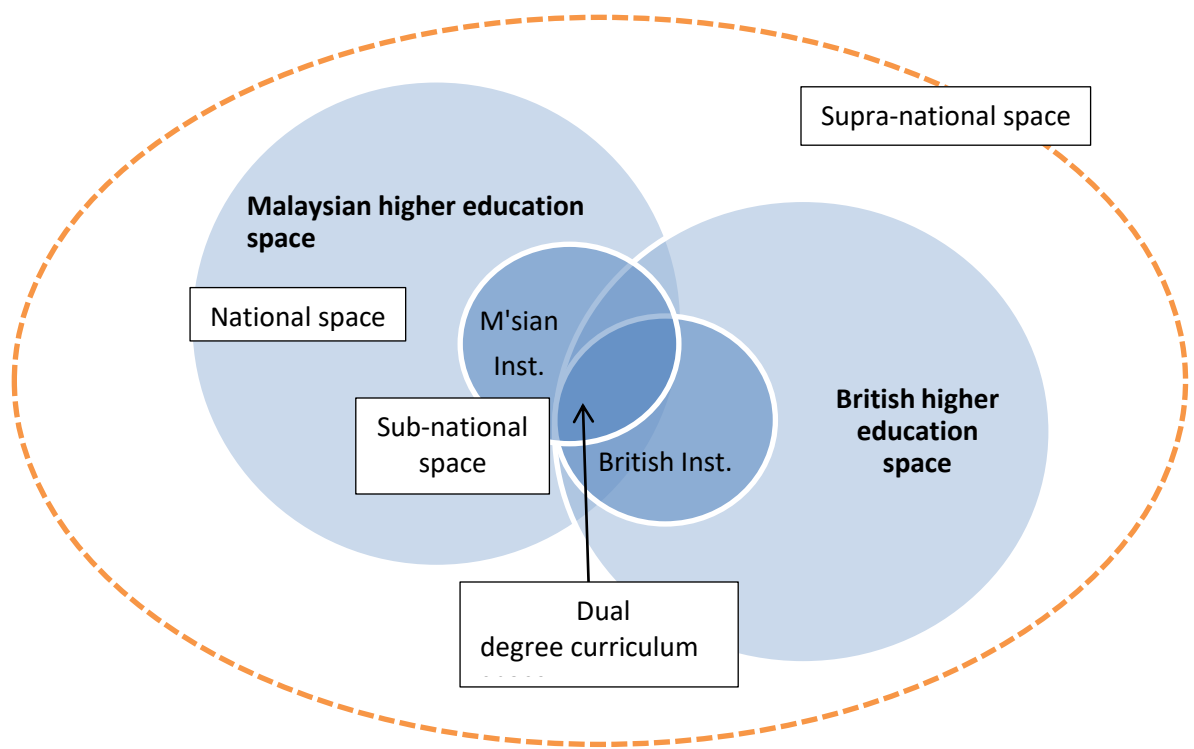
Figure discussed in: Cheng, M. W. (2017). The Southeast Asian higher education space: Transnational, international or national in new ways? *European Educational Research Journal* (Special Issue), 1-16.

Figure 6.
Malaysian-British dual degree curriculum space as an 'intersectionality' of multiple spaces of education

Our social understanding of space also comes along with the notion of borders or boundaries (Lawn, 2002; Pratt, 1999; Somerville & Perkins, 2003). My illustration, in Figure 6, shows not only the overlapping or intersections of different levels of Malaysian and British higher education spaces that make the M-B dual degree curricula. It also portrays the presence of borders or boundaries that frame the cultures, conditions and characteristics that form these different levels of spaces. This means the M-B dual degree curriculum is that multiple intersectional 'contact' space or zone, formed by the

overlapping of different levels of Malaysian and British higher education spaces, and where peoples with different geographical, historical, and cultural backgrounds come together to produce new 'hybrid' outcomes (Haig-Brown, 2001; Pratt, 1999; Somerville & Perkins, 2003). I use this illustration to highlight a few key points about the spatial character and culture of the cross-border M-B dual degree curricula in Malaysia.

First, as the literature on hybridity in Chapter Two outlines, the M-B dual degree curriculum is a 'hybrid' space due to the 'merging' and 'crossing-over' of Malaysian and British ways of knowing and doing higher education. Molly's repeated reference to the M-B dual degree curriculum as 'one degree-two systems' exemplifies this 'hybridity'. One aspect of this hybridity arises from the merging of disparities between Malaysian and British systems of higher education, that produce conflicts and dilemmas for M-B dual degree curriculum writing, when both systems are juxtaposed against each other. Another aspect of its hybrid nature relates to the different social histories of the curriculum writers at the Malaysian and British universities. They bring the 'opposite-ness' in their 'being', 'knowing', and 'doing' higher education into their cross-border dual degree curriculum 'writing' which cultures the national and sub-national higher education spaces to become 'mixed' or 'hybrid'. The 'opposites' in Malaysian and British higher education cut-across their respective national and sub-national borders as curriculum writers in this 'intersectional' space reconcile their beliefs, experiences and practices in the written texts that become their cross-border dual degree curricula. As such, this study's findings support the view that the process of 'border crossing' happens when different peoples and institutions work together in the 'contact' space or zone, and that this process generates 'hybrid outcomes' (Somerville & Perkins, 2003, pp. 261-262).

Second, the M-B dual degree curriculum is a 'de-territorialised' space formed by the 'blurring' of borders (Rizvi, 2011; Robertson, 2011) between Malaysian and British ways of doing higher education. The 'contact' space of zone, where local/Malaysian and foreign/British institutions and their curriculum workers connect and engage with one another, is tensioned and contested as it is formed by different peoples and their

conflicting beliefs and practices (Haig-Brown, 2001; Pratt, 1999; Somerville & Perkins, 2003). When curriculum writers at the Malaysian and British universities come together in making cross-border dual degree curricula, their dissimilar views, experiences and practices 'mix', 'entangle' and 'rub' with each other. The result is a 'blurring' of the boundaries between what are considered 'Malaysian' and 'British' ways of doing higher education. This 'blurring' of borders can be seen in M-B dual degree curriculum writing when the home-grown programs of Malaysian universities (sub-national) come under the ambit of Britain's QAA for quality assurance (national) for the award of the British universities' degrees which are internationally recognised (supra-national). Similarly, the work by curriculum writers at Malaysian universities (sub-national) to have their home-grown programs accredited by UK professional bodies like the ACCA and ICAEW (supra-national) distort or blur the boundaries between what is 'local/Malaysian' and 'foreign/British' in Malaysia's cross-border higher education space.

Importantly, the 'de-territorialised' intersectional space of the M-B dual degree curriculum is not entirely Malaysian or British. Some scholars describe such 'de-territorialised' space as 'transnational' because it is formed by non-state actors, working across national borders, separated by great distances yet connected by their common purposes or networked affiliations (Casinader, 2017; Gough, 2004; Rizvi, 2011; Vertovec, 2009). I argue that the M-B curriculum space is 'transnational' because the work of curriculum writers at Malaysian and British universities cut across national borders, blurring and weakening the 'boundaries' that demarcate what is 'Malaysian' and 'British'. Their work in this space, as non-state actors, is based on their common purpose to make dual degree curricula and involves overcoming the differences and conflicts associated with cross-border knowledge building. Vertovec (2009, p. 3) refers to such alliances and their workings across nation-states as 'transnational' groups and processes, and their collective attributes and wider implications as 'transnationalism'.

6.5.2 Emergent transnationalism.

Literature informs that the de-territorialised 'transnational' space is one in which new ideas, methods, and outcomes emerge (Rizvi, 2011, pp. 184-185; Robertson, 2011, pp. 292, 295). The findings from this study evidence this position in several ways. To begin with, the dual degree curriculum between Malaysian and British universities is a new cross-border higher education development in Malaysia. As discussed in Chapter Four, it began around the late-2000s as new private universities were founded alongside state plans to make Malaysia an education hub whereby local universities are allowed to conduct globally competitive programs to attract foreign student enrolments. To materialise their M-B dual degree curricula, curriculum writers had to navigate through disparate rules and conditions between Malaysian and British systems of higher education. They had to look for new ways to solve the problems they encountered as these were different from the ones in the past. For example, the curriculum writers had to find ways to incorporate MQA's compulsory subjects (general studies) into the '120 credits' of their undergraduate dual degree curricula without going against QAA's structure of only 90 to 100 credits for that level of study. Similarly, curriculum writers at both Malaysian and British universities had to rework their grading systems and classification of awards in ways that satisfied MQA's and QAA's dissimilar requirements on these matters. This study's findings on the M-B dual degree curricula suggest that there is the constant making/remaking and framing/reframing of Malaysia's cross-border higher education according to how 'local/national' specificities are mapped against 'foreign/international' trajectories. These findings indicate a 'transnational' optic whereby curriculum writers shift from viewing their practices as binary opposites, i.e. 'local/Malaysian' versus 'foreign/British', to considering them as mutually constitutive processes (M. P. Smith, 2001, pp. 3-4).

The intersectional space or 'contact zone' of the M-B dual degree curricula is also conceptualised as a space of cultural contact, or 'third space', exemplified by its spatial mobility, hybridity, and connectivity aspects (Bhabha, 1994; Somerville & Perkins, 2003). In this context, findings from this study show curriculum writers' work involving the

Internet and information communication technologies (ICT) 'blurring' and 'clouding' their sense of 'place' and 'time'. They found these new technologies allowed them to communicate and work 'face-to-face' with their British university counterparts, despite being separated by great distances and national borders, and generally at any time or place. Amazed by how technologies have changed people's life at work, Ed said:

> "We don't travel so much these days. Now, we use video-links. It's the easier and sensible thing to do although the technology is sometimes unstable ...We find ourselves getting used to the time difference between us. As you know, their day is evening for us or vice versa. It does mean that we would go home late at night because we finish around eight or nine at night. But these technologies have given us a way to take up new opportunities. It's about getting used to new ways of working with our partners who are far away."

Molly and Penny found the 'online' and 'virtual' meetings with their respective British counterparts 'helpful' because they could share or exchange documents concurrently and work remotely with them. Penny described the Internet and ICT as *"giving people more ways of working 'real-time' together"*. She elaborated:

> "Well, the internet and ICT are always evolving. And, we're sort of moving with it as all of us are beginning to work 'on demand'. By this, I mean we can now do what we want, when we want, and how we want."

Virtually networked spaces have no boundaries. They are spatial transformations formed by new multi-dimensional architectures and connections across different metropolitan regions (Castells, 2002a, 2010). As such, the Internet and ICT which offer virtual connectivity contribute to further 'blurring' of the boundaries between peoples and nation-states and increase the opportunities for 'forming' and 'exchanging' ideas, cultures, and knowledges across national borders. The construct of 'transnational space' enables people to 'belong' simultaneously to multiple places and time zones (Rizvi, 2011, pp. 187-188). In short, the 'hybridity' and 'interconnected-ness' associated with the cross-border dual degree curriculum space indicate that an emergent

transnationalism (Rizvi, 2011, p. 182; Vertovec, 2009, pp. 59-60) is re-spatialising Malaysia's higher education.

6.6   Conclusion

This Chapter's findings and discussions show curriculum writing processes culture the dual degree programs and affect the spatialisation of Malaysia's higher education. The curriculum writers' inherent subjectivities, understandings, and experiences of the conflicts and disparities involved in cross-border knowledge building work become apparent in how the M-B dual degree curricula in Malaysia are represented and reproduced. Curriculum writers' narratives on what 'national' and 'international' mean to them, and their challenges in 'marrying' Malaysian and British systems of higher education show their cross-border dual degree curriculum 'knowledge space' is inflected by cultural differences and educational conflicts because of their work that cuts across national borders. The M-B dual degree curriculum represents the 'space' and 'space-times' of Malaysia's contemporary higher education as curriculum writers, with biographies linked to Malaysia's colonial past, make their way through the changes and challenges associated with their realistic present and predictable future. The way curriculum writers go about their curriculum writing processes changes the culture ('re-culturing') of dual degree programs and shapes the spatial character ('re-spatialisation') of Malaysia's higher education.

Findings show the M-B dual degree curriculum is neither strictly national nor international. It is 'national' only to the extent of complying with Malaysian state regulations that focus on aligning or standardising public and private higher education in the country. British/Western (i.e. non-indigenous) knowledge dominates the curriculum writing processes by curriculum writers at Malaysian private universities. The curriculum writers' pro-British/Western orientation cannot be explained by colonial histories alone. Instead, findings show their pro-British bias being tied to current realities which include their biographies (e.g. backgrounds, expertise), practical consideration (e.g. abundance

of academic resources in English), and positive 'British brand' associations (e.g. global recognition and mobility).

Importantly, the curriculum writers understand 'international' in their dual degree curriculum writing to mean more than the inclusion of 'inter-national', 'cross-cultural', and global dimensions into their curricula as some scholars suggest (De Wit, 2002, 2011; Knight, 2008, 2012). They consider their M-B dual degree curricula 'international' because they experienced 'learning from each other', 'opposites coming together', 'bridging of gaps', and 'finding common ground' happening in their cross-border knowledge building work. Their cross-border endeavours highlight the blurring or weakening of borders that define what is local/Malaysian and foreign/British in their higher education which, in turn, indicate a 'de-territorialisation' of Malaysia's higher education space. The consequent merging and entangling of Malaysian and British cultures, knowledges, and practices in the making of cross-border curricula also mean a 're-spatialising' of this space, as in the forming of M-B dual degree programs as new 'hybrid' productions (Pratt, 1999; Somerville & Perkins, 2003).

The 'de-territorialising' and 're-spatialising' of Malaysia's higher education come about because Malaysian and Anglophone curriculum writers' work with their British university counterparts cuts across national-borders and was founded on common interest to pursue and maintain cross-border linkages and exchanges. These aspects together with their collective efforts in overcoming the challenges, conflicts, and differences associated with making M-B dual degree programs indicate an emergent transnationalism in their space of higher education (Casinader, 2017; Rizvi, 2011; Vertovec, 2009). I conclude that the cross-border curriculum writing that materialise the M-B dual degree programs, as transnational social spaces, is re-culturing and re-spatialising Malaysia's higher education. This 'spatialisation' of Malaysia's higher education, made visible by cross-border curriculum writing processes between Malaysian and British universities, highlight the effects of current conflicts and complexities that are characteristic of curriculum reforms in globalising times.

Chapter Seven

Transnationalism Remaking Malaysia's Higher Education

7.1 Purpose of the study

This doctoral study began with my interest to understand the effects of globalising higher education reforms on the spatial character and cultural trajectory of Malaysia's higher education. Literature indicates that contemporary higher education reforms are tied to the mobility of peoples and the flow of ideas and programs at local, regional, and global levels (Marginson, 2006; Marginson et al., 2010; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Sidhu & Christie, 2014). Therefore, I wondered about the cross-border higher education programs that are present in Malaysia and their effects in spatialising the country's higher education. Some scholars describe the re-spatialisation of Malaysia's higher education due to cross-border reforms as 'internationalisation' of higher education (Abdul Aziz & Abdullah, 2014; Knight & Sirat, 2011; Tham & Kam, 2008). Others refer to this re-spatialisation as 'transnational' forms of higher education (Mok, 2011; Tan, 2002; Ziguras & McBurnie, 2008). Yet, people and institutions that build cross-border higher education programs in Malaysia must follow 'national' system and policies. As highlighted in Chapter One, I was curious about the cross-border dual degree programs between Malaysian and British universities and how these re-spatialise Malaysia's higher education. How are these Malaysian-British (M-B) dual degree curricula 'national', 'international' or 'transnational?

Hence, I carried out this study to understand the making of cross-border M-B dual degree curricula in Malaysia and their effects on spatialising Malaysia's higher education in globalising times. My main research question was 'how and with what effects does the making of cross-border dual degree programs re-spatialise higher education in Malaysia'. In this Chapter, I summarise and discuss the findings from this

study that address this main question and the other sub-questions framing my investigations.

7.2 Social research of Malaysia's higher education

7.2.1 Concepts and theories framing the study.

Approaching this study through the sociology of curriculum lens enabled me to surface and understand the complexities and 'conflicted-ness' of Malaysia's higher education space. I focused on 'curriculum' as the key concept in this study because the knowledge building that made the M-B dual degree programs involved curriculum writers' ways of 'representing' or 'reproducing' their social histories, experiences, and practices (Pinar, 2004, 2003; Young, 1998, 2008). My understanding of curriculum as 'text-context' (Da Silva, 1999; B. Green, 2010; Kemmis, 1992, 1993) suggests that curriculum writers present or 'transcribe' their beliefs and expectations about 'contexts' into 'text' that become the dual degree curricula. Hence, I examined their 'curriculum writing' processes to trace the social and cultural relationships embedded in curriculum writers' 'being', 'knowing' and 'doing' higher education that made the M-B dual degree programs that are delivered in Malaysia.

Some educational sociologists also explain curriculum as the changing social and cultural spaces of learning or as 'knowledge space' (Gough, 2003; Leander et al., 2010; Seddon, 2014b). The debates on 'changing social spaces' and 'historical sociologies' bring the relational effects of 'space' and 'time' on higher education into focus (Leander et al., 2010; Marginson, 2010; McLeod et al., 2018). As such, my study incorporated the anthropological concepts of 'space' (J. Clifford, 1997; Marginson, 2010) and 'space-time' effects (Marginson, 2010; McLeod et al., 2018) to deepen my analysis and findings in terms of how the making of M-B dual degree curricula re-spatialise Malaysia's higher education in globalising times.

The literatures on comparative education research tell me that nation-states respond to education and curriculum reforms in ways that are unique to their histories and cultures (Karseth & Sivesind, 2011; Meyer, 2007; Tikly, 2001), and according to global shifts and trends (Marginson, 2006; Sidhu & Christie, 2014). As such, to understand the cultural trajectory of Malaysia's contemporary space of higher education requires that I grasp its national and colonial histories along with the effects of local and global higher education reforms (Hoogvelt, 2001; Rizvi, 2007; Tikly, 2001). This frame of reference caused me to investigate the 'inter-connections' between who the curriculum writers are, what they know and how they work along with their responses to local and global situations and changes. For this reason, historicised curriculum theory offered the theoretical framework for this study (Gundem et al., 2003; Pinar, 2004).

7.2.2 A critical inquiry approach.

This study employed ethnography (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Mills & Morton, 2013) and document research (McCulloch, 2004; J. Scott, 2006) as research methodologies. The curriculum theory literature invoked questions about who are the curriculum writers, what were their curriculum writing processes like, and how did they respond to local/Malaysian and foreign/British curriculum conditions in making their cross-border dual degree curricula. I also wanted to know how curriculum writers navigated the disparate priorities and requirements of Malaysian and British universities and state regulators, and how they addressed the pressures and dynamics of globalisation. This study is a critical inquiry as I probed the issues that surround higher education in Malaysia and delved beneath surface appearances and taken-for-granted assumptions about cross-border higher education programs in the country (Madison, 2005).

The in-depth interviews with curriculum writers who make the M-B dual degree programs generated contextual information about their social histories, institutional

priorities, cultural orientations, and responses to local/Malaysian and foreign/British ways of doing higher education. Their narratives provided rich texts for me (the researcher) to read in context, i.e. that of Malaysia navigating the local-global transitions that are associated with historical, social, and cultural changes at varying scales. The analysis of curriculum writers' profiles also surfaced their unique backgrounds, beliefs, and practices not as individuals but as two distinct social categories, i.e. 'Malaysians' and 'Anglophones'. The 'Malaysian' category comprised nationals of different ethnicities. Nonetheless, the analysis of their narratives did not reveal any differences in their responses that were due to their ethnic backgrounds. It was the same with the 'Anglophone' category which comprised participants from the UK, Australia, and New Zealand. The Malaysians' and Anglophones' responses were consistent within their collective social categories. Overall, the narrative analyses of interviews and documents (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Watson, 2006) showed that cross-border dual degree curriculum writing processes inflect the culture of dual degree programs in ways that produce a 'new' spatialisation of higher education in Malaysia.

7.3   Review of major findings

7.3.1 Historical ties and globalising shifts.

My study reveals the work by Malaysian and Anglophone curriculum writers in navigating their 'Malaysian-British' knowledge building processes and 'local-global' transitions as 'complicated' and 'tensioned' by state rules, national priorities, and their own ties with particular social histories and cultures. Findings show that shifts in national priorities and global economies, with changing times, produced different 'space-time' effects on Malaysia's higher education. Changes instituted by the state on education policy and curriculum, from the country's early-independence till now, have affected the culture and spatialisation of Malaysia's higher education and produced

three distinct and consecutive phases of reforms. I present these reforms as the phases of 'consolidation', 'liberalisation', and 'internationalisation' of higher education.

Malaysia's priority as it emerged from British colonial rule was to 'consolidate' the country's disparate streams of education into one single system of education in the national language, i.e. Malay, and to promote national identity. Its nation-building agenda caused public universities to prioritise *Bumiputera* or Malay students which prompted the private higher education sector to provide for the non-*Bumiputera*, i.e. Malaysian Chinese and Indians (Cheong, Hill, & Leong, 2016; Chin, 2009; Jomo, 2005). During this period, public higher education was regarded 'mainstream' and private higher education was deemed 'second choice' (M. N. N. Lee, 2004a, 2004b; Wan, 2007).

However, a few cycles of global financial crises along with the need for Malaysia to participate in the wider regional and global higher education reforms pushed the state to 'liberalise' its higher education. Legislations were amended (e.g. Education Act 1961 became Education Act 1996) and new ones enacted (e.g. PHEIA 1996 and MQA 2007) to endorse private higher education and allow foreign curricula in English into the country. The use of English threatened Malay sovereignty and local histories. Legislations and regulations that were established formed 'boundaries' that delineate Malaysia's public and private higher education. In short, the liberalisation of Malaysia's higher education as the state came under pressure from external global forces produced boundarying/bordering or re-boundarying/re-bordering effects (Robertson, 2011; Seddon, 2014a) in its national and sub-national levels of higher education space. The 'boundarying' effects of Malaysia's higher education make visible the dichotomies of 'public-private', 'national-international', and 'local-foreign' in this space.

The state's focus, since the mid-2000s, has shifted to 'internationalise' its higher education. Its current emphasis is on having programs that produce 'globally competitive' graduates and making Malaysia an 'international hub' for education (M. O. H. E. Malaysia, 2007, 2011; Ministry of Education, 2015; PEMANDU, 2010). This study shows the wide use of English in private higher education as being linked to Malaysia's colonial past but also to English as 'international' *lingua franca*. Curriculum writers

perceived that graduates from cross-border higher education programs have greater employment prospects and mobility owing to their proficiency in English. Their observations correspond with findings from recent studies that show students and employers in Malaysia rating graduates from private HEIs above public HEIs for employability within the country (Cheong et al., 2018), and higher in overall graduate attributes including English and communication skills (Cheong, Hill, Fernandez-Chung, et al., 2016). Other studies on Malaysian graduate employment report higher unemployment among graduates from public HEIs although *Bumiputera* graduates have greatest access to public sector employment (Ismail, 2011; M. O. H. E. Malaysia, 2012). These findings together with data on Increasing numbers of private and foreign universities in Malaysia and students enrolled, as explained in Chapter Four, suggest private higher education in Malaysia becoming the 'preferred choice'.

The mobility of students and academic staff is a key aspect of international or global higher education reforms (Knight, 2006; Mok, 2011). The relatively high proportion of Anglophone to Malaysian curriculum writers in this study, i.e. five to seven respectively, was not surprising considering the global higher education flows in today's world. A recent study reports Malaysian universities' current trend of employing foreign academics as 'international' experts (Wan & Sirat, 2018). Also, the National Higher Education Strategic Plan lists the recruitment of foreign academic staff or experts as a way of internationalising higher education in Malaysia (M. O. H. E. Malaysia, 2011, p. 45).

This study's findings on the making of M-B dual degree curricula show that colonial histories and globalising trends complicate Malaysia's higher education policy and curriculum reforms. Malaysia's responses to changes in global higher education have shifted the boundaries of its public and private higher education and produced historic 'paired-opposites' as well as emerging dichotomies that are not mutually exclusive. Instead, they co-exist and overlap in ways that create a 'conflicted-ness' or 'hybrid-ness' about Malaysia's space of higher education. My findings indicate that the

terms 'national' and 'international' are inadequate for explaining how cross-border dual degree curriculum cultures Malaysia's higher education space.

7.3.2 'Hybridity' in Malaysia's higher education.

The 'mixed' or 'hybrid-ness' of Malaysia's higher education space is evident in a few ways. Firstly, the Malaysian higher education system displays considerable diversity. It is made up of public and private universities that are driven by different sets of motivation, governance imperatives, and state relationships. While this study focused on private universities making cross-border M-B dual degree programs for methodological reasons, our understanding of Malaysia's higher education space cannot exclude public universities which also collaborate with foreign universities in different ways. As curriculum theory suggests, what forms higher education curricula depends on the people involved and their unique ways of doing curriculum which are rooted in their particular histories and cultures (B. Green, 2010; Pinar, 2004; Young, 2008). The curriculum writers in public and private universities in Malaysia respond to the forces of globalising higher education in different ways.

This study's findings show Malaysian and Anglophone curriculum writers have their own unique sets of cultural orientations and curriculum writing logics which align differently in their curriculum writing that make the M-B dual degree programs. For example, Malaysians wanted to follow or benchmark the British partner because they perceived them as more 'established' or 'reputable'. On the other hand, Anglophones applied British higher education methods because they were 'familiar' or 'experienced' in them. Similarly, people at the British universities approached their cross-border knowledge building with the Malaysian universities according to their own histories and cultures. Most curriculum writers described working with their British university counterparts as 'difficult' because they had to overcome their postcolonial 'differences' and 'gaps'. They used metaphors like 'David and Goliath', 'master and servant', and 'marriage of unequals' to emphasise the 'disparate-ness' in their work with the British partners. These descriptions highlight the 'opposite-ness' and 'conflicted-ness' of the

peoples, institutions, and processes that come together to materialise the cross-border dual degree curricula in Malaysia's space of higher education.

The differences between the Malaysian and British universities lie broadly in their institutional priorities and respective state higher education system. The 'private-enterprise' nature of Malaysian universities required their curriculum writers to focus on commercial aspects of higher education which included institutional branding, program promotions, and recruitment of local and foreign students. On the other hand, the 'public establishment' orientation of the British partner universities meant they prioritised the academic quality aspects of the dual degree programs which included improving the Malaysian universities' academic resources and research capabilities. The divergent institutional priorities of Malaysian (private) and British (public) universities added 'opposite-ness' and 'conflicted-ness' to the curriculum writers' cross-border knowledge building work. Similarly, differences between Malaysia's and Britain's system of higher education also account for the hybridity in Malaysia's higher education space. These differences include dissimilar educational philosophies, measures of academic loads, how learning outcomes are evidenced, and notions about assessments.

I argue that the 'opposite-ness' and 'hybrid-ness' revealed through these curriculum writers' narratives show the M-B dual degree curriculum as 'things of boundaries' in that they are the effects of 'boundary work' (Abbott, 1995; Seddon, 2014a). The boundaries forming Malaysian and British ways of being, knowing, and doing higher education create the 'differences' and 'dilemmas' that characterise cross-border dual degree curricula in Malaysia. The making of M-B dual degree curricula was a dilemma-driven process whereby curriculum writers were engaged in the 'boundarying' and 're-boundarying' of policies, processes, practices, and identities in their cross-border higher education space. The 'boundarying' in M-B dual degree curriculum writing was evident in curriculum writer's expressions like 'one country, two systems' and 'different systems side-by-side'. Similarly, there was 're-boundarying' in curriculum writers' work when they rescaled pass marks and recalibrated undergraduate degree

'honours' classifications to address the differences between Malaysian and British higher education grading and award systems.

I summarise the curriculum writers' experiences and understandings of the 'hybridity' in M-B dual degree curricula in Malaysia as the effects of 'opposites coming together', 'benchmarking the British', and 'commercialising higher education'. The 'hybrid-ness' of this space emerged from differences in peoples' social beliefs and cultural orientations, institutional histories and priorities, and the politics and governing regimes of different nation-states. The social, cultural, and institutional 'boundaries' that demarcate the Malaysian and British universities also highlight 'gaps' in their respective knowledges, skills, and capacities. The curriculum writers' resolve was to 'bridge-the-gaps' and 'work-on-par' with their British counterparts. Their narratives indicated clear purpose and efforts in pursuing and sustaining their cross-border connections with the British partner universities. As such, and over time, the making of cross-border dual degree curricula in Malaysia had resulted in a blurring of the boundaries in the paired-opposites of 'Malaysian-British', 'local-global', and 'national-international'. The effects of this blurring include the de-territorialisation and re-spatialisation (Robertson, 2011; Seddon, 2014a) of Malaysia's higher education and the forming of a new cultural space characterised by emergent transnationalism (Vertovec, 1999, 2009).

7.3.3 Transnationalism spatialising Malaysia's higher education.

This study shows that the blurring and reconfiguring of boundaries between local/national and global/international, in materialising the M-B dual degree curricula in Malaysia, produce a 'transnational' space of education that is culturally complex and politically tensioned. In other words, Malaysia's space of higher education is not strictly 'national' or 'international'. The M-B dual degree curricula are 'national' only to the extent of complying with state legislations and the national higher education framework. There is little local or indigenous/Malay knowledge making up the cross-border dual degree curricula due to its scarcity. Curriculum writers confessed to

adapting from Western or British resources and contextualising these materials to fit Malaysian situations. They also explained that 'international' in their M-B dual degree curricula meant 'using English', 'partnering with British universities', and 'bringing together Malaysian and British awards'. They confirmed the lack of plans to include Eastern or Asian cultures and knowledge traditions into their curricula. Importantly, they discerned the 'internationalisation of higher education' in their cross-border dual degree curricula with British universities as 'learning from each other', 'bridging the gaps', and 'finding common ground'.

The curriculum writers' narratives revealed that making cross-border dual degree curricula involved the 'crossing over', 'mixing', and 'merging' of Malaysian and British cultures, ideologies, and politics of education. The outcome or product of this process is something 'different' or 'new' in Malaysia's higher education space. This is because the borders or boundaries that delineate the local/national and global/international are not fixed or rigid. Instead, they are flexible and permeable to the flow of 'things' from either side which, upon coming together, rub and tangle with each other. Evidence of this happening was found in curriculum writers' stories about how they were 'borrowing', 'using', 'following' and 'benchmarking' the British universities' ideas, methods, standards and best practices. The mixing and entangling of these 'things', for example Malaysian and British rules on academic loads or credits, produced conflicts, dilemmas, and tensions for cross-border dual degree curriculum writing in Malaysia. Curriculum writers analogised the resolving of conflicts between the two countries' higher education systems as akin to 'pleasing two gods' or 'having different masters'. They also described addressing the gaps and differences between the peoples, institutions, and systems involved as 'tricky' and 'messy'.

As such, I argue that the effects of overlapping Malaysian and British knowledge spaces and the mixing and entangling of their processes and practices in higher education produce a 'de-territorialised' space with unique contradictions, dilemmas, and networked affiliations. The conflicts, dilemmas, and tensions are the effects of peoples with dissimilar histories and cultures responding to higher education reforms in

globalising times. This conflicted, dilemmatic and 'de-territorialised' space between non-state actors working across national borders, separated by great distances yet connected by common agenda or affiliations, is a 'transnational' space and the collective practices and attributes of their connections is 'transnationalism' (Casinader, 2017; Gough, 2004; Rizvi, 2011; Vertovec, 2009).

In summary, I conclude that the M-B dual degree curriculum is a 'transnational' social space. The conflicted, dilemmatic, and tensioned nature of Malaysia's higher education space are due to the multiple networked affiliations between Malaysian and British institutions and curriculum actors who are differentially positioned yet come together to materialise something new which neither party had at the start. The crossing-over, merging, and entangling of Malaysian and British cultures, ideologies, knowledge bases, and practices in making M-B dual degree programs across national borders ascribe a 'transnational-ness' to Malaysia's space of higher education. Therefore, the making of cross-border dual degree programs in Malaysia re-spatialises its higher education in ways that produce a new cultural space. Malaysia's contemporary space of higher education is characterised by an emergent transnationalism (Rizvi, 2011; Vertovec, 2009) that extends beyond its colonial legacies and embraces the current conflicts and complexities of higher education in globalising times.

7.4   Significance of the study

To date, much of the research on cross-border higher education in Malaysia has focused on technical-rational aspects and means-ends questions that inform policy and governance with limited attention to curriculum. There is also a dearth of literature in the sociology of curriculum on cross-border higher education reforms in Malaysia. My study addresses these gaps and is significant for several reasons.

First, this research is a critical inquiry into Malaysia's higher education that is informed by the sociology of curriculum. I have not come across any educational

research on Malaysia's higher education where the researcher provides a window on the curriculum workers' individual profiles and show how they translate policy themes into curriculum narratives as was done in this study. This study shows how Malaysia's cross-border higher education curricula are being materialised by curriculum writers as their social histories, beliefs, and practices unfold in particular situations and politics of education (Pinar, 2004, 2003; Young, 2008). It reveals the cultural embeddedness of curriculum writers' work and how their responses were tied not only to their historical resources but are also partly driven by the state and its social, political, and internationalisation agenda. This study's findings fill some of the sociology of curriculum gaps with reference to Malaysia's higher education.

Next, internationalising and globalising processes are affecting higher education practices in ways that are de-territorialising and re-spatialising higher education across nation-states (Gough, 2000, 2003; A. Green, 1997, 1999; Rizvi, 2011; Robertson et al., 2002; Seddon, 2014a). My study contributes to this body of literature by showing how the practical processes of making dual degree curricula between Malaysian and British universities are remaking and re-spatialising Malaysia's higher education space in globalising times. The knowledge generated from this study about the emergent cultural character of Malaysia's higher education space is not only interesting to education practitioners and researchers but also relevant and timely to higher education policy makers and curriculum actors in Malaysia.

Finally, this thesis offers theoretical insights that add to our current knowledge and understanding of contemporary curriculum issues and contribute to the discipline of curriculum theory and practice in today's world (Pinar, 2004, 2003; Yates, 2010; Yates & Grumet, 2011). My findings on the re-spatialising of Malaysia's higher education and the emergent character of its higher education space in globalising times justify the concepts of 'space-time' and 'boundary work' because they refine the lexicon of curriculum theory and practice. It supports how 'space-time' concepts (Barbousas & Seddon, 2018; McLeod et al., 2018) offer critical perspectives to acknowledging and understanding the effects of 'experiencing' and 'governing' on the re-spatialising of

education. Likewise, the concept of 'boundary work' affords us a lens to examine and explain the interplay between the sociological and political processes that remake educational spaces over time and scale (Seddon, 2014a). These concepts inform public and private policy and curriculum making decisions by alerting policy makers and curriculum workers to the significance of boundary work and spatial politics (Robertson, 2010, 2011; Seddon, 2014a, 2014b; Somerville & Perkins, 2003). Also, they warrant further research attention as emergent fields of study in higher education.

7.5 Implications of the findings

There are a number of implications arising from the findings of this study. First, the findings warrant higher education research in Malaysia that extends beyond the current rational considerations and technical investigations of education and curriculum to include studies in the sociology of education and curriculum to understand peoples' lived experiences, social beliefs, and cultures. Second, Malaysia's locale and 'situated-ness' in SEA suggests its multi-ethnic populace has social, cultural, and familial ties to peoples in parts of East Asia and South Asia. As such, this study's findings indicating that 'internationalisation' in Malaysia's higher education is about incorporating British or Western/Anglophone elements and not Eastern/Asian elements invoke further questions. How are my findings about the re-spatialisation of Malaysia's higher education relevant to other countries in SEA, particularly those with similar colonial histories or ethnic groups?

Next, the findings from this study can be helpful to people at the British universities involved in these cross-border dual degree programs. The research findings about transnationalism in Malaysia's higher education space may suggest ways for working through the complexities together. Finally, the discovery that emergent transnationalism is re-spatialising Malaysia's higher education is an important finding from this study. This research outcome warrants that a new 'transnational' optic be

employed for researching Malaysia's higher education and explaining the performance of histories, cultures, and power in this space.

7.6   Limitations of the study

This study began in late-2013 and data collection and analyses were completed in early-2016. The study involved 12 curriculum writers from two out of four Malaysian private universities that offer M-B dual degree programs. Findings are based on the narrative analyses of interviews and documents which included state legislations and policies that were operative at that time. Three Ministry officials were interviewed for purposes of cross-checking and validating my analyses of interview and documents. I did not include curriculum writers at the British universities as they are outside the framework of this study. Similarly, I did not include other stakeholders of the dual degree programs like students, parents, and employers. I also excluded public universities because none offered cross-border dual degree programs with foreign universities. Therefore, this study's findings are limited to these participants, the Malaysian private universities concerned, and a particular period in Malaysia's higher education. Although these findings cannot be generalised uncritically to other situations outside of these parameters, valuable and quality theoretical inferences can be drawn from them (Bryman, 2012, p. 406).

As mentioned, two Malaysian private universities with M-B dual degree programs did not participate. More insights could have been garnered from wider participation of curriculum writers from all four Malaysian private universities. This study's requirement on voluntary participation may also pose some limitation. The perspectives and predispositions articulated by those who agreed to participate may not be the same as that held by those who chose not to participate.

Reflexivity in qualitative research is another important consideration. My investigations and analyses can be affected by my personal knowledge, educational and professional experiences, as well as social and cultural biases (Stronach, Garratt, Pearce,

& Piper, 2007, pp. 196-197). I have analysed the interview and documentary narratives as 'they are to me', as someone informed by theory, methodology and Malaysian understandings. Qualitative analyses and findings are not 'absolutes' because, like all other research approaches, they are influenced by personal assumptions and perspectives (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, 2003; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). I acknowledge these points in my qualitative study as particular frames of reference and not weaknesses (Cilliers, 2005, p. 264). My findings and conclusions are those of a Malaysian scholar in a postcolonial country.

7.7   Recommendations for further research

To address the limitations of this study and contribute to research in the sociology of education and curriculum, I make the following recommendations for further research.

The focus of this study was on curriculum writers at Malaysian private universities. Alongside the curriculum writers, there are other groups of people involved whose perspectives and experiences can generate findings that deepen our understanding of the culture and spatialisation of Malaysia's higher education. Hence, this study should be extended to cover more Ministry officials and the curriculum writers at the British universities. Other groups of people in the M-B dual degree curriculum space include students pursuing such programs, parents or sponsors, employers of dual degree graduates, and professional accreditation bodies which endorse the dual degree curricula. There is scope to extend this study to cover the different stakeholders in M-B dual degree programs in Malaysia. This way, it will be possible to develop more comprehensive knowledge about the making of M-B dual degree programs and their effects on 're-spatialising' Malaysia's higher education.

Asides the M-B dual degree programs, there are other cross-border higher education reforms in Malaysia, such as twinning, credit transfers and branch campuses of foreign universities. Therefore, I recommend similar sociological investigations be

carried out to understand the knowledge building work in different types of cross-border higher education reforms in Malaysia. Such studies can produce findings that offer rich understandings of globalising higher education, and also contribute towards curriculum theory and explain knowledge building that cuts across the borders and cultures of different nation-states.

This study which focussed on Malaysia's private higher education revealed the conflicts and tensions arising from the dichotomies of 'public-private' and 'local-foreign' in this space. Currently, public universities do not engage in cross-border dual degree programs. However, some public universities have articulation arrangements with foreign universities to effect cross-border credit transfers and advanced placements. In view of the state's interest to advance collaboration between Malaysian and foreign universities (M. O. H. E. Malaysia, 2011; PEMANDU, 2010), it is relevant and timely to investigate cross-border reforms in public higher education.

For me, a fascinating area for further research relates to literatures suggesting Malaysia's place and role in the common SEA or ASEAN higher education space similar to the European Higher Education Area or EHEA (Jayasuriya, 2010; Robertson, 2010; Sirat & Jantan, 2008) and the relevance of Europe's Bologna Process for harmonising higher education in SEA (Sirat, 2009, 2012; Sirat, Azman, & Abu Bakar, 2014). These discourses indicate the influence of 'Europe' (Lawn, 2006; Novoa, 2002), as a borderless education space produced by changing geographical and conceptual borders that unfold through institutional networks and social movements and encroach into Malaysia's and SEA's higher education. Further investigation is warranted in the light of China's potential as a world super-power in the 21st century. How do scholars continue to investigate and challenge the binaries of Asia-versus-West in postcolonial studies, while also remaining critical to nativism and Eurocentrism (Chen, 2010)? Malaysia and other SEA countries, with the exception of Thailand, are former colonies to multiple European masters. As such, an examination of how and the extent to which emergent transnationalism in Malaysia connects with other SEA postcolonial nation-states could produce valuable research outcomes. Such findings can benefit Malaysia's higher

education policy and curriculum decision making not only as postcolonial country but as part of SEA's regionalisation in globalising times.

Finally, the emergent transnationalism in Malaysia's higher education space is associated with cultural translation in social institutions and hybridity in everyday practices (Vertovec, 2009, pp. 7-8). As discussed, the M-B dual degree curriculum as a 'transnational social formation' is also a 'new cultural space' (Vertovec, 2009, p. 27). This leads me to think about the modes of cultural reproduction or new identities in this space. For example, it prompts me to ask questions about who are the students in the M-B dual degree program, how do they identify themselves, and if they perceive themselves as being in a Malaysian or British program, or both. The issues and questions highlighted in this section merit further research.

7.8   Concluding comments

The core question in this study is about the issue of space and the re-spatialisation of higher education in Malaysia. I asked if Malaysia's higher education is being re-spatialised by the making of cross-border dual degree programs, and if the effects are internationalising or transnationalising. This study shows the re-spatialising of Malaysia's higher education to involve 'connectivities' across national borders of peoples' beliefs, cultures, and practices. Findings show that these connectivities are about conjugating the 'past-present', 'colonial-postcolonial', 'local-global' and 'national-international' in ways that entangle and produce new spatial characteristics.

Malaysia's contemporary higher education reforms are not dissociated from the higher education changes and developments occurring in other parts of the world. Its cross-border higher education reforms in recent decades disrupt the country's national priorities and structures. Its cross-border higher education space represents ways in which different peoples connect, and their disparate beliefs, cultures, and practices mix and intertwine. The overlapping of their 'local/national' and 'global/international' spaces, over time and at varying scales, blurs the boundaries and de/re-territorialises

the spaces which define professional's knowledge building work. Their effects produce a new 'transnational' space of higher education that is hybrid, contested, and dilemmatic in nature. This transnational imagery of Malaysia's contemporary higher education depicts a space within which people grapple to make sense of the local and global shifts that occur in our rapidly changing world. This study's findings endorse 'boundary work' as the analytical lens for explaining the sociological and political processes the remake educational spaces over time and scale.

This study also underscores the importance of changing space-time effects of education as the world globalises, boundaries shift, and familiar practices become re-cultured and remade. It explains the trajectory of Malaysia's higher education policy and curriculum reforms as being shaped not only by peoples' social histories but also the practical politics of present-day education. Learning about the people involved and tracing their processes that remake Malaysia's higher education space revealed their knowledge building cultures that are embedded in their lived understandings of their selves and social worlds. The nature of these connectivities and their effects are what have changed Malaysia's higher education space. Knowledge generated from these findings has implications for present and future education policy and curriculum decisions as nation-states' higher education reforms respond to global changes and pressures.

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Appendix A1: Interview guide for curriculum writers

Project title:

Internationalising higher education: Making of dual degree curricula in business education by Malaysian private sector institutions

Research questions:

Main question:

How and with what effects does the making of cross-border dual degree programs re-spatialise higher education in Malaysia?

Sub-questions:

- What is the historical trajectory of Malaysia's higher education policy and how does curriculum culture the higher education space?
- Who and what make the cross-border dual degree programs in Malaysia and with what effects on curriculum writing?
- How do processes of curriculum writing re-culture dual degree programs and with what effects on the spatialisation of Malaysia's higher education?

Interview areas and questions:

Area 1: Curriculum writers and their roles and work in cross-border higher education in Malaysia

Questions:

- Tell me about what you do?
- What is your background (academic/educational/professional)?
- What is your role in the dual degree programs in this university?
- How did you become involved? What was your pathway into this work?

Area 2: Character and complexities of Malaysia's cross-border higher education space

Questions:

- Who makes the dual degree curriculum? Whose curriculum is it?
- What goes into the curriculum? What ideas/contents/texts (national/international) do you include in your courses for the dual degrees program? Why?
- What particular priorities influence how you develop courses for the dual degree program? What are your university's priorities in terms of its dual degree programs?
- What Ministry policies or regulations affect your work in making dual degree programs? What public/external concerns or priorities do you need to consider?
- What is it like working with the British university counterparts?

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- What are particular situations (conflicts/dilemmas/priorities) you face in making your dual degree programs? Why are these important?

Area 3: Effects of Malaysia's cross-border higher education space on curriculum writers and what they do

Questions:

- How do these situations (conflicts/dilemmas/priorities) affect your work in making dual degree programs?
- What do these situations (conflicts/dilemmas/priorities) mean to you?
- What is the dual degree curriculum making process like? How would you describe the dual degree curriculum making process in Malaysia?
- How do you feel about the way your dual degree program is made?

Area 4: How curriculum writers address the complexities in making cross-border dual degree curricula in Malaysia

Questions:

- How do you respond to these needs/dilemmas faced in making dual degree curriculum?
- What do you do to reconcile the needs/conflicts/dilemmas encountered in making your dual degree programs?
- How do these dilemmas/challenges come about? Why?
- What does this mean for higher education in Malaysia?

Area 5: Curriculum writers' understanding of internationalisation of higher education

Questions:

- What does internationalisation of higher education mean to you?
- How would you describe internationalisation of higher education in Malaysia?
- Would you consider your dual degree program to be an internationalisation of higher education in Malaysia? Why do you say so?
- How did your university determine which foreign university to work with as partner for dual degree programs? Why a British university? How about an Asian university?
- How do you feel about the use of English in delivering the dual degree program? What about other foreign languages?

MIEN CHENG (MUHREC Approval – CF13/2539-2013001364)

Appendix A2: Interview guide for Ministry officials

Project title:

Internationalising higher education: Making of dual degree curricula in business education by Malaysian private sector institutions

Research questions:

Main question:

How and with what effects does the making of cross-border dual degree programs re-spatialise higher education in Malaysia?

Sub-questions:

- What is the historical trajectory of Malaysia's higher education policy and how does curriculum culture the higher education space?
- Who and what make the cross-border dual degree programs in Malaysia and with what effects on curriculum writing?
- How do processes of curriculum writing re-culture dual degree programs and with what effects on the spatialisation of Malaysia's higher education?

Interview areas and questions:

Area 1: Ministry officials and their roles or work relating to cross-border higher education in Malaysia

Questions:

- Tell me about what you do?
- What is your background (academic/educational/professional)?
- What is your role at the Ministry in terms of cross-border higher education in Malaysia? How are you involved in policy making/matters on private higher education and/or cross-border higher education?

Area 2: Character and complexities of Malaysia's cross-border higher education space

Questions:

- In your view, who makes the cross-border dual degree curriculum? Whose curriculum is it?
- What are the policies that regulate the making of cross-border higher education programs like the dual degrees in Malaysia?
- What are the Ministry's concerns/priorities with respect to the making of cross-border dual degree programs in the country? What particular policies by the MOHE/MQA are there?

- Are there particular ideas/contents/texts (national/international) that should be included in the cross-border dual degree programs? What are they? Why?
- What are the particular situations (conflicts/dilemmas/priorities) encountered in policy making or regulating the cross-border dual degree programs by private universities?

Area 3: Effects of Malaysia's higher education space on Ministry officials and what they do

Questions:

- How do these situations (conflicts/dilemmas/priorities) affect your work in policy making and/or regulating cross-border dual degree programs?
- What do these situations (conflicts/dilemmas/priorities) mean to you?
- How would you describe the policy or regulatory processes on cross-border higher education programs in Malaysia? What is the policy or regulatory process like?
- How do you feel about these policy or regulatory processes?

Area 4: How Ministry officials address the complexities in Malaysia's cross-border higher education

Questions:

- What are the needs/dilemmas encountered in making cross-border higher education or dual degree curricula in Malaysia?
- How do you reconcile these needs/dilemmas in your policy making or regulatory work?
- How do these dilemmas/challenges come about? Why?
- What does this mean for higher education in Malaysia?

Area 5: Ministry officials' understanding of internationalisation of higher education

Questions:

- What does internationalisation of higher education mean to you?
- How would you describe internationalisation of higher education in Malaysia?
- Would you consider the cross-border dual degree program by private universities to be an internationalisation of higher education in Malaysia? Why?
- What are the Ministry (MOHE/MQA)'s views on how Malaysian private universities select foreign universities as partners for dual degree programs?
- How does the Ministry (MOHE/MQA) view the use of English in delivering cross-border dual degree programs? What about other foreign language/s? How is your view?

MIEN CHENG (MUHREC Approval – CF13/2539-2013001364)

Appendix B: Monash University Human Research Ethics Approval

MONASH University

Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC)
Research Office

Human Ethics Certificate of Approval

This is to certify that the project below was considered by the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee. The Committee was satisfied that the proposal meets the requirements of the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* and has granted approval.

Project Number:	CF13/2539 - 2013001364
Project Title:	Internationalising higher education: Making of dual degree curricula in business education by Malaysian private sector institutions
Chief Investigator:	Prof Terri Seddon
Approved:	From: 13 September 2013 To: 13 September 2018

Terms of approval - Failure to comply with the terms below is in breach of your approval and the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research.

1. The Chief Investigator is responsible for ensuring that permission letters are obtained, if relevant, and a copy forwarded to MUHREC before any data collection can occur at the specified organisation.
2. Approval is only valid whilst you hold a position at Monash University.
3. It is the responsibility of the Chief Investigator to ensure that all investigators are aware of the terms of approval and to ensure the project is conducted as approved by MUHREC.
4. You should notify MUHREC immediately of any serious or unexpected adverse effects on participants or unforeseen events affecting the ethical acceptability of the project.
5. The Explanatory Statement must be on Monash University letterhead and the Monash University complaints clause must include your project number.
6. Amendments to the approved project (including changes in personnel): Require the submission of a Request for Amendment form to MUHREC and must not begin without written approval from MUHREC. Substantial variations may require a new application.
7. Future correspondence: Please quote the project number and project title above in any further correspondence.
8. Annual reports: Continued approval of this project is dependent on the submission of an Annual Report. This is determined by the date of your letter of approval.
9. Final report: A Final Report should be provided at the conclusion of the project. MUHREC should be notified if the project is discontinued before the expected date of completion.
10. Monitoring: Projects may be subject to an audit or any other form of monitoring by MUHREC at any time.
11. Retention and storage of data: The Chief Investigator is responsible for the storage and retention of original data pertaining to a project for a minimum period of five years.

Professor Nip Thomson
Chair, MUHREC

cc: Ms Mien Wee Cheng

Appendix C1: Sample of 'Request for Permission' Letter to Sunway University

15 September 2013

Professor Graeme Wilkinson
Vice-chancellor
Sunway University
47500 Petaling Jaya
Malaysia

Dear Professor Wilkinson

Request for permission letter - PhD study on "Internationalising higher education: Making of dual degree curricula in business education by Malaysian private sector institutions"

I hope that this letter finds you well. I am currently conducting a research project under the supervision of Professor Terri Seddon in the Department of Work, Learning and Leadership, Faculty of Education, towards my PhD degree at Monash University.

The title of my research project is as listed above. I would like to request your kind permission to allow me to interview your academic staff who are, or have been, involved in writing and/or developing the curricula for dual degrees in business education in Malaysia. I attach with this letter a copy of Monash University's Ethics Approval letter, the Explanatory Statement to participants, and the Consent Form for this project. Monash University offers a template of the Permission Letter which I have also enclosed with this letter for your reference.

Please let me know if you require further details about any aspect of my project, or if you would like to contact my supervisor. I thank you for your support of my research endeavour, and I look forward to your granting of permission on this research project. Thank you.

Yours sincerely

Cheng Mien Wee
Student No. 23075902
Faculty of Education, Monash University, Australia

Appendix C2: Sample of 'Request for Permission' Letter to Asia Pacific University

11 November 2013

Vice Chancellor
c/o Professor Dr. Andy Seddon
Dean, Quality Assurance & Partnerships
Asia Pacific University of Technology & Innovation
Technology Park Malaysia, Bukit Jalil
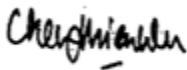57000 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Dear Professor Seddon

Request for permission letter - PhD study on "Internationalising higher education: Making of dual degree curricula in business education by Malaysian private sector institutions"

I hope that this letter finds you well. My name is Mien Wee, and I am currently conducting a research project under the supervision of Professor Terri Seddon in the Department of Work, Learning and Leadership, Faculty of Education, towards my PhD degree at Monash University.

The title of my research project is as listed above. I would like to request your kind permission to allow me to interview your academic staff who are, or have been, involved in writing and/or developing the curricula for dual degrees in business education in Malaysia. I attach with this letter a copy of Monash University's Ethics Approval letter, the Explanatory Statement to participants, and the Consent Form for this project. Monash University offers a template of the Permission Letter which I have also enclosed with this letter for your reference.

Please let me know if you require further details about any aspect of my project, or if you would like to contact my supervisor. I thank you for your support of my research endeavour, and I look forward to your granting of permission on this research project. Thank you.

Yours sincerely

Chengmianwu

Cheng Mien Wee
Student No. 23075902
Faculty of Education, Monash University, Australia

Appendix C3: Sample of 'Request for Permission' Letter to Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA)

11 November 2013

Professor Syed
Chief Executive Officer
Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA)
Petaling Jaya
Malaysia

Dear Professor Syed

Request for permission letter - PhD study on "Internationalising higher education: Making of dual degree curricula in business education by Malaysian private sector institutions"

I hope that this letter finds you well. My name is Mien Wee, and I am currently conducting a research project under the supervision of Professor Terri Seddon in the Department of Work, Learning and Leadership, Faculty of Education, towards my PhD degree at Monash University.

The title of my research project is as listed above. I would like to request your kind permission to allow me to interview your staff who are, or have been, involved in developing and/or implementing curriculum policies for cross-border higher education/dual degrees programs in Malaysia. I attach with this letter a copy of Monash University's Ethics Approval letter, the Explanatory Statement to participants, and the Consent Form for this project. Monash University offers a template of the Permission Letter which I have also enclosed with this letter for your reference.

Please let me know if you require further details about any aspect of my project, or if you would like to contact my supervisor. I thank you for your support of my research endeavour, and I look forward to your granting of permission on this research project. Thank you.

Yours sincerely

Cheng Mien Wee
Student No. 23075902
Faculty of Education, Monash University, Australia

Appendix D1: Permission Approval Letter from Sunway University

Appendix D1: Permission Approval Letter

SUNWAY UNIVERSITY

23 September 2013

Mien Wee CHENG
c/o Building 6
Department of Work, Learning & Leadership
Faculty of Education, Clayton
Monash University VIC 3800

Dear Ms. Cheng

Permission to conduct research at Sunway University for your project "Internationalising higher education: Making of dual degree curricula in business education by Malaysian private sector institutions" (Project No. CF13/2539-2013001364)

Thank you for your request to conduct your research at Sunway University involving the participation of academic staff of the institution for the above named research.

I have read and understood the Explanatory Statement regarding the research **Project No. CF13/2539-2013001364**, and hereby give permission for this research to be conducted.

Such permission in no way obliges the participation of any staff member – such participation must be voluntary and the consent of each individual must be obtained. Please ensure that appropriate clearance is obtained from Monash University ethics committee(s) for the use of any research instrument(s) in this project.

Yours sincerely

Professor Graeme Wilkinson
Vice Chancellor
Sunway University

Owned and governed by the

Jeffrey Cheah
Foundation

Appendix D2: Permission Approval Letter from Asia Pacific University

Appendix D2: Permission Approval Letter

A·P·U
ASIA PACIFIC UNIVERSITY
OF TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Professor L.B. Trustrum
Vice Chancellor
lb@apu.edu.my
Tel. 03 8992 5227 Fax. 03 8996 1101

13th November 2013

Mien Wee CHENG
c/o Building 6
Department of Work, Learning & Leadership
Faculty of Education, Clayton
Monash University VIC 3800

Dear Ms Cheng

Permission to Conduct Research at Asia Pacific University of Technology & Innovation (A.P.U.) for your project "Internationalising Higher Education: Making of Dual Degree Curricula in Business Education by Malaysian Private Sector Institutions" (Project No. CF 13/2539-2013001364)

Thank you for your request to interview our academic staff at Asia Pacific University of Technology & Innovation who have experience and knowledge in transnational higher education programs and dual degree curricula in Malaysia for the above research project.

I have read and understood the Explanatory Statement regarding this research Project No. CF 13/2539-2013001364, and hereby give permission for this research to be conducted.

Such permission in no way obliges the participation of any staff member – such participation must be voluntary and the consent of each individual must be obtained. Please ensure that appropriate clearance is obtained from Monash University ethics committee(s) for the use of any research instrument(s) in this project.

Yours sincerely
ASIA PACIFIC UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION (A.P.U.)

PROF. L.B. TRUSTRUM
Vice Chancellor

ASIA PACIFIC UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
(A Member of the APIIT Education Group)
Asia Pacific University Sdn. Bhd.
Technology Park Malaysia, Bukit Jalil, 57000 Kuala Lumpur
Tel: 03 8996 1000 Fax: 03 8996 1001
Email: info@apu.edu.my Website: www.apu.edu.my

TIER 5

APIIT Education Group is the proud recipient of the
Prime Minister's Award
and Export Excellence Award (Services)
for Industry Excellence - March 2011

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Appendix E1: Explanatory Statement to Curriculum Writers

MONASH University

(This information sheet is for recipient to keep)

Explanatory Statement

13 December 2013

To: Curriculum Writers

Title: Internationalising higher education: Making of dual degree curricula in business education by Malaysian private sector institutions

My name is **MIEN WEE CHENG** and I am conducting a research project with **PROFESSOR TERRI SEDDON** in the Department of Work, Learning and Leadership, Faculty of Education, towards a PhD degree at Monash University. This means that I will be writing a thesis based on this project, which is the equivalent of a 300 page book.

You are invited to take part in this project, in an **interview** which will be conducted on **one-to-one basis**. Participation in this project is **voluntary** and you are under **no obligation** to consent to participate. Please read this Explanatory Statement completely before making a decision.

Why you are chosen for this research
I invite you to participate in this research project because of your knowledge and experience in transnational higher education (TNHE) programs and dual degree curricula in Malaysia. I am interested in your perspectives on the curriculum making process for the dual degree in business education and your understanding of internationalisation of higher education in Malaysia.

The aim/purpose of the research
The aim of this research project is to explain the formation of dual degrees in business education in Malaysian TNHE and their effects in internationalising Malaysian higher education.

Possible benefits
Although studies on Malaysian TNHE are not new, we know very little about its curriculum history and its effects in internationalising higher education. There is also limited information on transnational dual degree curricula that have emerged in recent years. Your participation in this project can contribute to better understanding of the formation of dual degree curricula in Malaysian TNHE and their implications for internationalisation of higher education in Malaysia.

What does the research involve
The research involves the use of individual interviews with audio recording and document analysis. The interview will be conducted at a location that is convenient and comfortable to you.

How much time will the research take
The interview will take approximately 60 minutes of your time.

Inconvenience/discomfort
The levels of inconvenience and discomfort will be minimal as Monash University requires all research students to follow strict procedures on participants' privacy, and manage information collected in confidential and secure manner. I will obtain appropriate clearance from Monash University's Ethics Committee prior to conducting the interviews. You can obtain further information on Monash University's human ethics procedures from http://monash.edu/researchoffice/human/what-is-human-research.html, or email mweche12@student.monash.edu

Faculty of Education
PO Box 6, Monash University, Victoria, 3800
Building 6, Clayton Campus, Wellington Road, Monash University, Victoria, 3800, Australia
Telephone +61 3 9905 2819 Facsimile +61 3 9905 5400
Email info@education.monash.edu.au
www.monash.edu.au
ABN 12 377 614 012 CRICOS provider number 00008C

Payment
No payment or reward will be offered for your participation in this project.

Withdrawal from the research
Participation is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent. If you do consent to participate, you do not need to answer all the questions asked and you may withdraw from further participation at any stage. However, please note that responses given cannot be withdrawn. Your answers or responses will be treated with confidentiality and anonymity.

Confidentiality
All communication and information collected will be stored confidentially in secure places, and anonymity will be maintained through the use of pseudonyms or codes. You will find more information on confidential management of data from www.researchdata.monash.edu

Storage of data
Data collected will be stored in accordance with Monash University's regulations and the standard period for storage of data is 5 years, after which the data will be destroyed through secure means. Access to data collected will be highly restricted.

Use of data for other purposes
If the information collected is used for other research purposes, the information will be anonymous and nobody will be identified. Similarly, the research report may be submitted for publication but individual participants will be anonymous. Please note that whilst best efforts are made for anonymous and confidential management of information, absolute confidentiality or anonymity cannot be guaranteed.

Results
If you would like to know the research findings, you can contact me via phone (+60123833087), or email (mwche12@student.monash.edu).

If you would like to contact the researcher about any aspect of this project, please contact the Chief Investigator:	If you have a complaint concerning the manner in which this research Project No. CF13/2539-2013001364 is being conducted, please contact:
Professor Terri Seddon Email: Terri.Seddon@monash.edu Phone number: +61399052774 Fax number: +61399052779	**Executive Officer** **Monash University Human Research Ethics** **Committee (MUHREC)** **Building 3e Room 111** **Research Office** **Monash University VIC 3800** Tel: +61 3 9905 2052 Fax: +61 3 9905 3831 Email: muhrec@monash.edu

Please indicate your consent to participate directly to me by email to mwche12@student.monash.edu and complete the attached **Consent Form** which you can return to me when we meet. I look forward to your positive reply. Thank you.

Mien Wee CHENG
(Student No. 23075902)

Appendix E2: Explanatory Statement to MQA/Ministry Officials

MONASH University

(This information sheet is for recipient to keep)

Explanatory Statement

1 October 2013

To: Ministry Officials

Title: Internationalising higher education: Making of dual degree curricula in business education by Malaysian private sector institutions

My name is **MIEN WEE CHENG** and I am conducting a research project with **PROFESSOR TERRI SEDDON** in the Department of Work, Learning and Leadership, Faculty of Education, towards a PhD degree at Monash University. This means that I will be writing a thesis based on this project, which is the equivalent of a 300 page book.

You are invited to take part in this project, in an **interview** which will be conducted on **one-to-one basis**. Participation in this project is voluntary and you are under **no obligation** to consent to participate. Please read this Explanatory Statement completely before making a decision.

Why you are chosen for this research
I invite you to participate in this research project because of your knowledge and experience in transnational higher education (TNHE) programs and dual degree curricula in Malaysia. I am interested in your perspectives on the curriculum making process for the dual degree in business education and your understanding of internationalisation of higher education in Malaysia.

The aim/purpose of the research
The aim of this research project is to explain the formation of dual degrees in business education in Malaysian TNHE and their effects in internationalising Malaysian higher education.

Possible benefits
Although studies on Malaysian TNHE are not new, we know very little about its curriculum history and its effects in internationalising higher education. There is also limited information on transnational dual degree curricula that have emerged in recent years. Your participation in this project can contribute to better understanding of the formation of dual degree curricula in Malaysian TNHE and their implications for internationalisation of higher education in Malaysia.

What does the research involve
The research involves the use of individual interviews with audio recording and document analysis. The interview will be conducted at a location that is convenient and comfortable to you.

How much time will the research take
The interview will take approximately 60 minutes of your time.

Inconvenience/discomfort
The levels of inconvenience and discomfort will be minimal as Monash University requires all research students to follow strict procedures on participants' privacy, and manage information collected in confidential and secure manner. I will obtain appropriate clearance from Monash University's Ethics Committee prior to conducting the interviews. You can obtain further information on Monash University's human ethics procedures from http://monash.edu/researchoffice/human/what-is-human-research.html, or email mwche12@student.monash.edu

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Payment
No payment or reward will be offered for your participation in this project.

Withdrawal from the research
Participation is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent. If you do consent to participate, you do not need to answer all the questions asked and you may withdraw from further participation at any stage. However, please note that responses given cannot be withdrawn. Your answers or responses will be treated with confidentiality and anonymity.

Confidentiality
All communication and information collected will be stored confidentially in secure places, and anonymity maintained through the use of pseudonyms or codes. You will find more information on confidential management of data from www.researchdata.monash.edu

Storage of data
Data collected will be stored in accordance with Monash University's regulations and the standard period for storage of data is 5 years, after which the data will be destroyed through secure means. Access to data collected will also be highly restricted.
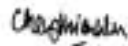
Use of data for other purposes
If the information collected is used for other research purposes, the information will be anonymous and nobody will be identified. Similarly, the research report may be submitted for publication but individual participants will be anonymous. Please note that whilst best efforts are made for anonymous and confidential management of information, absolute confidentiality or anonymity cannot be guaranteed.

Results
If you would like to know the research findings, you can contact me via phone (+60123833087), or email (mwche12@student.monash.edu).

If you would like to contact the researcher about any aspect of this project, please contact the Chief Investigator:	If you have a complaint concerning the manner in which this research Project No. CF13/2539-2013001364 is being conducted, please contact:
Professor Terri Seddon Email: Terri.Seddon@monash.edu Phone number: +61399052774 Fax number: +61399052779	**Executive Officer** **Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC)** Building 3e Room 111 **Research Office** **Monash University VIC 3800** Tel: +61 3 9905 2052 Fax: +61 3 9905 3831 Email: muhrec@monash.edu

Please indicate your consent to participate directly to me by email to mwche12@student.monash.edu and complete the attached Consent Form which you can return to me when we meet. I look forward to your positive reply. Thank you.

Chengweelin

Mien Wee CHENG
(Student No. 23075902)

Faculty of Education
PO Box 6, Monash University, Victoria, 3800
Building 6, Clayton Campus, Wellington Road, Monash University, Victoria, 3800, Australia
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Email info@education.monash.edu.au
www.monash.edu.au
ABN 12 377 614 012 CRICOS provider number 00008C

Appendix F: Consent Form

Consent Form:
(For all participants)

Title: Internationalising higher education: Making of dual degree curricula in business education by Malaysian private sector institutions

NOTE: This consent form will remain with the Monash University researcher for their records.

I understand I have been asked to take part in the Monash University research project specified above. I have had the project explained to me and/or I have read the Explanatory Statement, which I keep for my records.

I understand that:	YES	NO
• I will be asked to be interviewed by the researcher (one-to-one)	☐	☐
• Unless I otherwise inform the researcher before the interview I agree to allow the interview to be audio-recorded	☐	☐
• I will be asked to answer questions, in a semi-structured interview, about how I experience the curriculum making process of the dual degree in business education and on perspectives of internationalisation of higher education	☐	☐

and

I understand that my participation is voluntary, that I can choose not to participate in part or all of the project, and that I can withdraw at any stage of the project without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way. I note that responses given cannot be withdrawn.

and

I understand that any data that the researcher extracts from the interview for use in reports or published findings will not, under any circumstances, contain names or identifying characteristics without my signed consent below.

and/or

I understand that I will be given a transcript of data concerning me for my approval before it is included in the write up of the research.

Page 1 of 2

and/or

I understand that no information I have provided that could lead to the identification of any other individual will be disclosed in any reports on the project, or to any other party

and

I understand that data from the interview / transcript / audio recording will be kept in secure storage and accessible to the researcher and Chief Investigator only. I also understand that the data will be destroyed after a 5 year period unless I consent to it being used in future research.

and

I do / do not give permission to be identified by name / by a pseudonym / understand I will remain anonymous at all times in any reports or publications from the project.

Participant's name: _____

Signature: _____   **Date:** _____