WEST AFRICAN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MOBILITY TO PENTECOST UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, GHANA.

BY

ASIEDU SAMUEL KWAKYE

(10311399)

THIS DISSERTATION IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF MA MIGRATION STUDIES DEGREE.

CENTRE FOR MIGRATION STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON.

JULY, 2016
DECLARATION

I, Asiedu Samuel Kwakye, do hereby declare that with the exception of references to other people’s work, other work herein submitted is entirely the product of my own research under supervision and has not been presented for any other degree elsewhere.

Asiedu Samuel Kwakye
(Student)

Date

Dr. (Mrs.) Delali Badasu
(Supervisor)

Date

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh
DEDICATION

I wholeheartedly dedicate this research work to the Lord Almighty through whose guidance and protection I have been able to reach this far in my education. This work is dedicated to my parents Mr. and Mrs. J. K. Darko for their support in pursuing this course. It is also dedicated to my little sister Eunice Darko and Mrs. Judith Ampomah Bamfo for their support whiles embarking on this project.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

My special gratitude goes to my supervisor, Dr. (Mrs.) Delali Badasu for her advice, support and painstakingly going through my thesis upon all her busy schedules as the director of the Centre for Migration Studies and a Senior lecturer as well at Regional Institute for Population Studies (RIPS), Legon.

To all other lecturers of Centre for Migration Studies (CMS), University of Ghana, Legon, I say a big thank you for having time in shaping this work through contributions and constructive criticisms. I appreciate you all for your contributions in diverse ways. I wish to thank the authorities of Pentecost University College, especially Apostle (Dr.) Daniel Walker who is the current Rector of the university. I also thank the international office for providing all the needed information and support for this work.

To the research assistants (Doreen Dzokoto and Constantine) who helped in data collection for this project and the respondents whose invaluable information contributed to the success of this project, I say a big thank you to you all. I also thank Mr. Ben Oware Antwi for painstakingly editing this work for me.

Finally, much appreciation goes to Elders, Christian Effah Tweneboah, Emmanuel Teye, David Ampomah Bamfo, Deacon Kingsley Kofi Bamfo and Madam Felicia Darko, my own sister, Mr. Ewuntomah Raphael, Mrs. Priscilla Ankomah and the rest of my course mates not only for the successful completion of this work, but also for making the write up a challenging and rewarding experience.

May the Almighty God guide, protect and reward you all.
ABSTRACT

International student mobility has become a topic of interest in recent migration literature. This is probably because international student mobility has considerable implications both on economic and academic sphere and has rapidly grown across the world. Many tertiary institutions in the world today have interest in recruiting talented international students to ‘enhance their academic reputation, enrich campuses and programmes with cultural, social and academic contributions.

Many scholars on the migration field argue that this increase in international student mobility could be attributed to improved international communications, decreasing real cost of air travel, a widening range of educational opportunities for foreign students, increased globalization of labor markets among others.

International student mobility has mostly been known to be from developing to the developed countries probably due to the vast research that has been conducted into the area as compared with the little research done on international student mobility between developing countries.

This study investigates the West African international student mobility to Pentecost University College, Ghana. The study explores the socio-demographic characteristics of the international students at PUC, factors that influenced their decision making processes to choose Ghana as their study ‘abroad” destination and their choice of PUC. Additionally, their experiences as international students at PUC are also looked into and recommendations are made based on the findings.

Chen’s synthesis model is used to explain students’ decision making process in three distinct stages and to seek various factors that affect the choice of host country and institution. The research sample comprised sixty five (65) quantitative and ten (10) qualitative. The quantitative research method is utilized by using a survey questionnaire while the qualitative research method employed the use of a semi structured in-depth interview guide.
The findings indicate that most of the international students were from Nigeria and that many of the students came to Ghana expecting that their Ghanaian credential will put them in a better employment position upon their return home. Quite expectedly, some of the experiences of these students in Ghana have been negative, while others have been positive. Many of them noted the friendliness and hospitality of Ghanaians and the relative safety of Ghana as a country.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION .............................................................................................................. i
DEDICATION .............................................................................................................. ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ........................................................................................... iii
ABSTRACT ................................................................................................................ iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS ............................................................................................... vi
LIST OF TABLES ........................................................................................................ ix
LIST OF FIGURES ...................................................................................................... x

CHAPTER ONE .............................................................................................................. 1
  1.0 Background to the Study ................................................................................... 1
  1.1 Trends in West African International Student Mobility in Ghana ...................... 2
  1.2 Statement of the Problem ................................................................................. 3
  1.3 Objectives of the Study ................................................................................... 5
  1.4 Research Questions ....................................................................................... 5
  1.5 Significance of the Study ............................................................................. 5
  1.6 Structure of the Study ................................................................................... 7

CHAPTER TWO ............................................................................................................. 8
LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK .................................. 8
  2.0 Introduction .................................................................................................... 8
  2.1 The effects of Globalization and Internationalization to the International ..... 8
      Students’ Mobility .............................................................................................. 8
      2.1.1 Definition of terms ............................................................................... 9
      2.1.2 International students ........................................................................ 11
      2.1.3 Decision making and choice. ................................................................. 12
  2.2 Cross Boarder Education ............................................................................... 12
  2.3 Factors Influencing International Students Mobility. ..................................... 16
  2.4 Africa’s Involvement in International Students’ Mobility. .................................. 16
  2.5 Intra-Regional African Student Mobility Trends ............................................. 19
  2.6 The use of English as a Language of instruction ............................................ 23
  2.7 Frameworks..................................................................................................... 24
      2.7.1 Chen’s Synthesis Model ....................................................................... 24
      2.7.2 The “Predisposition” stage................................................................. 27
      2.7.3 The “search/selection/application” stage ............................................. 27
      2.7.4 The “choice” stage ........................................................................... 28
  2.8 Justification of Chen’s model for this study .................................................... 28
CHAPTER THREE ................................................................. 30
METHODOLOGY .............................................................................. 30
3.0 Introduction .............................................................................. 30
3.1 Research Method ................................................................. 30
3.2 Study area and Study Population ........................................ 31
3.3 Institution’s Profile ................................................................ 31
    3.3.1 Pentecost University College ........................................ 31
3.4 Data Collection ....................................................................... 32
3.5 Sample Population ............................................................... 36
3.6 Reliability, Validity, Representativeness .............................. 37
3.7 Operationalization ............................................................... 38
3.8 Data Analysis ......................................................................... 39
3.9 Ethical Consideration .......................................................... 40
3.10 Limitations .......................................................................... 40

CHAPTER FOUR ............................................................................. 41
SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WEST AFRICAN
INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AT PUC. .......................................... 41
4.0 Introduction ........................................................................... 41
4.1 Age distribution ................................................................. 41
4.2 Sex distribution ..................................................................... 42
4.3 Nationality ............................................................................ 42
4.5 Distribution of the student by Level at the University .......... 44
4.6 International Students Preparations at the Origin ............. 45
    4.6.1 Participants Source of Funding for Studies .................. 45
    4.6.2 Enrolled because of Language of Instruction ............... 46
    4.6.3 Duration of learning English before enrolling at PUC ... 47

CHAPTER FIVE ............................................................................. 49
FACTORS THAT INFLUENCED THE DECISION TO STUDY ABROAD, CHOICE
OF GHANA AND PUC. ................................................................. 49
5.0 Introduction .......................................................................... 49
5.1 Decision-making ............................................................... 49
5.2 Domestic Factors ............................................................... 51
5.3 Factors that influenced the choice of Ghana ..................... 54
5.4 Factors that influenced the choice of PUC ......................... 60
5.5 Source of information ....................................................... 64
CHAPTER SIX .............................................................................................................. 66
THE EXPERIENCES OF WEST AFRICAN INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AT
PUC. .............................................................................................................................. 66
6.0 Introduction .......................................................................................................... 66
6.1 Experiences .......................................................................................................... 66
   6.1.1 Experiences in academic related work ......................................................... 67
   6.1.2 Experiences on prices of goods and services ............................................... 68
   6.1.3 Social experiences ........................................................................................ 68
   6.1.4 Tuition fees .................................................................................................... 70
   6.1.5 Experiences with accommodation ............................................................. 71
   6.1.6 Entertainment activities ........................................................................... 71

CHAPTER SEVEN ....................................................................................................... 74
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS ................................ 74
7.0 Introduction .......................................................................................................... 74
7.1 Summary of Key Findings ................................................................................... 74
7.2 Conclusion ........................................................................................................... 76
7.3 Recommendation ................................................................................................. 77
7.4 Area for Further Research .................................................................................... 78

REFERENCES .............................................................................................................. 79

APPENDICES ............................................................................................................... 89
APPENDIX 1: QUANTITATIVE INTERVIEW GUIDE ........................................ 89
APPENDIX II: QUALITATIVE IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE ....................... 96
LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1: Enrolled because of Language of Instruction ............................................... 47
Table 5.1: Domestic factors that influenced decision making processes ....................... 53
Table 5.2 Encouragement from significant other on decision making processes .......... 54
Table 5.3: Factors related to the characteristics of Ghana ............................................. 56
Table 5.4: External factors: Economic, Marketing and information ............................. 58
Table 5.5: Factors related to encouragement from significant other on the choice of Ghana ............................................................................................................... 60
Table 5.6: External factors: (Academic pulling of PUC) ............................................... 61
Table 5.7: External factors: (Administrative pulling of PUC) ....................................... 62
Table 5.8: Factors related to significant others .............................................................. 64
Table 5.9: Source of information .................................................................................. 65
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1: The Synthesis model ................................................................. 26
Figure 4.1: Age Distribution of respondents .................................................. 42
Figure 4.2: Nationality of the students .......................................................... 43
Figure 4.3: Department affiliations of respondents ......................................... 44
Figure 4.4: Distribution of students by Level at the university ....................... 45
Figure 4.5: Participants source of Funding ..................................................... 46
Figure 4.6: Respondents duration of learning English language before entering PUC . 48
Figure 5.1: Personal characteristics and motivations ....................................... 50
Figure 5.2: External factors: internationalization and globalization .................. 51
Figure 6.1: International students performing during the 2016 awards, dinner and handing over night at PUC ............................................................... 72
Figure 6.2: A section of the international students during the awards, handing over and dinner night at PUC ............................................................... 73
CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Background to the Study

The origin of international student mobility and international study can be traced back to ancient times, as early as 600 BC in India and other regions such as China, Persia, Greece, Rome, and Western Europe (Altekar, 1965). These countries recruited cross-border students from abroad and used international languages like Sanskrit, Pali, Greek or Latinas as language of instruction. The international characteristics of tertiary education can also be seen in medieval European universities, such as Bologna, Cordova and Paris, in which faculty members and student body were composed of international scholars and students (Altekar, 1965; Dedijer, 1968; Hess, 1982 and Chen, 2007).

International student mobility has considerable implications both on economic and academic sphere (Daejoong, 2011) and has rapidly grown across the world. Many tertiary institutions in the world today have interest in recruiting talented international students to ‘enhance their academic reputation, enrich campuses and programmes with cultural, social and academic contributions, and contribute to countries and institutions’ research and innovation profiles’ (Middlehurst, 2003). Over the last few decades, international student mobility has tremendously expanded as the total number of international students has reached over 2.7 million (OECD 2006), with a predicted increase to 7.2 million by 2025 (Bohm, Meares, and Pearce, 2002).

It is believed that because of improved international communications, decreasing real cost of air travel, a widening range of educational opportunities for foreign students, increased globalization of labour markets and other factors, more students choose to study abroad to obtain higher education. Knight (2003, 2004) stated that the inclusion of education as one
of the 12 tradable sectors by the World Trade Organization (WTO) in the implementation of the General Agreement on Trade Services (GATS) has giving a significant boost to the cross-border tertiary education.

1.1 Trends in West African International Student Mobility in Ghana

Daejoong (2011) observed that developing countries are becoming important not just as senders but also as receivers of students in the international recruiting market. International students do not only move to the developed countries as existed before but recently also move within developing countries. Ghana has witnessed both increasing outflow and inflow of international student mobility in recent years. Among the most common host countries of Ghanaian students are the United Kingdom, United States of America, and Canada as a result of colonial ties and the use of English as a language of instructions. A small number however also go to other European and Asian countries for studies.

The increased number of public universities, the influx of local private universities and the increase in the establishment of branches of foreign universities in Ghana has also contributed to the increased inflow of West African international students in Ghana from countries such as Nigeria, Togo, Ivory Coast, Benin, Mali, and Burkina Faso. There are other international students from outside West African countries such as Gabon, Kenya, and Cape Verde among others. There are a number of international students studying and others on educational exchange programmes in our public universities who came to the country largely through collaborations involving Ghana’s diplomatic missions, educational and institutions in their countries (Asare, 2016). Data on international student inflow and outflow in Ghana and within West Africa are hardly available.
1.2 Statement of the Problem

International student mobility has been the dominance of the few developed countries especially the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and as Altbach (2004) noted, it is mostly from the developing countries to the developed countries. International student mobility has received little attention in the African migration literature, probably because labour migrants and refugees account for most international migration in the region (Adepoju and van der Wiel, 2010; Appleyard, 1998; Oucho, 2008.). While the literature on foreign study or international student mobility is large (the ‘select’ bibliography by Lulat 1984 runs to 40 pages), much of it is concentrated on foreign study in Europe, Asia, North and South America with just a few on Africa. The little research that has been done on African international student mobility mostly focused on the Southern African Development Communities (SADC).

For several years, Ghana has been a major sending country of international students to developed countries for international education. This trend has however changed since Ghana has become a destination country for a higher number of international students especially from Africa. Even though Ghana has become emerging host country, little studies have been conducted on the international students especially the West African international students who choose to study in Ghana as their study abroad destination.

Information on international student mobility within West Africa and specifically Ghana is hardly available. This could be attributed to lack of funds for research, unavailability of data, concentration on refugee and labour migration among others. Policy makers in foreign tertiary institutions cannot make any informed decision regarding international student when research into various dimensions have not been conducted. Meanwhile many are the experiences of international students.
Concrete and absolute decisions that impact lives and activities are made based on the availability of the relevant information. Despite the importance of international students’ presence in the learning environment and the society, to the best of my knowledge, little research has been done on the socio demographic characteristics, factors influencing the decision of West African international student mobility to Ghana, factors determining their choice of institution and the experiences of West African international students in Ghana.

It is against this background that this study was conducted, to examine the socio-demographic characteristics of West African international students at Pentecost University College, Ghana (PUC), factors that influence West African international student’s decision-making process of choosing Ghana as a study ‘abroad’ destination, factors that determine their choice of institution and explore the experiences of West African international students at PUC, Ghana, as a case study. The researcher chose PUC because it is an institution which has a high number of international students from different West African countries such as Nigeria, Togo, Ivory Coast, and Benin among others. This research will provide us with information on the socio-demographic characteristics of West African international students at PUC, factors that influence West African international students’ decision-making process of choosing Ghana as a study ‘abroad’ destination, factors that determine their choice of institution and explore the experiences of West African international students at PUC, a thing which is hardly available and also serve as a source of reference for further studies and decision making.
1.3 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to identify decision-making process and factors that influence the West African international student’s choice of Ghana and PUC as a choice of study abroad destination and institution.

The specific objectives are:

i. To describe the socio-demographic characteristics of the West African international students at PUC.

ii. To examine the factors that influence the decision-making process of the West African international students’ choice of Ghana and PUC.

iii. To explore the experiences of West African international students at PUC.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions shall be answered:

1. What are the factors that influence the West African international student mobility decision to study in Ghana?

2. What factors determine their choice of PUC?

3. What are the experiences of the West African international students at PUC?

1.5 Significance of the Study

First, this study focuses on identifying the factors that influence the West African international student’s decision on the choice of Ghana as a study destination. Most studies focused on student mobility from developing to developed countries because the developed countries have traditionally provided higher education as a knowledge product to Asian and African countries (Altbach and Knight, 2007). On the contrary, this study explores the motivations of the international students’ mobility within the context of West
Africa and specifically to Ghana. To the best of my knowledge this study is one of the few studies which attempt to throw light on inward West African international students’ mobility in the context of Ghana.

It is of great interest to undertake this study because Ghana for some time now was known as a major sending country of international students. Conversely, Ghana has now become a major receiving country of West African international students for tertiary education which underscores the significance of a better understanding of the nature of this trend. This study will fill the knowledge gap in the migration literature on West African international students’ mobility.

Secondly, this study tries to identify the dynamics and strength of both the factors and processes influencing student’s decision making on a study abroad destination within West Africa. Earlier studies on the trends and patterns have been done by using ‘push pull’ framework; however, the push-pull model only explains the factors that externally influence student’s decision-making such as economic, academic and political reasons among others. A comprehensive theoretical framework is used in this study thereby considering the views of significant others, like friends, family and also internal factors like personal characteristics as influential factors.

Additionally, this study will furnish policy makers with research evidence to address the negative experiences of international students at PUC and other universities in the country.

Lastly, the study will serve as a source of reference to West African international students seeking to enrol in Ghana and other West African countries.
1.6 Structure of the Study

The research shall be divided into seven chapters as follows:

Chapter one deals with the introduction and background to the study, trends in West African international student mobility to Ghana, statement of the problem, objectives of the research, research question, significance of the study, and the structure of the study.

The second chapter reviews literature of some selected studies with present empirical evidence on Africa’s involvement in international students’ mobility at the global level, and Intra-Regional African student mobility trends. The final section of this chapter discusses the theoretical framework used for the study.

The third chapter presents the methodology of the study and provides an insight into the design of the data analysis and further provides a justification of the type of data analysis chosen for this work.

Chapters, four and five are on the presentation and discussion of the findings.

Finally, chapter seven provides the summary, conclusion, and recommendations based on the findings from the study.
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction

The chapter is on the literature that was reviewed for this study and the theoretical framework used. The effects of globalization and internationalization to the international students’ mobility, definition of the terms of internationalization and globalization, international student, as well as decision-making and choice are given. It also covers Cross border education, Factors influencing students’ mobility, Africa’s involvement in international students’ mobility, Intra-Regional African Students’ Mobility Trends, the use of English as a language of instruction, and finally discusses the theoretical framework used for the study.

2.1 The effects of Globalization and Internationalization to the International Students’ Mobility

For a clear understanding of the concept of international students’ mobility, it is useful to review and define the terms of internationalization and globalization as a context since these concepts impact directly on cross-border student’s mobility (Daejoong, 2011). As a matter of importance, the researcher will exemplify the definition of internationalization and globalization of tertiary/higher education, which are frequently used but often confusing.
2.1.1 Definition of terms

Internationalization and Globalization of tertiary/Higher Education

De Wit (2002) argued that there are four perspectives to internationalization which are activity, rationale, competency and process. Activity and process approach are most frequently used. In this study, internationalization refers to two approaches which are activity and process. In activity approach, internationalization refers to a series of activities, programmes and services, international collaboration between institutions, and exporting knowledge and education. As a process approach, it involves policies and directs tertiary/Higher Education institutions internationally (Chen, 2007: 275; Daejoong, 2011).

Internationalization and globalization are two key words commonly used in the fields of education and politics and both have impacts on Tertiary Education institutions worldwide. In the global knowledge economy, tertiary institutions play a critical role as medium for a variety of ‘international relationships and continuous global flows of people, information, knowledge products, and financial capital’ (OECD, 2007). People are often confused in using these terms in a correct or proper way (Altbach, 2004); hence, it is necessary to define these terms clearly for better conducting the present study.

Globalization, which is the process of communication and information, is viewed as a combination of economic and cultural change. It leads to the world-wide markets through real-time and cross-border mobility of production. In addition, it depends on the worldwide systems of communication, information, and culture towards a single world community. Globalization is more transformative than internationalization. On the other hand, internationalization is an older and more traditional process, assuming that the nations-states still function as a boundary for economic, social and cultural
interconnection. Conceptually, internationalization has for a long time been regarded as the cross-border mobility of individual students and scholars, but not considered as a strategy that affects higher education institutions system (Van der Wende, 2001, 432, Daejoong, 2011). Similarly, Chen (2007; Daejoong, 2011) define internationalization as “the international content of curricula, the international movement of scholars and students concern with training and research, and the arrangement that engage a system of education cooperation programs beyond its national borders.”

The difference between globalization and internationalization is that under the process of globalization, nation-states become more integrated; on the other hand, internationalization makes nation-states more interconnected.

In sum, Knight (2008) defines globalization and internationalization of higher education as: Globalization is the process that is increasing the flow of people, culture, ideas, values, knowledge, technology, and economy across borders, resulting in a more interconnected and independent world. Globalization affects each country in different ways and can have positive and/or negative consequences, according to a nation’s specific history, tradition, culture, priorities, and resources. Education is one of the sectors impacted by globalization.

The internationalization of tertiary education is also a process, although different from globalization. Internationalization of tertiary education is the process of integrating an international, intercultural, and global dimension into the purpose, functions (teaching, research, and service), and delivery of tertiary education at the institutional and national levels.
In this study, globalization means broad economic, technological, scientific, political and cultural trends that directly affect higher education (Altbach, 2004). Academic systems and higher education institutions on the globe respond to these global trends and development in different ways, however all academic systems are under the influence of globalization to some extent. For example, information technology, the use of common language in scientific community, the worldwide research and development funding, and international mobility of scholars and students are part of a global environment that affect higher education differently.

Internationalization refers to the reactions of countries and institutions to cope with globalization through specific policies and programmes undertaken by governments, academic systems, and institutions. Internationalization has a significant degree of autonomy; hence the ways of responding to the new trends can be different depending on countries and institutions.

2.1.2 International students

Specific country definitions of mobile students vary (Kritz, 2012). For example, the USA, UK and Australia define international students as people who move to another country with the objective of studying while France, Italy, Japan and Korea on the other hand use foreign students to mean students who are long-term residents in countries but not citizens that get counted as mobile students. The OECD makes a distinction between foreign and international students by considering foreign students as people who are not citizens of the country of study, but have lived there for a long time and have been educated there. International students on the other hand are those who left their countries of origin and moved to another country for the purpose of study.
The definition of ‘international student’ which is key in this study follows the Global Education Digest in UNESCO 2006, which refers to ‘internationally mobile students’ as “individuals who leave their countries or territories of origin and travel to another country for the purpose of studying there” (UNESCO, 2006).

2.1.3 Decision making and choice.

Another terminology used frequently in this paper is ‘decision making’. This and for the purpose of this study refers to “a multistage and complex process undertaken consciously and sometimes subconsciously by a student intending to enter tertiary/ higher education and by which the problem of choosing a study destination is resolved.” The concept of choice is associated with tertiary education decision making, which can be defined as “both an outcome and process by which a decision becomes concretized at any given time in the decision-making process.” Thus, the two concepts are very closely related (Maringe and Carter, 2007, 463).

2.2 Cross Boarder Education

Cross border education (OECD, 2003) is becoming a fast growing phenomenon in higher education. There has been expansion in tertiary/higher education enrolment across the world over the past few decades. A lot of students recognize the need to study abroad to gain knowledge about the global world and international experience in order to compete in the global labour marketplace and to also enhance personal and professional competences (Chen, 2007: 272).

More than 165 million students worldwide participated in tertiary/higher education in 2009 which was a five-fold increase since 1970 and a three-fold increase since 1980 (Kritz, 2012). Foreign student number increased from 0.8 million in 1975 to 4.1 million in
A growing trend is also seen in cross-border tertiary education which is characterized by the movement of people (students, professors, scholars, researchers, experts and consultants), providers (institutions, consortia and companies) and programmes across national borders (Knight, 2006; Varghese, 2008).

According to OECD (2008), 2.9 million students from all over the world who were admitted into tertiary educational programmes studied abroad in 2006. It was predicted that more than 7 million students will be accepted in 2025 (Bohm et al. 2002; Perraton, 2004). The global population of students who move to another country to study continues to rise, reaching almost 5 million in 2014 – more than double the 2.1 million internationally mobile students in 2000 – with an annual increase of 10% (OECD, 2014). The OECD has projected that, with demographic changes, international students’ mobility is likely to reach 8 million students per year by 2025.

After remaining largely stable over the last decade, the balance of host countries is beginning to change. For now, the United States of America remains the most popular destination for international students, followed by the United Kingdom, Germany, France and Australia, with half of all international students pursuing degrees in these five countries (UIS, 2013). According to the Institute of International Education (IIE), one third of all internationally mobile students across the globe study either in the USA or the UK. Despite the negative impact of the 2008 financial crises, the total enrollment of international students in the USA increased by 42 per cent between 2008 and 2014. However, enrollments in the UK have been decreasing since 2012 due mainly to the introduction of stringent visa policies.
The USA and UK’S traditional market share is declining, with Australia and Canada being preferred alongside intraregional mobility, thus, those who choose to study abroad within their home region. Meanwhile Australian enrollments have started to rebound after a significant decline beginning in 2010, and Canadian enrolments are continuing a steady decade-long upward trajectory (World Education Service, 2012). Major sending countries on international students are China, India, Korea Republic, Germany, United States, Japan, and Malaysia in that order (UIS, 2009). The flow of international students into a country can have a significant impact to the economies, its culture and academics by generating financial benefits, enriching its cultural and academic environment (Daejoong, 2011). International students from Asian countries such as China, India and South Korea now rank high in that order (University of Oxford, 2015).

Australia’s education services exports have continued to grow in importance. Since 1982, education services exports have grown at an average annual rate of around 14 per cent in volume terms, with their share in the value of total exports increasing from less than 1 per cent to almost 6 per cent in 2007 (Connelly and Olsen, 2013).

These services not only include tuition fees, but also the living expenses of foreign students while studying in Australia. In 2007, tuition fees accounted for 39 per cent of overseas student expenditure in Australia, with the balance representing spending by foreign students on goods and services, such as food, accommodation, transport and entertainment. (Connelly & Olsen, 2013).

At the state levels, education as an export for Victoria remained the state’s largest export in 2011/12 with an amount of $4,448 million dollars. In Australian Capital Territory’s Top Exports 2011/12, education was the territory’s second largest export behind government’s goods/services with an amount of $321 million dollars whiles it was sixth for South Australia behind wheat, wine, copper, copper ore and iron amounting to $863,000 dollars.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in November 2013 in its International Trade in Service Series, international education activity arising from international students studying and living in Australia contributed $14.461 billion to the Australian economy in 2012\13. It was a 1.7 percent decrease from the earnings recorded in 2011\12 financial year of $14.711 and similar to that in the calendar year 2012 ($14.467 billion). The total export income generated by all international education activity was $15.0 billion consisting of spending on fees and goods and services by onshore students (this account for 96.2% of total exports). In 2012\13, the higher education sector generated $9.6 billion in export income (67.6% of total onshore earnings). Education related personal travel was Australia’s largest services export ahead of other personal travel services ($12.6 billion); and professional and management consulting services ($4.1 billion). In the Australia’s newspaper of September 30th 2013, Australia’s Trade Minister Andrew Robb wrote that there was little community understanding of the importance of international education to the country’s balance of payments. Education is Australia’s fourth-biggest export market, and largest service-based industry.

For Australia’s Education Minister, Christopher Pyne, education is Australia’s biggest non-mining export industry. Education is the only one of Australia’s top exports that
captures Australia as more than a quarry, with a view, it is the only clever country export among Australia’s biggest earners of export income (Connelly and Olsen, 2013).

2.3 Factors Influencing International Students Mobility.

Knowledge crosses borders and universities have welcomed international students from the very origin (Altbach, 2004; Daejoong, 2011). Previous studies have identified several factors that are associated with different countries in international students’ mobility; including population size, per capita gross domestic product, international and colonial ties, and home tertiary-training capacity, although consistent relationships have not emerged because of different study methodologies (Kritz, 2012). Varghese (2008) also found that factors such as cost of education, ideological affinity, language proficiency, perceived academic superiority of the institutions in the host countries, acquisition of foreign language and culture, employment opportunities, increasing income levels in the countries of origin, easy visa formalities among others, play a vital role in students’ mobility. The reasons for students’ mobility may also be viewed from economic and political perspectives.

2.4 Africa’s Involvement in International Students’ Mobility.

In the early 1960s, UNESCO estimated the worldwide population of students in third level education, excluding the USSR and mainland China, at 13.5 million. By 1983-84, this figure had risen to 48million. While much of the growth occurred in the developed world, a significant share occurred in the developing regions (Fahey, 1987). In Africa, the corresponding increase was from a quarter of a million to 1.8 million. Tertiary institutions in Africa in general have a marginalized position in knowledge production and dissemination processes. Tertiary institutions in Africa have gone through many
challenges since the 1980s than any other region of the world. The issues of poor research output, poor educational quality, limited infrastructure with huge enrolment pressure, deteriorating relevance of programmes among others have been a great challenge since then (Woldegiorgis & Doevenspeck, 2013). Mobility of African students in the global trends is not something new. The introduction of European higher education systems by the colonial masters in Africa brought the idea of international students’ mobility into existence in Africa.

The British and French sent some few Africans to their respective home institutions for higher education training, a strategy for colonial administration. Their aim for sending Africans for higher education at the time was to create elites who could assist colonial administration. Sending few African students to metropolitan universities in Europe was considered as cost effective compared to expanding higher education institutions in Africa (Woldegiorgis & Doevenspeck, 2015).

The British established the university of East Africa to serve Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, a population of 23 million with only 99 African graduates in 1963 (Altbach, 2004). In the same way, there were also only two higher education institutions in Portuguese speaking Africa (University of Luanda and the University of Lourenco) in the 1960s that were mainly established for Portuguese settlers. Out of a student population of 540 at the University of Lourenco in Marques, only one student was a Mozambican African in 1966 (Woldegiorgis & Doevenspeck, 2015).

These historical legacies continued even after independence in most African countries. Since there were few higher education institutions on the continent at the time of independence, the newly independent African governments used to send students abroad for higher education trainings. According to estimation by UNESCO, there were 183,000
African higher education students studying abroad in the 1980s representing 20% of the total foreign student population in the world (Fahey, 1987).

According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), the trend of African students going out to other regions for higher education studies has been rising since the 1990s. Statistics indicated that six percent of African students were studying abroad in 2010. There were 380,376 African students on the move in 2010, representing about a tenth of all international students worldwide and 6% of all African students (Marshall, 2013). This number is estimated to reach 8 million by 2020. Pull factors such as the availability of different number of courses, quality education, career opportunities associated with foreign degrees, scholarships and on study job opportunities, flexible entry requirements have facilitated the rise in the number of African students going abroad for higher education.

In terms of destination, most African students travel to France, UK, USA, Germany, Malaysia, Italy and Australia. According to the 2010 census, the percentage of African students who travelled to the above mentioned countries was stated as France (29.2%) the UK (10%), USA (9.7%), Germany (4%), Malaysia (3.9%), (ICEF Monitor, 2013). On the other hand, the top 6 African countries that sent most students abroad in the same year were Morocco 42,800 (11.3%), Nigeria 38,851 (10.2%), Algeria 22,465 (5.9%), Zimbabwe 19,658 (5.2%), Cameroon 19, 506 (5.3%) and Tunisia 19,506 representing 5.1% (Marshall, 2013). France has been the most favoured destination for African students for the past 20 years. Most of the students studying in France have however been from Francophone Africa as only 2.6% of Africans studying in France are from English-speaking African countries.
African students in general constituted 43% foreign students in France in 2011 and only 3% of them were from non-francophone countries. But recently the number of students from Francophone African countries studying in English speaking countries is also rising (Woldegiorgis & Doevenspeck, 2015). According to Beine, Noel and Ragot (2010), the percentage of Africans who were enrolled outside their country of citizenship was 11.6% globally.

2.5 Intra-Regional African Student Mobility Trends

Africa has also witnessed an increased mobility of international students within the sub region since the 1990s (Woldegiorgis & Doevenspeck, 2015). Thus, aside moving from Africa to other regions for tertiary education, movement within the region for higher education has also been positive. Various factors have contributed to the growing trend of intra-African students’ mobility. Relative economic development and political stability in some African countries since the mid-1990s, the collapse of Apartheid in South Africa and the growing higher education sector since 1994, the progressive economic integration among some African countries and the rapid expansion of higher education in some African countries are some of them. The intra-Africa mobility of students and staff has more than doubled in the past decade, with the major poles being South Africa and Angola (from Southern Africa), Kenya and Uganda (from East Africa), Tunisia and Morocco (from North Africa) and Senegal and Ghana (from West Africa)(ICEF Monitor, 2013).

Morocco for example hosted 6,996 African students in 2010 particularly from Tunisia and Algeria (Marshall, 2013). According to Marshall (2013), the availability of scholarship, the presence of more international branch campuses of foreign universities, low cost of tuition in the fields of medicine, engineering and administration have been mentioned
among the major reasons for Morocco to become the most favoured destination for North African Students. South Africa has also become a major destination for African students largely from SADC region such as Zimbabwe, Namibia, Botswana and Lesotho since 1994. In 2009, for example, South Africa was rated among the top 10 destinations for foreign students to pursue university education away from home. The Global Education Digest 2009 study stated that 8% of students in South African universities were international students mainly from SADC region.

In 2010 for instance, of all foreign students in South African universities, 72% came from SADC region. Generally, since the fall of the Apartheid regime, the number of international students in South Africa has more than quadrupled from around 12,500 in 1994 to nearly 53,000 in 2005.

Intra-African students’ mobility among Portuguese speaking African countries has also been emerging after the conclusion of the long civil wars in Angola (Woldegiorgis & Doevenspeck, 2015). Though the higher education space in Lusophone Africa is not as big as Francophone or Anglophone countries, Angola has been playing a major role as a main destination for international students from Portuguese speaking African countries. Even though Angola has a relatively young higher education experience because of the colonial policy of the Portuguese and the consequent civil wars in post-independence era, it has exhibited fast improvement in higher education provision and has recently become one of the destinations for international students from Africa. In 2010, Angola hosted 6,530 foreign students, mostly from its Portuguese-speaking countries of Cape Verde, Mozambique, and São Tomé and Príncipe. Students from the Democratic Republic of Congo and Guinea-Bissau are also choosing Angola for their higher education trainings (Marshall, 2013). Factors such as, the fast growing economy of Angola, growing labour
market for Portuguese speaking Africans, scholarship opportunities and relative peace contributed to the growing number of international students in Angola.

Student exchange programme in East African countries basically goes back to colonial times where Makerere University of Uganda used to be the only higher education institution in the region serving students from Kenya, Tanzania and beyond. Students have been travelling since then to Uganda for higher education training from various parts of Africa.

The quality of education at Makerere University used to be comparable to universities in the U.K. and this has given the university a reputation of being the ‘Harvard of Africa’ (Domatob, 1996). This trend has continued for a long time making Uganda the main destination for international students from East Africa. According to official reports from the Ministry of Higher Education in Uganda, for instance, there were about 16,000 international students at Uganda’s universities in 2010 constituting almost 10% of the total higher education students in the country (Marshall, 2013). It is not only Makerere University but also other universities in Uganda that are currently hosting international students; for example, Kampala International University (KIU) hosted 6,715 students, Islamic University in Uganda hosted 767, Makerere University Business School hosted 671 in 2010 (Woldegiorgis & Doevenspeck, 2015). The majority 70% of international students are from Kenya while the rest come from Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Rwanda, Sudan, Somalia and Congo. The relatively low cost of living and tuition fees in Uganda, better quality higher education, easy visa regulations and geographic proximity contributed to the large number of foreign students’ enrolment in Ugandan universities.
The 2004 Accra declaration by Association of African Universities (AAU) in partnership with UNESCO and the South African Council on Higher Education reaffirmed stakeholders’ commitment to enhance access to higher education and increasing academic mobility within the African continent. In order to realize this dream, some initiatives have been taken. In 2007, the African Union established the Mwalimu Nyerere African Union Scholarship Scheme which is aimed at enabling African students to study at recognized higher education institution on the continent, in areas of science and technology. Beneficiaries are expected to work in Africa for a minimum of two (2) years after graduation. This programme benefited from the European Union financial support of US$ 46.5 million in November, 2010 which allowed it to be extended for four years (2011 to 2015). SADC also included student and staff mobility in its 1997 Protocol on Education and Training. SADC specifically recommended that higher education institutions in its member states reserve at least 5% of its admissions for students from other SADC countries (UNESCO-UIS, 2009).

The proportion of SADC mobile students staying in their own region is as high as 50%, second only to Western Europe (UNESCO-UIS, 2009). The relatively higher regional student mobility may partially be the result of the 1997 SADC Protocol on Education and Training which aims to facilitate mobility. Several countries within the SADC have not been able to implement what is enshrined in the Protocol except for the South Africa, Swaziland, and Zimbabwe, which continue to charge higher fees for SADC students than national students, is a hindrance to students’ mobility (Butcher et. al., 2008). Meeting Africa’s tertiary education demand, however will not be easy considering the region’s overburdened education infrastructure, faculty shortages and competing demands for government revenues (Adepoju, 2002: World Bank, 2009).
2.6 The use of English as a Language of instruction

English is used as a language of instruction in Ghanaian education because it is the language of the colonial masters and the most widely used and studied language in the world (Daejoong, 2011). English, the dominant language of globalization has much to do with international students’ mobility. The majority of international students choose English-speaking countries as their study abroad destinations. Anglophone countries, such as the United States of America, the United Kingdom, and Australia, serves as the major host countries attracting a significant number of international students due partly to the globalized language, English (Kell and Vogl, 2010, 5).

Since the 1960s English has become the normal medium of instruction in higher education in many countries—and it is increasingly used in several countries where the language has no official status (Daejoong, 2011).

Altbach and Knight (2007, 9) also argue that as an instruction and communication media, English plays a vital role in motivating students to participate in cross-border education. Additionally, it is the main medium in the academic field. Most of international journals use English and universities in many non-English speaking countries stress the use of English in their professors’ publishing articles. Even in non-English speaking countries, like China, Japan and South Korea, universities provide degree programmes and courses in English to attract international students; and language training to the domestic students (Altbach and Knight, 2007). Many European Union nations like the Netherlands and Germany offer studies in English to draw students from outside the European Union (Daejoong, 2011). English is predominant language in higher or tertiary education across the globe.
2.7 Frameworks

A string of separate theories, nodes or frameworks, rather than a cumulative sequence of contributions that build upon previous blocks have been used in explaining migration. A comprehensive and dynamic model should be used as a framework to take into consideration of both factors and process of students’ choices of a host country and a host institution.

The synthesis model developed by Chen (2007) was adopted as a framework for this study. Chen (2007) incorporated a push-pull model presented by Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) to explain various factors affecting decisions-making and Hossler and Gallapher’s college choice model to identify three distinct stages in the process of enrolment decision.

2.7.1 Chen’s Synthesis Model

Although the push-pull model has been broadly used to explain cross border students’ mobility patterns and has provided great insights in the research on students’ choices of study destination, it has a couple of limitations.

First, this model cannot fully account for all the decision-making processes of individual students who choose to undertake international study (Lee, Maldonado-Maldonado, and Rhoades, 2006) because it looks at the influential factors from a macro perspective without considering other forces like personal characteristics and recommendations or referrals from others (Li and Bray, 2007).

Secondly, the push-pull model does not take into consideration the students’ mobility from developing countries or developed countries to other developing countries. It applies
only to the dominant patterns of students’ migration from developing countries to
developed countries (Chen, 2007).

Chen (2007) integrated the three-stage model of college choice into the push-pull model
to identify the process and factors in his research on the East Asian students’ choices of
graduate school in Canada. The synthesis model integrated the factors and process of
college choice (Chen, 2007). The synthesis model combined Hossler and Gallapher’s
college choice model (1987), Niece and Braun’s (1977), three-phase model, and Mazzarol
and Soutar’s (2002) push-pull model to understand the factors influencing international
students’ flow and decision-making process. Chen (2007) found that some international
students follow the process of deciding to study internationally, then choosing nation and
finally selecting an institution. However, not all students follow this sequence in choosing
the destination, thus skipping the process of determining a host country and directory
choosing a host institution. The synthesis model developed by Chen (2007) explains the
dynamic process of decision-making in choosing a study destination and accommodates
the limitations of Mazzarol and Soutar’s (2002) three – stage assuming that students
follow the order of deciding to study abroad, a host country and a host institution.

This model also accommodates three stages – predisposition, search/selection/
application, and choice in decision-making of international study. In addition, it includes
three domains of factors – student characteristics, significant others, and external push-
pull factors – which influence the decision-making process of determining a destination.
Each domain will be reviewed at different stages. Again each domain has a variety of
factors such as:

1. ‘Student characteristics’ refer to personal socioeconomic background, personal
characteristics preferences, academic ability, social capital, and creative capital
2. ‘Significant others’ mean human sources that influence the decisions such as family/spouse, relatives, professors, sponsors among others.

3. ‘External influences’ include push and pull factors from the home and host countries, personal driving forces due to external influences, and institutional characteristics (Chen, 2007).

**Figure 2.1: The Synthesis model**

Stage 1: Predisposition  
Stage 2: Search/Selection/Applications  
Stage 3: Choice

**Country**

- **To study abroad**  
  - Student Characteristics:  
    - SES  
    - Personal preference  
    - Significant Others:  
      - Social ties: Relatives  
      - Family/Spouse  
      - Friends/Alumni  
      - Employers  
  - External Influences:  
    - Push Factors (Home and/or Third Country):  
      - Academic  
      - Economic  
      - Political  
      - Culture/Language  
      - Information  
    - Pull Factors (Host and/or Third Country):  
      - Academic quality  
      - Economic & political tie  
      - Environment (safety/climate)  
      - Culture/Language  
      - Marketing  
      - Geographic proximity  
      - Immigration/ Mobility

- **To study locally**  
  - Student Characteristics:  
    - Social Economic Status  
    - Personal characteristics  
    - Academic ability  
  - Significant others:  
    - Family/spouse  
    - Relatives  
    - Professors  
    - Sponsors/employers  
  - External Influences:  
    - Push (Home country):  
      - Positive  
      - Negative  
    - Pull (Host country):  
      - Positive  
      - Negative  

**Institution**

- **Research programs**  
- **Professional programs**

**City**

- Program Offering  
- Application Process (Administration)  
- Recognition of Prior Credential  
- Alumni, friends  
- Marketing  
- Pull (Academic Factors):  
  - Reputation/Rankings  
  - Academic Quality  
  - Financial Aid/Scholarship  
  - Faculty + Interactions  
  - Research tools

**Choice Set:**

- Country Environment:  
  - Academic quality  
  - Reputation/prestige of the degree  
  - Research/technology business expertise  
- Environment (safety/climate):  
- Economic (costs):  
- Political ties:  
- Immigration Policies:  
- Geographic Proximity:  
- Familial Influence/Ties:  
- Significant Others:  
- Culture/Language

**Institutional Characteristics:**

- Reputation  
- Faculty  
- Economic (cost/benefit)  
- Career Plans/Mobility  
- Location  
- Financial aid  
- Scholarship  
- Social Capital  
- Family Influence  
- Friends/Alumni  
- Employers  
- Application Process

**City Characteristics:**

- Diversity  
- Tolerance  
- No Discrimination

Source: *Chen synthesis model (2007)*
2.7.2 The “Predisposition” stage

This stage is the first stage in which the potential student decides to study outside his or her country through searching and collecting information and on the basis of personal preferences and backgrounds. In this stage, factors affecting a student’s decision to participate in international studies are categorized into three dimensions: (1) student characteristics (for example, socio-economic status, personal characteristics, and academic ability); (2) significant others (for example, family, spouse, relatives, professors, sponsors/employers); (3) push-pull factors (example, unavailability of desired programme or education in the home country, low quality of education, political instability and so on).

2.7.3 The “search/selection/application” stage

At this stage, students search and collect information on prospective host countries, schools, programmes, and locations, analyze features of those elements, and select countries, and institutions which to apply to. International students proceed to this stage “search/selection/application”, after deciding to study outside their home country.

Students at this stage are required to make two decisions: selecting host countries and choosing institutions. First, factors influencing students’ decision on host country includes: (1) student characteristics like socio-economic status and personal preferences; (2) significant others like societies, relatives, family/spouse, friends/alumni, and employers; (3) external influences which include both push and pull factors like political, culture/language, educational system, economic among others as push factors and academic quality, immigration/mobility, geographic proximity, environment (safety/climate) and economic and political tie among others. At this stage, information is collected on countries, institutions, programmes and location from different sources –
internet, brochures, organizations (agents, libraries, study – abroad fairs, embassies), and significant others (friends, relatives, alumni, parents and so forth).

Chen (2007) found that the choice of country is not necessarily made before the choice of an institution. Some students choose a range of programmes or institutions in different countries at the same time because programme characteristics are considered most significant by the students. Countries and institutions have been considered simultaneously when deciding where and what to study.

2.7.4 The “choice” stage

The final stage is the choice stage where students choose to enrol in a particular institution and programme among several admission offers from institutions through assessing institutional and country-specific characteristics. Students experience the process of ‘trade-offs’ among a set of factors taken into consideration in the search stage.

Students again consider the factors of countries (for example, living cost, environment, and culture), institutions (quality, scholarship, alumni, and reputation), programmes (for example, programme specialty, ranking, reputation) and city (location and diversity), thus deciding on final enrolment.

At this stage, factors affecting students’ final enrolment in a specific institution are categorize into three as (1) country environment, (2) institutional characteristics, (3) city characteristics (tolerance, diversity and no discrimination).

2.8 Justification of Chen’s model for this study

Although this model was constructed by Chen (2007) to explain the motivations of international students who chose Canadian graduate schools, it is a comprehensive and
dynamic model in the sense that it takes into account both internal and external factors that influence student’s decision. Again, it explains decision-making process that students take by identifying three stages – predisposition, search/selection /application and choice. For this purpose, the author used this synthesis model as a framework for conducting this study with the idea of understanding West African international students’ decision-making processes, flows and motivations for choosing Ghana and PUC.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter is on the research methodology used for the study. It discusses the research design, sampling technique, data collection and analysis. The ethical consideration of the study is also discussed.

3.1 Research Method

Mixed methods (methodological triangulation) design has been identified as the framework of the entire study. This is an approach to inquiry that combines or associates both qualitative and quantitative forms. This method is used for the purposes of seeking convergence and corroboration of results from different methods, complementarity, initiation, development of methods and expansion.

In this particular case, the quantitative and qualitative data have been converged in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem. Although mixed method has the weakness of being a source of conflict in data interpretation and analysis, time consuming, among others, it served the purpose of this study.

Specifically, the research has been leaned upon the triangulation design of mixed methods. The triangulation method (applying qualitative and quantitative methods in one study) is often used to prove the reliability of a research tool as well as to cross-check the validity of the data obtained (McNeill & Chapman 2005). In this case, the quantitative approach has been applied to the first part of the research being more for descriptive purposes, though it is impossible to describe something without explaining it at the same time.
(McNeill & Chapman 2005). On the other hand the qualitative approach has been used to enhance and clarify the quantitative research findings; mainly focusing on the research questions N1 & N2 – ‘What are the factors that influence West African international students’ mobility decision to study in Ghana?, What factors determine their choice of institution?. A further discussion is also done on the qualitative aspect which mainly focused on the experiences of West African international students at PUC; hence, the common themes have been investigated throughout both quantitative and qualitative inquiries, such as the personal characteristics, opinions about Ghana’s higher education system; evaluation of admission process, academic system, tuition, lecturer performance, accommodation, prices of goods and services, transportation and feeding among others.

3.2 Study area and Study Population

The target population was the West African international students at PUC. A total of sixty-five (65) and ten (10) participants were respectively selected for the quantitative and qualitative methods. The research population in the study is all degree-seeking international students enrolled at PUC since 2012/13 academic year.

In order to clarify research subjects in this study, West African international students are defined as those who are citizens of other West African countries other than Ghana and who have a student permit allowing them to stay in Ghana during their study period.

3.3 Institution’s Profile

3.3.1 Pentecost University College,

PUC is a private mission university inaugurated on May 22\textsuperscript{nd}, 2003, by His Excellency, John Agyekum Kuffuor, the then president of the Republic of Ghana. In November 2004,
the National Accreditation Board (NAB) granted the university institutional Accreditation.

The PUC started with seven programmes in the 2003/2004 academic year. Today it runs thirty-two programmes comprising, certificate, professional, undergraduate and graduate programmes. The university college is affiliated to the University of Ghana and the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology. The university admitted its first batch of 171 students in the 2004/2005 academic year into the Faculty of Business Administration (FBA), Faculty of Science and Computing (FESAC) and the Faculty of Theology and Mission (FTM).

The university now runs masters, regular, evening and weekend schools for thirty nine programmes with a total student population of 4,193 made up of 2,207 male and 1,986 female students. International student’s population at PUC stands at 304 (PUC international students office, June, 2016).

This provided the ground for the researcher in getting the required West African international students for the study. The students were from West African countries such as Nigeria, Cote d’Ivoire, Togo, Burkina Faso and Benin.

3.4 Data Collection

As previously stated, the study was a mixed method study. Quantitative data was collected through the use of a structured questionnaire survey of sixty five (65) international students. The quantitative interview guide was divided into three parts, A, B and C.
Part A was about the participant’s personal profile. Information sought under this included age, sex, nationality, faculty and department affiliation and academic level at the university.

Part B also looked into the financial preparation of international students before enrolling and factors related to language of instruction. Here, source of funding for studies, level of English language, duration of learning English language before enrolling at PUC among others were the questions asked.

Part C was divided into three sections, the first section considered factors influencing the decision to study abroad which in this case is Ghana. Areas considered under this section were, personal characteristics and motivations, external factors: internationalization and globalization, domestic factors, encouragement from significant others. The second section was on factors related to the characteristics of Ghana such as Ghana perceived as an advanced country in terms of providing tertiary education, safe country to study, the desire to learn a Ghanaian language, Ghana’s economic and political ties with home country, geographic proximity to home country, affordable tuition and living cost, the ease and speed of acquiring staying permit among others. The final section was on factors influencing the choice of an institution. The questions asked centered on the reputation of PUC and programmes run by the university, availability of financial aid/scholarship, speed and ease of application process, provision of various services such a cultural excursion for international students, provision of on campus accommodation, recommendation from friends and alumni and family among others. These questions were grouped under External factors: Academic pulling of PUC, External factors: Administrative pulling and factors related to significant others. The questions were listed in a five point Likert “Scale from 1 = least important, to 5 = most important in order to
measure the degree of importance of the factors that influence students’ decision to study abroad, the choice of Ghana and PUC. Participants were asked to show to what extent they think each item is important by ticking in the relevant box.

English was used in conducting the study. The questionnaires were delivered by hand with the help of the research assistant and international students’ office that is in charge of international student affairs. Although the quantitative sample size was sixty five (65), ninety (90) questionnaires were distributed. The purpose was to raise the response rate so that in a situation where some participants refuse to bring back their questionnaire, it would not affect the sample size.

The questionnaire focused on the socio-demographic characteristics of the international students, factors that influenced the decision to study abroad, specifically in Ghana, and factors that influenced the choice of PUC.

The qualitative employed the use of semi-structured in-depth interview guide that focused on the experiences of the West African international students at PUC. Closed-ended questions were used for the quantitative survey since they provide a greater uniformity of responses for analyses and easy processing as compared to open-ended ones (Babbie, 2007). Scholarly work in the area of study was also consulted for additional information. This was aimed at enriching the quality of the study. The questionnaire was developed based on the literature reviewed (Chen, 2007; Daejoong, 2011). The researcher modified the modified quantitative questionnaire by Daejoong (2011) to suit the purpose and settings of this study.

The researcher visited the participants to encourage and explained to some of them how to fill the questionnaire and answered questions the participant did not understand in the
questionnaire. The questionnaires were collected by hand with the help of the research assistants and the international students’ office for analyses.

The qualitative aspect also sought first-hand information from ten (10) West African international students through in-depth interview on the experiences of West African international students at PUC. The interview guide was divided into two parts, Part A and B. Part A dealt with the personal profile of the participants whereas Part B was on the experiences of the West African international students. Under part A, age, sex, nationality, department and faculty affiliation as well as the academic level of the participants were sought. Part B questions also centered on years participants have spent at the university, why the participants chose to study at PUC, whether they were giving orientation at the start of their course. There were questions also on whether the participants were satisfied with the level of academic support available at the university, whether the performance of lecturers/supervisors is different from their expectations. Their major experiences were probed in the areas of academic system, thus, tuition, IA’s, examinations and library facilities. Others were accommodation, transportation, food, health, lecturers and heads of departments, entertainment activities, students permit, social environment, cost of living, language barrier and communication outside campus among others. The interview guide was semi-structured, outlining the major discussion points. This form of interview gives more freedom of expression for participant’s thoughts and ideas; moreover unproductive topics can be initially excluded from the guideline questionnaire (Flick 2006). Here, whether the interview will be relevant or not, the interviewer plays a large part in managing how to restrict and determine the interview to the major area of interest. The process of the interview was recorded as well as some notes taken on paper. At the end, transcripts of the interviews were done. The length of each of the interviews ranged from approximately 30 to 50 minutes, and was carried out
over 3 days. In all, a total of 75 participants, both quantitative and qualitative took part in the study.

3.5 Sample Population

Sampling refers to the process of selecting units of observation from a population. The key of sampling method is how to generalize the results from selected samples. Probability sampling based on probability theory involves the idea of random sample. However, non-probability sampling is used when probability sampling is not appropriate or impossible to be used (Babbie, 2007). That is, when all the units under study cannot be listed and the chance of selection are given to each.

The researcher usually has to make a decision exactly who will be surveyed, because the ‘population of interest’ (all those people who could have been included in the survey) is often very large, sometimes several million, depending on the subject of the research. There are several ways of sampling such as ‘random’ or ‘probability’ sampling, ‘stratified’ and ‘quota’ sampling, among others. The study employed the purposive technique in selecting the participants for the interview. There is one limitation of the ‘purposive sampling’ – another researcher can always come out with different characteristics and typical elements to be included in the sample. Although, given the subjectivity of the selection mechanism, purposive sampling is more appropriate for a small sample size and restricted population definition when inference to the population is not a top priority (Battaglia, 2008). Generally, the scientific research tries to make generalizations about the characteristics of the interest groups. However it is not the ambition of this particular research to do so as the limitation on this study show.
Simple random sampling method which is a probability technique that gives each member of the target population a known and equal probability of selection was used in selecting the halls of residence of participants at the initial stage. The halls and hostel were numbered from 1 to 7 and the West African international students in the first five (5) hall and hostels picked out of the seven (7) were used. This is known as the lottery method.

At the second stage, a systematic random sampling technique was used in selecting the participants for the quantitative questionnaire survey. This was arrived at by dividing the number of West African international students at each hall by the number of students the researcher wanted to sample to get the sample fraction. This means that the sample size were different for the halls and hostels selected. However, in all a total 75 participants made up of 65 quantitative and 10 qualitative were sampled.

3.6 Reliability, Validity, Representativeness

Three concepts are extremely significant for social research. Reliability is directed to the method, which means that no matter how many times a researcher uses the method he/she should get the same results. The research method is reliable when certain research is repeated and the results are the same. For example, a method such as participant observation involves a researcher in a situation that mostly cannot be repeated; this is why this method is often regarded as unreliable.

Validity refers to the ability of the questionnaire to tap or measure the information that is designed to tap. In other words, the instrument must be valid.

Representativeness characterizes the sample of the research. The main question here is whether the group of people or the situation being studied is typical of others. If it is so,
we can assume that what is true of this group is also true for others, so the outcomes can be generalized (McNeill & Chapman 2005: 9, 10). Questionnaire surveys usually maximize validity and reliability (Buckingham & Saunders 2004: 72).

With these concepts in mind, the questionnaire was designed in such a way that it was able to measure or tap the information suitable for the study.

3.7 Operationalization

The structure of the quantitative questionnaire followed a three-stage flow of modified synthesis model; predisposition, search/selection/application and choice since the author attempts to identify factors according to different decision-making process; (1) decision to study abroad, (2) selecting a host country, and (3) choosing a host institution.

The questionnaire was grouped into three domains of factors- ‘Student’s Personal Characteristics and motivations’, ‘Significant Others’, and ‘External Push-Pull factors’ to measure the influential factors. For a better understanding of factors influencing students’ decision making, the definitions of variables were developed.

Personal Characteristics are defined as students’ individual motivations to participate in international higher education and their social backgrounds.

Significant others for the purpose of this study will be defined as or involve an encouragements or recommendations from other influential people such as professors at the origin country, Alumni, relatives in the host country, pastors, as well as the use of social networks when students decide on a study abroad destination.
Finally, push-pull factors are defined as: (1) push factors are the negative factors which force students to decide to a study abroad, (2) pull factors are those which attract students to a specific country or an institution.

To measure the variables, questionnaire was constructed as follows.

The survey consisted of four parts: Part A- personal profile (6 items); Part B-factors related to preparations made at the origin country before enrolling at PUC in the areas of financial preparation and factors related to language of instruction (5 items); Part C-degree of importance of each factor (61 items); Part D- source of information (10 items) and it took about 45 minutes to complete.

In the first part, question items related to personal profiles, such as age, sex, nationality, faculty and department, qualification pursue, and level in the university were presented. In the second part, educational funding and language related question items such as level of English proficiency and duration of learning English before enrolling were sought to find out the challenges related to the language of instruction. The third part contains question items constructed to measure the importance of factors influencing the decision of a study abroad destination based on the theoretical frameworks. The final entail questions regarding source of information to investigate the degree of importance of information sources.

3.8 Data Analysis

The purpose of data analysis is to organize, provide structure to, and elicit meaning from research data. After quantitative data collection, it was then necessary to transform the data into numerical forms so as to make it suitable for statistical analysis. Each choice of item has its own value so that the answers could be transformed into numerical data for
analysis. The data was then encoded. After encoding, it was transformed into the Statistics Package for Social Science (SPSS) data for analysis. Data collected from the survey questionnaire related to personal profiles, and decisions were encoded and analyzed using SPSS. With regards to qualitative in-depth interviews, the researcher transcribed the interviews verbatim and analyses of the transcripts were carried out.

3.9 Ethical Consideration

The main ethical concern in the course of the questionnaire preparation and administering the researcher considered was the provision of anonymity of the participants. This was achieved by preparing and conducting the research without asking a participant’s name. This was to make participants feel comfortable in answering questions. The researcher also gave a brief explanation of the purpose of this study to the participants in the introduction section before the main questions in the questionnaire.

3.10 Limitations

The small population sample size caused the findings to be relevant only within the PUC, the institution it was taken from, taking into consideration as increased number of public and private universities in Ghana, and could not be generalized outside of this study. However, this study serves as a foundation upon which later studies could be built upon. In addition it is predicted that the findings may benefit both international students and policy makers at PUC and other tertiary institutions in Ghana as a result of the knowledge gained.
CHAPTER FOUR

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WEST AFRICAN INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AT PUC.

4.0 Introduction

After collecting both quantitative and qualitative data, the next step is the data analysis leaning upon the mixed methods research design. This and the next chapters present the results and discussion of the analysis of the data collected in line with the research objectives. The data were analyzed primarily by using the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Science). The total number of participants selected for the quantitative was 65 West African international students at PUC. I presented the descriptive analysis of the socio-demographic characteristics of participants by identifying ages, sex and nationality, field of study and level of education.

4.1 Age distribution

The outcome from the analysis in figure 4.1 indicated that a higher percentage (64.9 percent) of the participants were between the ages of 20-24 years, followed by 25-29 (23.2 percent). The percentage of the participants who were below 20 years was (7.7 percent) while those above 30 years constituted (4.6 percent). It is clear from the above analysis that a higher number of the participants were young in their early and mid-twenties and within the age for tertiary education in Africa.
4.2 Sex distribution

The sex distribution of the participants showed that the males (57) constitute a higher percentage than the females (43%). There were more males than females because most of the participants who were willing to participate were males. Again, it was also realized that the male population of the total students as well as the international students was larger than the female population as indicated under the institutions profile.

4.3 Nationality

In terms of nationality, figure 4.2 showed that most of the respondents were from Nigeria, they represented approximately two thirds (66.2%) of the total number of participants, followed by the Ivorian (23.1%). The rest are Burkinabe (6.2 percent), the Togolese (3.1 percent) and finally the Beninese (1.5 percent). Nigerians form the majority due to the language (English) of instruction, and cultural similarities between Ghana and Nigeria. The large national population size of Nigeria compared to those of the other countries could probably account for their larger presence.
4.4 Department affiliation of Participants

Figure 4.3 revealed that 11 students were enrolled in the department of Communication Studies, 10 students in the Human Resources, 9 students in Accounting, 8 students in Information Technology, 17 students in Logistics and Supply Chain Management, 9 students in Marketing and 1 student in Corporate and Business. More than half with a percentage representation of 58.5% of the international students who participated in the study were enrolled in three major fields of study, Logistics and Supply (26.2%), Communication Studies (16.9%) and Human Resource (15.4%). It is likely that jobs are more available in these areas after graduating than other programmes. Again, it is also clear from the study that although students are encouraged to enter into the Information Technology field in West Africa, an increasing number of the participants in this study still prefer the Business Administration programmes to Information Technology.
Figure 4.3: Department affiliations of respondents

Source: Field Data, 2016 N = 65

4.5 Distribution of the student by Level at the University

The participants who were at Level 200 constituted the highest percentage (35%). They were followed by those at Level 300 (28%) and level 400 (23%). The lowest percentage (14%) was the Level 100s as shown in figure 4.4. The reason for the lower percentage/proportion by the level 400’s was that data was collected at the time when they were writing their final examinations and doing project work as well. The Levels 100s were also not willing to participate because they were yet to complete their first year and needed much time for their studies to pass their second semester examinations to avoid withdrawal from the university.
4.6 International Students Preparations at the Origin

Factors considered by the researcher here are; students’ source of funding and factors related to language of instruction (for example, choice of instruction due to the usage of English as a language of instruction, English language level before applying and the duration of learning English language before enrolling at PUC).

4.6.1 Participants Source of Funding for Studies

It was revealed by the study in Figure 4.5 that 43.1% of the West African international students who took part in the study were students who pay for their own cost of education while 1.5% percent of the students receive scholarship sponsored by the host institution. The percentage of students who are partially self-funded and on partially studentship-sponsored either from the host institution or home institution was 10.8% comprising 7 students. A higher percentage (45%) of the participants were sponsored by others such as parents, aunties and uncles, churches among others. The study revealed that although some students pay for their own education whiles others receive sponsorship, the majority
of West African international students at PUC are sponsored by parents, guardians or family members.

**Figure 4.5: Participants source of Funding**

![Bar chart showing participants' source of funding with percentages: 43.1% totally self-funded, 10.8% scholarship sponsored by the host institution, 1.5% partially self-funded and partially studentship-sponsored, and 44.6% other.]

*Source: Field Data, 2016 N = 65*

**4.6.2 Enrolled because of Language of Instruction**

Language of instruction served as a factor participants considered when deciding on where to enrol as international students. West African international students at PUC are from countries that use either French or English as official language. While some international students decided to enrol in Ghana as their first choice of country for study destination because of the use of English language as a language of instruction, others indicated that they enrolled in Ghana not because of the use of English as a language of instruction, but on other factors such as peace and geographic proximity among others.

From table 4.1, the percentage of students who enrolled because of the use of English as a language of instruction was 41.5% made up of 27 students whereas a higher number 38
making up 58.5% indicated that they did not choose Ghana due to the use of English language as a language of instruction.

One of the participants for instance retaliated;

“Why should I come to school in Ghana because of the use of English as a language of instruction when that is the language we use in our schools back home right from day one, are you aware we speak better English than you Ghanaians?”...he laughed. - Ike

A higher number of the international students who decided to study in Ghana because of the use of English as a language of instruction were mostly students from the Francophone West African countries whereas majority who chose Ghana based on other factors rather than the use of English as a language of instruction are mostly students from Nigeria who already use English as their language of instruction.

Table 4.1: Enrolled because of Language of Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language of instruction</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>41.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>58.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data, 2016

4.6.3 Duration of learning English before enrolling at PUC

One of the requirements for admitting students into tertiary education in Ghana is the ability to read and write English language since it is the language of instruction. The researcher was therefore interested in knowing the durations international students used in learning English language before they were enrolled at PUC. The research revealed that
their duration of learning English varied based on countries of origin and students language learning abilities.

Figure 4.6 showed that 15.4% could not remember their duration of learning English language before applying, (16.9 percent) indicated that it took them between 1-6 months of learning English before applying. Again, (13.8 percent) of the students studied English between 7-12 months whereas a higher percentage (53.8 percent) studied English over 1 year before enrolling at PUC.

“I am from a Francophone country so I had to spend one year learning English here in Ghana before enrolling. I spent the first six months learning and writing for the basic examinations. I continued for the intermediate immediately after the basic examinations and because I needed it as a requirement and was serious with it, I was able to pass.” – Dave, Level 200

Those who spent over 1 year in learning English were mostly Nigerian students who use English as a language of instruction in their home country.

Figure 4.6: Respondents duration of learning English language before entering PUC

Source: Field Data, 2016
CHAPTER FIVE

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCED THE DECISION TO STUDY ABROAD,

CHOICE OF GHANA AND PUC.

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings on factors that influenced West African international students’ decision to study abroad, choice of Ghana and PUC.

Based on Chen’s synthesis model, the decision-making to study abroad is influenced by three domains of factors – (1) student characteristics and motivations, (2) external push-pull factors related to home-host country and (3) encouragement from significant others. The ratings and extraction for the percentage mean and standard deviation calculations were based on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from “5-most important” to “1-least important.”

5.1 Decision-making

It is revealed by the analysis in figure 5.1 that a high percentage (32.3%) of the West African international students who took part in the study considered the opportunity to gain freedom from family as least important whereas 10.8% considered that as most important factor in their decision.

Again with regards to the prospect for jobs and chance of receiving high salary and promotion, 33.8% of the participants indicated that that was more important in their decision. Additionally, 32.3% of the participants indicated the prospect of jobs and the chance of receiving high salary and promotion as their most important motivating factor, on the other hand, 6.2% and 9.2% indicated that as least important and important factors respectively.
Regarding the value placed on foreign degrees, 4.6% of the participants indicated that it was the least influencing factor in their decision while to some 30.7% of the participants, it was the most important factor that influenced their decision to study outside. Those percentage of the participants who indicated that higher education degree from a foreign country is valued in their country and as a result were more important in their decision is 38.5%. From the analysis on personal characteristics and motivations as factors influencing participants decision to study ‘abroad’ which ones again in this case is Ghana, the higher value place on degrees from a foreign country emerged as the most influencing factor among the other factors considered. This was followed by the chance of receiving a high salary and promotions with foreign degree and then the opportunity to gain freedom from family as the least influencing factor in that order.

**Figure 5.1: Personal characteristics and motivations**

![Personal characteristics and motivations](image)

*Source: Field Work, 2016*

The external factors considered were foreign language skills desirability, the opportunity to experience a foreign culture and the prospect of better employment and higher salary after study abroad. A high percentage (38.5) of the participants indicated that better
employment and higher salary after study abroad were more important influential factor in their decision, although 29.1% indicated that as most important. While 29.2 percent of the participants indicated foreign language skills desirability as most important factor, 23.1 percent of the participants also indicated opportunity to experience foreign culture as most important influential factor in their decision.

**Figure 5.2: External factors: internationalization and globalization**

![Bar chart showing external factors]

**Source:** Field Work, 2016

### 5.2 Domestic Factors

These are factors that served as push factors for a student to decide to study outside his or her home country. Many factors could be considered as push factors but for the purpose of this study the factors considered are value of foreign degrees, unavailability of desired programme, unavailability of jobs, and financial support from home government, uncertain political situation, and low quality of education in the home country. The
researcher also considered encouragement from significant others such as family/spouse, friends/other students, professors, alumni and relatives.

From table 5.1, a high percentage (32.3%) of the participants indicated that they were influenced to enroll outside their country of origin based on the fact that foreign degrees are prestigious or valued in their home country. Although 6.2 percent rated this factor as least important in their decision-making, 15.4 percent rated that as most important influential factor in their decision.

Again, it could be seen from table 5.1 that financial support from home government had least influence on a higher percentage of the students’ decision. As 56.9 percent of the students indicated that as least influential factor, 1.5 percent indicated that as most important factor in their decision. Other factors which were least important in students’ decision were uncertain political situation and low quality of education in their home country. The analysis from the table also shows that the value placed on foreign degrees was the most important (15.4 percent) among all the domestic factors considered.
Table 5.1: Domestic factors that influenced decision making processes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domestic factors</th>
<th>Degree of importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Least important (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign degrees are prestigious</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desired programme not available at the origin</td>
<td>43.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty in getting a job at the origin</td>
<td>29.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial support from home government</td>
<td>56.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political instability</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low quality of education at origin</td>
<td>44.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data, 2016

From Table 5.2, Encouragement from family/spouse emerged as the most important influential factor among the other factors. Whiles (56.9 percent) indicated encouragement from family/spouse as most important, only 10.8 percent of the participants indicated encouragement from alumni as most important. Additionally, as 6.2 percent of the students choose encouragement from family/spouse as least important, a higher percentage (47.7 percent) of the students choose encouragement from professors as least important.
Table 5.2 Encouragement from significant other on decision making processes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Encouragement from significant others</th>
<th>Degree of importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Least important (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family/spouse</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends/other students</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professors</td>
<td>47.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni</td>
<td>38.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatives in the host country</td>
<td>30.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data, 2016

5.3 Factors that influenced the choice of Ghana

Table 5.3 shows the analysis of the factors related to the characteristics of Ghana that influenced the West African international students in choosing Ghana as a study destination. The Table shows that the various factors considered had varied influence on students’ decision in choosing Ghana as a study destination. While 38.5 percent of the students indicated that the perception of considering Ghana as an advanced country in terms of providing tertiary education had a neutral effect on their decision, 10.8 percent indicated that as most important whereas 18.5 percent also indicated that as an important factor.

Another factor that had a higher influence on students’ decision in choosing Ghana is the fact that Ghana is considered as a safe country to study in West Africa. Close to fifty percent (44.6) of the participants indicated this factor as more important whereas 27.7
percent indicated that as most important factor they considered before choosing Ghana. One of the participants revealed; 

“I chose Ghana because of peace and security and I am very happy with the level of peace I enjoy here in Ghana. You can walk as late as 12am in this community without any fear of danger but this is a serious problem in my country. Where I live in Nigeria, you dare not go out after 10:00pm without the company of friends or family.” – Orji

However, 6.2 percent of the students indicated this factor as least important factor in their decision.

Other factors that were influential in students’ decision in choosing Ghana were Ghana’s political ties with home countries (27.7 percent), the desire to learn a Ghanaian language (27.7 percent), and the interest in understanding Ghanaian culture. On the other hand, factors such as Ghana’s economic ties with home country, Ghana perceived as economically advanced country, similarities in educational system between origin and host country and the climate of Ghana among others did not have much influence in students’ decision in choosing Ghana as a study destination as shown by the analysis.

Close to two-thirds (63.1%) of the participants indicated that the climate of Ghana had the least influence on their decision to study in Ghana, meanwhile, 20.0 percent indicated that as important factor in their choice of Ghana, whereas 3.1 percent indicated that as least important as shown table 5.3. One of the participants lamented;

[Sic] “...you know Ghana weather is very bad, it is too hot and has even changed my colour, I was fair before coming to Ghana but now I have become dark. - Caleb
Table 5.3: Factors related to the characteristics of Ghana

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors related to characteristics of Ghana</th>
<th>Degree of importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Least important (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced country in providing tertiary education</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economically advanced country</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe country to study</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic ties with home country</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political ties with home country</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Similarities in educational systems with home country</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire to learn a Ghanaian language</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire to learn English language in Ghana</td>
<td>33.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in understanding Ghanaian culture</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghanaians are kind and friendly people</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nice climate in Ghana</td>
<td>63.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data, 2016
Other external factors that were considered in relation to the characteristics of Ghana were economic, marketing and information in Ghana. These factors are considered as pull factors in influencing West African international students’ decision in choosing Ghana as a study destination. Among all the factors considered, the ease of obtaining information about studying in Ghana came out as the most important (27.7 percent), followed by the good reputation of Ghanaian tertiary education (18.5 percent) and geographic proximity to home country (16.9 percent) in that order. Although 16.9 percent of the students indicated geographic proximity to home country as most important factor, a high percentage (20.0%) indicated that as least important.

The analysis on geographic proximity showed that a high percentage (20.0%) of the participants considered that as least important compared with the 16.9 percent who considered it most important as shown in Table 5.4. This indicated that, proximity is no barrier to migration due to the worldwide interconnectedness in all aspects of contemporary social life. Improved communication and technology and cheaper air fare could also be used in explaining the low regard for proximity in migration. This factor and language similarities could be used to explain the reason why although countries such as Togo, Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast are closer to Ghana, Nigerian students are still more than students from other West African countries in Ghana.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>External factors: Economic, Marketing and information</th>
<th>Degree of importance (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ghanaian degrees provide greater mobility for future career</td>
<td>Least important: 9.2, Important: 18.5, Neutral: 24.6, More important: 35.4, Most important: 12.3, Total: 100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good tertiary reputation</td>
<td>Least important: 4.6, Important: 15.4, Neutral: 29.2, More important: 32.3, Most important: 18.5, Total: 100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ease and speed of acquiring staying permit</td>
<td>Least important: 24.6, Important: 18.5, Neutral: 23.1, More important: 27.7, Most important: 6.2, Total: 100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordable living and tuition cost</td>
<td>Least important: 40.0, Important: 24.6, Neutral: 15.4, More important: 12.3, Most important: 7.7, Total: 100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographic proximity to home country</td>
<td>Least important: 20.0, Important: 24.6, Neutral: 23.1, More important: 15.4, Most important: 16.9, Total: 100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural similarities with home country</td>
<td>Least important: 27.7, Important: 29.2, Neutral: 23.1, More important: 7.7, Most important: 12.3, Total: 100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ease of obtaining information about studying in Ghana</td>
<td>Least important: 12.3, Important: 12.3, Neutral: 27.7, More important: 20.0, Most important: 27.7, Total: 100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data, 2016
Just as the factors related to significant others were considered under factors that influence the West African international students’ decision-making process, a similar study was also done under the factors that influence the students’ choice of Ghana. The analysis revealed that a high percentage (36.9 percent) did not consider influence from friends as important. However while 18.5 percent considered that important, 10.8 percent considered it more important with 7.7 percent indicated that as most important factor. It could be seen from the analysis on table 5.5 that recommendations from professors at the origin were least important as indicated by the majority (63.1%). On the degree of importance, recommendations from parents or family members emerged as the most important (26.2%) factor followed by the presence of relatives or family (21.5%) in Ghana. The presence of family in Ghana serving as an influential factor is in line with the network migration theory which links the interpersonal relations that exist between migrant and return migrants as facilitating the migration process. On the other hand, recommendation from professors at the origin emerged as the least important (63.1%), followed by Ghanaian drama, music, movies (47.7%) among others as shown in table 5.5.
Table 5.5: Factors related to encouragement from significant other on the choice of Ghana

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors related to significant others</th>
<th>Degree of importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Least important (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence from friends</td>
<td>36.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations from Professors at origin</td>
<td>63.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatives or family in Ghana</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced by Ghanaian drama, music among others</td>
<td>47.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations from parents or family members</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data, 2016

5.4 Factors that influenced the choice of PUC

This section analyses the factors that influenced the choice of PUC.

The analysis showed that all the external factors considered under academic pulling of PUC had a great deal of influence considering the percentages under more important and most important on the degree of importance as shown on table 5.6. Whiles (29.2%) indicated reputation of PUC as most important factor, only (12.3%) indicated that as least important. Again, whereas (9.2%) of the participants indicated quality of the programme as least important, a high (27.7%) percentage of the participants indicated that as most important. The percentages under more important and most important for the various factors indicate a higher influence compared with the percentages for least important and
important for the same factors. What this means is that the participants took various external factors of PUC into consideration before enrolling.

Table 5.6: External factors: (Academic pulling of PUC)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>External factors: (academic pulling of PUC)</th>
<th>Degree of importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Least important (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reputation of PUC</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reputation of the program at PUC</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of the program at PUC</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranking of PUC</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reputation of faculty members</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data, 2016

Additionally, there were other external factors the researcher considered in relation to administrative pulling. Table 5.7 showed that a high percentage (46.2%) of the participants indicated availability of financial aid/scholarship by PUC as least important since they were aware before applying that the institution has no such facility in place.

The percentage of students who considered that as most important factor in choosing PUC was only 9.2 percent. The speed and ease of application by PUC was also influential in students decision as 21.5% indicated that as most important compared to the only 3.1% who indicated that as least important. Another finding from the analyses showed that a high (50.8) percentage of the students considered language support from PUC as least
important with only 9.2 percent indicating that as most important. The variety of programmes and courses at PUC was also influential in students’ decision in choosing PUC as 20.0 percent indicated that as most important, 33.8 percent also indicated that as more important compared with the 9.2 and 18.5 percent of the participants who indicated that as least important and important respectively.

Table 5.7: External factors: (Administrative pulling of PUC)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>External factors: (administrative pulling)</th>
<th>Degree of importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Least important (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial aid/scholarship</td>
<td>46.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety of program and courses</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition of previous qualification</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speed and ease of application</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wide range of courses in English</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of services such as cultural excursion for international students</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language support from PUC</td>
<td>50.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ease of getting information on PUC</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus facilities</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides on campus accommodation</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data, 2016
The last area the researcher considered under factors related to the choice of PUC was factors related to significant others. These are factors related to the influence and recommendations arising from people such as teachers, family, pastors, friends, alumni and agents. High percentages of all the factors considered were least important in students’ decision in choosing PUC. For example, table 5.8 shows that the majority (66.2%) of the students indicated recommendations from teachers at the origin as least important. Similarly, as high as (73.8%) and (61.5%) indicated recommendations from pastors as well as agents were least important in their choice of PUC respectively. The percentage of those who indicated the factors related to significant others as most important in relation to the choice of PUC ranges from as low as 3.1% to 16.9%. For example, only 4.6% indicated recommendation from pastors as most important, again only 7.7% indicated recommendation from alumni as most important whiles only 9.2% also indicated recommendation from agents at the origin as most important.
Table 5.8: Factors related to significant others

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors related to significant others</th>
<th>Least important (%)</th>
<th>Important (%)</th>
<th>Neutral (%)</th>
<th>More important (%)</th>
<th>Most important (%)</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations by teachers at the origin</td>
<td>66.2</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations by family</td>
<td>44.6</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations by Pastors</td>
<td>73.8</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence from friends</td>
<td>44.6</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations from alumni</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations from agent at the origin</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data, 2016

5.5 Source of information

The last part of this section analyzed how the students got information on academic activities at PUC. The analyses revealed that internet was rated as the most important (28.1%) source of providing information about PUC to the West African international students. This was followed by family or relatives (18.5%). It could be explained from the analyses that the use of technology in deciding on where to migrate to play an important role in the current flow of migration. Again, family or relatives also play an equally important role in migration flow through the usage of networks. While all the factors considered under external pulling on the choice of PUC were influential in students’ decision, the reverse is true for the factors considered under source of information. Higher percentages indicated the factors as least important with the exception of the internet.
Table 5.9: Source of information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of information</th>
<th>Least important (%)</th>
<th>Important (%)</th>
<th>Neutral (%)</th>
<th>More important (%)</th>
<th>Most important (%)</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educational exhibition fair</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family or relatives</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational agent</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper advertising</td>
<td>47.7</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazines</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television advertising</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct contact with host university</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct contact with faculty at the host country</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data, 2016
CHAPTER SIX

THE EXPERIENCES OF WEST AFRICAN INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AT PUC.

6.0 Introduction

This chapter is on the experiences of the West African international students at PUC. Experiences here and for the purpose of this study refer to something that happens to the international students or a situation that they are involved in. It also includes the knowledge they gain from life and from being in different situations as international students at PUC. The researcher conducted a semi-structured in-depth interview of ten West African international students at PUC. The experiences were both positively and negatively expressed by the students. Their experiences were expressed in the areas of academic systems, accommodation, transportation, food, health, library, lecturer performance, entertainment activities, student permit, weather, social environment, local students, outside community, prices of goods and services, communication and language barrier and changes in culture (origin and host country), among others.

6.1 Experiences

Negative experiences here and for the purpose of this study refer to the challenges that the international students go through which in effect affect their academic, economic, social, and religious lives, among others, whereas positive experiences here refer to those factors that promote or encourage the international students’ wellbeing and the essence of their coming into Ghana. A number of narratives indicate both positive and negative experiences:
6.1.1 Experiences in academic related work

The participants were asked about their experiences regarding academic related work. Almost all of them indicated that they were satisfied with the kind of academic work they are experiencing at the university. Some of the participants had this to say;

“Although the challenges have been enormous, ranging from accommodation, deliberate increase of prices of goods and services for international students, health issues, and food related problems; I personally think that academic work is more stable in Ghana and in PUC in particular where I am now than it is in my country. ...I attended a university in my country for a year and a half before enrolling at PUC but there, lecturers can go on strike for a whole semester and that extends the years spent at the university but it is not like that here at PUC. My experiences regarding academic work have been a positive one. I am saying this for me, because I don’t know about others” – Alex, Level 400.

Shine, who was also in her third year studying Banking and Finance said;

“Although I knew university work involves a lot of efforts, I least expected it to be so broad. My brother, academic work here at PUC is a force to reckon with if you want to make good grades. It is not like other places where one can manoeuvre his or her way. Even if you don’t attend lectures for a single day you will be in trouble because you can’t imagine the volume of notes and explanations that will be waiting for you by the time you come back”.

“In fact, apart from the initial challenges I went through which were all related to adjustment problems, I would say that Ghana’s education system is one of the best in West Africa, even in Africa. Academic work at PUC for me is up to standard, the lecturers know what they are up to, most of them are easily approachable and they welcome students whenever there is a problem. There is no compromise on discipline, maybe it is because the institution is a private one and moreover it is a religious institution... you know Pentecost and the way they do their things. To the lecturers, there is no difference between local and international students. I can even say that they
treat the international students even better than the local students. My uncle was a student here and that was why I also came here, he laughed”. (Lawrence, Level 400).

6.1.2 Experiences on prices of goods and services

While others believe that there is a deliberate increase of prices on goods and services for international students at the local market, others too were concerned about the cost and quality of items on the market.

“Ghanaian people deliberately increase prices when they see that we are foreigners. I remember I went to Accra central one day with my Ghanaian friend to buy wrapper for my mum, the person selling the wrappers told me it was Ghc 250.00. I didn’t buy the wrapper because I knew the price was too much so I went to inform my friend who was buying from a different customer, he took the money from me after he had finished buying his items and asked me to wait for him at where he bought his items because he didn’t want them to see I had been there earlier. He went to the same woman selling the wrapper and bought it at a cost of Ghc 180.00 so I hope you understand what I mean”. (Alex, Level 400).

“...In Nigeria, I can get a quality pair of jeans for N2,000, and a shirt for that same price or much less. But here in Ghana, that same amount cannot get me a trusted quality pair of jeans”. (Fred, Level 400).

6.1.3 Social experiences

“I am very happy with the level of peace I enjoy here in Ghana. You can walk as late as 12am in this community without any fear of danger but this is a serious problem in my country. Where I live in Nigeria, you dare not go out after 10:00pm without the company of friends or family. Forget about the challenges associated with fees and the rest, they are always a problem for international students everywhere. My elder brother went through similar challenges even in Europe. ..., you easily get transport to wherever you want to go if only you have the means, public transport too is safe.” (Orji, Level 200).
Caleb, a final year Accounting student preparing to submit his long essay also said,

[Sic]…‘I have never regretted schooling in Ghana, although I went through some challenges at the initial stages regarding accommodation, health problems due to the weather and the local food, you know Ghana weather is very bad, it is too hot and has even changed my color, I was fair before coming to Ghana but now I have become dark. Language barrier was also a problem for me at the initial stage because you know most of your sellers don’t understand English, I made a conscious effort to learn the common local language (Twi) in this community so that I can communicate with the local people. I am now able to speak Twi small. My Ghanaian mates also helped me by teaching me the language.”

It is evidenced from Caleb’s experience that the conscious efforts he made by learning a Ghanaian language (Twi) has helped him integrate better into the community than most of his colleagues. The ability to speak the host language is an important way of integrating into a host community.

Esther, a Level 200 Communication Studies student biggest problem with PUC is the way students are forced to go to church. She lamented;

[Sic] “...my problem with PUC is that they force students to go to church which to me is not good. Church to me is something that should come from the heart and not by force but here they force us like we are kids. Again, they are too strict on dressing; what is that, wear this, don't wear that as if we are Sunday school children.”

She added; “They are pissing me off. Do you know what I expect them to do; I expect them to organize English language proficiency classes for us instead, so that those of us who are not very good at the language can learn. The French classes should be for those who can’t read or write French instead of mixing us with them.”
She said in her concluding remarks; “Ghana and PUC are however a good place to be because the school has a good library and acquiring students’ permit is easy as long as you meet the requirement. We don’t even work on that; it is our international office that does it for us by paying the required charges. I have learned how to live with people from different cultures and I would say Ghanaians are very receptive.”

6.1.4 Tuition fees.

One area that received negative comments by almost all the West African international students was on tuition fees. These complaints were in connection with the payment of fees in foreign currency (US$) and the amount charged.

For Oscar a level 400 student ... his biggest challenge so far for coming to study at PUC is the fact that he has to pay school fees in foreign currency. He complained,

“...the payment of fees in foreign currency (US$), adding to the instability of the economy and inflation has made cost of living in Ghana almost unaffordable. We pay as three times the fees paid by the local students and when you are able to even pay 90% of your fees which is far greater than the fees of the local students, the authorities do not allow you to write examinations unless you pay all. This is a serious problem for us as international students. I knew our fees would be greater than the local students before I applied but I didn’t know it will be to this level, meanwhile we have friends in other private universities here in Ghana who are paying less that we pay, why? If you say you are doing a research about us, then, tell the authorities that we want them to reduce the fees because it is too high.”
6.1.5 Experiences with accommodation

With regards to accommodation, most of the students said buildings marked as 'International Students Hostel' popularly referred to as ISH by the students, are usually very expensive but because there is limited accommodation on campus as well as getting a room to rent, some of them have resorted to paying for ISH. They asserted that even renting a place is equally expensive, even though not as expensive as most private hostels, but the stress they go through to get the place is more than the fees they pay at these hostels. The services of the so called ‘room agents’ have even worsened the case as they charge fees before they even show you the house or the room. After charging you before showing you the room, they again charge an agent fee and what some do is that they put an extra amount on the real cost of the room and go for it from the landlord or lady in the absence of the one coming to rent.

“Accommodation is a serious problem at PUC I must confess. You will have to go round the community moving from one house to another asking if there is room available as a foreigner. It is very stressful so what some of us do is that we contribute say a group of three or sometime four and rent since it is difficult getting a room individually. Most landlords and landladies do not want this idea but we also have no option” - Ken.

6.1.6 Entertainment activities

Students participate in social events. Some of them include dinner and awards night and handing over ceremony night.

“...you know it is said that all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. We the international students celebrate our international week every year and you will love it
when you witness it yourself. It is during such and other occasions that we see most of our colleague international students and we socialize very well” - Shanti.

The researcher as part of his research activities participated in one of the programmes by the international students as an observer. The pictures below were taking under permission during the programme.

**Figure 6.1: International students performing during the 2016 awards, dinner and handing over night at PUC**

Source: Field Work, June 2016
Figure 6.2: A section of the international students during the awards, handing over and dinner night at PUC

Source: Field Work, June 2016
CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.0 Introduction

This chapter is on the summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study.

7.1 Summary of Key Findings

The findings indicated that the highest percentage of the students were from Nigeria and that the male students constituted a higher percentage of the participants. Again, it was revealed that most of the participants were Business Administration students at the department of Logistics and Supply Chain Management. Additionally, most of the participants were in Level 300, followed by Levels 200, 400 and 100 in that order.

The findings revealed that personal characteristics such the prospect of better employment and higher salary and promotions after study in Ghana, high value of a higher education degree from a foreign country influenced students’ decision to study abroad. Again, external factors such as the desire to acquire a foreign language and the opportunity to experience foreign culture and encouragement from significant others such as family/spouse greatly influenced West African international students decision to study in Ghana.

On factors relating to the characteristics of Ghana as influencing West African international students’ choice, the most influential ones were, the regard for Ghana as a safe country to study, Ghana’s strong political ties with home countries, the desire to
learn a Ghanaian language, and interest in understanding a Ghanaian culture were highly influential in students’ decision in choosing Ghana as a study destination.

Other external factors such as reputation of Ghanaian universities, geographic proximity and the ease of obtaining information on studying in Ghana at the origin country also had an influence on the choice of Ghana. Recommendation from significant others such as relatives in Ghana, and parents or family recommendations also played a vital role in students choice of Ghana.

West African international students’ choice of PUC was influenced or motivated by many factors. External factors relating to academic pulling of PUC like reputation of PUC, reputation and quality of programme at PUC, ranking of PUC, and reputation of the faculty members also influenced students’ choice for PUC. Other external factors relating to administrative pulling that influenced students choice of PUC included, speed and ease of application, and campus facilities.

The leading provider of information for West African international students who participated in the study about education in Ghana and PUC was the internet, followed by family or relatives.

Finally, the findings from the qualitative in-depth interviews on experiences of West African international students at PUC also revealed that students’ experiences were both negative and positive. While there were challenges regarding deliberate increase of prices for international students on the local market, language barrier, health, accommodation problems and weather related challenges, dressing and church activities among others, transportation, discipline, library facilities, student-lecturer relations,
peace and security in the communities as well as freedom of movement and more importantly academic work has been more positive and stable. Again, others have had the opportunity to learn how to live with people from different cultural background.

7.2 Conclusion

The outcome of hosting international students are beneficial for all parties involved; these students contribute to the enrichment of higher education, to the strengthening of relations with various countries in world trade, and to the promotion of global understanding. Moreover, international students provide additional financial support needed by many universities both public and private, especially at a time when national governments are cutting down on its financial support to the universities and the private universities struggling to survive. Concomitantly, there are expectations on universities to function like the market economies when universities’ budgets are linked to total students enrolments, number of courses run, and the number of students graduating. It is within this context that international students have come to constitute a sizeable number of the student body by many universities including Pentecost University College, Ghana where this study was conducted.

The study revealed that many of the participants believed Ghana as a safe place to study and this influenced them in selecting Ghana as a study destination. There is therefore the need for the government and all stakeholders to create and maintain a conducive environment politically, economically, socially and religiously so that international students will have the cause to trust the safety of Ghana in order to attract more international students since they contribute immensely to the economic and academic development through fees and other spending and research of host countries and
institutions. The private institutions also have a role to play in attracting more international students into their institutions. Their concentration should not be so much centered on the financial benefits but rather the provision of quality tertiary education. It is when that is achieved that more international students will be attracted into the country.

Since the reputation of the universities in the country also served as an influencing factor in students’ choice of Ghana and the institution as well, the authorities have a task of maintaining a very good reputation of the universities. This could be achieved by engaging in various researches, the kind of lectures they employ as well as the quality of students they produce among others. Finally, the experiences of the West African international students who took part in the study were both positive and negative.

7.3 Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. PUC should consider setting fees that are comparable to those at other private universities since the students indicated that they have friends at other universities who pay far lesser than they pay at PUC.

2. It is now obvious that just getting admitted into PUC and coming to Ghana is not enough. An adequate provisions should be made especially regarding accommodation so that the so called ‘house agents’ would not use international students for business. The authorities can achieve this in collaboration with private investors so that more hostels can be built and regulated for use by the internationals students.
3. As at now all students have the same orientation. The international students understudied indicated that: there should be a separate orientation programme for local and international students since they virtually have different needs.

4. Attention should also be paid to the international student office since they work directly with the international students if only PUC wants to attract more international students and have the benefit thereof. There is the need to engage those who really understand issues relating to international students or give adequate training to the staff at the international students office. Furthermore, the international student’s office at PUC needs a more spacious place to run and coordinate its activities than where it is.

7.4 Area for Further Research

Though the research questions and the issues raised in the study have been thoroughly investigated and analyzed it is recommended that further studies be conducted on experience of West African international students in more than one private university in comparism with the experiences of those in public universities in Ghana. Larger sample sizes can be used so that generalization can be made from the patterns that may be observed.
REFERENCES


Altbach, Philip and Knight, Jane (2006). “The Internationalization of Higher Education: An in-depth look at these changes can be found in Trends in the up-94-over-past-decade.


Towards a Common Future: Higher Education in the SADC Region. Research Findings from Four SARUA Studies (Study Series 2008), Johannesburg: SARUA.


Knight, J. (2003). GATS, trade and higher education: Perspective 2003 - Where are we?


Knight, J. (2002). Trade in higher education services: implications of GATS. London: Observatory on Borderless Education.


www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20140131102318847


APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: QUANTITATIVE INTERVIEW GUIDE

IDENTIFICATION

Number…………………….. Mobile number……………………………..

PART A: Personal Profile

1. Age…………………….. 2. Sex…………………….. 3. Nationality…………………..

4. In which faculty and department are you studying now?
   Faculty: ………………………………………………
   Department………………………………………………

5. What level are you in this university?  a. level 100 (   ) b. level 200 (   )
   c. level 300 (   ) d. level 400 (   )

Part B: Financial preparation and factors related to language of instruction

1. Source of funding for studies? Please circle one.
   a. Totally self-funded
   b. Scholarship sponsored by the host institution
   c. Scholarship sponsored by the home government
   d. Partially self-funded and partially studentship-sponsored
   c. Other (please specify) ……………………………………………………..

2. Is Ghana your first choice of country for study destination because of instruction in English language?  a. Yes (   )
   b. No (   )

Please explain your answer …………………………………………………

3. Have you applied to any other institution in foreign countries besides Ghana?
   a. Yes () b. No (   )
If yes, which countries have you applied?

a. ........................................ b. ............................. c. .................................

4. How was your English language level when you applied?

a. No Skills (  )
b. Beginning (  )
c. Average (  )
d. Slightly over average (  )
e. Advanced (  )

5. How long did you learn English language before you entered PUC?

a. None (  )
b. 1-6 months (  )
c. 7-12 months (  )
d. Over 1 year (  )

Part C: Degree of importance

The following questions are the known factors influencing the decision to study abroad. These are listed in a five point Likert “Scaling from 1 = least important, to 5 = most important to.” Please show to what extent you think each item is important by ticking ‘√’ in the relevant box.

Factors influencing the decision to study abroad

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal characteristics and motivations</th>
<th>Least important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>More important</th>
<th>Most important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Foreign degrees improve job prospects/the chance of receiving a high salary and promotions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Higher education degree from a foreign country is valued</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


90
3. The opportunity to gain freedom from family

**External factors: Internationalization and globalization**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Least important</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Most important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Foreign language skills are desirable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The opportunity to experience a foreign culture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Prospect of better employment and higher salary after study abroad</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Domestic Factors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Least important</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Most important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Foreign degrees are prestigious or valued by my home country</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Desired programme or education is not available in my home country</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. It is hard to find a job in my home country</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Financial support from home government</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Uncertain political situation in the home country</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Low quality of education in my home country</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Encouragement from significant others**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Least important</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Most important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Family/Spouse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Friends/other students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Professors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Alumni</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Relatives in the host country</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Factors related to characteristics of Ghana

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Least important</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Most important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Perceived as an advanced country in terms of providing tertiary education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Perceived as economically advanced country</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Regarded as a safe country to study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ghana has strong economic ties with my country</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Ghana has strong political ties with my home country</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Ghana’s educational system is similar to the one in my home country</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I would like to learn a Ghanaian language</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I would like to learn English language in Ghana</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I am interested in understanding Ghanaian culture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Ghanaians are perceived as kind and friendly people</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. The climate of Ghana is nice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### External factors: Economics, Marketing & Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>External factor</th>
<th>Least important</th>
<th>Most important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University of Ghana <a href="http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh">http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factors related to significant others</td>
<td>Least important</td>
<td>Most important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. My friends recommended, studied, or planned to study in Ghana</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. My professors recommended or studied in Ghana</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I have relatives or family members in Ghana</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ghanaian drama, movie, music, mass media influenced me to study in Ghana</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. My parents or family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Ghanaian degrees provide greater mobility for my future career
2. Ghanaian tertiary education has a good reputation
3. The ease and speed of acquiring staying permit
4. Tuition and living costs in Ghana are affordable
5. Geographic proximity to my country
6. Similar culture as my home country
7. Easy to obtain information on Ghana
recommended me to study in Ghana

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors influencing choice of an institution</th>
<th>Least imp.</th>
<th>Most imp.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>External factors: Academic pulling of PUC</strong></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Reputation of PUC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Reputation of the program at PUC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Quality of the program at PUC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ranking of PUC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Reputation of the faculty members in my program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>External factors: (Administrative pulling)</strong></th>
<th>Least imp.</th>
<th>Most imp</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Availability of financial aid/scholarship</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Variety of programs and courses offering</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Recognition of my previous qualification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Speed and ease of application process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Offering a wide range of courses in English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Provides various services such as cultural excursion for international students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. Possible language support from the university (opportunity to learn English before pursuing the programme)

8. Ease of getting information on PUC

9. Campus facilities – buildings, library, internet etc.

10. Provides on campus accommodation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors related to significant others</th>
<th>Least imp.</th>
<th>Most imp.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. My teachers in my home country recommended PUC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. My family recommended PUC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. My pastor recommended PUC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. My friends have studied or are studying in PUC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. My friends or alumni recommended PUC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The agent in my country recommended PUC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX II: QUALITATIVE IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE

EXPERIENCES OF WEST AFRICAN INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AT PUC, GHANA. IDENTIFICATION

Number……………………. Mobile number…………………………

PART A: Personal Profile

1. Age…………………… 2. Sex…………………… 3. Nationality………………

4. In which faculty and department are you studying?

   Faculty: ………………………………………………….
   Department……………………………………………….

5. What level are you in this university? ………………….

EXPERIENCES OF THE WEST AFRICAN INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

1. How long have you been here (with reference to the university)?

2. Did you begin your university course at PUC immediately after completing SHS or its equivalent in your country?

3. Why did you choose to study in this university?

4. Were you giving orientation at the start of your course?

5. Did orientation meet your expectations? (Orientation refers to information or programs received from the institution before departure, upon arrival, or throughout the adaptation process. It is designed to help students adapt and transition into living and studying in the host country.

6. During orientation, were you given information about the logistics of living in your host country? (Logistics include but are not limited to: information on opening a bank account, how to access health insurance, employment/internship opportunities, finding housing, using public transit, and knowing where to buy necessities.)

7. How could orientation be improved?

8. Before you came to study at PUC, was your accommodation arranged for you?

9. Were you properly settled before you began your studies?
10. Did you have any concerns about studying at PUC before you actually left your country? (Probe for those concerns)

11. Did you expect to be studying for your Bachelors at your current University?

12. Is the educational culture in Ghana and PUC different from the one in your country? (Probe for similarities and differences)

13. Are you satisfied with the level of the academic support available by the University?

14. Are the performances of your lectures/supervisor different from your expectations?

15. Do you feel part of the university’s community?

16. What have been your major experiences at PUC?

   Probe for:

   ✓ Academic system – tuition, IA’s, Examinations, library facilities

   ✓ Accommodation – what best describes your current housing situation?

   ✓ Transportation

   ✓ Food

   ✓ Health

   ✓ Lecturers and heads of departments

   ✓ Entertainment activities

   ✓ Student permit

   ✓ Social environment (relationship with Ghanaian students and the outside communities)

   ✓ Prices of goods and services

   ✓ Language barrier and communication

   ✓ Culture (origin and host country)

17. How could the University help you better adjust and integrate into the host community?

18. Do you have friends from your country studying at other universities in Ghana, who experience the same problems?

19. Would you recommend PUC to other people in your home country as a place to gain their qualifications in Ghana?
20. Would you do your masters at PUC if you get the opportunity?

21. Could PUC do anything to improve your experience, and if so, How?

22. Please is there anything else you would like to add or clarify?

Thank you so much for your sharing time and sincere response!