



Revisiting the determinants of changes in MBA curriculum in France: the introduction of leadership-related modules in MBA, between differentiation and conformity

Thi Thu Tra Nguyen

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EN SCIENCES DE L'ACTION

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**Revisiting the determinants of changes in
MBA curriculum in France:
the introduction of leadership-related modules in
MBA, between differentiation and conformity**

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Tra T.T. NGUYEN

RÉSUMÉ

Dans la littérature récente en management, l'enseignement de la gestion est décrit comme une activité commerciale qui s'exerce sur un marché dont le produit phare est le MBA. En cherchant à promouvoir leurs MBA respectifs dans cet univers concurrentiel, les écoles de commerce sont ainsi amenées à renouveler ce cursus en permanence. De ce fait, l'industrie de l'enseignement de la gestion est devenue un important terrain de recherche en management.

Le MBA bénéficie désormais d'une reconnaissance quasi mondiale et il a connu une croissance remarquable au cours des dernières décennies. Il est par ailleurs abondamment critiqué, notamment au regard de la teneur et l'organisation des enseignements qui y sont dispensés.

Cette étude porte sur les relations et les influences croisées des parties prenantes dans le développement du cursus du MBA, en particulier en ce qui concerne l'introduction de modules liés au leadership.

Cette étude qualitative longitudinale, menée sur un échantillon de MBA en France, permet de préciser les rôles stratégiques et les influences respectives des principales parties prenantes que sont les régulateurs, les fournisseurs et les « clients » dans le processus d'élaboration d'un programme MBA.

La constante amélioration de ce diplôme répond en effet aux recommandations des régulateurs et à la perception des organisateurs, mais rarement aux souhaits de demandeurs. Nous proposons un modèle de croissance en spirale des parties prenantes dans l'organisation du MBA, qui met en évidence une dynamique permettant à la fois à l'industrie et à ses acteurs d'accroître leur efficacité.

Mots clés : formation management, MBA, leadership, stratégie, école de management

ABSTRACT

In recent literature, Management Education is frequently described as a business industry, with the MBA program as its flagship product. Whilst attempting to position their programs in an increasingly competitive market, business schools continuously develop and renew the MBA. As a result, Management Education has become a new area of management study.

The MBA has enjoyed a remarkable growth in recent decades, to the point that it has become a globally recognised degree. However, it has also received considerable criticism, especially regarding its curriculum content and organisation.

Using a qualitative interview-based research on French MBA programs and curricula development, this study focuses on the interaction of stakeholders in the MBA curriculum development, notably in light of the introduction of leadership-related modules.

Its main findings evidence the strategic role and influence of the main stakeholders, i.e. regulators, suppliers and “clients”, in the MBA curriculum development process. The continuing improvement of the MBA curriculum reflects the recommendations of the regulators as well as the perspective of the suppliers, but the influence of demanders is more limited.

This research led to the identification and the specification of a spiral evolution model, for the interaction of stakeholders in the organisation of MBA and Management Education creates a synergistic growth in the industry that enables both organisations and the industry to be more efficient.

Key words: management education, MBA, leadership, strategy, business school

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SYNTHESE DE LA THESE EN FRANÇAIS

LA GENÈSE DE L'IDÉE

Issue des recherches académiques menées en Sciences de Gestion et en Sciences de l'éducation, ainsi que de notre expérience professionnelle en tant que gestionnaire de programmes dans l'Enseignement supérieur, notre recherche s'attache à étudier l'enseignement de la gestion en tant qu'activité commerciale.

La question de savoir si l'enseignement de la gestion est une activité commerciale est ancienne. Elle a notamment été posée clairement en 2015 lors d'une conférence organisée par la Société Française de Management. L'enseignement de la gestion est en effet de plus en plus considéré comme une industrie « banale » et une activité commerciale, bien qu'elle diffère des autres industries en raison de caractéristiques propres à l'Education (Williams, 1995; Bennis & O'Toole, 2005). Selon Dumez (2015) l'enseignement de la gestion est considéré comme une activité qui crée de la valeur contribuant à la richesse des Nations, et les programmes d'enseignement de la gestion, leur contenu et leur gestion même sont désormais régulièrement étudiés sous un angle managérial et commercial (Datar, Garvin, Cullen 2010, Dameron, Durand 2008, Thomas 2007, Spender 2007, Starkey et al, 2004). Ces études montrent que les concepts issus de la littérature en Sciences de Gestion (marketing, stratégie, gestion du changement, entre autres disciplines) sont désormais utilisés et discutés à propos des Grandes Ecoles de Commerce et de toute institution d'enseignement en gestion.

Considérant que l'enseignement en gestion obéit aux lois du marché, on pourrait s'attendre à une convergence du modèle de diffusion des concepts de Sciences de gestion au sein des Ecoles de commerce. Cependant, des changements récents dans

l'enseignement de la gestion montrent au contraire une divergence dans les modèles économiques des écoles de commerce. La possibilité de commercialiser l'enseignement est considérée par certaines comme une transformation des stratégies de développement des formations et des cursus en gestion. Ce changement des stratégies d'enseignement de la gestion serait notamment le résultat d'une tentative par les institutions d'enseignement supérieur de répondre aux exigences de la mondialisation, ou encore un virage dans leur cycle économique (Iniguez d'Onzono et Carmona, 2007; Hawawini, 2005; Bennis et O'Toole, 2005). La gestion stratégique des institutions d'enseignement supérieur est donc largement étudiée pour comprendre la stratégie et le développement de ce « marché » ou « l'industrie » de l'enseignement de la gestion ». En cherchant à promouvoir leurs MBA respectifs dans cet univers concurrentiel, les écoles de commerce sont ainsi amenées à renouveler ce cursus en permanence. De ce fait, l'industrie de l'enseignement de la gestion est devenue un important terrain de recherche en management.

PROBLÉMATIQUE

Plusieurs recherches en Sciences de l'éducation appliquées à l'enseignement de la gestion ont ainsi noté l'effet du marché sur les programmes de MBA (Master en administration des affaires).

Les recherches menées par Datar, Garvin and Cullen (2010, p.31) sur l'enseignement de la gestion et les MBA à travers des entretiens auprès de doyens d'écoles de commerce montrent que "le MBA permet l'accès à des carrières attractives autrement inaccessibles". Le MBA est défini comme un diplôme qui attire des candidats issus d'un large champ de disciplines ou encore comme un diplôme généraliste pour des candidats dotés d'une expérience professionnelle conséquente (Association des MBA - AMBA). Le MBA apparaît comme le seul diplôme international dans la mesure où le programme d'enseignement est relativement homogène dans le monde (Mintzberg, 2004). L'appellation « MBA » et les premiers cursus de MBA sont apparus au début du 19^e siècle aux Etats-Unis pour répondre au besoin des pays industrialisés et de leurs entreprises d'une approche plus scientifique de la gestion. Si les écoles de commerce américaines dominent toujours le marché du MBA (Pfeffer and Fong, 2002, Durand 2008), des concurrents émergents pour répondre aux besoins locaux en Europe, Asie et Amérique Latine (Antunes and Thomas, 2007, Blackman, 2011). Le MBA a ainsi connu une très forte croissance ces dernières années, et est sans nul doute le diplôme le plus internationalement reconnu pour la gestion d'entreprise. Néanmoins, pour un diplôme qui est souvent considéré comme la réponse universitaire aux préoccupations du monde des affaires, il souffre également de nombreuses critiques, notamment en ce qui concerne la valeur, le rôle et la pertinence des écoles de commerce qui élaborent et délivrent le MBA. Les écoles recherchent donc certaines normes visibles comme les habilitations et les accréditations afin de valider et démontrer leur engagement envers l'assurance et l'amélioration de la qualité et de la pertinence de la formation.

La thèse analyse l'enseignement de la gestion à travers différentes disciplines : stratégie, gestion et organisation. L'enseignement de la gestion est considéré comme un marché ou une industrie, les écoles de commerce comme des organisations, le programme de MBA comme leur « produit » phare et le développement du programme d'enseignement du MBA comme un outil de gestion stratégique.

La thèse est organisée en cinq parties, commençant par une introduction, puis la revue de la littérature, la méthodologie et les résultats et finalement la conclusion.

REVUE DE LA LITTÉRATURE

La partie de revue de la littérature aborde trois thèmes : 1) les développements stratégiques et la problématique conformité ou différenciation face à la question du positionnement des écoles de commerce, 2) le contexte de l'enseignement de la gestion et la dynamique historique du secteur des écoles de gestion, et 3) une revue approfondie des processus de design des cursus éducatifs en général, et des modules de leadership en particulier.

Selon Deephouse (1999), une entreprise ou une organisation doit trouver un compromis entre différenciation et conformité avec les organisations comparables au sein d'une industrie afin d'obtenir de meilleures performances et montrer sa légitimité dans l'industrie. Cette approche peut s'appliquer à d'autres marchés faisant face à des pressions compétitives et institutionnelles fortes, notamment au domaine de l'Education. Notre thèse repose largement sur la théorie de l'équilibre stratégique, où les institutions recherchent également une légitimité. La thèse étudie ainsi l'importance relative des forces en présence : les forces en concurrence sur le marché et les forces de légitimation dans l'environnement institutionnel, avant de questionner l'existence d'une position d'équilibre stratégique dans l'industrie de l'enseignement de la gestion. Ces notions de position équilibrée ou de compromis entre différenciation et conformité dans l'enseignement supérieur avaient déjà été mentionnées dans la littérature, mais ont gagné en popularité suite aux débats entre chercheurs sur la légitimité et les réformes des programmes d'études de MBA (Mintzberg, 2004; Starkey et al, 2004; Bennis et 2005 O'Toole; Antunes et Thomas, 2007; Engwall, 2007; Durand et Dameron, 2008 et 2011). Ce n'est donc pas la première fois que l'enseignement de la gestion et le MBA sont l'objet d'un débat sur la conformité et la différenciation. Ainsi Datar, Garvin et Cullen (2010) décrivent l'état de l'enseignement de la gestion et du MBA comme un état contradictoire entre **différenciation** « Comme dans les diplômes de premier et second cycles, beaucoup d'éléments critiques du programme d'études du MBA sont soumis à la discrétion et à l'adaptation, avec des efforts limités pour imposer la standardisation ou l'uniformité » et **conformité** « de puissantes forces mènent à une convergence des programmes d'études :

les Institutions ont tendance à imiter les leaders dans leur domaine; les groupes d'accréditation imposent des normes; ainsi que la pression sociale et les modes en matière d'éducation ».

La position de l'équilibre stratégique (selon la théorie de Deephouse, 1999) existe aussi dans le domaine de l'enseignement de gestion, surtout dans les formations de type MBA. La révision de la stratégie des écoles pour trouver cette position est d'abord dû au fait que les écoles trouvent leur légitimité soit en imitant les autres écoles reconnues, soit en suivant les directives des régulateurs. Plusieurs facteurs expliquent que les écoles s'intéressent plus à une accréditation qu'à une autre. Grâce à l'accréditation, les écoles de commerce trouveront un moyen de se légitimer (Trieschmann, 2000 ; Argenti, 2000 ; Basso, Dornier et Mounier, 2011 ; Wedlin, 2007 ; Rubin et Dierdorff, 2009 et 2011 ; Khurana, 2007). En outre, l'accréditation leur offre l'opportunité d'acquérir une connaissance plus approfondie de leurs forces et faiblesses, l'opportunité également d'élaborer des programmes nouveaux de meilleure qualité, et de confirmer et prouver le niveau de leurs offres sur le marché.

Korpiaho, Paivio et Rasanen (2007) identifient différentes conceptions de l'éducation en gestion, en se posant sur trois revues de recherche sur les programmes de gestion: l'Académie de l'apprentissage et de l'éducation en gestion, le Journal of Management Education et Management Apprentissage. Ils forment les concepts d'éducation de gestion avec 1) le Qui - qui enseignent et qui apprennent; 2) le Comment - la façon dont l'éducation doit être accomplie; 3) le Quoi - choses à accomplir et accomplies; et 4) le Pourquoi - raisons de viser certains objectifs et d'employer certains moyens dans l'éducation. Les chercheurs façonnent les conceptions en cinq types: la tradition à distinguer avec les programmes de MBA et cinq formes révisées, à savoir l'éducation fondée sur la science, l'éducation approche pédagogique sur les compétences, le service d'apprentissage, l'éducation approche pédagogique active et l'éducation critique de gestion. Les différences entre les conceptions sont reprises dans le tableau suivant.

	Traditionnel	MBA	Education fondée sur la science	Education approche pédagogique compétences	Service d'apprentissage	Education approche pédagogique active	Education critique de management
QUI Enseignants	Spécialistes de la discipline	Prestataires de service	Chercheurs	Des chercheurs, des formateurs et des évaluateurs en compétences	Experts concernés dans leur propre domaine, engagés à enseigner	Facilitateurs & co-chercheurs	Facilitateurs et Chercheurs activistes
QUI Elèves	Des individus poursuivent des carrières à vocation institutionnelle	Des clients payants, avec quelques années d'expérience professionnelle	Dépendant la qualité des théories	Des individus possédant des compétences personnelles, grandissant à des tâches professionnelles	Des professionnels qui apprennent et rencontrent avec des privilégiés	Des professionnels expérimentés ayant des capacités réfléchies	Des victimes d'éducation ou des apprenants auto-réfléchis et ouverts, les professionnels potentiellement responsables
COMMENT	Conférences, cas et autres exercices sur des outils, des techniques et des modèles spécifiques à la discipline	Programme de cours modulaires sur un large éventail d'outils de gestion, avec des méthodes traditionnelles	Introduction à des théories fondées sur des preuves, avec la répétition des compétences de réflexion, la lecture, l'écriture	Exercer et démontrer les compétences professionnelles, définies et évaluées par les enseignants	Application de connaissances académiques dans des projets à but non lucratif, en collaboration avec d'autres	Des projets d'apprentissage ou de recherche d'action sur les pratiques professionnelles, avec le soutien réfléchi	Fournir des ressources intellectuelles et des espaces pour la réflexion critique sur l'idéologie / les pratiques managériales et

							l'expérience de l'injustice
QUOI	Des spécialistes et gestionnaires à venir	Des certifications de l'accès aux professions, de manière rentable	Gestionnaires professionnels, responsables et professionnels	Des professionnels compétents, capables de diffuser, développer les meilleures pratiques	Des citoyens éduqués et responsables, pour une société démocratique	Praticiens réfléchis et autonomes	Professionnels et intellectuels politiquement conscients et actifs
POURQUOI	Le succès dépend des talents et des valeurs des individus, l'éducation leur offre-t-elle des opportunités?	L'enseignement du MBA en tant qu'investissement pour ceux qui font pour une meilleure économie, les individus sont libres de choisir en fonction de leurs valeurs?	Les vertus intellectuelles et la responsabilité morale font-elles une véritable profession?	Des professionnels compétents et efficaces sont efficaces et réussissent-ils dans la société?	Le service est une action morale et valorise la dignité humaine, la démocratie en tant que série de valeurs?	Le développement humain à des fins pratiques, professionnelles et sociales dans des relations égales?	Résister à l'aliénation, maintenir l'espoir et lutter pour une meilleure société

Conceptions de l'éducation de gestion dans les trois journaux

Source: Korpiaho et al (2007) Anglo – American forms of management education: a practice –theoretical perspective

Les écoles souhaitent atteindre la position d'équilibre pour différencier en détail la formation selon leurs propres ressources ou pour s'adapter à leurs propres environnements (Antunes et Thomas, 2007 ; Starkey, Hatchuel et Tempest, 2004). Mettant en évidence que les écoles de commerce font face à une crise d'identité et d'image, Antunes et Thomas (2007) ont proposé un processus de construction sociale pour différencier les écoles avec trois niveaux : institutionnel, compétitif et capital social afin de construire une identité organisationnelle différente que les autres écoles.

Durand et Dameron (2008) ont exploré les évolutions possibles des écoles de commerce dans différentes zones et développé trois scénarios pour chaque zone, correspondant aux positions : différenciation, conformité, et équilibre stratégique

	Conformité	Différenciation	Equilibre stratégique
L'Europe / l'OECD (sans les Etats unis)	Rattraper les meilleurs	Ignorer les tops	Différencier par des spécificités nationales ou régionales
Les Etats unis	Entrer pour dominer	Prendre de l'avance	Reconnaître et concurrencer
Les BRICS	Importer les meilleurs	Diversifier les moyens	Mixer et mélanger les stratégies

Les scénarios entre les positions de conformité, différenciation et équilibre stratégique

Adapté de la littérature de Durand, Dameron (2008) et Deephouse (1999)

QUESTION DE LA RECHERCHE

La question centrale traitée par notre thèse est celle de la compréhension des déterminants des changements de cursus MBA en France. Pour la traiter, nous nous intéressons en particulier aux dispositifs pédagogiques concernant la formation au leadership comme révélateurs des évolutions de ces programmes, en prenant pour cadre de référence le prisme de la théorie de l'équilibre stratégique entre conformité et différenciation et en nous intéressant aux jeux des acteurs (parties prenantes) spécifiquement.

Les recherches préalables ayant appliqué la théorie de l'équilibre stratégique à l'enseignement de gestion souffrant de lacunes, notre thèse a également intégré la théorie des parties prenantes pour évaluer le rôle des acteurs au sein de l'organisation et dans son environnement (Freeman & McVea, 1984, 2004; Damak-Ayadi & Pesqueux 2005; Roegiers, 1997; Durand 2005).



Les parties prenantes dans le MBA – le jeu des acteurs

Source: développé à partir de la littérature de Durand (2005), Roegiers (1997)

Deux questions émergent de cette recherche :

- 1) Qui, parmi les parties prenantes du MBA, sont les déterminants du changement des programmes d'études de MBA?
- 2) Comment ces déterminants influencent-ils le développement des programmes de MBA et la gestion stratégique des institutions qui les délivrent?

Le but de la thèse est finalement de répondre à la question suivante :

Pourquoi les institutions universitaires révisent-elles leurs programmes d'études de MBA? (Compétitivité et/ou Légitimité, Conformité et/ou Différenciation)

Le but de la thèse est finalement de répondre à la question suivante :

Pourquoi les institutions universitaires révisent-elles leurs programmes d'études de MBA? (Compétitivité et/ou Légitimité, Conformité et/ou Différenciation)

Notre objectif est de comprendre certains phénomènes plutôt que les tester formellement. Par ailleurs, nous nous souhaitons identifier les liens logiques entre ces phénomènes. De ce fait, les « hypothèses » énoncées ci-dessous doivent être considérées comme des « propositions » de recherche. Nos hypothèses visent à examiner l'implication des parties prenantes et leur position stratégique dans l'industrie de l'enseignement de la gestion, en particulier dans le développement des programmes de MBA et leur mise en oeuvre. Après avoir identifié les principales parties prenantes influençant le développement des programmes de MBA dans la revue de littérature, nous développons les propositions de recherche concernant les déterminants des changements de cursus de MBA. La première proposition se concentre sur la question suivante : Parmi les parties prenantes identifiées du MBA, quelles sont celles qui sont des déterminants du changement de cursus de MBA? La deuxième proposition focalise sur la question suivante : Comment de tels déterminants influencent-ils le programme d'études de MBA, et par conséquent la gestion stratégique des institutions universitaires?

L'ÉTENDUE DE LA RECHERCHE

La théorie des parties prenantes permet d'identifier les groupes d'acteurs en présence dans l'industrie de l'enseignement de la gestion, y compris les acteurs de l'offre, les demandeurs et les régulateurs et permet surtout de comprendre que la tendance des écoles de commerce à réviser leurs programmes d'études particulièrement autour du thème du leadership provient de leur volonté de replacer les écoles de commerce à l'équilibre stratégique entre conformité et différenciation. En prenant en compte toutes les parties prenantes impliquées dans la révision des cursus de MBA et des programmes d'études, les modules de leadership constitueraient un chemin pour surmonter les contradictions entre les exigences des acteurs de la régulation et les ressources limitées des programmes de MBA et des Ecoles de commerce. Les activités de développement des programmes d'études de MBA révèlent ainsi toute la structure, le modèle économique, la gouvernance, la gestion stratégique et l'organisation des écoles de commerce.

Le développement de modules de leadership devient-il une compétence à obtenir, annoncé dans la mission de chaque école de commerce (Petriglieri & Petriglieri (2015) ? Cependant, chaque école a retenu différentes définitions et différentes dimensions pour développer et intégrer le leadership dans leur cursus. Interprétation, compréhension, mise en œuvre et application du leadership sont souvent confondues dans l'enseignement de la gestion, et requiert une définition claire. Leadership devient un terme passe-partout appuyé sur une vaste littérature académique, les écoles pourraient aborder le terme selon différents angles. De plus, selon la notion de « coïncidence » issue des méthodes de recherches sociales (Becker, 2002, les ficelles de métiers), les formations MBA avec les cursus et le thème de leadership se répétant, il nous apparaît que la mise en place des modules de leadership dans le cursus MBA peut être un bon proxy du changement (développement) de cursus de MBA.

UNE ÉTUDE APPROFONDIE SUR LES ACTEURS DE LA RÉGULATION :

La triple couronne de l'accréditation (AACSB EQUIS, AMBA) est-elle une norme pour les MBAs d'élites ?

L'accréditation est une procédure par laquelle une instance habilitée reconnaît ou évalue la qualité d'un organisme. Dans le domaine de l'éducation, l'accréditation est un processus qui référence les qualités grâce auxquelles les écoles de commerce ou programmes de gestion d'entreprise pourront être accrédités. Par exemple, aux États-Unis, où l'enseignement des affaires et de la gestion a été élaboré bien avant d'autres pays, et où les diplômes de type MBA sont privilégiés dans les écoles de commerce américaines (Antunes et Thomas 2007), il existe plusieurs organismes qui ont pour but de référencier la qualité de l'enseignement. Un collège ou une université doit être accrédité dans son ensemble avant d'obtenir l'admissibilité de son programme de MBA à l'accréditation. Les organismes et institutions ayant vocation à accréditer forment un ensemble comprenant le Conseil pour l'accréditation de l'enseignement supérieur (CHEA) : Moyen- Association des États des collèges et écoles (MSA), New England Association des écoles et collèges (NEASCSC), Commission de l'enseignement supérieur du Centre-Nord, Association des collèges et les écoles (HLC), Commission du Nord-Ouest sur des Collèges et Universités (NWCCU), etc. Les trois organismes principaux d'agrément aux États-Unis sont L'AACSB, l'ACBSP, et l'IACBE, qui sont eux-mêmes reconnus aux États-Unis par le Conseil pour l'accréditation de l'enseignement supérieur (CHEA). Ils sont (i) L'Association pour les écoles collégiales des affaires (AACSB), qui accrédite les universités de recherche ; (ii) le Conseil d'accréditation pour les écoles et les programmes de commerce (ACBSP), qui accrédite les universités et les collèges, et (iii) l'Assemblée internationale pour l'éducation collégiales des affaires (IACBE), qui accrédite également les écoles en dehors des États -Unis. L'AACSB, l'ACBSP, et l'IACBE sont eux-mêmes reconnus aux États-Unis par le Conseil pour l'accréditation de l'enseignement supérieur (CHEA).

En dehors des Etats-Unis, les organismes d'accréditation regroupent l'Association of MBAs (AMBA) basée au Royaume-Uni, le Conseil gouvernement Indien pour l'enseignement technique (AICTE), le Conseil de l'enseignement supérieur (CHE) en Afrique du Sud , le Système européen d'amélioration de la qualité (EQUIS) ou le système européen d'accréditation des programmes (APES) de EMFD (European Foundation for Management Development) pour les écoles principalement européens et asiatiques, ainsi que la Fondation pour l'accréditation d'administration des affaires internationales (FIBAA) en Europe.

Fondé sur la base de la maîtrise de sciences en commerce, le Master of Business Administration (MBA) a adapté son cursus et son intitulé au XIXe siècle pour répondre aux besoins des pays industrialisés et les entreprises à la recherche d'une approche scientifique de la gestion. Le MBA attire les cadres expérimentés dans différents domaines qui désirent se réorienter ou accélérer leurs carrières. Le MBA est considéré comme un grade universel dans la mesure où son modèle d'éducation est relativement homogène dans le monde entier (Mintzberg, 2004). Bien que les écoles des États-Unis continuent de représenter le plus grand nombre d'écoles de commerce de dimension mondiale (Pfeffer et Fong 2002, Durand 2008), des concurrents émergents, sensibles aux besoins du marché local, sont créés aujourd'hui en Europe, en Asie et en Amérique latine (Antunes et Thomas 2007, Blackman, 2011). Le MBA a connu une croissance phénoménale au cours des dernières années pour devenir aujourd'hui le diplôme supérieur de gestion le plus reconnu internationalement. Néanmoins, les programmes de MBA ne fournissent qu'une certification institutionnelle. Par conséquent, la validité du diplôme MBA dépend de la reconnaissance du public de l'école ou du programme, et de l'agrément de certains établissements pour assurer la cohérence et la qualité au niveau des programmes d'études supérieures de l'enseignement professionnels. Les institutions recherchent donc certaines normes visibles comme les habilitations et les accréditations afin de valider et démontrer leur engagement envers l'assurance et l'amélioration de la qualité. En raison de la concurrence croissante entre les écoles de commerce, les plus compétitives essaient de trouver des opportunités pour évaluer, améliorer et faire connaître la qualité des programmes proposés. Un organisme présente ainsi non seulement l'intérêt de la

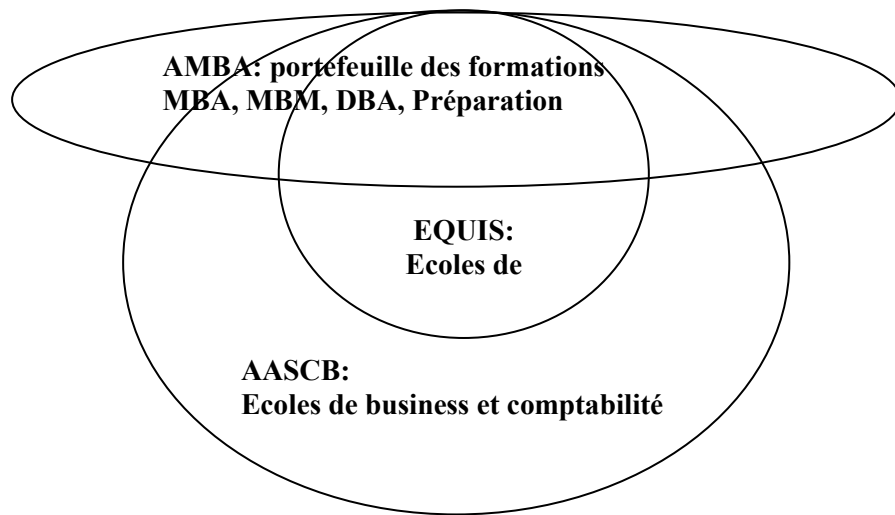
similarité ou de la conformité pour montrer sa légitimité dans l'industrie, mais également l'avantage de la différenciation pour une meilleure compétitivité à l'égard de ses concurrents. (Deephouse 1999). La légitimité est conférée par la conformité aux standards et normes, par l'expertises, les médias et l'imitation des concurrents (Deephouse 1996, Dacin 1997). Si l'on applique la théorie de l'équilibre stratégique de Deephouse à « l'industrie » de l'enseignement de la gestion et des affaires, plusieurs facteurs expliquent que les écoles s'intéressent plus à une accréditation qu'à une autre. Grâce à l'accréditation, les écoles de commerce trouveront un moyen de se légitimer. En outre, l'accréditation leur offre l'opportunité d'acquérir une connaissance plus approfondie de leurs forces et faiblesses, l'opportunité également d'élaborer des programmes nouveaux de meilleure qualité, et de confirmer et prouver le niveau de leurs offres sur le marché.

L'Accréditations triple couronne

En fait, il existe trois principaux organismes mondiaux de certification dans l'enseignement de gestion et des affaires: l'AACSB, l'EQUIS et l'AMBA, qui sont appelées la Triple Couronne. Alors que l'AACSB domine l'accréditation des écoles de commerce aux États-Unis, l'EQUIS couvre les business schools en Europe; l'AMBA quant à lui, accrédite davantage le portefeuille des programmes de niveau troisième cycle d'un établissement, plutôt que l'ensemble de l'école. L'AACSB possède une plus large influence, car il accrédite tous les programmes de gestion et de comptabilité d'une même université avant de lui accorder son accréditation. L'AMBA est la plus internationale des trois organisations, car son accréditation porte sur les écoles basées dans 46 pays, contre 42 pays pour l'AACSB et 38 pays pour l'EQUIS. L'influence de l'EQUIS est placée entre les deux premiers, car son accréditation ne concerne pas les portefeuilles spécifiques des programmes et se trouve limitée au niveau de l'école de commerce et ne concerne pas l'université. Selon Eric Cornuel (2011), directeur général de l'EFMD à Bruxelles, l'EFMD a créé EQUIS en 1998 pour normaliser l'amélioration de la qualité des écoles de commerce, et, se basant sur une philosophie et une méthodologie proche de l'EQUIS, l'EFMD a lancé l'EPAS en 2005 afin d'examiner et d'accréditer des programmes individuels. Par conséquent, l'EQUIS est

considérée comme l'homologue européen de l'AACSB ; l'APES dans son ensemble pourrait être considérée comme équivalent de l'AMBA.

Sur 15 673 écoles offrant des programmes de degré affaires dans le monde entier (l'AACSB International, 2013), seules 58 écoles ont obtenu la triple accréditation de l'AACSB, l'EQUIS et de l'AMBA. La majorité de ces écoles triple-couronnes, et de celles qui combinent un double accréditation, sont localisées en dehors de la zone Amérique du Nord.



L'étendue des accréditations de l'AACSB, l'EQUIS et l'AMBA.

Comparaison des trois accréditations et leurs critères d'agrément

Quand une école de commerce porte son choix sur une association d'accréditation, elle décide d'adopter le modèle de stratégie de développement attaché à cette association, et ainsi renoncer à suivre ceux proposés par les autres associations, puisque chacune d'elles se différencie par ses propres critères et références d'accréditation. Le temps investi et le budget sont parmi des décisions importantes à considérer car les frais d'inscription dans une telle association s'élèvent de 18 mille à 40 mille euros.

La comparaison des trois grandes associations l'AACSB, l'AMBA et l'EQUIS, fait apparaître que l'AACSB privilégie généralement des critères d'ordre quantitatifs; l'AMBA s'attache à des critères plus qualitatifs alors qu'EQUIS se place entre les deux. Faculté est le point essentiel de différenciation entre le système d'évaluation proposé par ces trois associations. L'AACSB est exigeante sur les ratios des professeurs (ratio de qualification académique et ratio de qualification professionnelle AQ/PQ) et désapprouve l'utilisation massive de professeurs invités, tandis que l'AMBA ne prescrit aucun ratio professeurs-à-élèves et tolère plus de professeurs invités. L'EQUIS contrôle le nombre minimum de professeurs prescrits et désapprouve également l'utilisation massive de professeurs invités, comme l'AACSB. En ce qui concerne l'internationalisation, l'AACSB procède à l'évaluation contre sa propre mission de l'école, de sorte que l'AACSB n'impose aucune exigence d'internationalisation à moins que l'internationalisation fasse partie de la mission de l'école. En revanche, L'AMBA et l'EQUIS ont des exigences strictes sur l'internationalisation. L'AMBA a recours à des critères d'internationalisation de la recherche, de programmes et sur les critères d'admission des candidats. En ce qui concerne les critères de recherche, l'AACSB exige des recherches en lien avec la mission de l'école; l'AMBA exige des recherches et publications dans des revues scientifiques internationales ou une preuve de recherche importante au niveau national, quant à l'EQUIS, seule une recherche de dimension internationale est prescrite.

En chiffre	AACSB	EQUIS	AMBA
L'année de création	1916	1998	1967
Siège	Floride, Etats-Unis	Bruxelles, Belgique	Londres, Royaume Uni
Nombre des écoles accréditées	672	142	210 écoles avec MBA
Durée de la procédure de l'accréditation	2-7 ans	2-3 ans	9-18 mois
Accréditation totale	5-10 ans	3-5 ans	3-5 ans
L'équipe d'audit	Peer review Administrateurs et doyens bénévoles des écoles	Peer-review Seul doyens et présidents des écoles sélectionnées	Sénior académiciens des meilleurs programmes accrédités + 1 représentant AMBA
Frais de l'accréditation	\$18.500 – \$30.500	€ 25.000 - € 40.625	£15.000 - £22.000

Les faits et les chiffres des trois standards et ses critères d'accréditations

Normes, Standards, Critères	AACSB	EQUIS	AMBA
Les valeurs fondamentales	La qualité, l'innovation, l'amélioration continue		
	Les contributions intellectuelles; la qualité; l'innovation, le comportement éthique; l'environnement collégial; RSE, la durabilité et l'amélioration continue	La qualité, l'internationalisation, l'éthique, RSE, les liens sociaux	Les meilleurs et pertinentes pratiques; reflet de l'évolution des tendances et de l'innovation, l'amélioration continue
Gouvernance & Stratégie	La mission distincte, Les stratégies qualitatives et quantitatives, les approches, les résultats attendus	La mission articulée, La stratégie cohérente, La gouvernance efficace et intégrée;	La mission appropriée; La stratégie cohérente, Des politiques bien définies de la gouvernance

Comparaison des valeurs et critères accréditations

Même si les trois accréditations sont d'accord sur l'importance de la qualité, de l'innovation et de l'amélioration continue des formations ou des écoles visées, chaque organisme souligne différentes valeurs telles que l'environnement collégial (AACSB), l'internationalisation (EQUIS) ou les pratiques pertinentes appropriées au cursus. Chaque équipe d'audit demande une valeur différente sur la mission ou la stratégie de l'école ou du programme, mais ces valeurs restent peu précises et abstraites pour le public.

Normes, Standards, Critères	AACSB	EQUIS	AMBA
Programmes apprentissage	Processus de gestion des programmes (les objectifs, la conception, la livraison, les résultats et les évaluations) Les Connaissances, les compétences et l'intégration du programme dans les projets professionnels;		
Enseignants – qualité de l'enseignement	Nombre des professeurs, enseignants, diplômés et l'expérience professionnelle exigés		
	Taux des professeurs permanents / professeurs invités Taux des professionnels confirmés / professeurs scientifique	Minimum 25 enseignants principaux	Les enseignants peuvent remplacer les recherches par les conseils professionnels
Etudiants	Évaluation de la progression, la carrière post-graduation		
	La création, de la facilitation et l'évaluation des étudiants-professeurs et les interactions entre étudiants,	Évaluation de la sélection, La diversité des élèves, maîtrise de la langue	
		La maîtrise de la langue (selon le programme)	Minimum 3 ans d'expérience de travail à temps plein, la taille des cohortes d'au moins 20, l'apprentissage mutuel entre pairs.
Personnel professionnel	Une répartition claire des tâches entre les professeurs et le personnel professionnel, Nombre suffisant et disponibilité du personnel professionnel		Une répartition claire des tâches (direction académique et des responsabilités administratives) Le personnel professionnel pour administrer, gérer et exécuter le programme
Recherche et Développement	Dans la mission de l'école	La recherche académique avec la dimension internationale	Recherche et publications dans les journaux nationaux ou internationaux visés

Comparaison des trois normes et critères accréditations

Les raisons de la préférence pour des accréditations multiples

On observe qu'un certain nombre d'universités ou d'écoles de commerce prétendent être «accrédité». Cependant, la question est de savoir par qui? Les organismes d'accréditation n'étant pas tous reconnus, il devient important de connaître sur quelle partie spécifique porte l'habilitation d'une école ou des programmes. D'une part, la meilleure étude sur un organisme d'accréditation se faisait par le gouvernement ou le ministère de l'éducation d'une école. D'autre part, l'accréditation d'une école peut ne pas être reconnue en dehors de ce pays, ou un certain type d'accréditation peut être reconnu dans un pays mais pas dans l'autre. Par conséquent, les écoles demandent une accréditation auprès des organismes les plus connus non pour la référence, ou pour le classement, mais pour être reconnues internationalement pour autant de pays que possible. Le point fort des grandes écoles de commerce américaines est de tirer des avantages concurrentiels liés à leurs gains dans la modélisation avec des produits standardisés de MBA, la légitimation des écoles de commerce, les marques et les réputations bien établies. Dans une période où les MBA « modèle américain » sont dominants, les problèmes d'image, de réputation et de l'internationalisation deviennent essentiels pour les écoles non-américains, en particulier les écoles européennes (Antunes, Thomas 2007). Chacune de ces écoles européennes a été influencée par différentes caractéristiques culturels, juridiques et réglementaires issues de leur pays d'origine, cependant elles témoignent d'une grande diversité et atteignent un niveau de crédibilité internationale en adoptant le « style américain ». Chaque établissement cherche donc à démontrer sa propre légitimité. Cela répond à la question de savoir pourquoi les écoles européennes (plus de 37 des 55 écoles triple accréditées) aspirent à obtenir une accréditation américaine (AACSB) ou européenne (AMBA, EQUIS), alors qu'aucune école américaine ne cherche à obtenir le titre de la triple couronne.

Une des raisons de cette absence d'écoles américaines dans la liste «triple couronne» est qu'elles ne répondent pas à l'exigence de l'AMBA. L'Association des MBAs n'accrédite que les écoles de commerce qui exigent de leurs candidats MBA un minimum de trois ans d'expérience professionnelle post-graduation à temps plein, alors que les plus grandes

écoles de commerce américaines admettent de candidats récemment diplômés avec peu ou pas d'expérience de travail. Les meilleures écoles de commerce américaines ne cherchent même pas à obtenir une accréditation étrangère, puisqu'elles sont accréditées par l'AACSB uniquement en fonction de leur réputation de grandes écoles.

De plus, parmi les meilleures écoles de commerce, certaines choisissent de s'appuyer uniquement sur l'accréditation délivrée par leur organisme national d'accréditation dépendant habituellement du ministère de l'éducation de leur pays.

La question se pose donc concernant les écoles et les programmes lorsque la tendance actuelle est de postuler au plus grand nombre d'accréditation possible : « Quels sont leurs objectifs et stratégies ? ». Autrement dit, quel modèle doit-on suivre ou comment se différencier ? Les programmes ou les écoles ayant obtenu la « triple couronne » pourraient-ils être considérés comme de meilleure réputation et hautement classés dans la liste des écoles de commerce ? A ce stade, le système d'accréditation ne joue pas seulement le rôle de référence mais le rôle de classement. Néanmoins, la limite de jeux de critères entre les organismes d'accréditation et les organismes de classement est mal définie. Il est cependant évident que les organismes d'accréditation comme les organismes de classement se rattachent à ce que l'on nomme les « effets de réputation » (Antunes, Thomas 2007).

D'une part, le fait d'être accrédité par des organismes d'accréditation reconnus fait partie du jeu des classements. Les titres accrédités par l'AACSB, l'EQUIS et l'AMBA ont été indispensables pendant des années afin d'être éligible à certains grands classements. (Schwertfeger, 2011). Par exemple, les écoles de MBA qui souhaitent participer au classement mondial des MBAs du Financial Times doivent avoir obtenu une accréditation internationale au préalable. Jusqu'à présent, cela comprenait l'accréditation par l'AACSB, l'EQUIS ou l'AMBA. Actuellement AMBA n'appartient plus à ce groupe. Selon Michael J. Jacobs du Financial Times, la raison principale réside dans le fait que, seules les

accréditations qui concernent une école dans son ensemble - et non pas uniquement les programmes individuels - seront prises en considération.

D'autre part, les effets de réputation peuvent manipuler les modèles de compétition pour les ressources et la gestion stratégique du marché de l'école de commerce, parce que les hiérarchies de réputation agissent comme des obstacles à la mobilité pour la nouvelle entrée. Triple accréditation couronnée agit comme une barrière impressionnant les nouveaux candidats désireux de s'inscrire dans une école d'élite, de grande réputation et de haut niveau. Les écoles de commerce européennes n'ont pas la même orientation stratégique que les écoles des Etats-Unis, en prenant du retard sur le niveau des salaires, le suivi des anciens élèves et particulièrement sur les critères de recherche, qui pèsent lourdement sur les normes de classement. Les atouts des écoles de commerce européennes se concentrent sur la dimension internationale, les progrès de la carrière et le potentiel haut salaire, avec lesquels elles pourraient facilement satisfaire aux critères des accréditations. Les écoles européennes trouvent leur légitimité en établissant un nouveau produit MBA et par la recherche d'une meilleure réputation, mais elles se différencient dans panel des organismes bonne réputation que le secret de leurs forces.

Les écoles français avec la Triple Couronne

La France, ainsi que le Royaume-Uni, sont parmi les pays ayant plus grand nombre d'écoles obtenant la triple accréditation (17 écoles anglaises et 12 écoles françaises). Un avantage indéniable de l'image apportée par le titre triple-couronne est qu'il facilite notablement le recrutement d'étudiants étrangers, alors que les critères des accréditations européennes de l'EQUIS et l'AMBA nécessitent des standards d'internationalisation. Ainsi, concernant l'internationalisation, ces écoles obtiennent facilement des visites scolaires, des échanges d'enseignants et des stages auprès d'institutions et des entreprises à l'étranger (Tony Gibbs, Oxford Brookes University). Le benchmarking ou l'amélioration de la qualité n'ont pas été déclarés par les tenants de triple-couronne comme étant un avantage essentiel lié aux accréditations. Gibbs n'est pas le seul à émettre un point de vue sur les avantages de la triple accréditation sur l'amélioration du recrutement et de la

réputation de l'école. De courts entretiens individuels ont été réalisés sur l'importance et la valeur ajoutée par l'obtention de nombreuses accréditations. Trois membres du personnel travaillant pour le département international des écoles de commerce françaises ont été interviewés: Dorine Lebreton, Responsable du développement international de l'école de commerce de Toulouse (triple accréditations); Junko Adachi, chef du bureau de représentation de HEC Paris au Japon pour la zone Asie (triple accréditations) et Gilles Lespade, directeur pédagogique de l'INSEEC Business School (double accréditation de l'AACSB et l'EQUIS). Seule Toulouse Business School a évoqué des valeurs telles que l'analyse interne et comparative, la revue sur l'organisation, le renforcement de la gestion des ressources humaines. Loin de mentionner les valeurs ajoutées de chacune et de toutes les accréditations que détient HEC, le personnel de HEC Paris au Japon ne fait pas la différence entre les trois accréditations. Le directeur pédagogique de l'INSEEC ne souligne pas la valeur de la qualité de l'enseignement, mais se base sur un autre point de vue. L'INSEEC met en évidence un lien entre le fait d'être accrédité au niveau international et l'amélioration du réseau professionnel pour les stages des étudiants.

Néanmoins, les trois personnes interrogées sont d'accord sur deux points concernant les avantages des accréditations. Premièrement, les accréditations améliorent leur image, celle-ci apparaît comme étant celle d'une école de haut niveau pour le recrutement à l'étranger. Toulouse Business School et l'INSEEC soulignent que, selon les pays, les accréditations peuvent être appréhendées différemment comme certification de la qualité et de la réputation. Par exemple, Toulouse Business School, qui est connue pour être une école triplement couronnée admet que cela contribue beaucoup à établir en Chine une bonne image, celle d'une école d'élites, puisque les élèves chinois connaissent et étudient beaucoup le marché des accréditations. En revanche, au Japon, aucun des candidats ne se soucie de l'accréditation, qu'elle soit unique, double ou triple. D'autre part, toutes les personnes interrogées souhaitent que leur école se concentre sur ces avantages pour demander des classements qui pousseront le recrutement. Certes, le marché des demandeurs de formation type MBA s'oriente toujours vers les États-Unis et ils seraient familiers apprécient les critères de classement portant sur l'importance des salaires et les perspectives de carrière des diplômés, le réseau d'anciens élèves, etc. Les

critères de l'internationalisation et de la performance étudiés par les équipes d'audit d'accréditation ne sont pas, à leurs yeux, aussi attractifs que les critères de classement. Cette observation est confirmée par la conclusion de l'enquête menée sur le MBA du Conseil d'admission des formations supérieures de management (Graduate Management Admission Council GMAC) auprès des futurs étudiants, où il apparaît que les étudiants choisissent des destinations d'étude basées sur des critères spécifiques : l'attractivité du lieu, une meilleure préparation pour leur future carrière, un tremplin pour une carrière à l'international, la qualité du système d'éducation du pays choisi. Les États-Unis demeurent la destination mondiale la plus populaire pour étudier en MBA, suivie par d'autres pays anglophones comme le Royaume-Uni, Singapour et l'Australie.

METHODOLOGIES

Nous préférons utiliser les résultats des recherches antérieures, notamment les approches de Datar et al (2010) "Repenser le MBA - l'enseignement de la gestion à la croisée des chemins", et les compléter pour mieux comprendre l'état actuel du commerce de l'enseignement de la gestion. Cependant, leur recherche se concentre sur les meilleures écoles de commerce et américaines, soutenant que les changements au sein des institutions de premier rang sont un indicateur de tendances plus larges. Ceci est satisfaisant pour démontrer la tendance de conformité, mais la différenciation pourrait résulter de nombreux autres facteurs, tels que le classement, le lieu où se déroule le programme et sa culture (spécificités pays ou région). De plus, les résultats de Datar, Garvin et Cullen (2010) reposent sur les besoins non satisfaits des étudiants après avoir suivi le programme de MBA, sur la base d'entretiens auprès de doyens d'écoles de commerce et de cadres d'entreprise, et non sur un échantillon d'étudiants actuels ou d'anciens élèves. Par ailleurs, les programmes d'études étudiés sont issus des sites internet des écoles ou d'entretiens auprès du personnel administratif ou des doyens des écoles. La manière dont les cours ont été conçus et enseignés est entièrement examinée de ce seul point de vue, et ne prend pas en compte celui des étudiants.

Le nombre croissant de programmes de MBA offerts dans cette industrie que constitue l'enseignement de la gestion dans le monde (aux États-Unis, dans les pays anglophones et non-anglophones) oblige les écoles de commerce à différencier ou à standardiser leur offre par rapport à la concurrence. Nous avons décidé de mener nos recherches sur les programmes de MBA en France. Ce choix a été pris pour trois raisons. La première raison est que « les MBA français ont une orientation plus sectorielle qu'aux États-Unis » (Durand et Dameron, 2008, p.168). La deuxième raison provient de la méthodologie et du terrain sur lequel nous souhaitons exercer nos recherches : une étude longitudinale sur les programmes et avec les acteurs principaux définis comme les parties prenantes dans les MBA, y compris les étudiants et les enseignants. Deux programmes MBA : celui du Cnam (Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers) et celui du Kedge Business School

ont été observés. La troisième raison est la manière contradictoire dont le leadership a été introduit alors qu'en France il n'y a pas de traduction pour ce mot. Comment développer le thème et le concept de leadership quand on emprunte le mot à la langue anglaise ?

Il est ainsi particulièrement intéressant d'étudier la tendance des programmes d'études de MBA français à s'orienter vers les thématiques de leadership, bien qu'en France aucun mot français équivalent n'existe pour mentionner la notion de leadership. La langue française a tous les mots équivalents pour définir le vocabulaire de gestion comme "gestion (management) - gérer (manage)- gérant (manager)" ou "dirigeant (director) – diriger (direct) ", mais elle n'a pas d'équivalent pour le mot « leadership » et l'utilise tel quel dans les cours de gestion. Le « leadership » demeure un nouveau concept dans l'enseignement de la gestion en France, et est toujours associé à une vision américaine de la formation des gestionnaires, alors même que les cours de leadership et de compétences personnelles prennent de plus en plus d'importance dans les programmes d'études de MBA et les programmes de formation de gestion aux Etats-Unis (Rynes et al, 2003; Datar et al, 2010; Rubin et Dierdorff, 2011; Rynes et Bartunek, 2013).

L'objectif de la recherche est d'étudier la diffusion de cette nouvelle tendance américaine d'introduction de module de leadership dans les programmes d'études de MBA français et de comprendre et expliquer les différences en termes de contenus ou mise en place à travers l'étude de différents cas.

Selon la base de données en ligne, en France il y a environ 130 programmes de MBA de tous les types, enseignés par environ 50 Écoles de commerce lors de l'année universitaire 2015-2016. Nous classons ces Ecoles de commerce en 5 grandes familles :

- Grandes Écoles de commerce (système français des Grandes Écoles de commerce)
- Universités et leurs institutions autonomes (IAE)
- Autres Écoles de commerce
- Écoles de commerce étrangères avec un campus français
- Universités d'entreprise

L'opacité du jeu d'acteurs qui caractérise les programmes et les cursus n'est pas le seul élément de leur complexité. Lorsque nous nous penchons sur l'étude des cas concrets, nous sommes obsédées par plusieurs sources d'inspiration à travers le contenu des cursus et l'information des entretiens.

Nous avons conduit une étude approfondie de la réforme des programmes de MBA en France et des acteurs affectant la stratégie des écoles et leurs cursus respectifs, afin d'estimer leurs positions et leurs compromis entre différenciation et conformité. Les contextes personnels, l'expérience passée et les projets professionnels qui ont amené les acteurs à se développer et à influencer les organisations et/ou l'industrie de l'enseignement de la gestion ont également été étudiés.

Plusieurs méthodologies ont donc été sollicitées au fur et à mesure de nos recherches : études documentaires, entretiens semi-directifs de directeurs d'écoles de commerce en France, étude de cas (deux écoles de commerce et leurs programmes de MBA : CNAM et KEDGE) à différents moments dans le temps, observation participante de 90 étudiants ainsi que les discussions en groupe pendant leurs études de MBA entre 2013 et 2015. Notre activité de coordination d'un programme de Master en Gestion et nos années d'expérience professionnelle dans l'environnement de l'enseignement de la gestion, a facilité notre accès au terrain.

En ce qui concerne les cas d'étude, notre recherche s'est appuyée sur trois types de sources : archives et documents d'écrit, notamment les brochures de programme MBA, les records de l'observation participant, les entretiens individuels et en groupes.

Nous avons suivi les cohortes d'étudiants (étudiants s'inscrivant à plein temps, à temps partiel) du CNAM et de KEDGE. Une observation participante a été menée au début de leur programme puis des réunions de groupes pendant leur programme pour examiner les effets de leurs attentes antérieures en termes de cours de leadership. L'observation participante a consisté à participer activement à leur cours de jeu de simulation d'entreprise.

Le tableau suivant reprend l'étendue des échantillons et le nombre d'entretiens ou d'enquêtes enregistrées pour cette recherche.

	L'acteur de l'offre	L'acteur de la demande	L'acteur de la régularisation
KEDGE	5	55	1
CNAM	7	35	2
NEOMA	2		1
MAZARS	1		
IAE Aix en Provence	1		
SFM ¹	6		3

Tableau des échantillons de recherche

¹ Le séminaire d'hiver 2015 de la société française de management SFM, « L'enseignement supérieur de management devient-il un business ? », février 2015

RÉSULTATS PRINCIPAUX DE LA RECHERCHE

Afin de répondre à notre question de recherche: Pourquoi les institutions universitaires révisent-elles leurs programmes d'études de MBA? (Pour la différenciation et / ou la conformité ?), nous établissons nos résultats principaux en cinq points.

Débriefing des deux cas : CNAM et KEDGE

Le CNAM est considéré comme une école de la deuxième chance, le public et la cible de la formation de MBA sont les ingénieurs, les gestionnaires intermédiaires qui souhaitent obtenir un niveau managérial. C'est pourquoi le cursus de MBA du CNAM propose des modules de gestion générale et des spécialisations en techniques de management, telle que la gestion de patrimoine, gestion de projet, gestion de la mode, etc. Il est fidèle au le cursus traditionnel des programmes américains avec un tronc commun de cours de gestion de base, et des spécialisations, avant d'effectuer le voyage d'étude et suivi des cours de coaching.

Le leadership n'est ni l'objectif ultime ni mission du programme MBA au CNAM, néanmoins il existe des cours de développement du leadership. Evitant de suivre les sujets à la mode comme les autres programmes MBA, le programme refuse de parler systématiquement ce thème de leadership dans le cours et dans le développement de cursus. Etre différent de la tendance rend le programme MBA du CNAM un programme tradition avec peu de révolution aux sujets de la gestion générale, et le programme réclame que l'approche pédagogique du cursus permet les étudiants de développer le sens et la posture de leadership via les cours de gestion et leur expérience professionnelle à l'avenir. Le programme n'a jamais fait connaître l'importance de leadership comme une compétence à enseigner, ni attire les étudiants avec les cours de leadership. Nous voyons le programme du MBA au CNAM comme un parcours de survol sur le thème de leadership, avec parfois des cours électifs de leadership. L'arrivée d'un professeur associé à temps partiel, qui est intéressée et se spécialisée par l'enseignement du leadership est la raison

sur laquelle des cours électifs de leadership sont mis dans le cursus. C'est une raison qui semble absurde, mais les étudiants réclament eux aussi une exposé plus forcée et approfondie sur le leadership. Sans l'attention renforcée sur le développement du leadership, les élèves ne voient pas l'importance du développement des gestionnaires dans l'équilibre entre la gestion et le leadership. Il n'obtient pas non plus des réflexes et des attitudes préalables pour s'entraîner ou exercer des activités de leaders, selon les études de Mintzberg (2004) et Caligiuri (2006). Le temps consacré à ce sujet n'est pas suffisant afin d'aider les élèves de voir, d'absorber et de pratiquer dans le cours ou dans la vie professionnelle.

A l'opposé du cas du CNAM, le programme de MBA à KEDGE Business School est entièrement dédié au développement du leadership. Cependant, avec toutes ces constatations, nous avons la conclusion qu'il est sur dosé avec les sujets de développement du leadership. Les cours sont organisés, ajoutés avec une grande intention d'établir un bilan complet de leadership pour les étudiants, mais l'utilisation de l'image de leaders et la définition du leadership est mélangée et éculée. Les cours sont organisés avec un rythme dense, une variété de sujets ayant un lien vers le leadership. Tous les cours sont présentés avec une couche de leadership, pourtant les sujets essentiels dans le MBA ne pourraient pas être axés que sur le développement du leadership. Comme certaines écoles de commerce, KEDGE installe dans le cursus différents systèmes d'évaluation du leadership, ainsi que les conférences et séminaires au sujet de leadership. Cependant, ces conférences et séminaires offrent aux étudiants la diversité mais aussi le chevauchement sur des définitions, des théories de leadership et des méthodes de développement du leadership. Le temps consacré à ce sujet est trop, certains élèves nous ont dit qu'ils en avaient ras-le-bol de leadership. Cela crée une surcharge de travail sur le leadership afin que les élèves soient confus le programme est pour but de préparer les chefs et non pas les cadres des affaires. Mintzberg (2004) appelle dans sa recherche une approche de l'enseignant de la gestion qui se équilibre entre la gestion et le leadership pour le développement des cadres, et pour que les futures cadres puissent apprendre de leurs expériences vers autres nouvelles expériences. Nous constatons qu'il est déficient et manque d'uniformité dans la structure de cursus à travers

des cours de leadership, par apport des revues des cursus de développement du leadership (Mintzberg, 2004; Caligiuri, 2006; Perry, 2007; Komives et al, 2011; Kouzes and Posner, 2003, Smith, 2006). Nous constatons que le surchargé sur leadership du programme de MBA à KEDGE est une moyenne de différencier de MBA au public. Le cursus que sur le leadership est développé et communiqué comme un cursus innové, remarquablement différencié auprès des autres programmes MBA dans l'industrie.

Le thème de leadership relève la rhétorique et la stratégie de conformité dans le changement du cursus MBA

Les résultats dans les deux cas du développement de MBA au travers des modules de leadership montrent que les deux écoles CNAM et KEDGE ont beaucoup de similitudes dans leurs élaboration et mise en œuvre de programmes de MBA. Les deux programmes sont définis dans la façon de se conformer aux normes internationales d'accréditation. Avoir l'accès sur le même ressource d'humain dans l'industrie, elles sont attribuées différentes allocations de ressources financières et techniques.

Nous ne comparons pas le cursus en lien avec des cours de leadership, car avec l'un c'est trop utilisé et avec l'autre c'est trop ignoré. Nous constatons un autre faite par apport de ce thème de leadership dans le cursus de MBA. Toutes les personnes impliquées dans la création et le développement de l'enseignement de ces deux programmes, lorsqu'ils étaient interviewés, par coïncidence conviennent que le leadership est si tendance que les deux écoles évitent de devenir conformistes avec cette tendance. Les deux écoles montrent les efforts pour éviter cette conformité. Selon KEDGE, différencier soi-même auprès des autres écoles et programmes par la mise en œuvre d'un angle de leadership précise, le développement du leadership (et non pas le leadership lui-même) est une solution. Tandis que pour CNAM, il semble qu'ils ne veulent pas parler de leadership pour lui distinguer auprès des autres qui en parlent trop. Autrement dit, le CNAM se différencier par se retirer des courant des différenciations similaires et ignorer totalement le courant.

Le fait qu'il y a tant de différentes définitions du leadership dans la littérature et dans les cursus de MBA mène au chaos dans l'interprétation et la mise en œuvre de cours, des approches pédagogiques et des missions de programmes MBA. Nous ferons remarquer que certains programmes de MBA auraient ajouté le mot « leadership » dans le titre d'un cours pour un but de marquage et de communication. C'est un art de la rhétorique dans la construction et la communication de cursus au public. « Faire répéter sans arrêt le mot tendance est une moyenne d'obtenir l'attention de public », comme un directeur d'un MBA a dit, « le cursus deviendrait un avantage concurrentiel pour attirer des potentiels et des candidats, qui souhaitent entendre les mots tendances. »

Différenciation est une image diversifiée de conformité

La conclusion résume sur la position stratégique de diverses parties prenantes et vérifier leurs rôles et leurs influences dans le processus de développement d'un cursus ou d'un programme de l'enseignement. Le développement et changements du cursus de MBA est le résultat des décisions prises auprès des remarques et des recommandations principales des acteurs de la régularisation, des acteurs de l'offres et des acteurs de la demande. Un programme de MBA est toujours en mode revoir concernant l'amélioration de cursus, mais dans un processus et dans l'ordre respective des parties déterminants. En ce qui concerne les recommandations des organismes de la régularisation, notamment les l'organisme d'accréditations, des classements ou des instances des pouvoirs académiques, il est systématiquement mise en examen pour modifier le cursus. Les programmes sont déclarés de développer les compétences de gestion pour les élèves comme mission, mais ils n'écoutent pas assez leurs demandes directes, et réagir lentement aux demandes de changer le cursus. Les cursus et les cours sont mis sous la réflexion et la flexibilité des acteurs de l'offre, dépendant de leurs connaissances et expériences préexistantes. L'objectif de différencier les programmes en pleine concurrence, ces efforts de différenciation sont pourtant mis en œuvre dans les mêmes réactions et engagements,

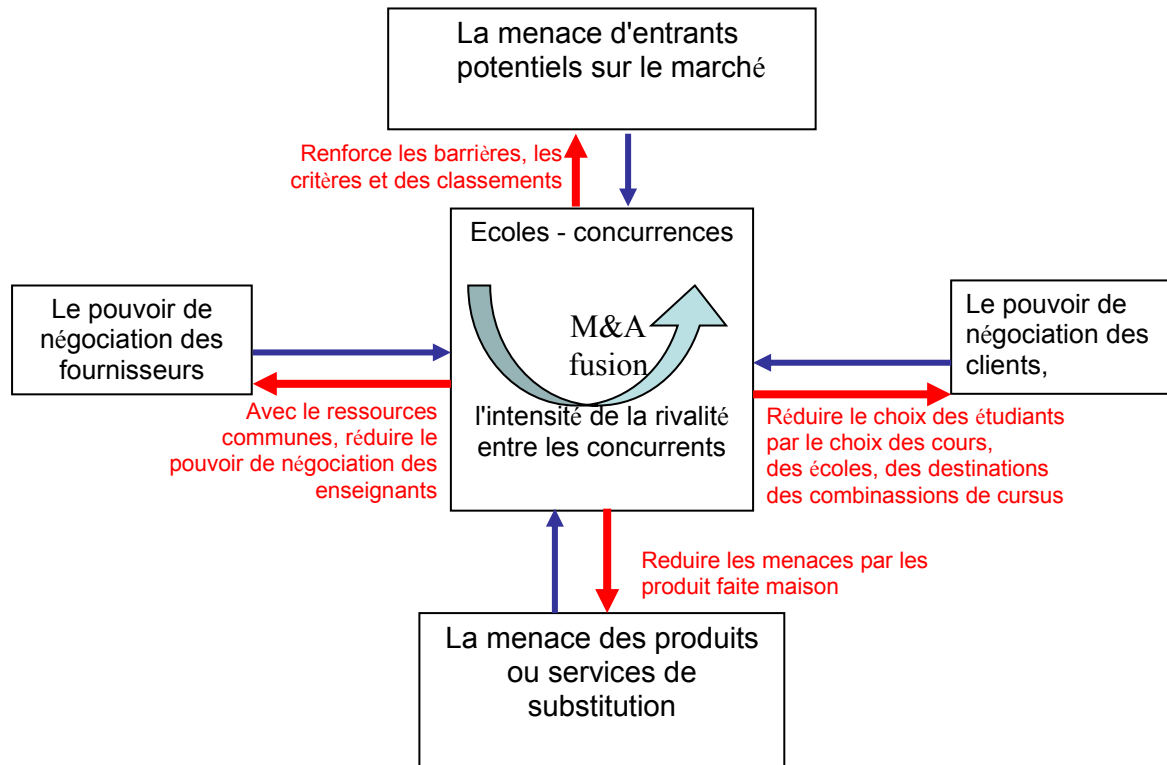
par les même causes. La différenciation est donc considérée comme une image reflétée de conformité. Les écoles se comparent et se différencient des autres, mais ils pourraient imiter aussi en comparant l'une et l'autre. Elles actualisent systématiquement les programmes avec des mêmes idées à jour et des recommandations de normes, il montre qu'elles gagnent plus de légitimité et de conformité avec ces mêmes recommandations et idées. Certaines écoles prétendent construire leur propre modèle, unique, distingué ou même un OVNI, mais ses modèles sont construits par les individus avec des expériences et des connaissances similaires, leurs modèles sont donc douteux pour être vraiment unique.

Chemin divergent dans le monde actuel des instances de qualité et des accréditations force les programmes vers la conformité également. Nos données narratives depuis les entretiens démontrent une explication sur le repositionnement stratégique : d'un côté, les écoles copient vraiment les meilleurs programmes de MBA afin de pouvoir joindre le même groupe stratégique avec les grands. De l'autre côté, les écoles veulent vraiment faire de différence mais il converge pour développer l'isomorphisme inconditionnel.

Alliances et internationalisation devient un modèle économique dans l'industrie de l'enseignement de la gestion

Le monde moderne construire la vie vers l'internationalisation et la mondialisation. Les entreprises et les organisations sont obligées de suivre cette évolution s'ils voulaient rester compétitif. C'est aussi le logique d'une école de commerce, faire face à la compétitivité et à la recherche de la croissance. Les étudiants, eux aussi, ont besoin de se former pour participer à cette évolution des affaires internationales. Pour répondre au besoin de croissance, l'internationalisation, les économies d'échelles, les écoles de commerce forment des alliances stratégiques afin d'acquérir des avantages concurrentiels, avec leurs propres conceptions de l'alliance basées sur leurs propres ressources internes et les variables spécifiques. L'internationalisation, comme une forme d'alliances stratégiques, augmente son effet auprès des écoles de commerces dans nos recherches au cours des dernières années. Les écoles ne sont plus concurrents mais partenaires. La création d'une

alliance ou une coopération entre les écoles crée une synergie afin de surmonter les avantages concurrentiels, contre les forces de Porter (1980)



Le modèle des « cinq forces de Porter » appliqué à l'industrie de l'enseignement de la gestion

Source: Porter M.E (1980), Nalebuff, Brandenburger, and Maulana (1996)

La tendance de l'internationalisation de l'enseignement de la gestion et des écoles de commerce devient un outil clé de la mondialisation dans de nombreux autres domaines. En effet, les étudiants en gestion aujourd'hui, les cadres en gestion à l'avenir, pourraient l'amener les économies dans un contexte mondial par innovation et par développement sans frontières des autres métiers aussi.

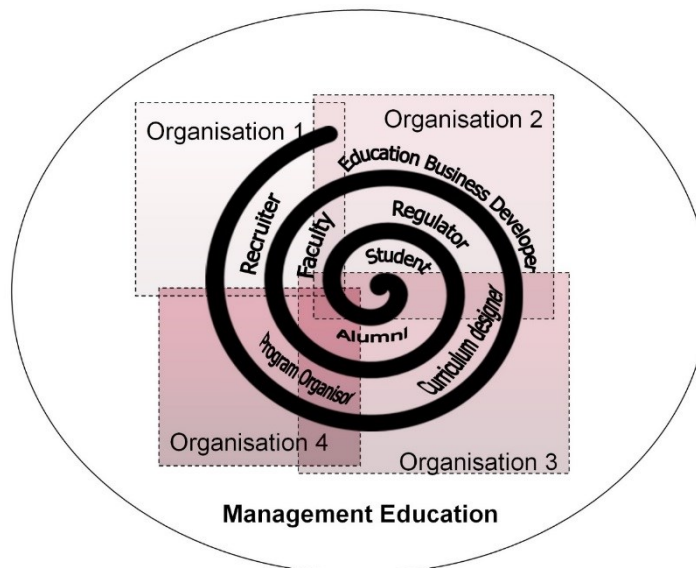
Un modèle hybride de l'évolution des parties prenantes dans l'industrie de l'enseignement de la gestion

Le multi facettes et les rôles d'un seul individu dans différentes organisations et dans l'industrie se confond avec l'identité d'une partie prenante. Les résultats d'analyse des

entretiens nous permettent de proposer un modèle spiral de l'évolution des parties prenantes dans l'industrie de l'enseignement de la gestion.

Par exemple, les évaluateurs, dans un processus d'évaluation par les pairs, pouvaient examiner et donner des remarques différentes sur un programme, car les remarques sont fondées sur ses expériences différentes en tant qu'un ancien étudiant, un directeur ou un professeur actuel de MBA, un ancien recruteur dans une entreprise ou un cadre professionnel dans une autre entreprise spécifique.

Weick (2002) mentionne le fait que l'individu interagit ou évolue dans une organisation, par conséquent, faire changer cette organisation. Les mouvements évolutifs des parties prenantes à différentes périodes de temps, ainsi que les parties prenantes invisibles et invisibles telles que les expériences et les connaissances antécédents dans le processus décisionnel montrent une manipulation importante dans l'organisation et leurs influences respectives dans la conception et la mise en œuvre des programmes MBA.



Le modèle de l'évolution spirale des parties prenantes dans les programmes de MBA et dans l'enseignement de la gestion

L'évolution spirale des parties prenantes est aussi l'issue de la tension entre mimétisme et différenciation entre les écoles et des programmes de MBA. La décision de différenciation d'un individu d'une organisation est le résultat de l'expérience de conformité accumulée de cet individu après le changement de position parmi plusieurs organisations. La tension dans l'industrie de l'enseignement de la gestion est évolutive de façon prévisible car les écoles (comme organisations) et les individus évoluent aussi. À ce égard, le modèle en spirale démontre un processus stratégique conditionnelle où les décisions sont multipliées ou disparues de façon éventuelle. La position d'équilibre stratégique est considérée comme une moyenne d'améliorer la performance des organisations, et dans ces organisations avec tel modèle d'évolution en spirale, les rôles de chaque acteur en tant qu'individu assurent la similitude avec l'industrie, mais en même temps révéler la différenciation de l'organisation.

CONCLUSION

Les changements de programmes d'études de MBA sont le résultat d'une combinaison de plusieurs acteurs parmi les parties prenantes les plus impliquées, et dans l'ordre d'importance :

- *Les recommandations des acteurs de la régularisation (les régulateurs) pour faire des changements sont significatives;*
- *Les rôles changeants des parties prenantes et une dynamique d'évolution en spirale dans le système éducatif influencent les changements de cursus de MBA*
- *Les ressources humaines et intellectuelles des acteurs de l'offre (les gestionnaires et les enseignants) sont limitées afin de renouveler les modules de cours;*
- *Les revendications des acteurs de la demande (les demandeurs) pour des changements sont assez faibles.*

Les déterminants influencent le cursus de MBA, et par conséquent la gestion stratégique des institutions universitaires, selon une logique d'obtenir l'équilibre stratégique :

- *La Conformité mène les programmes à imiter les programmes les plus performants existants.*

Les programmes de MBA introduisent, modifient ou adaptent les modules de leurs programmes d'études principalement pour suivre les indications des régulateurs ou s'inscrire dans la conformité. (Une plus grande similitude stratégique augmente la légitimité).

- *L'atteinte de la conformité conduit les programmes à la différenciation pour être plus compétitif.*

Les programmes de MBA utilisent leurs propres ressources et capacités pour différencier le contenu de leurs modules, seulement lorsqu'un niveau suffisant de conformité est atteint. (La différenciation augmente la concurrence)

- *Une position stratégique équilibrée est issue tant des stratégies de différenciation que des stratégies de conformité.*

Les programmes de MBA adaptent leur gestion stratégique aux changements de nouveaux modules de cours dans le but d'atteindre une position stratégique équilibrée. (Une plus grande légitimité et une plus grande concurrence augmentent la performance).

L'IMPORTANCE DE LA RECHERCHE

Les trois contributions sont consacrées aux aspects actuels, l'articulation entre pratiques de gestion, enseignement et recherche.

Cette recherche contribue à l'identification et à l'évaluation des déterminants parmi des parties prenantes qui gèrent les écoles de commerces et les programmes MBA. Cette recherche trace la stratégie contradictoire des écoles entre le conformisme pour la légitimité et la différenciation pour les avantages concurrentiels, à travers les modules liés au leadership. Il analyse l'évolution organisationnelle optimisée et la gestion stratégique des écoles et des programmes de gestion dans un modèle très spécifique de développement en spirale, pour les individus parmi les organisations et l'industrie. Cette recherche pourrait ouvrir une nouvelle piste de recherche dans le domaine de science de la gestion dédié à l'enseignement en générale, ou à l'enseignement de la gestion. Cette recherche pourrait éventuellement prouver un certain effet de halo dans le terrain de l'enseignement. Dans le cadre de la recherche sur un développement optimisé et une réforme des programmes de la gestion, cette recherche est également une tentative de répondre à la question de savoir comment développer et améliorer les offres de programmes de gestion en MBA.

Cette recherche a été amenée par les méthodologies qualitatives telles que l'étude de cas et les enquêtes qualitatives (entretiens, discussions, observations participants). Les méthodes d'enquêtes qualitatives sont souvent dévalorisées par rapport aux méthodes quantitatives. Cette recherche a des limites spécifiques d'une recherche qualitative : échantillons trop faibles, cas non représentatives pour légitimer les résultats obtenus. Pourtant, selon Becker (2002), la manière traditionnelle de l'échantillonnage est d'identifier une population, puis de sélectionner un échantillon de cette population très contrastée avec des caractéristiques qui mettront en évidence les différences à l'étude. Le choix des cas particuliers sera légitimement montrer la généralisation de la recherche. Pour continuer à contribuer à la littérature de la science de gestion sur les formations de gestion en France, nous allons continuer des échantillons différentes et d'enrichir notre recherche.

PART I: INTRODUCTION

“Management in business is fun; management in academia is not fun”

(Clayton M. Christensen, 1999)

Management experience earned from the business sectors and academic sector in business and management education bring us endeavours to do research on this specific academic sector with the business angles.

The French Academy of Management (Société Française de Management SFM, 2015) recently organised a conference which investigated the question *“Is Management Education becoming a business?”* It is interesting to question whether Management Education should become a business. Over the years Management Education has been increasingly considered a “regular” industry and a business, even though it differs from other industries due to the specific characteristics of education (Williams, 1995; Bennis & O’Toole, 2005). Considering that management and business education reacts to market-driven forces, business schools can then be expected to a convergence towards a model for the diffusion of management concepts and ideas. However, recent changes in Management Education are seen as a shift in business schools’ business model. This change toward marketability of education is considered by some to be a transformation in the strategic management of education. This change in educational strategy is assumed to be a result of an attempt by institutions to meet the demands of globalization, or a turn in their business cycle (Iniguez de Onzono and Carmona, 2007; Hawawini, 2005; Bennis and O’Toole, 2005). The strategic management of business schools is therefore extensively examined to understand the strategy and development of the “industry of Management Education.” This concept of Management and Business Education as a business industry is not new, if we look back in the literature of management and business education.

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

1. Business and Management Education as a market

Dumez (2015) states that Management and Business Education is frequently considered a business industry, which creates value contributing to a nation's wealth. Consequently program curricula, programs activities and management are regularly analysed from a business management perspective (Datar, Garvin, Cullen 2010, Dameron, Durand 2008, Thomas 2007, Spender 2007, Starkey et al, 2004). These researchers further state that concepts used in business and management: marketing, strategic management, and change management, among other disciplines, are interpreted and discussed in the business school and Management Education context.

The establishment of Management Education as an academic discipline was reinforced by the developments in the world's economy, the growth industry on a global scale, and the attempts to introduce economic disciplines in universities in the 18th century. In 1999, Ka-ho Mok, who studied education development in Hong Kong and Mainland China, examining the effect that emerging market forces had on education in those countries, concluded that higher education had been significantly affected by emerging market forces in those countries by what he termed "marketization." His research also introduces the idea of competition and cost recovery in the field of education:

"Students are no longer students but rather are clients or customers; their admission is about access instead of selection. The curriculum design encompasses cores and options from which students as customers can choose, rather than a fixed set of subjects. On the management front, a shift from collegial to managerial forms of university governance has been widely recognized as a "global" trend..."
(Ka-ho Mok, 1999, p.134)

Mok (1999) continues to suggest that strong market forces have caused business schools to re-orient themselves to be more sensitive to market needs, and produce employable graduates to suit the employers' demands. The researcher goes on to state that courses and curricula are "market-driven", stressing practical and applied value, while governance and pedagogical service delivery have been eventually "marketized". When measuring performance and results, the academy no longer looks simply at educated graduates but pay more attention to the salary, the professional outlooks, and the employers' scopes of performance. The term "marketization of higher education" is not solely mentioned by Mok but from other literatures. Williams (1995) indicates the main characteristics that allow researchers to apply the economic theory of the market to the review of higher education: market entry versus a highly regulated market, increasing tuition fees (price), loans for studying versus decreasing governments' subsidies (finance resources), proliferating marketing, branding and institutional rankings to guide students' choice versus students and market needs. March and Weil (2009) distrust this application of business of business schools as it put business schools into a dangerous contradiction and functions of business schools are reduced to operating as an instrument of the labour market where "schools select and certify graduates, propagating and legitimizing the values and norms endorsed by the business world, while students are forced-fed formalized models, strong indicators and procedural tools." (Thoenig, 2009, p.ix)

Another case study in American's top business schools is conducted by Zell (2001), who examines the consequences of schools becoming market driven. Not only schools shift towards privatization and search for revenue generating products such as executive education programs, schools increase tuition fees in order to bring in the revenues and resources to compete with other business schools. Zell states that although it would have been unusual before, today it is not uncommon to hear professors talk about students in terms of them being customers.

Business schools are organisations (Simon, 1967), thus organisational theories and designs are relevant tools to study them. Depending on the point of view, two models are applicable to business schools: a business model and an academic model. The former

focuses on contents and teaching processes (Simon, 1967; Mintzberg, 2004; Bennis and O'Toole, 2005 and Spender, 2013) whereas the latter focuses on the impact of the market and globalization (Hawawini, 2005; Iniguez de Onzono and Carmona, 2007; Starkey and Tiratsoo, 2007; Engwall, 2007; Durand and Dameron, 2008; Brown, 2010; Reeves, Huerta and Ford, 2011)

On the one hand, business schools provide education. On the other hand, they are professional schools, expected to deliver a valuable input because they are attended to improve one's value on the labour market. Claiming that business schools are a problem in organisation design, since the year 1967 Simon has challenged to redesign and manage the business school towards an "equilibrium condition". Bennis and O'Toole (2005) analyse what they prefer to call the "paradox between scientific model and professional model", considered to be the actual cause of today's crisis in management education. In the business model, business schools' performances are measured by competences of graduates and understanding or grounding of faculty on. In the academic model, performance of business schools are evaluated by abstract financial and economic analysis, statistical multiple regressions or research and publications. By allowing the scientific research model to drive out other essential performance outlooks, business schools are institutionalizing their own irrelevance in terms of management practices.

The introduction of market forces into management education is the most crucial issue facing institutions nowadays (Brown, 2010). To another extend, management education is highly regulated domain because of the "key role of universities play in producing, allocating and regulating knowledge, including the knowledge required for professional occupations and practices as well as information problems" (Brown, 2010, p10). With the introduction of the concept of market, management education becomes a highly regulated market with government intervention, professional norms, introduction of private management experts and academic self regulations. How market forces could be combined with all those regulated characteristics to bind the benefits of increased competition and efficiency without losing the core qualities in creating, conserving knowledge and serving broader economic, social and cultural goals.

Engwall (2007) suggests considering that management and business education reacts under market-driven forces, business schools can be expected to converge towards a model for the diffusion of management ideas. However, the industry of business education is not similar to other industries, due to the special characteristics of education. Students are basically uninformed customers who are not much acquainted with the offer and who rarely use the product twice. Reputation is thus a crucial factor for those choosing a particular education. Prestigious and well known institutions will accordingly be more attractive to students and will consequently have better opportunities for selecting good students and thus a better chance of producing elites. The reputation of an institution will affect the demand, the selection and the success of its students. Network building is also another prominent feature; Engwall argues that the most important element is not the content of the education but the social interaction with fellow students. Interaction of students creates contacts in professional life and opportunities for future network and social mobility. Tired of being shaped by market forces, many schools feel compelled to develop an identity, or a “niche in which it can excel” (Zell, 2001, p.335), or saying in other words, to differentiate itself from the other business schools.

2. MBA as a flagship product in this industry of Management Education

In the framework of Zell’s above-mentioned research (2001), the researcher further argues that there are three factors leading to the emergence of this term. First, the dramatic rise in salaries of MBA holders, which began in the 1980s. MBAs became known as “golden passports” to success. Second, the rising cost of the MBA degree itself. “Students are paying more, so they want more,” (Zell, 2001, p.331) said one professor, representing the sentiments of many other professors who explain that students now calculate the value of each course to get their money’s worth. Third, the rankings were also influential in forcing professors to view students as customers - a concept that not all professors were eager to accept. One of Zell’s interviewed faculty members described the MBA program as the product of business school and advocated differentiation:

“Our main output as seen externally is the MBA degree. But there is no agreement about what we should be producing. All the MBA programs want to be highly ranked so there’s a lot of competition, and it seems to me that we should find something that we do really well and build an MBA program around it, which is not what we’re doing now.” (Zell, 2001, p.335)

The market effect on the MBA has been noted by researchers. Datar, Garvin and Cullen (2010, p.31) researching the state of business education and MBA degrees while interviewing deans of business and management schools agree that, “the MBA ensured access to these (as well as other) attractive, otherwise inaccessible careers.” The **Master of Business Administration (MBA)** is a master’s degree which attracts people from a wide range of academic disciplines (according to the business dictionary) or is a career development generalist degree for those with significant relevant work experience (according to the Association of MBA - AMBA). The MBA is the only global degree in the sense that its model of education is relatively homogeneous worldwide (Mintzberg, 2004). The MBA designation originated in the United States, emerging from the late 19th century as the industrialized countries and companies sought scientific approaches to management. Despite the fact that United States business schools continue to dominate the global landscape (Pfeffer and Fong, 2002, Durand 2008), local competitors now exist in Europe, Asia and Latin America (Antunes and Thomas, 2007, Blackman, 2011).

The MBA has enjoyed marvellous growth over recent years and is arguably the most internationally recognised degree for business management. However, for a degree that is often positioned as the business world’s academic answer, it has also received considerable criticism. With the increasing competition among business schools, there has been a parallel and quite critical discussion about the value, role and relevance of business schools. Critical observers have regularly accused the business schools of various shortcomings, including:

- Falling far short of their scholarly aspirations; the programs are left lacking coherence or underlying logic. Business school's curricula are for the most part, still narrow and vocational (Gordon & Howell, 1959)
- Lack of relationships with the "real world" and inability to infuse students the inappropriate ethical and moral standards (Bennis & Toole 2005; Ghoshal, 2005; Hayes & Abernathy, 2007)
- "Losing their way": students are taught too much theory, much of it irrelevant and overly quantitative, and provided too little exposure to the 'soft' people aspects of organisations, leadership, and business ethics (Mintzberg, 2004; Hawawini, 2005). Business researches pay too little attention to field based research that explores real world management practices and the training has limited value in preparing students for their careers (Datar, Garvin, Cullen, 2010). Future MBA graduates receive more or less instruction, which is dispensed by trainers and solely geared to training but not from science and the logic of research (March, Weil, 2009)
- Promoting models and values that have been implicated in current corporate scandals (Starkey, Hatchuel, Tempest, 2004). The MBA model has been affected by some of the rare but incredibly damaging scandals of the beginning of the 21st century (unethical behaviour, inappropriate governance, top management and board greediness, etc.) (Dameron, Durand, 2008).

Those critics bring up the question of using the resources and capabilities of business schools to revisit the MBA programs by moving away from traditional programs and reforming and diversifying their curricula (strategic differentiation). However, there is a tension between these recommendations and the business schools' search for enlarging reputations by either accrediting themselves in joining reputed accreditation associations or by climbing up in reputed ranking bodies. By joining in the chase for reputation, business schools are joining the regulation mechanisms. Both accreditation organisations and ranking bodies create certain signals, rules, criteria or parameters that business schools are obliged to respond to. These obligations become a regulator for schools' strategies to seek for legitimacy and higher reputations (strategic similarity or conformity).

Datar et al (2010) further argue that although the MBA curricula are theoretically subject to discretion and tailoring, as in post graduates programs, powerful forces are in fact pushing these curricula in the same direction. These forces include the propensity of business schools to mimic the leaders in their fields; the standards imposed by accrediting bodies, societal pressure and educational trends.

Starkey et al (2004) also emphasize that the very nature of the business school implies that management concepts and principles are well established and embodied in the MBA curriculum, whereas business reality suggests otherwise. They argue that new management models have never been created in the academy and that management trends flow from practice to academia and not the other way. An important question is therefore raised: can business schools invent and introduce new management models in MBAs in these changing times? Can they introduce and apply new MBA modules to improve the program outcomes and meet the changing requirements of today's context?

In the framework of our preliminary research on the evolution of certain MBAs, it allows us to reach the following conclusions:

- MBA programs have been indeed amended in various ways, and each school has diversified its program based on its competences and response to the public's requirements within the same families of topics. However, the stakeholders involved and their relative weight need to be clarified.
- Core curricula are shortened and made more flexible in order to allow options and specializations.
- There is a general tendency to introduce leadership-related courses in the curricula. Leadership is not only considered a character to be achieved after confirming the functional and managerial skills but presented as a skill to be learnt.

The tendency of revisiting and improving the value of MBA programs is clear, but it is difficult to understand the whole reform mechanism, to distinguish conformity from differentiation and identify where the real added value of each business school lies. The above-mentioned preliminary research has helped generate and develop research ideas and questions that are worth pursuing further.

CHAPTER 2

THESIS ORGANISATION

Remaining in the streamline that business education is considered a market or an industry, this thesis is organised to analyse business and management institutions as organisations (a firm, a company, an enterprise, a group) and MBA program as flagship products or services in this market. Consequently, the changes in MBA curricula are regarded in a way to revisit existing products and services.

1. Thesis Structure

In the light of the above, this thesis is written under the following structure:

The literature review will firstly look through definitions and literature in the field of strategic management and organisation, where certain terms such as legitimacy, conformity, and differentiation are linked with organisational boundaries: extra, intra, inter-organisations. Those above mention terms are necessary to introduce and explain the strategic balance theory, which will be used as the core theoretical framework of this thesis.

Secondly, the review will go deeply into the literature on management and business education, with attempts to prove the strategic balance theory in existing theories or proposals on business education strategies. The thesis works on field studies of changes and determinants of changes in MBA curricula and leadership-related modules, hence necessary literature in the resources of stakeholders' theory, curriculum development and

leadership theme should be clarify as a foundation for future developments in research analysis and case studies.

The methodology begins with the design of research using field studies and field experiments in the business of management education, where studies investigates behaviour and manipulating behavioural variables in its natural setting to maximize realism of context. The field studies are implemented by means of case-study methodology. One major feature of case study methodology is that different research strategies are combined with the purpose of illuminating a case from different strategic angles explained in the literature review. In order to identify key variables for the field study, an analysis of typology of stakeholders and a design of a spiral strategic management model are employed. The choice of typology and model will determine the focus groups for field study collections of data and further analyses to answer the questions of research designed.

Field study research results is organised initially with a summary on European and French actual context in management education, MBA programs and their curricula. Each case study will be presented, where rhetorical analysis of schools' histories and programs' chronologic and key events reveal a proper set of narrative essences collected in the field studies and experiments. A comparison of two cases is conducted in order to understand the phenomenon of strategic management position of schools. The theories that review the strategic position and model are proposed before leading to **the final conclusion**.

2. Research question

To follow up the axes of the preliminary research, this research will focus on the boundaries of new leadership-related modules introduced in MBA programs and curricula. The following two research questions emerge:

1) Who, among stakeholders of MBA, are the determinants of changes in the MBA curricula?

2) How do such determinants influence the MBA curriculum development and strategic management of academic institutions?

The objectives are:

- To clarify the strategic position of the various stakeholders involved;
- To map their respective influences on the program and their roles in curricula development process
- To analyze the respective strategies of the business schools regarding their MBA programs;

The purpose of this research is to finally answer the question of:

What makes academic institutions revisit their MBA curricula?

(Competitiveness and / or Legitimacy, Conformity and /or Differentiation)

3. Hypotheses

Hypotheses are built based on Deephouse's theory on strategic balance position (1999)

Hypothesis 1 focuses on the question: Among the stated stakeholders of MBA, who are the determinants of changes in the MBA curricula?

Hypothesis 1: Changes in MBA curricula are the result of a combination of several factors by the most pronounced direct determinants:

The Regulators recommendations to make changes are significant;

The Providers' own resources proposal to renew modules are limited;

The Demanders' claim for the changes is quite weak;

The changing roles of stakeholders in the management education system influence the changes in an evolutionally spiral effect.

Hypothesis 2 aims at explaining question: How do such determinants influence the MBA curriculum, consequently the strategic management of academic institutions?

The Conformity leads programs to imitate existing successful programs.

MBA programs introduce, modify or adapt modules in their curricula mainly to follow conformity or regulators' indications. (Greater strategic similarity increases legitimacy).

Secured conformity drives programs to differentiation for competitiveness.

Only when a sufficient degree of conformity is secured, MBA programs use their own resources and capacities to differentiate the contents of modules (Differentiation increases competitiveness)

A strategic balanced position is defined from both conformity and differentiation strategies.

MBA programs adapt their strategic management to the changes of new modules in order to achieve a strategically balanced position (Greater legitimacy and competitiveness increase performance)

A thorough analysis of cases and general MBA programs in France is required to enable the candidate to triangulate and validate the links and relative weight of the identified determinants. At the same time, the thorough research would allow the candidate to illustrate the above propositions and finally build a proper theory of strategic management in Management Education.

PART II LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER 1

LIMITATIONS IN CURRENT LITERATURE OF STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION

If standing at the position as stated in the introduction part, that MBA program is seen as a product or service, business schools as a firm, Business and Management education as a market, then it should be possible to apply the existing strategic management theories in the literature to explain the temptation of revisiting MBA programs. The fact that business schools use resources and capabilities to revisit the MBA programs or follow the supply and demand forces of the economic theory of the market, however; could not be easily justified appropriately by tradition strategic management theories. We always keep a position to verify the applicability of each theory in the literature with the specific angle of the business education domain.

Before focusing on the literature of strategic management applicable for management and business education domain, it is important to emphasize that management education is a highly regulated industry. As a market, it is highly regulated in all terms of entry, supply and demand (Brown, 2010). Regarding how free new providers are to enter the higher education market, due to legal requirements mainly and financial, political and social matters, the entry is very highly regulated in the whole system of higher education. Regarding how free providers are to specify the product, as regulation is a combination of state sanctions and academic judgements (Brown, 2010, p.7), the curriculum with all course content and delivery are aimed at assessments and accreditation. Regarding how free demanders are to choose the product and provider, providing the country's education and labour regulation or information asymmetry (Reynaud, 1996), providers could not go far for complete and various information about programs and institutions before choosing. Furthermore, the characteristics of students (Engwall, 2007) assume either this market provides a reasonably homogeneous product or the limited capacity of

demanders to distinguish effectively between different products. Although being a highly regulated market, management education is manipulated strongly by strategic management and organisational theories like other industries. The literature review on strategic management below will review management education in two axes. The first axe between the environmental or institutional based and the resource-based view, and the second axe between the conformity or legitimacy and the differentiation. With strong grounding in related literature in strategic management and organisation, we also identify limitations and gaps of each mainstreams of research and propose our position that addresses the gaps to define the theories that adapt the most to management education. The central theme of this literature part on strategic management is the strategic balance position built from the two axes. Another part will dedicate at reviewing the stakeholders' influences affected by the two axes. Finally, it is aimed at identify the different impact of legitimacy and differentiation on strategy of the external environment, the organisations' strategic capability (resources and competences) and the expectations and influence of stakeholders-actors, for they each influence the choice of a strategy before implementation (Lynch, 2011).

Roughly speaking, Strategic Management is a field of study and practice concerned with complexity arising out of ambiguous and non routine situations organisation-wide (Johnson, Scholes, Whittington, 2010). It includes understanding the strategic position of an organisation, strategic choices for the future and managing strategy in action. In this context, researches assume that the fundamental theories of strategic management focus on the relation between a firm's strategy and its environment, which could be a competitive environment (Porter, 1980); or an institutional environment (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). Other strategic researches emphasize a resource-based view where external strategic factors influence the resource selection and deployment capabilities (Amit and Schoemaker, 1993; Barney, 1991; Dierickx and Cool, 1993). Finally, certain studies combine competitive advantage and resource-based views (Barney 1991, 2001), or combine institutional and resource-based views (Olivier 1997), or else combine institutional and competitive advantage (Deephouse 1999). In general, these combinations agree on the relations between institution and legitimacy and between competitive advantage or resource-based and differentiation. Deephouse develops

further the relation between these combinations and a firms' performance in order to introduce his strategic balance position theory.

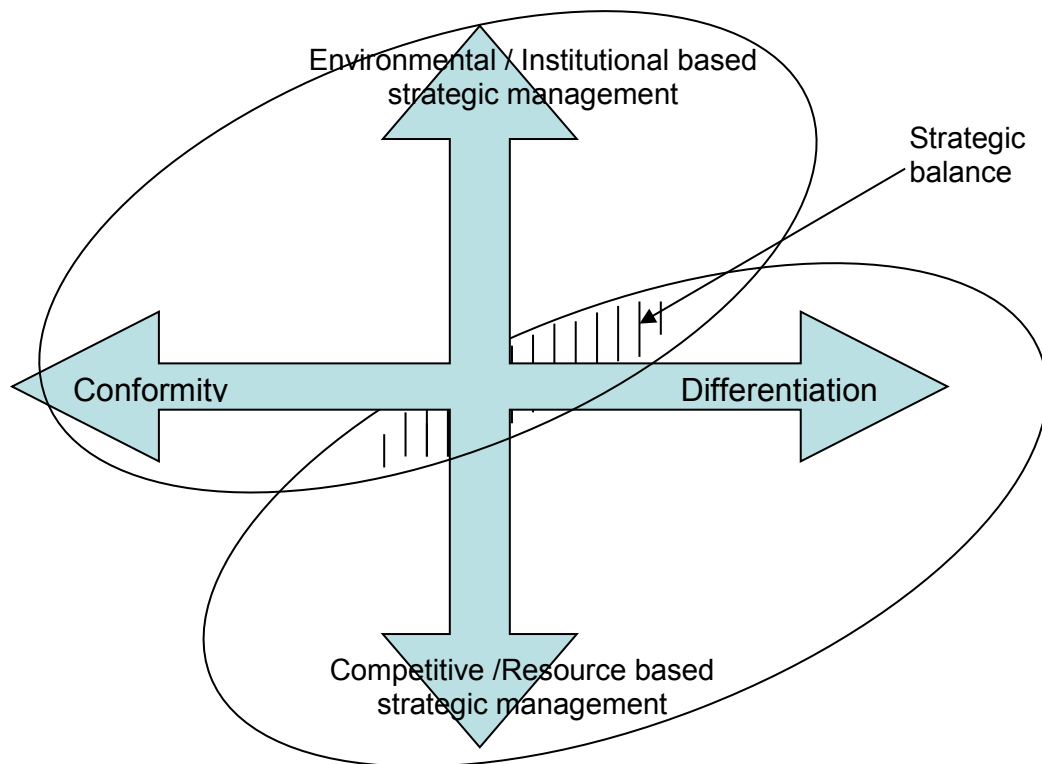


Figure II.1.1: Strategic balance position, seen from the axes between legitimacy/ differentiation and competitive resource based /institutional environment based

Source: Author (2014) adapted from Deephouse (1999), Barney (1991), and DiMaggio & Power (1983)

Simon (1996), in his book of “Sciences of the Artificial”, defines an “artefact” as a meeting point - an “interface” between an “inner environment, the substance and organisation of the artefact itself, and an “outer” environment, the surroundings in which it operates. If the inner environment is appropriate to the outer environment, or vice versa, the artefact will serve its intended purposes.” In strategic management, one of the basic strategic methods taught in any MBA programs should be the SWOT analysis of a firm, also look at the relations of an entity among its inner and outer environment. The traditional Strength – Weakness - Opportunities and Threats analysis structure has been developed by Barney (1991) as a model for a firm to implement strategies and obtain competitive advantages. Firms could either follow the resource based model to exploit their internal strengths (that

are their strengths and weaknesses); adapt to the environmental models of competitive advantage by responding to environmental opportunities and neutralizing external threats.

1. External environment

1.1. Limitation in Competitive advantage

“The essence of formulating a competitive strategy is relating a company to its environment.” (Porter, 1980, p.3) The centre of attention in literature on the competitive environment model is the description of Porter’s Five Forces. These competitive environmental conditions influence a firm’s performance and results. Porter’s five forces of competition include: 1) a firm’s barriers to entry, 2) the threat of competitive product substitutions, 3) bargaining power of buyers, 4) bargaining power of suppliers, and 5) rivalry among current competitors. A breakdown on the five forces is made in regard to the industry of business and Management Education and it indicates the specific character for each of the forces in the Management Education industry.

Entry Barriers

The six major sources of entry barriers are: 1) economies of scales, 2) product or service differentiation, 3) capital requirements, 4) switching costs, 5) access to distribution channels, and 6) government policy. These first five major sources are not really relevant to the industry of Management Education. In this industry which is considered a highly regulated industry by government policies and quality organisations (Pfeffer 1978, Engwall 2007, Antunes and Thomas 2007, Durand and Dameron 2008), entry barriers are high for a new program and product differentiation is difficult. Pfeffer, (1978) as well as Antunes and Thomas (2007) both suggest that universities will be rather hesitant in admitting new disciplines or founding new academic institutions. Such hesitation is often not only an expression of an attempt to protect academic standards but also an effect of ordinary competition for scarce resources. New pedagogies and new disciplines generally emerge as a response to new management problems.

Other barriers mentioned by Porter, replicating a product, hiring a competitor's employees, or by purchasing materials know-how from industry suppliers and consultants, may be a consideration of Management Education. An example would be the number of MBA programs offered in the U.S. According to the Business school data trends and 2010 list of accredited schools issued by AACSB International (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business), the U.S. offers the world's largest number of MBA programs with over 4000 programs offered by 454 institutions. How could student distinguish and choose among these 4000 programs?

Rivalry among existing competitors

The intensity of rivalry among existing competitors creates further competitiveness to the industry. The domination of U.S. business schools is strengthened by the reputation and ranking of U.S. schools. Hence, U.S. schools are in a good position to charge much higher tuition fees, to recruit and pay well top professors, to provide better research conditions and knowledge transfer.

Recently, European business schools improved their position in the business education industry. European schools also are successful in circulating international students inside Europe, with the major political change such as the Bologna Agreement on change of degrees, the success of program ERASMUS (European Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students) and the numerous programs non-Anglophones provided by French, Germany and Spanish business schools over other regions in the world (Witte, 2006). Finally, Management Education in Asia is booming (Blackman, 2011) and catching up in the global race of prestige business school, with four Asian schools in the Financial Times' top 20 global MBA rankings (China Europe International Business School (CEIBS)², Hong Kong UST Business School, the Indian School of Business, and the Indian Institute of Management). Those who made the choice to pursue an MBA in Asia are comforted with this recognition. Whether the goal is to establish themselves ahead of U.S. candidates for

² The CEIBS was created in 1984 in Beijing, then moved to Shanghai and took the name of China European International School (CEIBS) in 1994. The school is a not-for-profit joint venture established under an agreement between the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation (MOFTEC) and the European Commission. CEIBS mission is to support China's economic development and to further China's integration into the world economy.

international jobs, or simply to have a degree that carries the cachet of regional knowledge, it is clear that students outside the U.S. have found a new destination for Management Education (Blackman, 2011).

In reference to the global picture of the developed and emerging zones of business schools, these numerous business and management schools are put together in a fierce competition to recruit students, keep the high quality of teaching and research, provide and maintain high well-paid alumni, and keep good relationships with the business community. Downstream, the number of MBA graduates who enter the workforce with similar equipped knowledge and know-how is rapidly rising. Mintzberg (2004) pointed out in his book concerning managers stated that in 2004 nearly one million individuals in the U.S. had their MBA. In comparison in 1958 4,041 had MBAs, in 1964 6,375 graduates had an MBA and in 1966 12,998 and 1976 42,654 individuals in the U.S. had their MBA. Given these numbers obviously a competitive rivalry in this Management Education is thus very intense.

Substitutes

“Identifying substitute products is a matter of searching for other products that can perform the same function as the product of the industry” (Porter, 1980, p23). Porter suggests that analyst look even in the industry in line with Datar et al (2010) discussion on the MBA. As stated by Datar, graduate management training has long been regarded as a “golden passport” for many jobs, with the MBA degree making its place as the dominant product of business schools. The previous authors state that the pressure from substitute products in Management Education emanates from the same product being offered in different modes (MBA one year programs, MBA part time programs, executive MBA programs, hybrid MBA programs, online MBA programs) as well as abundant specialised master programs in the field of management and business, or corporate training and development programs. Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) that transfer MBA courses in new formats, are also considered a viable substitute for an MBA degree someday (Holtom and Porter, 2013).

In job placement data drawn from the case studies that appear in the book “Rethinking MBA: Business Education at a Crossroads” (Datar, Garvin, Cullen, 2010), two domains where a significant majority of full time MBA graduates from top ranking MBA programs take jobs in financial services and consulting, where the salaries are the highest. This makes it very difficult for graduates from other fields such as holders of financial or economics degrees to compete with MBA graduates. However, the volume of graduates that took jobs in these two sectors dramatically decreased after the 2008 financial crisis. Post-crisis, many lucrative jobs in financial services, and to a lesser extent in consulting, have simply disappeared. At the same time, financial services and consulting firms are substituting non-MBAs for MBAs. Datar et al’s (2010) interviews with senior managers in banks and consulting firms confirm that both industries now need to recruit more technically competent people rather than generalist MBA graduates.

From the students’ side, reputation is considered a crucial factor for those choosing a particular education (Engwall, 2007). However, the reasons a student may choose an MBA are shifting now because holding an MBA no longer guarantees a position or an immediate raise. Students have long gone to business schools to gain entry to high-paying jobs in investment banking, private equity, and hedge funds, however today they prefer to equip themselves with several competences to secure future employment (Engwall, 2007). Consequently, these other professional programs offered by schools, training enterprises, and consulting human resource groups could be suggested to be a substitute threat to the MBA within the educational industry.

Buyers

Students provide the main buying power in this industry. Unlike normal buyers, students have to go through an admission and requirements process to become buyers. Given the nature of management disciplines, Management Education has no or few admission requirements in terms of fundamental knowledge, today. In order to meet the fundamental business knowledge requirements many schools accept prior business experience as a measure of fundamental knowledge needed to meet the school’s knowledge requirements. Engwall (2007) indicates that education has special characteristics regarding students as buyers. The researcher suggests the first

characteristic differentiating education from other businesses is that students are not acquainted with the subject matter offered - if they were, they may not have enrolled. This suggests that students buy the product not knowing the product. The second differing characteristic is that even if the student greatly appreciates a particular educational program, they will not be repeat customers. These student buyers will buy the product just once regardless of the quality of the product. A third differentiating characteristic is that after the completion of their educational accomplishment they may be uncertain whether the education they have received was good or bad, since the real test of education appears only after a considerable period of professional life. In conclusion, these three differentiating characteristics suggest that the student customer is a relatively uninformed buyer.

MBA students, however, are different and are considered fastidious buyers even before enrolling the program. Dameron and Durand (2008) state that students are behaving less like unquestioning users of the educational system and more like clients or demanders, who are demanding a good return on their investment, so they look for information regarding the how graduates could be promoted after learning MBA. One might argue that recent availability and ease of access to information regarding the content and the quality of different degrees provide students more knowledge considerations when it turns to their choice of program to enrol. Nonetheless, as described in the reviewing of Management Education as the industry that reputation and network building are the essential determinants that form the knowledge and information of future students. The most important element therefore is not the content of the education program but the reputation of the school as indicated by its ranking, statistics on salaries of alumni and the social interaction between alumni and fellow students.

Suppliers

Following Porters' five forces, the bargaining power of suppliers needs to be examined. Specifically in this industry, suppliers could be regarded as an insiders' group - that is it is the faculty that stipulates the teaching activities and the outside business environment that provides business practices and cases for the courses. Ultimately, however, the gathering of practical cases from outside environments depends on faculty or assimilated

consultants. Faculty typically includes professors of various ranks: assistant professors, associate professors, and (full) professors, usually tenured (or tenure-track) in terms of employment contracts. Though a main supplier, faculty is considered an institutional asset. In order to gain bargaining power, faculty members are required to have an up-to-date understanding of business practices gained through recent managerial experience, or recent business consulting experience. To be the most effective teaching has to be linked to practice as well as theory. Roland Perez (2011) considers management as “knowledge for action.” The author suggests that management must be learned mainly for and through practice, in contact with practitioners (those who are actively involved), without too much concern for academic research (those who simply observe). Nevertheless, most management researchers also collect knowledge in the field that is identifiable and, when appropriate, transferable and taught. Hence, a business school is formed normally by faculty with multiple tasks, professor – researcher – consultant – published author. Bennis and O’Toole (2005) also point out the dual missions that most business schools claim, that is educate practitioners and create knowledge through research. Historically, business schools have emphasized the former professional roles at the expense of the latter research activities, even though a diverse expertise raises faculty’s bargaining power as suppliers to business schools.

Our first and generally formulated proposition is that the competitive analysis of the Management Education industry can be classified and studied in regard to its resources and actors utilizing Porter’s competitive forces. The below figure is framed from above analyses on the industry of Management Education

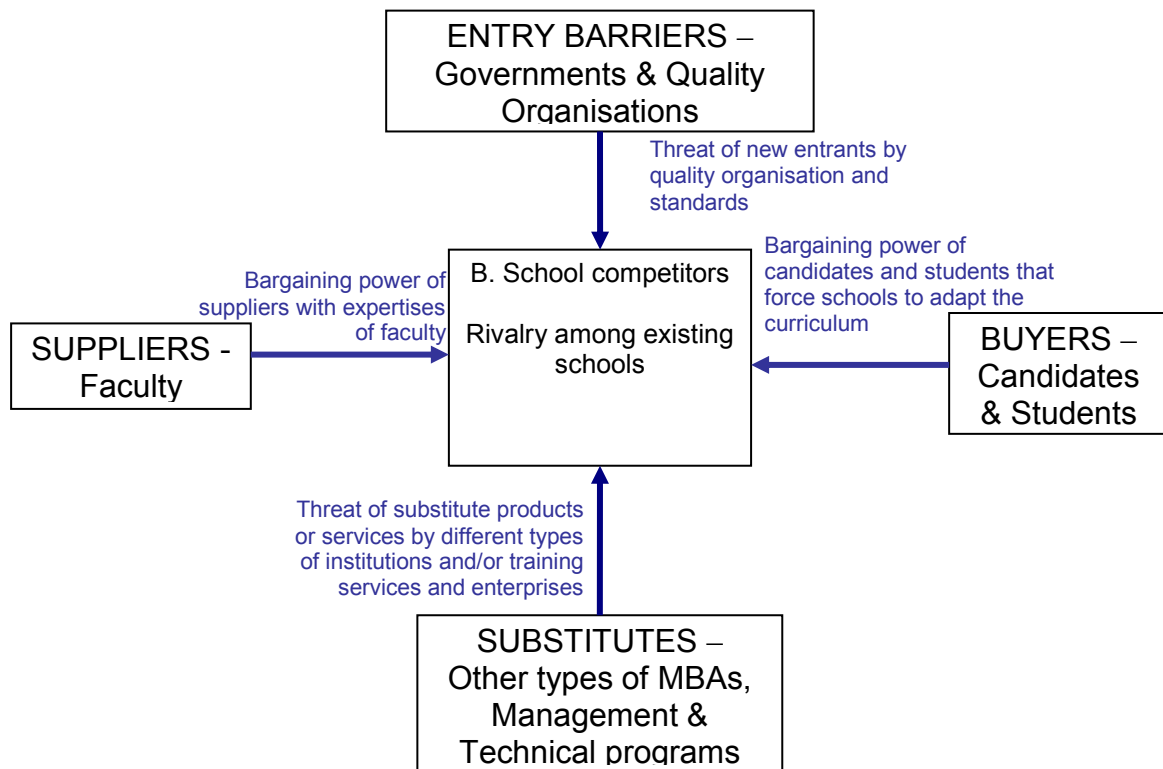


Figure II.1.2: Porter's Structural analysis of the competitive environment of Management Education Industry

Source: Author (2014) adapted from Porter M.E (1980) with analyses for the industry of Management Education based on the literatures (Engwall 2007, Datar et al 2010, Durand and Dameron 2008, 2011, Bennis and O'Toole 2005, Antunes and Thomas 2007)

"Coopetitive" strategy and Nalebuff's value net analysis in the industry of Management Education

While Porter's five forces model represents the competitive environment of the industry, Nalebuff's, Brandenburger's and Maulana's (1996) Value Net map and the "Coopetitive" model is a model that focuses on the firm and explores both competitive and cooperative advantages of forces (players) in the industry and the interdependencies among them. Similar to Porters' model, the Value Net focuses on the firm's clients and suppliers, who interact with the firm in the transaction of flows of finance and services or products. The perpendicular dimension involves the forces as "substitutors" and "complementors", who

only interact but not transact with the firm. Both substitutes and complements could be considered competitors. Forces named as a competitors, will be viewed more as competitors rather than being seen as opportunities for cooperation. Therefore, in order to create a stronger position in the market place there are more chances that the firm will look for opportunities for cooperation than for competition with forces in the Value Net and the Coopetitive models.

Considering universities as specific firms, Nalebuff, et al. (1996) constructs the Value Net model for universities, where in the transaction dimension; customers are not only students but parents, companies, governments, and donors. Suppliers are not only faculty but staff, administrators, publishers and again donors. In the interaction dimension, the substitutors are other colleges or schools, freelancing faculty or training and consulting enterprises that can provide the same education or alternative training programs. These complementing firms are also other colleges or other activities that could involve interactions with the customers and suppliers of the university.

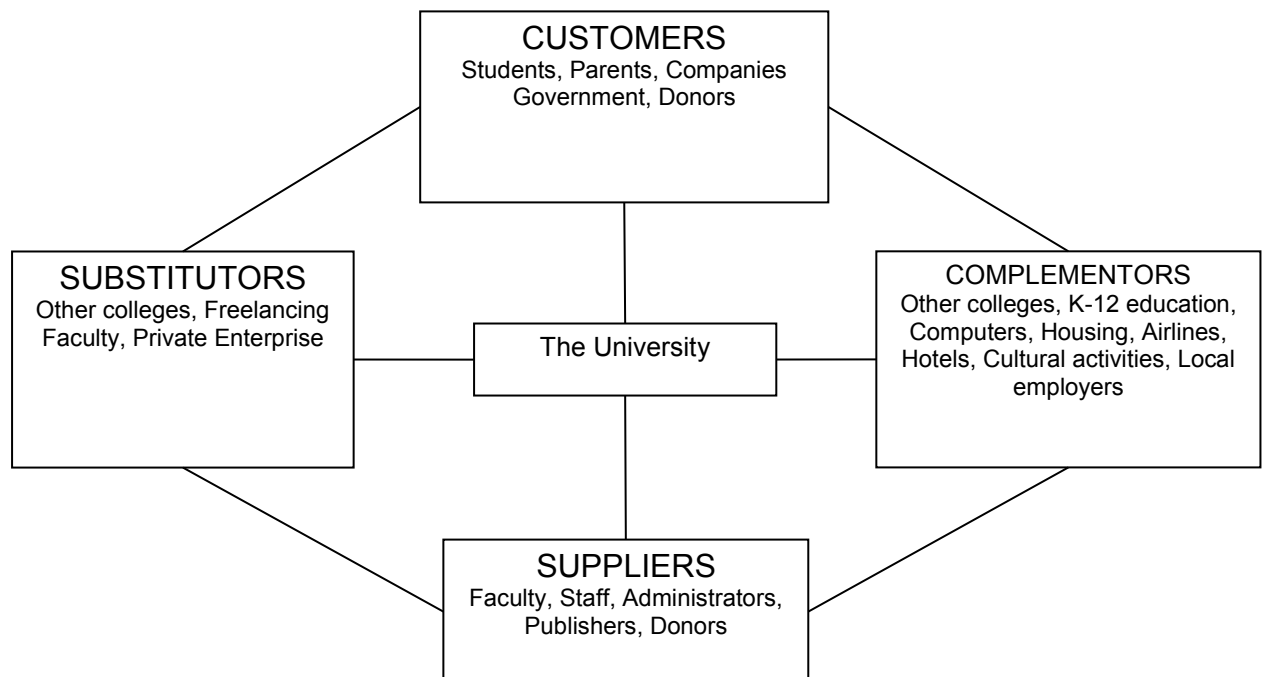


Figure II.1.3: Nalebuff's analysis of the University's Net

Source: Nalebuff, Brandenburger, and Maulana (1996)

Our second proposition is that one specific resource or actor could be involved in different forces, thus act as different players in the environment around the specific firm of education. Faculty, for example, could be considered substitutors or suppliers. Such multi-position and interdependency of players create spaces for coopetition.

Strategic Alliances in the industry of Management Education

The main idea of coopetition is how a firm creates value, by cooperating with other firms in the industry. These researchers state, “The game of business is all about value: creating it and capturing it” (Brandenburger and Nalebuff, 1995, p59). With the formation of networks or alliances between firms, alliances could create and capture value through synergy as partners achieve mutual gains that neither may have been able to achieve individually (Spekman et al 1998, Dornier et al 2012). Alliances could also capture values by building new businesses, accessing new markets, accessing new skills and learning, gaining scale, improving supplier effectiveness and creating advantaged networks (Bamford et al, 2003).

In fact cooperation could be seen as competition in a different form and partners chosen are in fact competitors who have alternative motives for cooperation (Hamel et al, 2002). Alliances are formed and strategic alliances are becoming a tool of management replacing competitive advantages. Creating alliances is where businesses consider both cooperative and competitive ways to change the “business game” (Bamford et al, 2003; Brandenburger and Nalebuff, 1995).

While not all competitors metamorphose into cooperative relationships in some specific industries they do and in these industries the alliances are highly formed. Contractor and Lorange (2002) assume that the rate of alliance formation is much higher in the knowledge-based economy than that in the material-based economy. The authors reason that “an economy based on knowledge favours customization, flexibility, rapid response and dis-internalization or deconstruction of the value chain. This favour alliances as different pieces of the value chain under different ownership cooperate with each other.” (Contractor and Lorange, 2002, p.488)

So in what industries does competition lead to coopetition or alliances and which industries adopt strategic alliances rather than competitive advantage approach? With an industry' focus on the regulatory, economic and competitive conditions, alliances seem significantly more present in the services industry such as professional services, banking and insurance, utilities, and airlines (Contractor and Lorange, 2002, Bengtsson and Kock, 2000, Koza and Lewin, 1998).

Our third proposition is that Management Education is among the specific industries where alliance is the result of competition. Analysis on alliances of business schools and MBA programs such as merger and acquisitions will be employed to develop below to confirm this proposition.

Merger and Acquisitions (M&As) in MBA and Business schools

“The factors that determine the intensity of competitive rivalry can and do change.” (Porter, 1980, p.21). In the industry of Management Education, changes in rivalry typically take the form of mergers and joint ventures. Among U.S. business schools, considered the “high strategic stakes”- schools or European’s “catching up” business schools, the trend is to merge schools or programs from different regions, countries, continents and “blend and cross-sell” strategy (Durand, 2008; Green & Johnes, 2009).

Numerous schools opened a campus overseas and increase their multi-national campus network. “Trium MBA” is an extreme example of cooperation between New York University (NYU) Stern Business schools, School of superior commercial studies - Ecole des hautes etudes commerciales de Paris (HEC Paris) the London School of Economics and Political Sciences (LSE). The cooperation between these schools allows their students to earn an MBA issued jointly by the three schools after 10 weeks of courses in London, Paris, New York, Shanghai and Sao Paolo.

Durand and Dameron (2008) research focuses on strategies and map different scenarios for Management Education across schools cooperation. They consider that Management Education institutions are developing strategies to connect with each other, and to create a European area for Management Education. Business schools and universities echo one another with multilateral strategies, and programs taught in English, with joint curricula from various countries, various campuses. Schools in the U.S. are running ahead of the field. Some of these programs have recognised the need for a European component in order to offer a unique program globally. Based on nine internal challenges of Management Education and seven external social and economic factors, Durand and Dameron (2008) outline five scenarios for the future of business schools and Management Education. Each scenario is described using a set of key variables which could be found in the forces building the business model and that of business schools (Hawawini 2005, Iniguez de Onzono and Carmona 2007 or Porter 1980) : i) the sources and structures of funding, ii) career attractiveness for faculty, iii) networks of alliances or mergers, iv) institutional or market dominance, v) new entrants, vi) management as a science or not, and vii) role of e-learning. Among these five scenarios, Durand and Dameron (2008) believe that mergers and acquisition are compelling evidence that schools search to become international, gaining visibility through size and economies of scale.

Looking separately at the five forces cannot bring the whole picture of the competitive strategies driving this industry forward. Analysing each force could help a firm to position itself in the industry, but could not have the structural analysis of the industry, which is the aim of Porter's five forces model. Hence, the links and influences between these five forces are more interesting and complete when relating a firm, in this case a business school to its environment.

From the above analysis, government policy and quality organisations are the main forces to maintain the barriers to the new entrances. The rivalry of the industry forces business schools to produce their own substitutes with different programs, or with joint programs made by merging and cooperating entities among existing schools. The latter trend of joint and merged programs creates new direction in the industry towards the other forces. With such self-generated substitutes, schools reduce the threat of substitutes and raise

the barriers of entrants. Since suppliers are both insiders' and outsiders' resources, schools reduce eventually the power of suppliers by enriching their merged faculty resources, forcing them towards updated and substitute programs and using them to enforce the quality of the product as a requirement of quality barriers and attract buyers. Schools also indicate to buyers- candidates and students, that the distribution channels could be far-reaching, and hence reduce the pressure on schools. In parallel, candidates are highly selected to join the program and design their own programs in different destination, or with different technical electives that better suit them or prepare them for future positions.

With this angle of view, the Porter's five forces driving the industry competition has been deformed and is driven by the cooperation inside the industry itself. Instead of being threatened and shaped by the forces, the industry of management education mitigated the forces with its cooperative programs.

1.2. Limitation in Institutional environment

Nevertheless, not all Business schools merge and joint their management and business programs with other schools. "The higher education institutions have certain elements in common and interact to a certain degree while being less intertwined with other institutions" (Teichler, 2008, p.355). So their strategic management focuses more on the internal environment rather than the external environment in order to cope with competitive marketplace, which Weber (1968) considers as the most important competition that generate his bureaucratization theory. In the internal environment Scott and Meyer (1991) classify into technical environment, that resembles much to resources and competences approach, and institutional environment. Both environments can be represented to a greater or lesser extent in any organisational environment, but the authors tend to categorize universities and education institution as institutionally strong but technically weaker.

Institutional environment deals with “activities and mechanisms by which structures, models, rules and problem-solving routines become established as a taken-for granted part of everyday social reality” (Schneiberg and Soule, 2005). Institutional environment focus less on actors, their characteristics or interests but it is interested in investigating the actions, interest and agents themselves flow from accepted mythologies of order and organisation. In regards of institutional environment approach, the external environment is considered outside the organisation’s boundaries, or could be called extra-organisational boundaries, while actors and their flows inside the organisation’s boundaries are called inter-organisational boundaries. Particular actors instantiated and carried by actions and flows between the two boundaries are named as actors of intra-organisational boundaries. Though, in the institutional environment point of view, organisations in general, and business schools in this particular field also underline the idea to communicate and mutual awareness among the competitors and pay attentions to the totality of relevant actors that constitute a recognized area of institutional life: key suppliers, resource and product consumers, regulatory agencies and other organisations that produce similar services or products (Di Maggio & Powell, 1983), or “for some important purposes, every institutions is going to rely on the strength and reputation of the system as a whole” (Watcon, 2006, p15). Di Maggio and Powell (1983) on the other hand do not look at the strategic issues of organisations to reduce the forces’ powerfulness and cope with challenge the forces. The centre of attention in their research however is on the process of homogenization in the environment, which is called isomorphism. “In the initial stages of their life cycle, organisational fields display considerable diversity in approach and form. Once a field becomes well established, however, there is an inexorable push towards homogenization.” (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p.148) As a proof given by the authors via the researches of Tyack and Katz from the early 1970s, public schools experienced the same process. Without mentioning the usual five forces in the environment as Porter (1980), DiMaggio and Powell (1983) focus on the emergent powerful forces in a mature life cycle organisational fields which force, persuade, or invite organisations towards changes in their strategy and direction to increase compatibility with the environment. Those powerful forces are grouped into three main mechanism of institutional isomorphic change, called 1) coercive isomorphism, 2) mimetic isomorphism and 3) normative isomorphism. The following table resumes the

difference between the three mechanism of institutional isomorphism, in link with the influence flows and organisational boundaries.

Coercive isomorphism (political influences)	Level of dependence on another organisation (legal organisation influences)	Level of centralization of resource supply (standard organisation influences)	Extra-organisation boundaries
Mimetic isomorphism (uncertainty avoidance)	Level of uncertainty between activity and results (performance uncertainty)	Level of ambiguity of organisation's goals (strategy uncertainty)	Inter-organisation boundaries
Normative isomorphism (professionalization processes)	Level of reliance on academic credentials in management (academic professionalization)	Level of participation of management in professional associations (practical professionalization)	Intra-organisation boundaries

Table II.1.1: DiMaggio and Powell's isomorphism mechanism

Source: Author (2015) adapted from DiMaggio and Powell (1983)

The coercive isomorphism is the results of formal and informal “political” pressures, via government, legal environment, quality organisations and standard operators that organisations depend on. Organisations contend not for customers and profits, they look for political power and institutional legitimacy as well. Hence, they are forced, persuaded or invited to change its direction to obtain legitimacy rather than improve performance. Schools, in the case that the authors stated from Meyer et al (1981), organize the programs, recruit special education teachers, select special students, promulgate curricula that conform to state standards. When the programs enlarge its environment of operation, like in the case of MBA curricula being applied all over the world, a certain state's standard is not enough to cover the legitimacy of the zone of operation. Schools at that level seek to use the greater power of the larger social system to eliminate difficulties. That enters the influence of standard operating procedures and legitimated rules and

structures of quality organisations outside the governmental arena. Here DiMaggio and Powell assume two hypotheses that predict the isomorphic change in the organisation:

- The greater the dependence of an organisation on another organisation, the more similar it will become to that organisation in structure, climate and behavioural focus.
- The greater the centralization of organisation's resource supply, the greater the extent to which organisation will change isomorphically to resemble the organisations that provide resources.

Organisations may change their goals or develop new strategies and practices similar to the standard depending institutions; however they observe that their new goals, strategies and practices could construct around themselves a new environment that constrains their ability to change further in the future due to the engagement with such standard institutions. On the other hand, legitimacy and dependency on standard bodies are not the only pressures that push organisation towards isomorphic changes. Uncertainty is another reason. Uncertainty is the result of knowledge absence or the vagueness of transaction cost in the competitive environment (Knight, 1923) "When organisational technologies are poorly understood, when goals are ambiguous, or when the environment creates symbolic uncertainty, organisations may model themselves on other organisations." Regarding this type of isomorphism, DiMaggio and Powell also state two hypotheses:

- The more uncertain the relationship between means and ends, the greater the extent to which an organisation will model itself after organisations it perceives to be successful.
- The more ambiguous the goals of an organisation, the greater the extent to which the organisation will model itself after organisations that it perceives to be successful.

An example to illustrate this conformism in the field of management education is the analysis of changes in curricula of four MBA programs from year 2000 to 2010 (Author, 2012). Reviewing the full time MBA programs in school year of 2000-2001, the situation is quite identical in the four schools (STERN, CSULB, CEIBS, and CNAM³). The core curricula

3- The Leonard N. Stern School of Business, New York University, in New York, United States. (STERN)

are dedicated to a common body of Knowledge where fundamental functional tools, techniques and skills for a manager are mentioned. After the solid base of managerial and functional skills, all MBA programs focus on “something” more than general, although an MBA program is considered a career development generalist degree for those with significant relevant work experience (AMBA’s definition). Since we are reviewing programs at the year of 2000 after about 100 years of development of MBA programs, each program has already evolved since, and differentiated with its specializations, although majors are normally in the domain of Marketing, Finance or basic topics of management. The position changed simultaneously in year 2010. All the programs in the research are on the trends to shorten their duration of the studying. If 10 years ago, most programs lasted for two years of 24 months, the 2010’s programs are almost for 12 to 18 months, including the internship or exchange experience. On one side, in some schools where MBA programs are not accredited or not in the global ranking systems, the MBA programs are the same and similar to any standardized MBA program with core fundamental management courses and basic electives. On the other side, reputed MBA programs that obtained more than one accreditation and are top listed in Financial Times provide more choices of structuring students’ MBA programs.

The fact is that models of organisational changes are observable, but policy and strategy detail changes inside such successful and legitimate organisations are less easily identified. And when strategy changes depend on insiders’ capacity, there rests another type of isomorphism – normative isomorphism, intuitively from professionalization of members of organisations. Professionalization exists in two main isomorphism affected aspects: cognitive knowledge from formal education, and elaboration of professional networks. These two aspects develop organisational norms among and between different functions, specialists in the environment. These norms act as a filter of personnel involving in the operation of the organisation, where professionals must compromise with non-

- The College of Business Administration, California State University of Long Beach, in California, United States (CSULB)

- China Europe International Business School, in Shanghai, China (CEIBS)

- International Institute of Management, Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers, France (CNAM)

professional clients, suppliers, directions and regulators. However, organisations could also be reinforced by the recruitment of non professional clients, suppliers, regulators, etc. and train them to become professional parties. On this type, DiMaggio and Powell give two different hypotheses:

- The greater the reliance on academic credentials in choosing managerial and staff personnel, the greater the extent to which an organisation will become like other organisations in the field.
- The greater the participation of organisational managers in trade and professional associations, the more likely the organisation will be, or will become, like other organisations in its field.

When applying to the management education when academic credentials and quality bodies are confound, it is difficult to distinguish between the coercive and the normative isomorphism. Furthermore, the arguments that management education curricula presented by MBAs should focus on professional and academic values are hotly debated. They create two main streams of normative changes, but both emphasize the greater extent to which a business school will become like other organisations in its field. For example, Datar et al also conducted a curriculum comparison of the top ranked MBA programs from 2006 and 2007. Their findings were firstly the course content of these programs is very similar. They came to a conclusion of some trends of evolution in MBA programs, some of which are similar to the findings of authors' above mentioned case studies. Datar et al concluded the "rethinking MBA" session with proposals from top ranked business schools to strengthen the relevance of business programs:

- 1) A Global perspective
- 2) Leadership Development
- 3) Integration
- 4) Organisational Realities
- 5) Creative, Innovative Thinking
- 6) Oral and Written Communication
- 7) The Role, Responsibilities, and Purpose of Business
- 8) Risk, Regulation and Restraint (or Understanding the Limits of Markets and Models)

Before apply them to the curriculum strategy or implementation, one must question whether these tendency of “unmet needs” were created by underlying causes of isomorphism, because nothing assures that by changing strategy, they are pioneers in the field or conformist organisations doing more efficiently than their “more deviant peers”. DiMaggio and Powell use the field of hospitals (case of Fennell, 1980) to illustrate that competition and isomorphism among hospitals is not in the aim of patients, but is based on attracting physicians, who in turn bring their patients to the hospitals. They increase the range of services and treatments not because there is an actual need for a particular service or disease, but because they will be defined as “fit” only if they can offer things that other hospitals in the area offer, or as “competitive” only if they can have such doctors. In another case of rate regulation in fire insurance in different American States, Schneiberg and Soule (2005) use numerous previous results to explain that rate regulation as a policy that a few leading states developed independently, and it then became a community norm and served as a template for other states to adopt as they managed uncertainty or sought legitimacy. The conclusion of Fennel and Schneiberg & Soule has to be verified in the field of business schools, but it creates a doubt of the whole change tendency of the business schools’ programs. The tendency to model their own strategies after the political institutions, after similar organisations in the same field that organisations see as more legitimate or successful, or after other organisation with strong professionalization, is a reaction to be more credible and legitimate against uncertainty. Or, in another temptation to diversify their strategic management, organisations find that there is relatively little variation to be selected from, they turn to change and follow models with or without awareness. In this view, the institutional environment approach consists of (1) local problem-solving efforts in which organisations develop or import a new form or strategy in response to their characteristics, politics, operations and problems; and (2) processes of mimesis, theorization, and diffusion by which local solutions in the new form or strategy spread throughout the industry. From the industry phenomenon, since the number of adopters of new form or strategy increases, since states, industry or professional organisations endorse local solutions, and since all actors theorize the solutions, the new form or strategy becomes more important, credible, communicability and legitimacy. In turn, the new form or strategy becomes a model for other organisations and is established as an accepted norm, where organisations must

conform as a condition for legitimacy, creating pressures for organisations to adopt the form or strategy independently of their requirements, characteristics, politics, operations and problems.

As it is not easy to distinguish between different types of isomorphism in industry in general, or the management education field in particular, and as DiMaggio and Powell themselves admit that “the typology is an analytic one, the types are not always empirically distinct”, we really need to see and compare with other sources of strategic management that could be applied in the management education fields. Each of the institutional isomorphism can be expected to happen only in the absence of evidence that they improve internal organisational efficiency. The following part will look further to the literature on firm resources and competences as competitive advantage and source of strategic management.

2. Limitations in Resources and Competences

Though confirming educational institutions are typically found institutionally strong and technically weaker, Pilbeam (2009) also concludes that education institutions are found in an increasing strengthening technical environment, emphasized by resources, competences and performances. These changes in strategic management of education institution are to meet not only institutional environment’s expectations but efficiency and effectiveness in academic activities.

Returning to the starting point of strategic management analysis using SWOT position, Barney present a synthesis framework, in which a firm should exercise strategies that exploit its internal strengths, through responding to environmental opportunities, neutralizing external threats and avoiding internal weaknesses. In Barney’s argument, the environmental models assume that the resources should be heterogeneity and mobile in the environment (industry, group) so that the environment could affect the performance of firms. To the contrary, the resource-based model verifies the two assumptions of heterogeneity and mobility for the analysis of sources of sustained competitive advantage.

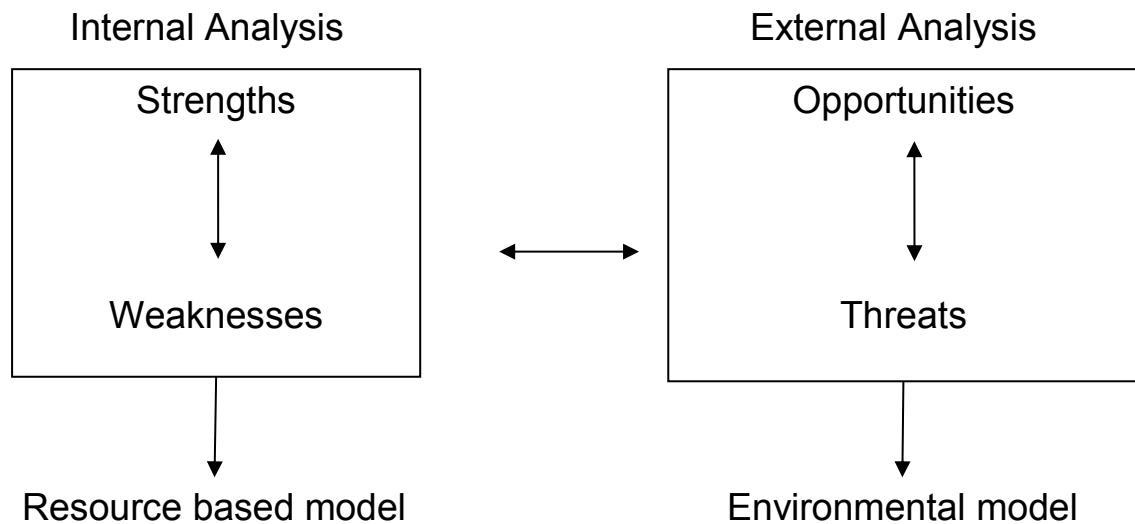


Figure II.1.4: Jay Barney's synthesis on the relationship between traditional strengths-weaknesses-opportunities-threats analysis of strategic management review

Source: Barney (1991)

Strengths in traditional resources strategic language are resources that companies can use to conceive and implement their strategy (cited by Barney according to Learned, Christensen, Andrews and Guth 1969). The resources of firms that Barney mentions are grouped into three categories: physical capital, human capital and organisational capital. The resources, whichever type of capital, human or organisational, could create important complementarities between environmental models and resource based model. These environmental models work as identifying the resources and exploit or neutralize them upon their categories as opportunities or threats. The resource model afterwards suggests what additional characteristics that these resources must possess if they are generate sustained competitive advantages.

The author brings facts and arguments to proof that unless firms' resources are heterogeneous and immobile, there are different strategies to implement and use different resources to earn competitive advantages. Those latter, however, are not considered sustained competitive advantages and could be caught up by other firms and their strategies. So in order to obtain the sustained competitive advantages, firms resources have to earn both two conditions and have four attributes: it must be valuable, it must be rare, it must be imperfectly imitable an there cannot be equivalent substitutes.

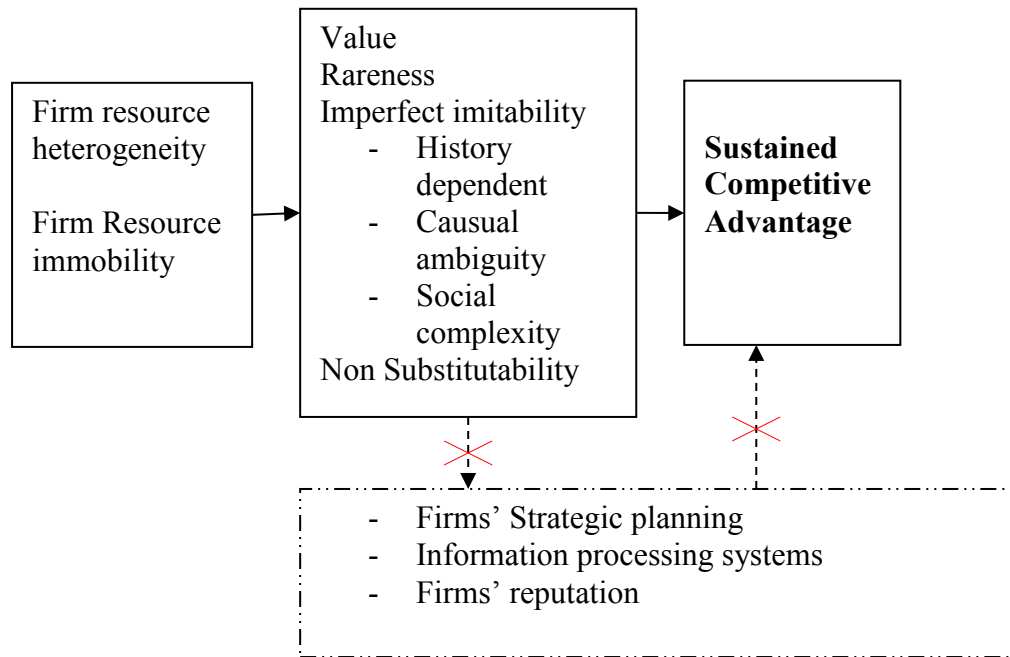


Figure II.1.5: The relationship between resource heterogeneity and immobility, value, rareness, imperfect imitability and substitutability and sustained competitive advantage

Source: Barney (1991)

Although the reputations of firms have been cited as sources of competitive advantage (Porter, 1980), Barney opposes the idea by proving that reputations are not rare, and could be imitable, or substitutable, hence could not be a sustained competitive advantage. In fact, rather than developing a positive reputation, firms might reassure their customers and suppliers through the use of guarantees and other long-term contracts, which turn out to be substitutes for firms' reputation. In the same logic, firms' strategic planning and information processing systems could not be a sustained competitive advantage, since there are many firms engaged in the environment's planning and process, they learn from each other how to do so or how to make use of resources to implement so. Thus these resources are far from being rare, and they easily obtain very high imitability or substitutability considerations.

As Barney (1986) points out, firms need to be analysed from the resource side as well as from the product side if a privileged product market position is achieved or protected by

the deployment of scarce assets, it is necessary to take into account the opportunity cost of these assets. Dierickx and Cool (1993) continue with the insights of Barney and conclude that “asset stocks are strategic to the extent that they are non-tradable, non-imitable and non-substitutable.”

However, Looking at Barney’s framework of resource model, it is difficult for a firm to turn its resources to become a sustained competitive advantage with all public known resources. It is furthermore difficult for a firm to know the main resource or the set of resources that produce such success. Hence it is under high ambiguity that a firm attempts to reproduce a successful firm’s strategies through imitating or substituting its resources, or that firm innovate its heterogenic and immobile resource to produce a sustained competitive advantage. All strategies then are “characterized as economically rational within the constraints of limited information, cognitive biases, and causal ambiguity (cited by Oliver 1997 according to Amit and Schoemaker 1993, Ginsberg 1994, Lippman and Rumelt 1982 Peteraf 1993, Reed and DeFillippi 1990). In the field of business education, the fact that business schools apply and add leadership to their curriculum is to echo a strategy that could be of its own or of successful schools. Nevertheless, it is difficult to detect the real motivation of such echo through the resource-based model of strategic management.

We assume hereby that neither the resource based nor the environmental based models in the strategic management literature could be purely applied in the market and industry of education management. “The resource-based view has not looked beyond the properties of resources and resource markets” (Oliver 1997) and the environmental based models has looked strictly to closed items of factors and determinants involving in the environment’s analysis. The fact is thus followed up by examining the theories that combine different angles of models, and one of the theories that are brought forward in business education studies is the theory of strategic groups that lead to strategic positioning studies.

3. Strategic group studies and strategic positioning analysis

3.1. Limitation in Strategic group research

Strategic group studies often examine the two previous mentioned models between the environmental one and the resource based one. In the strategic group theory, the performance and strategies could be attributed to strategic groups and not only to the idiosyncratic character of an individual entity in that group or industry. A strategic group could be defined as a group of firms pursuing similar strategies regarding relevant dimensions with similar resources (Hunt 1972, Porter 1980, Yami & Benavent 2000). Strategic group theory focuses on the relationship between strategic group or strategic group membership and performance. In a thorough review of literature on this relationship, Dornier et al (2012) conclude that research on strategic groups could not prove the existence of a genuine link between strategic group membership and performance, using neither the objective approach (reflecting the environmental model nor the cognitive approach (reflecting the resource based model) to strategic groups. Nevertheless, they point out that many researchers recognize the potential complementarity of the objective and cognitive approaches to strategic groups in order to analyse the similarities and differences in strategic behaviour, strategies effect on performance, and position of firm in the strategic groups.

In addition, Dornier et al (2012) summarize from different researches that there exist the heterogeneity of strategic groups' structure and different heterogeneous factors creates different types of positions of firms regarding their strategic groups. Reger and Huff (1993) based on their findings from the bank study propose different positions or types of firms in relation to strategic groups:

- Core Firms that are closely associated and define the basic core strategy of a strategic group.
- Secondary Firms that implement the strategic group core strategy less consistently than core firms.
- Transient Firms (Defector Firms) whose strategies are changing from one strategic position to another, but along dimensions common to other firms in the group.
- Misfit Firms (Inconsistent Firms) whose strategies are inconsistent over time.

- Idiosyncratic firms whose strategies cannot be easily expressed in terms of the key strategic dimensions used to define the competitive positions of most firms in the industry.

Dornier et al (2012) add up two categories of firms which are Solitary Firms (strategic group with unique member) and Firms belonging to several strategic groups. Although strategic group theory is failed to prove the existence of genuine link between strategic group membership and performance, it combines institutional, environmental and resource-based views to a link a membership position within its strategic group. Furthermore, strategic group theory develops the derivations to analyse the relation between firms' performances and strategic positions and their strategic similarity or differentiation from their strategic groups.

3.2. The theory of choice: Strategic position analysis

3.2.1. Differentiation

According to the resource based view, a firm that takes advantage from differentiating its resources will be less confronted with the competition (Barney, 1991). The market is assumed to have a finite level of resources at a certain point of time; hence these resources are divided among the firms competing for the same strategic position in the group, except for solitary type of firms. A firm that avoids conforming to the strategies of others but differentiates its strategies (being either misfit or idiosyncratic firms) will have less similar competitors that limit the performance of the firm and hence decrease its failure rates (Hannan et al 1990, Porter 1991). A firm in the Core firm position will earn profits from its distinct position depending on the ability of numerous secondary firms - their competitors to imitate the position. Normally Core firms tend to be more resistant to change and to have a myopic vision of the industry because of their strong identification with the group. (Dornier et al 2012). Rational differentiation reduces competition and increases performance, or as Deephouse (1999) conclude: Less strategic similarity increases performances.

In the context of management education, few literatures explore the theory of strategic group. Providing that strategic group theory provides analytic framework to answer questions about the similarities and differences in organisations' strategic behaviour, their strategies' effect on performance, Thomas and Li (2009) identified that "neither business schools nor universities have been the context for applying the tools of strategic group analysis" but it has been applied to the analysis of MBA programs in previous literatures; which emphasizes that strategic groups could be found in the business and management education context. The authors choose factors that represent a school's resources and strategies in order to form strategic groups. Those factors are cited as 1) financial endowment and budget, 2) faculty skill and administrative resources, and 3) program and research profile. The two prior factors is stated as the major determination a school's position within the global business education industry since it shows the difference outcomes in terms of performance and reputation of the school. In other words, a school should be different in using its richness of professors' skills or social function and quality of students in order to avoid similarity in competition and stake out a distinct position from its rivals.

3.2.2. Conformity

Other arguments, particularly institutional theory agree that a firm should be same as others in order to gain legitimacy and hence achieve superior performance. Types of Core Firms who identify strongly with the group will be more effective to exchange information, transfer resources and work collectively for their mutual benefit. They also recognize their interdependence and act together more effectively to create competitive barriers, which is proved in the case of joint MBA and merging business schools in the previous part. Secondary or even Transient firms potentially are protected as being legitimated to the group. A legitimate firm obtains resources of higher quality and at more favourable terms than does a firm whose legitimacy is challenged, since they are considered in a legitimate group with easily understood strategies or less risk to fail. Deephouse (1999) consequently concludes that greater strategic similarity increases performance.

3.2.3. Strategic balanced position

Strategic Management past researches have evidenced that strategy is shaped as a firm's position between similarity and differentiation. This leads to the relation between competitiveness, legitimacy and performance. However, because members of the strategic group do not perceive or are indifferent to certain amounts of differentiation, firms can be different to some degree from their competitors and maintain their legitimacy in keeping similar dimensions as their strategic group. Deephouse (1999) has developed the theory of strategic balance by integrating into a single theory the conflicting perspectives. By differentiating, firms reduce competition, thus less strategic similarity increase performance (Competitive advantage - Porter 1980, Barney 1991). By conforming, firms demonstrate their legitimacy; thus greater strategic similarity increases performance (Institutional theory - DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). Deephouse (1999) has introduced the strategic balance theory, according to which a firm should be balanced between differentiation and conformity. In well established and highly regulated markets whose competitive and institutional forces are high, the proposals for differentiation and similarity should both be significant according to Deephouse.

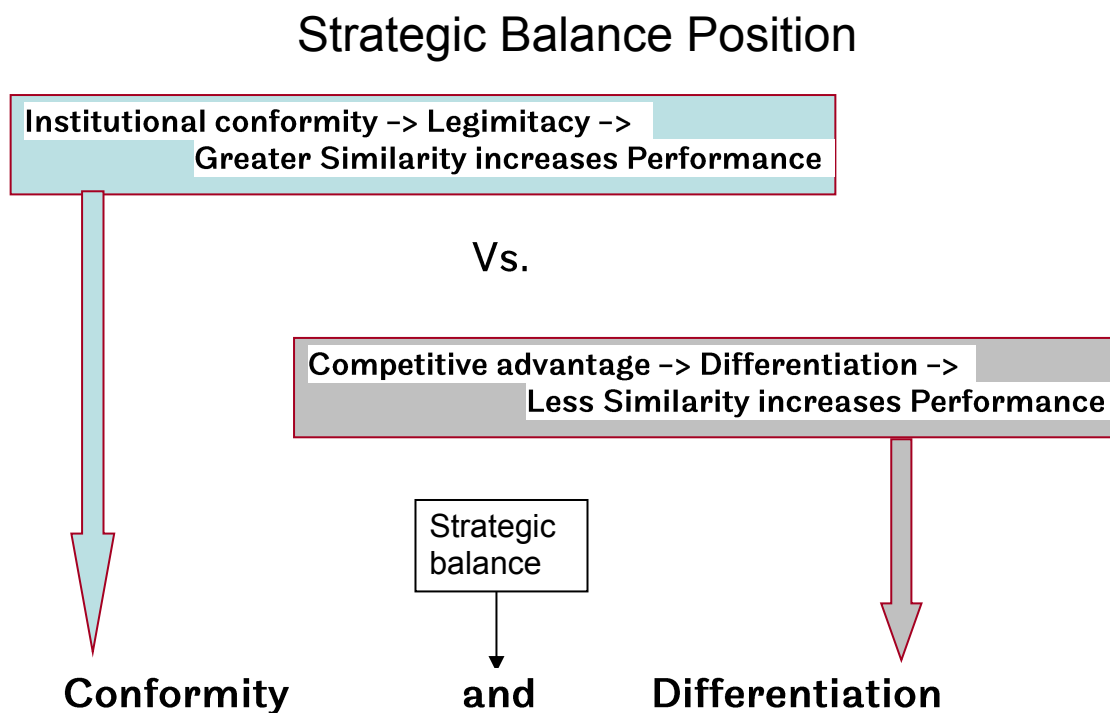


Figure II.1.6: Deephouse's strategic balance position

Source: Author (2015) adapted from Deephouse (1999)

The performance of firms based on their position in relation to strategic groups, and the tendency to move towards to the balance position should be tested in different context. Though there exist literatures investigated business schools under the strategic group theory and strategic profiles, very few researches focus further the strategic position of business schools and MBA programs in the business and management education context. This could be seen as a field research and a context to test Deephouse's strategic balance theory.

4. Conclusion

Considering the relative strengths of competitive forces in the market and legitimating forces in the institutional environment, should business schools build a strategic balance position vis-à-vis these forces for a higher performance? In fact, some elements of balanced position or trade-offs between differentiation and conformity in higher education have been vaguely mentioned in the literature. Brown (2010) is among few researchers, who discuss about the balance, differentiation and similarity features at the same time to compose a healthy higher education system, where:

- A balance between public and private purposes and benefits of education, a balance between the interests of individual institutions and an education system as a whole, a balance between institutional autonomy, freedom of action and common interests.
- A differential and diversity of provision of programs to respond to new kinds of demands, with resource differentials between individual institutions, staffs or academic cores.
- A regulation in the system in the public interest so that it produces worthwhile outcomes for both external and internal stakeholders.

Considering that this research field is still underdeveloped to look at the trade-offs between differentiation and conformity in management education, we shall start with the review of management and business education in the context of Deephouse's strategic balance position. We then conduct a study on the MBA curricula reform where influential actors representing the forces in different organisational boundaries affecting the schools' strategy and their respective MBA curricula, to look for their positions and trade-offs between differentiation and conformity.

PART II LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER 2

MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS EDUCATION: A REVIEW IN CONTEXT

In the literature, Management and Business Education is increasingly considered a ‘regular’ industry, even though it differs from other industries due to the specific characteristics of education. Recent changes in Management Education are seen as a shift in business schools’ business model, a transformation to meet the demands and the globalization trends, or a turn in their business cycle (Iniguez de Onzono and Carmona 2007, Hawawini 2005, Bennis and O’Toole 2005).

The strategic management of business schools is therefore extensively examined to understand the strategy and development of the “industry of management education”. This review examines management education through the strategic management lenses in the following order: (1) reviewing the history, the markets and the models of business schools in the field of management education (strategic background or context); (2) summarizing previous researches that have implications for strategic management on business schools (strategic theories); (3) applying Deephouse’s notion of strategic balance position (1999) to researches provided to education institutions (strategic balance). Specific zooms on Master in Business Administration (MBA) programs will be applied at each stage to demonstrate the reviews, for it was argued that MBA programs are flagships of management education in many researches (Mintzberg 2004, Antunes and Thomas 2007, Engwall 2007, Durand and Dameron 2008 & 2011, Spender 2008, Datar, Garvin, Cullen 2010, etc.) Specific contexts that are reviewed include management education in European.

The purpose of this review is firstly to connect the previous and existing literatures with the concept of Deephouse’s strategic balance position between conformity and

differentiation, applied in the field of education management and in the development of business programs and curricula. The aim is furthermore to enhance the theory part of business strategies and the practical part of management education.

1. History of management institution and roles of management education

1.1. History of management institution

The recognition of management education as an academic discipline was reinforced by the development in the world's economy, the growth industry on a global scale, and the attempts to introduce economic disciplines into the universities in the 18th century. Many scholars claim that the development of business and management knowledge originally started in Europe, but they disagree on which European countries the first insights of “business schools” were established. Upon Engwall (2007), the newly established chairs of economics in German universities are the first academic institution involving in economics and business, who reflected the prevailing political belief in mercantilism and the importance of exports for the national wealth. The German “Handelshochschulen” model thus becomes the leader for other Nordic countries business schools during the early decades of the 20th century. Bearing another view, Antunes and Thomas (2007) give evidences that the knowledge of commerce should be institutionalized and taught initially in Europe, as a result of the military power of not only the Prussian regimes (Germany) but the Napoleonic regimes (French) as well. French scholars also join the latter points of view, with de Montmorillon (2011) arguing that France is where the first business schools were conceived, represented by Ecole Spéciale de Commerce et d’Industrie (known as ESCP Europe today) inaugurated in 1819. Historically, the initiative of setting up business and management knowledge as an academic field started in Europe since the early 19th century, but the institutionalized and highly legitimized business schools have appeared in the US since the 20th century.

It is undeniable that US models are dominating the business and management education field around the world. Management education as a scientific standard could be tracked back to the 1950s with the US models of the Carnegie Foundation and the Ford Foundation to set up commissions to review the state of management education. The reports of the commissions formulated policy prescriptions that drove the development of universities and business schools towards a research and discipline-led focus, with an emphasis on scientific method, research and knowledge creation and a strong focus on graduate education in business. This focus also created a significant gap between the rigor of the scholar, discipline-based, academic research tradition anchored firmly in the economic and social sciences and the relevance of understanding and improving management practice for the management clients of business schools (Antunes, Thomas 2007). The changes and add-ups that the commissions proposed include operational research, other quantitative studies, behaviourally oriented studies, recruitment into US business schools of mathematicians, political scientists, psychologists, sociologists, and statisticians, and especially the development of the post-experience Master in Business Administration MBA programs (Engwall, 2007). Although the actual influence of American models varies among different European countries, the US models are said to have become "the benchmark for European schools" (Crainer & Dearlove, 1999, Engwall, 2007, Durand et al, 2008 & 2011) However, it was not until the second half of the 20th century that such MBA programs took off, triggering an on-going debate about the roles of management education, and the different models of business schools.

Although the American models have been adopted afterwards and influence varies different European countries, the US models are said to have become "the benchmark for European schools" (Crainer & Dearlove, 1999, Engwall, 2007, Durand et al, 2008 & 2011) However, it was not until the second half of the 20th century that such MBA programs took off and got such reputation as nowadays.

Whether this growth will continue, slow down or even reverse itself in the near future is a question confronting business school administrators and management education researchers worldwide. Questions about the roles of management education and the

models of business schools are often echoed in researches in the last decades (Pfeffer and Fong, 2002, Bennis and O'Toole 2005, Hawawini 2005, Dameron, Durand, 2008, Datar, Garvin, Cullen, 2010, Spender 2013). These questions are separately raised afterwards.

1.2. The role of Management Education

The role of Business schools and Management education, as Bennis and O'Toole (2005) summarize, is a dual mission that most business schools claim: (1) to educate practitioners and (2) to create knowledge through research. Historically, business schools nevertheless have emphasized the former at the expense of the latter. The dual mission matches the two goals that Simon (1967) assumes for a business school: "both the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, and the application of knowledge to practical pursuits." Concerning the educate On the practitioner side, this role is to "educate all the functions constituting a "business language" which it is indispensable to master, but it does not split into marketing plus finance plus accounting, etc." (Mintzberg, 2005). Basso et al (2011) further consider that a business school's task is either (1) training functional technical experts that acquire tools and know-how in order to occupy any defined function in an organisation, or (2) preparing managers or organizers that influence others' behaviour in order to defined collective action, or (3) educate future leaders that understand well the instruction of organisations in order to influence the construction of the society. Pfeffer and Fong (2002) demonstrate that ultimately a business school is about career and salary enhancements for learners.

The role of a management education is illustrated on the curriculum and the knowledge that business schools and their instructors teach and train learners. Instructors could transfer know-how without any difficulties from a class to another, since it is their jobs. But in reality it is difficult to a manager to transpose from a function to another in a company or to another company, another industry. Say in another word, the context knowledge is not as transposable in management as for a professor, an engineer or a doctor. To manage a company, one must know the context perfectly. Management

educated must be a practice with a part of craft (profession, experience), a part of art (insight or intuition), and a part of science (analysis). However the management graduates are not designed to become a calculator (a pure science) or an artist (pure art). The work place needs people who is balanced, devote to a task and practice a management style that they could be qualified as “employable”.

As a counter point, Starkey et al (2004) consider business school as social institutions, as key players that contribute to the development of new ideas and new managerial skills. Starkey et al argue that business schools and management research have potentially central roles in the context of a knowledge society where education, training and research are core processes of social and economic change for a new era. Perez (2011) defines management as “knowledge for action”. He mentions the three arguments against the legitimacy of management science, where management is (1) a compromised science that associated with capitalism, (2) an art rather than a science and (3) a pseudo or a soft science. Management must be learned mainly for and through practice, in contact with practitioners (those who are actively involved), without too much concern for academic research (those who simply observe). Nevertheless, most management researchers do not only do simple observations but also collect knowledge that is identifiable and contestable and when appropriate may be transferable and taught. Hence, a business school is based normally on a triple-function faculty whose members are at the same time researchers, practitioners and teachers.

Being nourished from military thinking, business schools emerged more or less at the end of the nineteenth century (de Montmorillon 2011). With the accepted meaning of management as knowledge for action, business schools were created to meet the need for trained individuals to be capable of making good practical decisions in several domains. When using the term of business school, we share as well the counter point that Pfeffer and Fong (2002) demonstrate, that business school primarily is about career and salary enhancements, or business school is to be considered a social institution, a key player in society for an evolution of new ideas and professions of management (Starkey et al 2004).

At the end of the twentieth century, business education was characterized by a solid, dominant model that was simultaneously functional and cross-functional.

But then questions about corporations' aims arose at geographical level, management education should equip future managers to deal with structural and geographical expansion of corporations and the increasing power of stakeholders. Does the demand of corporations' geographical expansion uniquely bring the thoughts of internationalization and multicultural into the framework of management education and new perspectives for business schools?

Management education is not only practice bias but also employment oriented. Could we say then that management education is a mirror of the business world and careers' demands? Basso et al (2011) say yes to this question, but then arise another question what position to take. "Is the business school a place dedicated to teaching conformity or is it an arena where debate and opposing views can be heard". At the former position, it is then explainable what happened in current crises in the 2000s. Management education is a responder to the demand of the market, hence business schools prepare and provide the technicians that the economy required; come up with theories explaining the main economic events of the 1980s only after the fact; and provide modelling elements that presupposed the efficiency of markets, shareholders' value creation.

The literatures bring to a close that management concepts and principles are well established in business school and assumed to be embodied in the MBA curriculum. Business reality suggests otherwise.

With accumulate crises from accounting fraud at Enron and WorldCom, and then the collapse of the Lehman Brothers and major financial institutions, management education could not just keep teaching conformity. Business schools could not teach the management a complex system by dividing it into smaller pieces and optimizing those pieces without considering the whole. The shareholders' value maximizing should not be

the highest objective of an organisation, but it should enlarge the scope to maximizing the stakeholders' value, including customers, public, employees, society, etc.

Datar, Garvin and Cullen (2010) summarize the essential components of business school education in three fields to be taught: knowing (or knowledge), doing (or skills) and being (or a sense of purpose and identity). Whilst they do not reject traditional management theories, they argue that business schools need to reassess the facts, frameworks and theories that they teach (or the “knowing” component) while at the same time rebalancing their curricula so that more attention is paid to developing the skills, capabilities, and techniques that lie at the heart of the practice of management (or the “doing” component) and the values, attitudes and beliefs that form managers' world views and professional identities (the “being” component).. The topics of self-awareness, broad world view of landscape of business, (or internationalization and multicultural business) practical skills, realities of organisations, leadership skills, adapt to change (leadership); etc should be added-up in the management curricula.

Korpiaho, Paivio and Rasanen (2007) base on a review of three journals of management education research: The Academic of Management Learning and Education, The Journal of Management Education, and Management Learning, to identify different conceptions of management education. They form the management education concepts with 1) the Who – those educate and are being educated; 2) the How – means education to be accomplished; 3) the What – things to be achieved and accomplished; and 4) the Why – reasons to aim for certain goals and employ certain means in education. The scholars shape the conceptions into five types: the tradition to be distinguished with the MBA programs, and five revised forms namely science-based education, competency-based education, service-learning, action-based education and critical management education. The differences between the conceptions are resumed in the following table.

	Traditional	MBA	Science-based education	Competency-based education	Service learning	Action-based education	Critical management education
WHO teachers	Specialists in disciplines	Service providers	Scholars and researchers	Skills researchers, trainers and assessors	Concerned citizens & experts in own field, committed to teaching	Change and bridge academic & work-life practices, facilitators & co-researchers	Activist scholars and facilitators
WHO students	Instrumentally oriented careerists	Paying customers, with a few years of work experience	Subjected to the quality of theories	Individuals with personal, improvable skills, growing up to professional tasks	Coming professionals and privileged citizens who learn from encounters with less privileged	Experienced professionals with reflective capacities	Victims of education or self-reflective, open-minded learners, potentially responsible professionals
HOW	Lectures, cases, and other exercises on discipline-specific tools, techniques, and models	Program of modular courses on a wide array of managerial tools, with traditional methods	Introduction to robust, evidence-based theories, with the rehearsal of thinking skills, reading, writing	Exercising and demonstrating working skills, defined and assessed by teachers	Applying academic knowledge in not-for-profit-sector projects, in collaboration with others	Action learning or research projects on professional practices, with the support of reflective spaces	Providing intellectual resources and spaces for critical reflection on managerial ideology/ practices and experience of injustice

WHAT	Successful specialists and forthcoming managers	Certifying access to executive positions and the professions, in a profitable way	Academically educated, responsible, professional managers	Competent professionals, capable of diffusing, developing best practices	Educated, responsible citizens, for democratic society	Reflective, autonomous practitioners	Politically aware and active professionals and intellectuals
WHY	Success depends on individuals' talents and values, educations provides then with opportunities?	MBA education as an investment for those make for a better economy, individuals free to choose according to their values?	Intellectual virtues and moral responsibility make a real profession?	Competent, human professionals are effective and do well in society?	Service is moral action and values human dignity, democracy as a set of values?	Human development to serve practical, professional and social purposes in equal relations?	Resisting alienation, keeping up hope and a struggle for a better society and work

Table II.2.1: Conceptions of management education in the three journals

Source: Korpiaho et al (2007) Anglo – American forms of management education: a practice –theoretical perspective

In the book of "the future of business schools, scenarios and strategies for 2020", Durand and Dameron (2008) have already raised the questions: what will be the core pieces of knowledge, skills and capabilities to be taught in business schools by 2020 and beyond? This question whether management is a science has been developed and analyzed further by other researchers in another book of Redesigning Management Education and Research, Challenging Proposals from European Scholars.

Antunes and Thomas (2007) use different sources of research literature to point out that there are distinct differences between European and US models of business education. To argue against the idea of Pfeffer and Fong (2002) "this fact has caused business schools in other countries (outside the US) to imitate US schools a model of business education", the authors present the idea that a distinctive set of national business school role models have merged over time in Europe. The latter alternative models uses a theoretical model based on a social constructionist approach, together with other evidence to highlight the key elements of differentiation between European and US business schools. Joint with the other European researchers (Durand et al, 2011), they put the idea that these differences imply the future competitive strategies of European management schools.

Historically, the initiative of setting up business and management knowledge as an academic field started in Europe since the early 19th century, but the institutionalized and highly legitimized institutions become more developed in the US since the 20th century.

Throughout Europe, higher education systems are mainly public with state-owned universities. Though, it is hard to look at European management education as if it was homogenous. The job market for business professors remains essentially national, student mobility is still low despite EU effort to foster cross border exchange programs, and the specificity of each national higher education structure is still high. The only possibility to look at European management education as a whole is to cluster into three models: the Latin, the German and the Anglo-Saxon models.

French is included in the Latin model, where business education remains split between the public and private systems. Public universities offer under graduates and doctoral degrees while private and semi-private business schools play a central role in delivering Master's degrees and executive or professional education such as MBAs. Moreover, while the public system dominates in volume, private or semi private business schools are more selective and more prestigious at Master's level. The tuition fees show the difference from quite low in the public schools and ten times that amount for private or semi private schools

Of the European countries, France is still cautious when it comes to adopting the American model. Business education started early in France with the creation of l'Ecole Supérieure de Commerce in Paris in 1819 and l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes Commerciales in Paris in 1881. However, these schools belonged to the very special French system of grandes écoles which according to Barsoux and Lawrence (1990), are regarded by companies "as elaborate sifting systems rather than purveyors of knowledge primarily purchasing the "concours", that is, the entrance exam and initial selection rather than the training itself". As a result the American model has barely put in an appearance at all, and participation in the North American publication game is therefore limited in France.

It should be added that various attempts to protect French culture and the French language (the Toubon laws) have been an important factor of this resistance to the US model. Crainer and Dearlove (1999) argue that business schools in France simply provide a mechanism for selecting elites: "people don't go to the top business schools just for the learning; they go to join an elitist club, which has little to do with their abilities as managers. Basso et al (2004) also mention the same symptom of participants in French business schools - les grandes ecoles de commerce in the book "Tu seras patron, mon fils, les grandes écoles de commerce face au modèle américain" (You'll be boss, my son; the leading business schools face the American model)

1.3. Models of business schools

This part does not analyze the models of business schools on the basis of cultural or national indexes. Instead, it attempts to evaluate models of business schools based on their functions or performances as institutions. Business schools are organisations (Simon, 1967), thus organisational theories and designs are relevant tools to study them. Depending on the point of view, two models are applicable to business schools: a business model and an academic model. The former focuses on contents and teaching processes (Simon 1967, Mintzberg 2004, Bennis and O'Toole 2005 and Spender 2013) whereas the latter focuses on the impact of the market and globalization (Hawawini 2005, Iniguez de Onzono and Carmona 2007, Starkey and Tiratsoo 2007, Durand and Dameron 2008)

Academic model

Simon (1967) assumes that the goals of a business school include “both the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, and the application of knowledge to practical pursuits. It does not assume that one of these goals is the sole possession of the discipline, the other, the sole possession of the professions.”

On the one hand, business schools provide education. On the other hand, they are professional schools, expected to deliver a valuable input because they are attended to improve one's value on the labour market. Simon therefore concludes that business schools “must be vigorous in research as well as teaching, and must provide a solid intellectual core to the professional as well as the disciplinary portion of its concerns.” But how could professional practice eventually combine vigorous theorizing? Claiming that business schools are a problem in organisation design, Simon challenges to redesign and manage the business school towards an “equilibrium condition”. Yet the equilibrium condition is vaguely designed since practice is towards the creation of economic value, not scholarly contribution (Spender 2013). Bennis and O'Toole (2005) analyze what they prefer to call the “paradox between scientific model and professional model”, considered to be the actual cause of today's crisis in management education. In the business model, business schools' performances are measured by competences of graduates and

understanding or grounding of faculty on. In the academic model, performance of business schools are evaluated by abstract financial and economic analysis, statistical multiple regressions or research and publications. The authors accuse numerous business schools to have a blind adoption of an inappropriate and ultimately self-defeating model of academic excellence, that create the nowadays crisis and off the line lost in management education of business schools. By allowing the scientific research model to drive out other essential performance outlooks, business schools are institutionalizing their own irrelevance in terms of management practices.

What Bennis and O'Toole (2005) call a scientific model is a model where management is assumed to be an academic discipline like mathematics, chemistry or geology. Joining other scholars (Mintzberg 2004, Pfeffer and Fong 2002, Simon 1967), they claim that business is a profession, not a discipline, and thus rely on many academic disciplines, include applied mathematics, economics, psychology, philosophy, and sociology and computer science. They call for a distinction between a professional and an academic discipline as a prerequisite before criticizing the scientific model of business schools. "In our view, no curricular reforms will work until the scientific model is replaced by a more appropriate model rooted in the special requirements of a profession." Bennis and O'Toole argue that, on the contrary of what lively debated by professors and faculty of business schools in top economics and management research journals, most current issues facing business managers are questions of real business judgments.

Spender (2013) suggests that the design and model of business schools could be explored by looking at two issues: (1) the relationship between theory and practice; and (2) the distinction between generalities and particularities. As per the former relationship between theory and practice, Spender builds on Knight's approach since 1923 to conclude that business educators can teach students by "synthesizing empirical generalizations with the available theory without expecting that theory to be determining." As per the latter relationship between generalities and particularities, Spender points at the fact that general management is declining and being replaced by a booming production of specializations in business curricula aiming at resolving particular problems.

In the temptation to find reasons why business schools embrace the scientific model rather than the professional model, Bennis and O'Toole (2005) give three reasons. Firstly, it will be easier for faculty to generalize the business cases by eliminating complex social and human factors as well as minimize time in the field discovering the actual problems facing managers. Secondly, faculty is influenced by the number of articles published in "A-list" business research journals, which are refereed by anonymous panels of scholars who assess research findings based on objective, scientific standards. However those articles are hardly consulted by practitioners who manage to find their own solutions with restrict incomplete data and complex environments. At many business schools, young academics choose the road to tenure which does not run through field work in businesses. "Junior scholars are urged to avoid too much work with practitioners and to concentrate their research on narrow, scientific subjects, at least until late in their quest for tenure". Consequently, as research-oriented business professors come to dominate Business school faculty, management curriculum, notably that of MBA are designed and taught with what were known by tenured faculty from researches and journals, not with what really happened and experienced in the real management life. The third reason Bennis and O'Toole explain the over embracing scientific model therefore is the fact that the integration of disciplined-based knowledge with the requirements of business practice is left to the student when they graduate and become business practitioners. "Today, business practitioners are discovering that business school professors know more about academic publishing than about the problems of the workplace. It's no wonder there's been such a marked increase in the number of in-house corporate universities and for-profit management education organisations."

This paradoxical situation is also explained by Durand (2013) when he analyses the to-be-called "between-two-pertinence" position of management education offers in his department of management, innovation and prospective in CNAM - school of management and humanities. The position is to dose equally between academic activities and knowledge and professional and managerial practice and experience in the offers so

that the students and graduates could benefit from both academic and professional tools and skills.

The goal is to balance academic activities, knowledge, professional and managerial practice and experience in the teaching offer so that students could benefit from both academic and professional tools and skills. In order to achieve the proper dosage, many business schools have to hire adjunct professors who are professionals and experts to teach MBA courses, so that students could learn about connections between practical knowledge and academic disciplines.

Business model

Viewing a business school as a firm, Hawawini (2005) analyses the functions of business schools in the competitive environment with factors such as demands, branding, products, operation and delivery, finance, human resources and corporate governance. These seven factors result in a SWOT analysis that, in a context of global competition, leads business schools to change and adapt. Iniguez de Onzono and Carmona (2007) also argue that the process of globalization increases the effects of the five forces in the business model of business schools: market concentration, products (structure and form of delivery of program), finance (sources of income), operation and distribution (distribution channel), demand and customers (profile of customers).

This part integrates the two points of view into eight up-fronting issues in business model of business schools, including:

(1) *Market concentration*: Iniguez de Onzono and Carmona base on Frey and Eichenberger's 1993 idea to label business education in research-market type and competitive-market type. The point is the authors contrast the North American market as a competitive-market with European market a research market. In a competitive market, there is a high mobility of academics, strong links between promotion, compensation and objective, performance and evaluation, high competitive at the time of searching for students, faculty and funding. Meanwhile, in a research-market, there is a high intervention and barriers (such as different

education languages) that prevent mobility and competition, status of school and faculty is prevented so that evaluation does not really link to performance or promotion, compensation. However, globalization and steady growth of business educations move business schools in the research market towards the convergence of market concentrations. The convergence does not occur from the research-market zones towards the competitive-market ones; it shows the union of competitions in traditional universities, business schools, corporate or enterprise universities, consultancy firms, online organisations, etc.

(2) *Demand or profile of customers*: the effects of globalization on business education and how to respond to this phenomenon. Applicants for business educations do not only constitute from one country or at the same stage of professional life. The needs and characteristics of candidates are changing, with a solid international dimension in their demands. That leads schools to several ways to internationalize its curriculum, its students, its faculty and its presence. In the aim of internationalization, business schools follow either import or export or alternative model. The import model aims at diversifying the school: recruiting new students, attracting new faculty and governing teams from around the world and choosing English to be the only and mutual language of communication and teaching. The export model focus on exchange students, faculty and create as many study trips as possible to provide students and faculty with maximum international exposures. In this export model the design of curriculum must be flexible but it is hard to control the quality of academic outcomes as well as financial investments. Even though, the heaviest financial investments are considered if network model (alliance model) is implemented, when business schools seek for implant multiple-site institution or merge and acquire campuses in different countries or regions in the world.

(3) *Human resources*: the shortage of highly qualified faculty and what to do to make up for the shortfall. With the high demand and the opening of new schools, new campuses; shortage of faculty is a non-surprise results. Again the question of focusing on research oriented faculty or professional oriented is raised, and how to manage a faculty with two distinct tracks. More than that, an alternative to

recruit faculty trained in fields that have a close association with business administration as stated in the academic model part.

(4) *Product*: high demands from the customers and changing context of business environment generate the need to review the program and curriculum. The needs to introduce softer skills (behavioural skills and societal skills) into the curriculum while preserving the more analytical and concept-based courses (core courses) are one of the factors to reemphasize the value of the product. This should be discussed further in the next chapter of literature review.

(5) *Operation and delivery*: given that business schools internationalize to different campuses and towards different students, with shortage of faculty, technology is considered part of the solution of programs' operation, how the effects of information and communication technologies could be on modernize teaching and learning methods. Another temptation on operation of business programs is to make a flexible and appealing structure, duration and contents to an ever-dynamic demand. The traditional mode of education on classroom-based full time is gradually replaced by part time or is blended between classroom, outdoor and online activities.

(6) *Finance*: public or private business schools face the same problem of fund raising. They converge to achieve a financial balance between governments support, fund raising from alumni and enterprises, and revenues program fees. Moreover, current or alternative funding models are built in order to support continuous increase in program demand, and investment in researches or future program developments. On their turns, the research and teaching performance could help increase the allocation of funding to business schools from different resources, notably from governments and executive educational activities.

(7) *Branding*: the need to strengthen reputation and build up the school brand in order to secure its long term competitive position. However, branding of business school, according to Hawawini (2005), is partly supported by its faculty, programs and the visibility and success of its alumni. Hence, the success of a reputed business school does not belong only to a product and the human resources that create products, it depends on the market segment (the best students and

corporate sponsors or recruits best students) and standard auditors (ranking and accreditation organisations). Again in here, it is the strategic choices and management structures of business schools that help boosting the branding.

(8) *Governance*: the need to adopt more effective governance structures and to make the appropriate strategic choices that will allow the school to better cope with competitive pressures. Consequently activities and management structures pay more attention to outsiders' votes and impacts on schools programs and competition (government, the press, the public, the auditing bodies, etc). Moreover, as the result of changing funding models, schools management board need to open and invite new financial investors (governments, alumni, sponsors, students' representatives).

This business schools' business model is described from different angles in the literature, e.g. competition, funding and demand (Starkey and Tiratsoo 2007), merger and acquisition, economies of scale, funding and pricing policy (Durand and Dameron, 2008). Considering that business school is a business, Durand points at the "business becoming" attitude of the schools, that brings difficulties to see and evaluate their academic value (academic models).

Given the above insights into different views on the roles of business schools and the contrasts between the academic model and the business model of business schools, the following section looks into different theories on the strategic management of education institutions.

2. Strategic management of education institutions

2.1. A new agora – Rethinking the business school (Starkey et al 2004)

Criticizing business schools despite their actual profitability, Ken Starkey, Armand Hatchuel and Sue Tempest (2004) point out the propensity of scholars to revisit the value and role of business schools. On one hand, the business of business schools are judged to be too "marketized" to offer business courses money's worth rather than other traditional degree subjects; or become the "cash cow in a university system increasingly squeezed of

cash from the public purse”. On the other hand, scholars doubt about the value added and roles of business schools, beyond the universities and business schools’ reason “for the financial health”. The authors follow Pfeffer and Fong’s research (2002) to argue why the position of current business schools in the “league tables of business performance” depends primarily on career and salary enhancements of students. The debates between business models and academic models of business schools do not limit in the issues that faculty should provide to students theoretical wing or practical wing knowledge. The authors suspect that these schools are facing a deep crisis in the functional logic of the university and its role in relation to the economy and organisation governance. They suggest that business schools and management research should be rooted in academic traditions and become potentially a new knowledge spaces, called a new agora – defined by Nowotny et al (2001) as “the new public space where science and society, the market and politics commingle.” The definition is made under the metaphor of the original agora in the city-states of ancient Greece and since “we needed a novel and expansive term for a space that transcends the categorizations of modernity”

Measured by this new agora strategy, Starkey et al (2004) try to reconfigure business schools with different scenarios:

1. *The scenario of little change* is where business schools adapt their policy and training to a “business as usual” extrapolation of the present. It fits with the analysis of history and market development of business schools, given the steady growth in the US, Europe and then expanded to other continents (Far East, Asia, Latin America)
2. *The scenario of change for the worse* occurs when business schools are seen as “educationally, culturally and ethically bankrupt”. New providers such as management consulting groups and corporate universities enter the education industry, meet more expectations from the public and gain competitive advantages.
3. *The scenario of change for the better* is where business schools are more like academic entities. They concentrate on the search for knowledge that is relevant

to the needs of individuals and the society, which constructs their core competence in the competitive market. They focus on the creation of knowledge appropriate to changing business conditions.

2.2. Social construction process (Antunes, Thomas 2007)

As Starkey et al, Antunes and Thomas (2007) also look at the dilemmas of the business schools presented by Pfeffer and Fong (2002). However, against Pfeffer and Fong (2002) who assert that “business schools in other countries (outside the US) imitate US schools in the model of business education”, they highlight with other European researchers (Durand et al, 2011), key elements of differentiation between European and US business schools and suggest that these differences announce the future competitive strategies of European schools.

Historically, the initiative of setting up business and management knowledge as an academic field started in Europe since the early 19th century, but the institutionalized and highly legitimized institutions become more developed in the US since the 20th century.

The authors argue that business schools’ industries are “cognitive communities”, where “Over time, as social interactions occur within the business school cognitive community, a language and nomenclature evolves to capture the “industry belief systems” – models and evolutions of business educations - that consistently be shared through public media, shape the strategies and actions of members of the community”.

Antunes and Thomas posit that a distinctive set of national business school models have emerged over time in Europe, using a theoretical model based on a social constructionist approach. This model has three levels:

1. “*Industry beliefs*” exist about the boundaries of markets and competitive interactions: business schools are defined in a national context and they are

influenced by the cultural, legal and regulatory idiosyncrasies of their home country.

2. Norms or “*industry recipes*” emerge: The industry logics and beliefs about business schools are shared globally, with standardization of the US style business school model and the MBA as the flagship management program. In this level, the dominant industry model becomes the “recipe” for the others to imitate. As a result, it creates certain leading national industry examples.
3. *Inter-organisational* performance differences and reputation orderings manifest: The trend of national reputation elites beyond the US business school model continue to confirm. At the same time, “consumerism pressures and quality accreditation processes” also strengthen the reputation position of business schools and the “social coding and interpretation of business school differences in performance” are confirmed accordingly.

2.3. Foresight scenarios (Durand, Dameron 2008)

From a strategic perspective, Durand and Dameron (2008) posit that “management education institutions are developing strategies to connect with each other, and to create a European area for management education.” Business schools and universities echo one after another with multi-literalist strategies, with programs taught in English, with joint curricula from various countries, various campuses. These programs illustrate a growing awareness of the need for Europe to offer a unique program globally. They identify the nine challenges for business schools in the world, in regarding the US schools as runners ahead in the field. The first two challenges identify the above mentioned wonder about the roles of management education and business schools:

- 1) Management is best practices and / or scientific knowledge?
- 2) Do Business schools really have the capacities to educate the managers of tomorrow?

The four coming challenges recall the value of business schools, in which we could identify some concepts in the strategic background:

- 3) Is there, will there be such a thing as a European way to manage?
- 4) Whether business schools move towards an increasingly commercial approach?
- 5) Will European universities and business schools eventually be in a position to take care of themselves, with an autonomous governance?
- 6) Towards internal battles around brandings of degrees, programs and institutions?

The three rest challenges make the manner of business schools questionable:

- 7) Could business schools strike a better balance for faculty between teachings, doing research and touch base with reality?
- 8) Could business schools reconfigure their teaching methods towards the value network but keeping the traditional values?
- 9) When and how to provide a life long learning?

In order to map the scenarios of business schools strategies, the authors point out the seven exogenous pressures on the environment of management education and industry of business schools, which are:

- 1) European Construction (Europe and Regions) will affect the role of Europe in the world, including economics and education.
- 2) The liberal thrust increases the market dynamics in academic industry and business schools' governance, especially public-funded ones.
- 3) Aging concerns all developed countries, with emerging consequences such as redirecting continuous education, professional life after retiring.
- 4) The rising of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) influences the external environment of the educational systems and management knowledge so far from developed economies.

- 5) The rise of the knowledge economy and investments in universities research and education help countries to leverage knowledge and catch up the gap in both engineering and management with others in the global economic race.
- 6) Issues of governance enable countries and companies to stabilize legal system, enforce intellectual property rights, fair treatment, etc
- 7) English as the language of business and its dominance affect the choice of business schools to implement its education and research projects.

Based on these findings, Durand and Dameron draw out five scenarios about the future of business schools and management education. Each scenario is described using a set of key variables which could be found in the abovementioned forces building the business model of business schools: i) the sources and structures of funding; ii) career attractiveness for faculty; iii) networks of alliances or mergers; iv) institutional or market dominance; v) new entrants; vi) management as a science or not and vii) role of e-learning

The five scenarios of future for management education that Durand and Dameron present are:

- 1) Drifting away: where North American dominance, value chain of management education is not affected much and financial resource is limited
- 2) European Management stands up: EU management claims some form of specificity, thus feeding into business schools' curricula
- 3) Business Schools as vendors: schools and programs are organized as distribution channels, professors are knowledge gurus
- 4) Mergers and acquisitions: schools search to becoming international, gaining visibility through size, building economies of scale
- 5) Reactive adaptation: Business schools are struggling to transform themselves, in search for performance.

The authors look further at three geographic clusters of activities that business schools are developing: the United States (or North America in general), European countries (or OECD countries) and the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and developing countries. This analyze helps the authors to place the current strategic postures of the business schools in their scenarios, as follows:

- 1) *Forging ahead* (North America cluster) – to reinforce the dominance of leading schools on the business education industry.
- 2) *Penetrating to influence* (North America cluster) - to focus on strategic group of leaders, make full use of the resources and dynamics and get access to the group
- 3) *Catching up* (OECD cluster) – to imitate and follow the US leading schools
- 4) *Importing from the leaders* (BRICS cluster) – to try to access to knowledge and adapt to the national context
- 5) *Ignoring the leaders* (OECD cluster) – to operate the strategy with national boundaries and own academic, economic forces, with a risk of isolation in the global management environment.
- 6) *Diversifying sources* (BRICS cluster) – to aim at finding alternate sources to be independent from leading schools' suppliers
- 7) *Differentiating to compete by leveraging national or regional specificities* (OECD cluster) – to operate in the same direction of the second posture, with an observation on leading schools and their tendency.
- 8) *Blending and cross-selling* (BRICS cluster) – to move firmly towards customization of imported knowledge and construct capacity to create local knowledge
- 9) *Recognizing and competing* (North America cluster) – to acknowledge potential emergence of business schools success in regional and global market and develop a plan to compete.

3. Strategic balanced position in the literature

Past Strategic Management researches have evidenced that strategy is shaped as a firm's position between similarity and differentiation. This highlights the relation between competitiveness, legitimacy and performance. By differentiating, firms reduce competition, thus less strategic similarity increase performance (Competitive advantage - Porter 1980, Barney 1991). By conforming, firms demonstrate their legitimacy; thus greater strategic similarity increases performance (Institutional theory - DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). Deephouse (1999) has introduced the strategic balance theory, according to which a firm should be balanced between differentiation and conformity.

Strategic scenarios and postures of Starkey et al (2004), Antunes and Thomas (2007), and Durand and Dameron (2008) will be reviewed in the light of Deephouse's strategic balance theory, in order to demonstrate that although with different expressions, the strategic balanced position has already been identified and described in the existing literature on management education.

3.1 The new agora as future “re-legitimization” for business school (Starkey et al 2004)

Business schools are the object of numerous criticisms that they cannot ignore. They also face numerous demand of modern, up-to-date knowledge from the business world. By redefining the new agora to the “changes for the better” scenario, business schools achieve a re-legitimization. They look beyond the business school as a “honey-pot to attract students and start discussing the things that are supposed to be the university's core and distinctive competence, its *raison d'être*, the nature of knowledge, the creation of knowledge and its dissemination.”

Starkey et al borrow Habermas' idea (1976) that there is a relationship between the socio-cultural system, the educational system and the occupational system in management education. Looking at the diffusion of management ideas, Engwall (2007) further notes

that management education (educational system) is engaged in reciprocal relationships with three other significant management fields, namely practice, consulting (occupational system) and media (socio-cultural system).

The processes are then reinforced by the interaction between the fields, where management education is the response to problems arising from the other fields, solutions from practice and consulting are imported to education and solutions proposed by business schools are exported to practice. The argument of Habermas is that the socio-cultural system provides the basis for the legitimacy of the other systems. Consequently, business schools should gain legitimacy by:

- being a new kind of knowledge space and not just a knowledge carrier, where different disciplines and different stakeholders (scientists, politicians, company and industry representative, non-governmental agencies and pressure groups, media and others) interact and learn from each other;
- being a space of advancing business issues, that is opening debates in which scientific and policy discussion about business and management take place and give rise to greater public awareness of these issues;
- engaging in production, through research and teaching, of more socially robust knowledge, building closer links between business and other faculties. Not only this would comfort their legitimacy, it would also expand the sphere of influence of the business schools.

In this redefinition of the role and value of the business schools and their management programs, Datar et al (2010) add the concerns of globalization, leadership and integration. In this “new agora”, these authors list eight unmet needs of the society and market to be considered. In other words, the act of redefining the new agora, meeting these unmet needs and focusing on those demands of changes is a means to refine the legitimacy of business schools and management trainings.

In the European context, education was historically the domain of the government and of the religious authorities (Durand, Dameron, 2008). There is a distinction between students going to the universities to acquire knowledge, including management knowledge; and apprentices joining enterprises to acquire skills. Management education institutions and universities were created to focus on research and now develop strategies to connect with each and to create a European area for management education.

The Bologna Agreement signed in 1999 is an attempt to mutual European resources and achieve a worldwide recognition on European education, including management education. To strengthen further the knowledge space of business education in Europe, Dameron, Durand et al (2011) respond to the call of the Société Française de Management (SFM – the French Academy of Management), jointly debate collective strategies in order to find better ways of management education development trends imported from North America. The group of authors proposes that the European model of business school be designed or redesigned in the typically European style.

For now however, European management education cannot be considered homogenous. In each country, the business schools thus have to decide whether they should follow the US model or differentiate themselves. And in the latter case, how could they differentiate themselves? Is it only by relying on their cultural value-added?

3.2. Differentiation in social construction process (Antunes, Thomas 2007)

Following Habermas, Antunes and Thomas (2007) consider that each school is influenced by a set of cultural, legal and regulatory characteristics in its home country. This social construction process makes those characteristics the basic differentiation factors that could help certain business schools to surpass others. In fact, Antunes and Thomas make a link between the social constructionist perspective and the inter-organisational performance differences and reputation orderings and claim that European schools could perform as well and compete with the dominant US schools.

At each level of social construction, these authors indicate various sources of difference:

- Level of industry beliefs in the national contexts: schools assert themselves by applying institutional and national differences that could be shaped by factors such as language, culture, regulation, standardization and size.
- Level of industry recipes in regional and global contexts: schools use competitive differences as recipes. They include factors such as governance, funding and endowment, international mindset, innovation, knowledge transmission and corporate links.
- Level of reputation orderings is linked with social capital differences such as rankings and reputation and brand loyalty factors.



Figure II.2.1: Social construction pyramid

Source: Antunes, Thomas (2007), *The Competitive (Dis)Advantages of European Business Schools*

Therefore, where Starkey et al suggest that business schools should redefine their legitimacy, Antunes and Thomas recommend them to focus on differentiations at several levels as a competitive advantage in the business school industry. These differentiations

could be the drivers of their business model. Turning such differentiation into a competitive advantage may be a complex endeavour, however, given the fierce competition on the business education market.

From a European perspective, the three categories of differentiations are illustrated in opposition with those of the US schools. Concerning institutional differences, variations in terms of language, history and culture are numerous, although European schools ultimately operate with the same international standards and accreditation agencies.

Regarding competitive differences factors, European universities and business schools are often public, making funding and endowment less flexible as in the US. Apart from funding resource, European schools still have strong assets in international mindset, innovation, creative ways to develop research and learning programs.

In terms of social capital differences, reputation effects undoubtedly influence the competition and the recognition by the market, with elites groups in each European country, or with up-climbing rankings and accreditations in international organisations.

3.3. Balanced scenarios (Durand, Dameron 2008)

As seen above, Durand and Dameron have distinguished three geographic clusters, and in each cluster, have developed three strategic postures for business schools towards five foresights scenarios for 2020. As shown in the table below, there is a clear correspondence between these postures and Deephouse's different strategies of conformity, differentiation and balanced.

	Conformity	Differentiation	Balanced
Europe / OECD (except US)	Catching up	Ignoring the leaders	Differentiating to compete by leveraging national or regional specificities

US	Penetrating to influence	Forging ahead	Recognizing and competing
BRICS	Importing from the leaders	Diversifying sources	Blending and cross-selling

Table II.2.2: Conformity, Differentiation and Balanced scenarios

Source: Author (2015) developed from Durand, Dameron (2008), Deephouse (1999)

In Europe and OECD countries other than North America, business schools can adopt an imitation strategy, that is, a “catching up” posture similar to conformity. “Ignoring the leading players” is a clear differentiation attempt, with a risk of isolation from the environment. The in-between posture of “differentiating to compete by leveraging national or regional specificities” is how business schools try to find their strategic balance position.

In the North America zone, "forging ahead" is a differentiation strategy in which leading schools rely upon existing structural advantages, the gap in available resources, the strength of existing brand names and the control on the research domain. "Penetrating to influence" is conformity because schools use a well-established domination of the zone to infiltrate potential challengers. The third posture - "recognize and compete" - seeks a balanced position, i.e. recognize the potential emergence of competing approaches to management as a way to prepare to compete.

In the BRICS zone (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and developing countries, "import from the leader", i.e. learning from US business schools, is clearly a conformity response; whereas "diversity sources" is an endeavour to differentiate. "Blend and cross-sell" is the strategic balanced situation, where schools move towards customization of management knowledge imported (conform) while at the same time progressively develop a capacity to create local knowledge (differentiate).

Durand and Dameron consider that management education and research in Europe is “in a race to follow the dominant US model of business schools, mainly through imports and imitation.” To a large extent, this conformity is necessary to be onboard in the management education industry. However, some of the traits of the US model of

management education are worth importing, but others traits are specific to the US context. For these, Europe ought to leverage its own specificities and use such differentiation traits to gain the competitive advantages. Specifically, European schools could focus on social sciences and humanities, on the intercultural variety of the European Union, on the involvement of the public sector in education... etc.

The authors call this dual strategy "balanced dynamic portfolio over time", so that Europe is reinforced in the position of a second supplier of management knowledge worldwide, offering an alternative source of management education and research to business schools in the world. Such dual stance is not easy to develop and hold, however. It is difficult for European business schools to clarify how they can capture this dual strategy into the curricula of the various programs they offer and how the entire portfolio is deployed in an integrated, consistent way. Durand's and Dameron's scenarios suggest that in order to compete in the international arena of business schools, European business schools should follow a dual strategy combining an active "catching up" strategy (towards US schools) on the one hand, plus a dedicated "differentiating" strategy on the other hand. Furthermore, they emphasize that European stakeholders including business schools and universities, national governments, the European Union institutions (the Commission and the Parliament) and industries (large European firms as well as small and medium enterprises) should join forces to create the conditions for a European Management model that could challenge the US leaders.

Below is a mapping of the literature examined in the previous sections. It clearly shows that if schools want to compete in the management education arena, they must focus on the top level of balance strategic position to get recognition in branding, reputation, governance or curriculum.

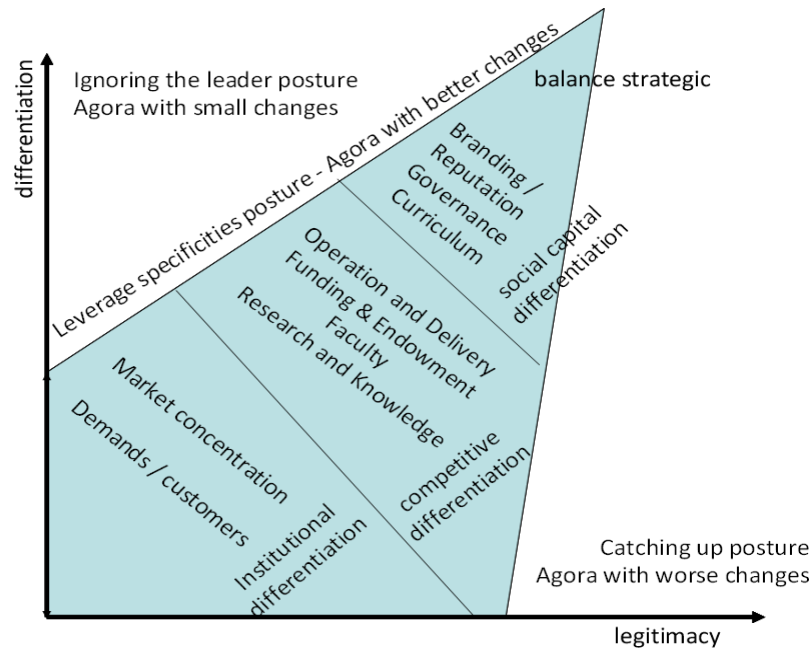


Figure II.2.2: Balance strategic factor

Source: Author (2015) built from strategic scenarios of Starkey et al 2004, Antunes, Thomas 2007 and Durand, Dameron 2008)

4. Conclusion

Deepphouse concludes his presentation of his strategic balance theory by stating that “The ultimate relationship between strategic similarity and performance depends on the relative strength of the differentiation and conformity propositions over the range of strategic similarity.” He suggests that further development of this theory can help researchers better understand the trade-offs between differentiation and conformity, and that further research should examine if strategic balance theory applies in other markets facing strong competitive and institutional pressures (rather than commercial banks).

Arguably, it is the case of the market of management education analyzed in this paper. Though this market is analyzed from various angles and using different models, there is a broad consensus in the literature on the fact that by reinforcing legitimacy and enhancing

differentiation, European business schools should head towards the balance strategic scenario.

PART II LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER 3 RESOURCES OF CURRICULUM

*“Anyone imagines some provisions to change an existing situation into a preferred situation is a designer ... The design, thus conceived, is at the heart of any professional training. This is what makes the difference between science and profession. Engineering schools as well as architecture schools, schools of laws, management schools, medicine schools, normal education schools, all are concerned, primarily, by the process of curriculum design”**

(Simon H. La science des systèmes. Paris : Épi, 1974, pp. 73.)

The word curriculum originates from the Latin word “currere”, meaning “to run” or “a race course of action”. It implies that a program curriculum is created to provide a template or design which enables learning to take place. According to Taba (1962), “curriculum is a plan of learning.”

Curriculum is usually defined as the learning that is expected to take place during a course (which is synonym with a syllabus) or program of study (which is synonym with a program) in terms of knowledge, skills, attitudes, learning and assessment methods, etc The term “curriculum” used within this context is reduced to the structure and content of a program in a defined period of time. So the focus is on aspects of curriculum design, curriculum development, and curriculum stakeholders that include all courses within one program.

* *Origin statement in French: «Quiconque imagine quelques dispositions visant à changer une situation existante en une situation préférée est un concepteur... La conception, ainsi conçue, est au cœur de toute formation professionnelle. C’est elle qui fait la différence entre science et profession. Les écoles d’ingénieurs, comme les écoles d’architecture, de droit, de gestion, de médecine, les Écoles normales d’enseignement, toutes sont concernées, au premier chef, par le processus de la conception».*

As a first step in the process of reviewing literatures; describing curriculum design within higher education are searched with helps from colleagues in the education and training research centre of CNAM. The frameworks based on scientific literature concerning conception science, adult learning theories, formal and informal learning, student-centred learning, curriculum development, educational development with different models from objectives model to process model. Secondly, the review focuses on stakeholder theories and its application in resources to create or develop curricula. The chapter finally goes through different literatures on specific curriculum of management and business education, with highlight of MBA curriculum.

1. Curriculum creation and development

1.1. Curriculum cycle

A new program is designed based on a curriculum cycle from needs assessment, program design, program implementation, outcome evaluations (Peyton & Peyton, 1998). The dynamism of this curriculum cycle is it goes endless and emphasizes on different aspects varies with the participants' perceived needs.

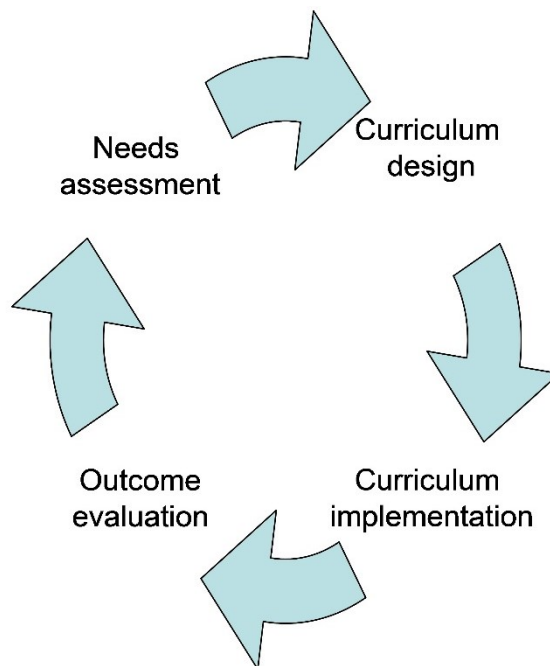


Figure II.3.1: Curriculum cycle

Source: Peyton & Peyton (1998)

Similarly, according to Holmes (2007) and Wolf (2007), the curriculum development is a cyclical process including four phases of design and development, implementation, assessment and review and accreditation.

Curricula in higher education are divided into five different types: *formal*, *ideal*, *perceived*, *operational* and *experiential* (Goodlad 1984). The formal curriculum is a set out in documents, to be implemented, with stated outcomes and assessments. The ideal curriculum denotes the aspects of curricula over which there might be a struggle for control. The perceived curriculum represents perspectives on what curriculum is or should be, from the point of view of academics, who are deans, programs administrators and faculties. The operational curriculum describes classroom processes and evolution of contents throughout the courses' period. Finally, the experiential curriculum represents the curriculum as perceived by students (Coate, 2009). Goodlad (1984) regroup the five different types into *curriculum-as product* (in which sits ideal, formal and perceived curricula) and *curriculum-as-process* (where operational and experience curricula describe all the action parts)

The curriculum, once conceptualized, is not a static program. On the contrary, it develops continuously due to environmental demands and contextual changes. The term curriculum development in this chapter implies that curricula develop by a continuous process. It covers other terms as curriculum renewal, revisiting, curriculum reforming or modification. One of common initiatives for curriculum development comes from faculty who are interested in improving their curriculum so as to benefit student learning (Wolf, 2007). Another regular ways and means of revisiting curriculum are originates from institution and program administrators – policy makers (Totté, Huyghe and Verhagen, 2013). Finally, one specific approach to reform curriculum comes from organisations external to the institution, such as specialized accrediting agencies or professional associations (McDaniel, Roth and Miller, 2005). Any curriculum needs to be developed in the light of the institution or internal and external context in which it is going to be delivered. If a new course is being designed and developed then there are a number of approaches that can be taken and issues that need to be addressed to meet the needs of

al stakeholders involved. (McKimm, 2003, 2009). McKimm points out a number of stages which must be completed within Peyton's curriculum cycle:

- Needs assessment:
 - Determine and agree the educational or professional context in which the program is to be developed and delivered
 - Define the needs of the learners in line with the requirements of professional bodies
 - Determine the aims and broad learning outcomes of the program
- Curriculum design:
 - Identify ideas and constraints
 - Agree the broad structure and framework of the program, the main areas of teaching and learning, the sequence of the main topics and the key assessments
 - Allocate the detailed development of each topic or course area in terms of defining objectives and learning outcomes to individuals or teams
- Curriculum implementation:
 - Course teams to develop coherent programs which have defined learning outcomes, timetables, content, appropriate teaching, learning and assessment methods and which utilize relevant and available learning resources
 - Implement and refine the program
- Outcome evaluation:
 - Develop an appropriate and deliverable evaluation strategy
 - Review and revise the course in line with feedback – has it met the identified needs of the learners and other stakeholders?

In the design and delivery of medical curricula, researchers (McKimm 2009, Akturk 2012, Al-Shaham 2013) acknowledge that medical educators shift from the traditional model depicted by Flexner (1911) to Harden's SPICES curriculum model (1984).

Flexner (1911)	Harden (1984) the SPICES model
Teacher-centred	Student-centred
Knowledge giving	Problem-based
Discipline led	Integrated
Hospital oriented	Community oriented
Standard program	Electives (+ core)
Opportunistic (apprenticeship)	Systematic

Table II.3.1: Trends in Medical Education Curriculum Planning and Design: Flexner to Harden

Source: McKimm (2009)

Teaching, learning and assessment methods have much in common with those in other professional education, including management and business educations. In the SPICES model of Harden, we could figure out that the curriculum design and development has shift from taking into account the broader context of curriculum such as institution's vision of teaching and learning, the regulations and education policy of the institution towards integrating practice based linked with professional development, relevant to students and communities and contributing to the learning outcomes of the curriculum (Prideaux, 2001).

1.2. Curriculum development models

Once looking at a cycle and its evolution in curriculum development, a *centralized or decentralized* approach needs to be reviewed for course design, delivery and management.

Centralization can be seen at national, regional or organisational levels. Centralized curricula tend to be more structured and orderly, and it is easier to ensure uniformity and statutory bodies. In higher education, especially in management and business education with still highly debated roles of institution, there are no "national curricula" as such. Nevertheless, a number of reports and recommendations have been produces by

statutory bodies, such as the Bologna declaration (1999) or national higher education governments, quality assurance agencies, accreditation and vocational organisations, which must be adhered by curriculum planners in order to ensure that the program meets the needs of vocational education and training, or simply in order to be inline with benchmarking standards fixed by academic reviews and institutional audits.

On the contrary, decentralized curricula tend to be more appropriate to students' specific needs and often ensure better delivery and management by faculty and program planners. Decentralization can allow for a variety of approaches to design delivery and modify from different resources and stakeholders of curriculum development.

There is another approach to view curriculum design and development, which are the *objectives (outcomes based) model* and the *process (problem based) model*.

The objectives model takes into account the vision, aims and outcomes of the curriculum as a place to develop understanding. Kelly (2009) mentions that aim and outcomes of a curriculum should be defined in terms of intellectual development and cognitive functioning. Hence, the objective model of curriculum development takes as its major premise the idea that everything should be defined in terms of leaning outcomes and learning objectives. Curriculum design according to this model is developed in four steps:

- Reach agreement on broad aims for the program and specific objectives for the course
- Construct the program with courses to achieve these objectives
- Define the curriculum in practice by testing capacity to achieve objectives
- Communicate the curriculum to faculty

The objectives model forms a part of Outcomes Based Education which indicates that “educators should think about the desirable outcomes of their programs and state them in clear and precise terms. They should then work backwards or ‘design down’ in the jargon of Outcomes Based Education, to determine the appropriate learning experience which will lead to the stated outcomes.” (Prideaux, 2000). The disadvantages of the objectives model include the gap between stated objectives of programs and narrow

specification of courses and depending expertise of faculty; as well as abstract and difficult to measure performance between course delivery, assessment and “a significant, worthwhile objective or “a well-written outcome statement” (Prideaux, 2000).

The second model is a focus on a process approach additional to the product approach, initiated by Tyler (2013). Tyler argues that a quality curriculum design is to answer in the order the four questions:

- What content is to be accomplished?
- What learning experience will help accomplish the purposed?
- How can these learning experience be effectively organizes?
- How can the effectiveness of the learning be evaluated?

The process model, furthermore developed by Stenhouse (1975) assumes that content and learning activities have an intrinsic value and they are not just a means of achieving learning objectives. Stenhouse argues that there were four fundamental processes of education:

- Training (skills acquisition)
- Instruction (information acquisition)
- Initiation (socialization and familiarization with social norms and values)
- Induction (thinking and problem solving)

This approach fits for Problem-based learning education, where content, teaching strategies, sequence learning experience and students’ strengths and weaknesses are assessed. Problem-based learning aims to stimulate students to observe, think, define, study, analyze, synthesize and evaluate a problem. Although it promotes certain advantages to students, Problem-based learning is very demanding of both faculty and learners, with extensive leaning resources and traditional, standardized assessment methods are difficult to apply as may as students define own learning goals and faculty act as facilitator role. The process model depends a lot on the quality of the faculty in the specialist knowledge to ensure the facilitator role.

Lying between the two approaches is defined the integrated approach. Harden (1984) suggests that integrated courses enable students to learn meaningful sets of information

which are more easily retained and applied to other situations. They can encourage the development of higher-level objectives such as application of knowledge, analytical skills and problem solving. Integrated approach also underline curriculum with integrated courses that may enable sharing of resources. Hence, the best approach to curriculum design is to combine the best of both objectives and process approaches according to student need, teacher experience and organisational structure and resources. There cites some different stakeholders of curriculum that worth a deeper review to analyze their importance in curriculum design and development.

2. Stakeholder theory and resources of curriculum

2.1. Stakeholder theory

In the recent decade scholars have called for the creation of a new theory of organisation which would more accurately describe organisation activities by focusing on stakeholder relationships. Freeman (1984) was the first scholar to present stakeholder as a theory assessing the roles of actors in and within a firm's environment. As a theory of organisation, stakeholder theory helps to develop a relational model of organisations by revisiting questions about "who" is actually working with and/or in the firm (Damak-Ayadi, Pesqueux 2005). As a theory of strategic management, stakeholder theory encourages management to develop strategies by looking for new direction for the firm and how the firm can effect the internal and external environment as well as how the environment may affect the firm (Freeman, McVea 1984, 2004). As a theory of education management, stakeholder theory oversees the operational and management of educational organisation, with "the game of actors" in education and training programs (Roegiers 1997, Durand 2005).

Scholars have defined stakeholders in a way or in another. Stakeholders are defined as "All parties who will be affected by or will affect [the organisation's] strategy" (Nutt and Backoff 1992), as "any group or individual that can affect or be affected by the realization of a company's objectives" (Freeman, 1984), or as "all of the agents for whom the firm's development and good health are of prime concern" (Mercier 2007), or as "A stakeholder

is an individual or a group that claims to have one or more stakes (risk/responsible) in an organisation. Stakeholders may affect the organisation and, in turn be affected by the organisation's actions, policies, practices and decisions” (Carroll and Buchholtz 2009)

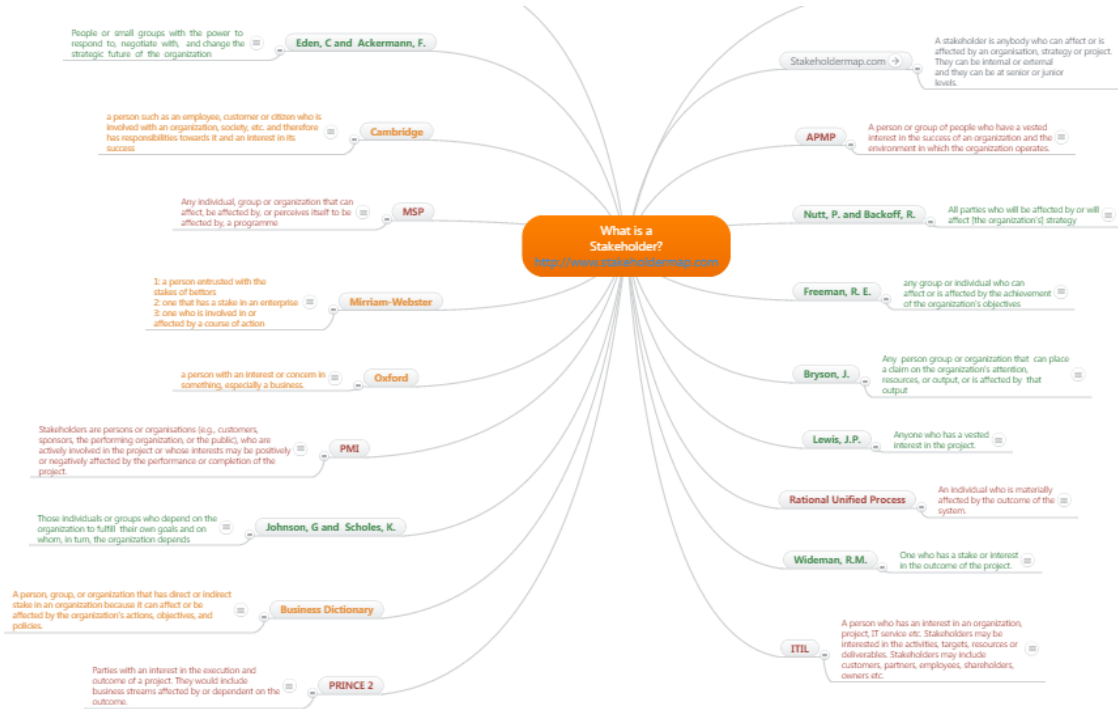


Figure II.3.2: Stakeholder definition map

Source: Developed with stakeholder mind map tool (<http://www.stakeholdermap.com/>) from stakeholder definitions of Nutt and Backoff (1992); Mercier (1999); Freeman (1984); Bryson (1995) Johnson and Scholes (2002); Carroll and Buchholtz (2009) and other provided sources of the website

However, “the decision about how to define stakeholders ... is consequential, as it affects who and what counts” (Mitchell et al. 1997). In order to identify and analyze stakeholders in an organisation, steps are to be enacted from:

- Identifying the stakeholders

In education, identifying stakeholders typically refers to “anyone who is invested in the welfare and success of a school and its students, including administrators, teachers, staff members, students, parents, families, community members, local business leaders, and elected officials such as school board members, city counsellors, and state

representatives. Stakeholders may also be collective entities, such as local businesses, organisations, advocacy groups, committees, media outlets, and cultural institutions, in addition to organisations that represent specific groups, such as teachers unions, parent-teacher organisations, and associations representing superintendents, principals, school boards, or teachers in specific academic disciplines. In a word, stakeholders have a “stake” in the school and its students, meaning that they have personal, professional, civic, or financial interest or concern” (the Glossary of Education Reform).

- Putting in priorities the stakeholders

Stakeholders in education, as well as in other industry, are distinguished between Primary and Secondary stakeholders (Carroll, 1991). Primary stakeholders are those who entertain a direct and contractually determined relationship with the company, while Secondary stakeholders consist of actors who are situated at the border of a firm and who may my impact and be impacted by its actions indirectly and without having any contractual connection to the firm. In education and curriculum development, the direct stakeholders could be cited as faculty (teachers), students, parents, administrators, school staffs; they are counted as internal resources. Indirect stakeholders are external environment resources, listed as government, community leaders and policy makers, society, recruiters and advocacy groups, reputation bodies, quality assurance agencies, etc.

- Understanding stakeholders’ perspectives

The perspectives on what stakes each educational stakeholder could think about depend on different outcomes of the new program or curriculum. Key groups and their stakes in the objective of “students’ success” are resumed as:

Stakeholder	What’s at stake
Students	Personal success throughout school, future opportunity
Parents	Pride, success, and opportunity for the students they care about
School staff	Professional efficacy and job satisfaction
Administrator	Adequate yearly progress, meeting accountability expectations
School board	Fulfil the schools’ mission, media coverage, accountability
Business community	Ability to hire graduates with skills needed, community economics

Other community members	Community pride and liveability, media coverage
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Table II.3.2: Key educational constituent groups and their stakes in students' success objective

Source: Saiful (2011) - Curriculum planning and development in Medical & Allied Health Schools

- Incorporating stakeholder perspectives into the organisation.

Stakeholders in education often go through stages when faced with a new program or curriculum: (1) unrelated concerns: where the actor does not believe the new program will affect them; (2) personal concerns: where the new program affect the person as an individual out of the academic context; (3) task-related concerns: where specific concern over how to teach (or learn) or implement the new curriculum, what strategies and learning experience occur, what equipment and material will be necessary, etc. Final stage could be considered (4) impact-related concerns: where the new program or curriculum affects others within the school and the community.

Before applying the stakeholder theory to define the resources of curriculum development, we should remember its postulates resumed by Damak-Ayadi, Pesqueux (2005):

- An organisation will maintain relationships with several groups that affect or are affected by its decisions (Freeman, 1984).
- Theory will be dependent on the nature of such relationships because of the way in which the processes involved and the outcomes achieved can affect society and stakeholders.
- Stakeholders' interests have some intrinsic value, but no one interest should be able to dominate all of the others (Clarkson 1995; Donaldson & Preston 1995).
- Theory is served for managerial decisions (Michell et al 1997).

2.2. Resources of curriculum

Harrison and St John (1994) develop an integrated approach with many of the conceptual frameworks of mainstream strategy theory. In their work, "stakeholder theory combines perspectives from other traditional models such as resource-based view, institutional view of a firm." They are able to combine traditional and stakeholder approaches because

they use the stakeholder approach as an overarching framework within which traditional approaches can operate as strategic tools. In the effort to combine Education Management, Strategic Management and Stakeholder Approaches, we are looking for the relationships of internal and external stakeholders in the curriculum development.

Educational Management is a field of study and practice of management concerned with the operation of educational organisations. According to Bush (2003), educational management was derived from management principles first applied to industry and commerce. Its theory development largely involved the application of industrial models to educational settings and then the invention of alternative models based on theorists' and practitioners' observation of, and experience in, schools and universities. The process of deciding on the aims of the organisation is at the heart of educational management. Within the sphere of an education program, the aims of the educational organisation are represented by a curriculum development and management. Although a curriculum seems to be no more than an assemblage of classes and materials that collectively constitute an educational program (Datar et al, 2010), it needs to be developed in the light of the organisation's aims or environmental context in which it is going to be delivered. If a new course is being designed and developed then there are a number of approaches that can be taken and issues that need to be addressed to meet the needs of all stakeholders involved. (McKimm 2003, 2009). The approaches are from the organisational level between the objectives model (outcomes based education) and the process model (problem based learning). Key issues should be covered within the course or program level, from the Aims, Architecture, Learning outcomes/objectives (knowledge, skills and attitudes), Content, Teaching and learning methods or pedagogy and Assessment methods

According to Holmes (2007) and Wolf (2007), the curriculum development is a cyclical process including four phases of design and development, implementation, assessment and review and accreditation. Those faces involve all stakeholders from administrator, managers, instructors, students, regular makers and controllers, as well as influences and pressures from external environment. (Barrow and McKimm, 2009, Wolf 2007)

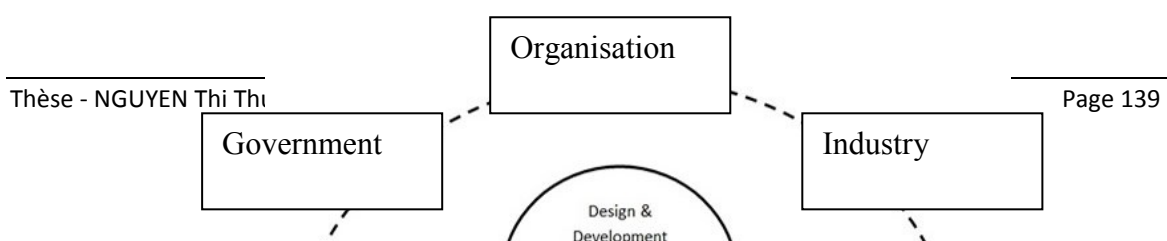


Figure II.3.3: Curriculum development process

Source: Author (2015) developed from the Holmes T, (2007); Barrow, M and McKimm, J. (2009); and Wolf P, (2007).

Resources of curricula creation and development might include the external stakeholders that are over different layers of institution's boundaries (extra-organisation boundaries). These resources assure the legitimacy of the new curriculum. Requests to create or reform a curriculum could come from the states, the government, the ministry of higher education or even a commission from a common zone's counsellor such as European Union's Higher Education and Research Commission. Although curricula in higher education institution tend not to be subjected to as much influence or interference from the national level (Coate, 2009), the creation or development of a curriculum could be affected simply as the government mandate to promote the national language in higher education program. For instance, the Toubon law that requests all French universities to teach programs in French language. National systems for reviewing quality in universities are also a reason for programs to keep the curriculum aligned with their norms in order to keep its certification assurance in formal standards. The expectations of curricula are not only occurring nationally, but are now developed and discussed at regional or "supra-national" levels. As an example, the Bologna Process, bound by the ministers of higher

education from 45 countries in and around Europe, has a substantial impact on national systems on modifying the length of a curriculum to meet standards of 3-6-8 years of obtaining bachelor, master and doctoral degree respectively.

Another external authoritative source of revisiting curriculum comes from quality assurance agencies, accreditation and vocational organisations, which must be adhered by institution dean and program administrator, curriculum planners in order to ensure that the program meets the needs and gains reputation. In postgraduate levels, a curriculum may largely reflect specialist academic research or professional areas. There maybe accreditation bodies who evaluate certain aspects of curriculum depending on specializations, research, and professional areas. Curriculum developers are increasingly orienting their efforts towards national frameworks or international standards in terms of accreditation, rankings and standards (Coate, 2009).

Other resources of curricula creation and development grow from the internal environment of the institutions (inter-organisation boundaries). “Decisions about curricula – what is taught, when it is taught, how it is taught and to whom it is taught, seem to be made by academics with the greatest freedom at the highest levels of the education systems” (Coate, 2009). Academics in this context consist of deans, professors, programs administrators, researchers, faculty and instructors. At the level of advance studies, especially in professional oriented programs, academics have more freedom to design curricula and this freedom may increase as areas of specialization within research and profession might feature more substantially (Coate, 2009). The core content of the program might be shaped by academics, but there tends to be more space for student participation in the curriculum, especially as resources of practical contents.

Finally, the resources of curriculum could originate from competitive advantage environment surrounding the institutions (and intra-organisation boundaries). A curriculum is recently put in benchmarking standards (McKimm 2003) so it could be modified in comparison with existing programs country-wide, even internationally in terms of contents, or it could be revisited in terms of teaching and learning methods in regards with highly-debated added values such as case study methods, massive open

online courses (MOOC) or exchange and international curriculum. Curriculum developers tend to look towards reputable degree programs to assess their own standards on an informal basis. Now the influences of international development and virtual sources are increasingly remarked, when access to curricula documents has been simplified by the internet. This virtual availability of curricula is an interesting, yet suspicious phenomenon within a globalized higher education system (Coate, 2009).

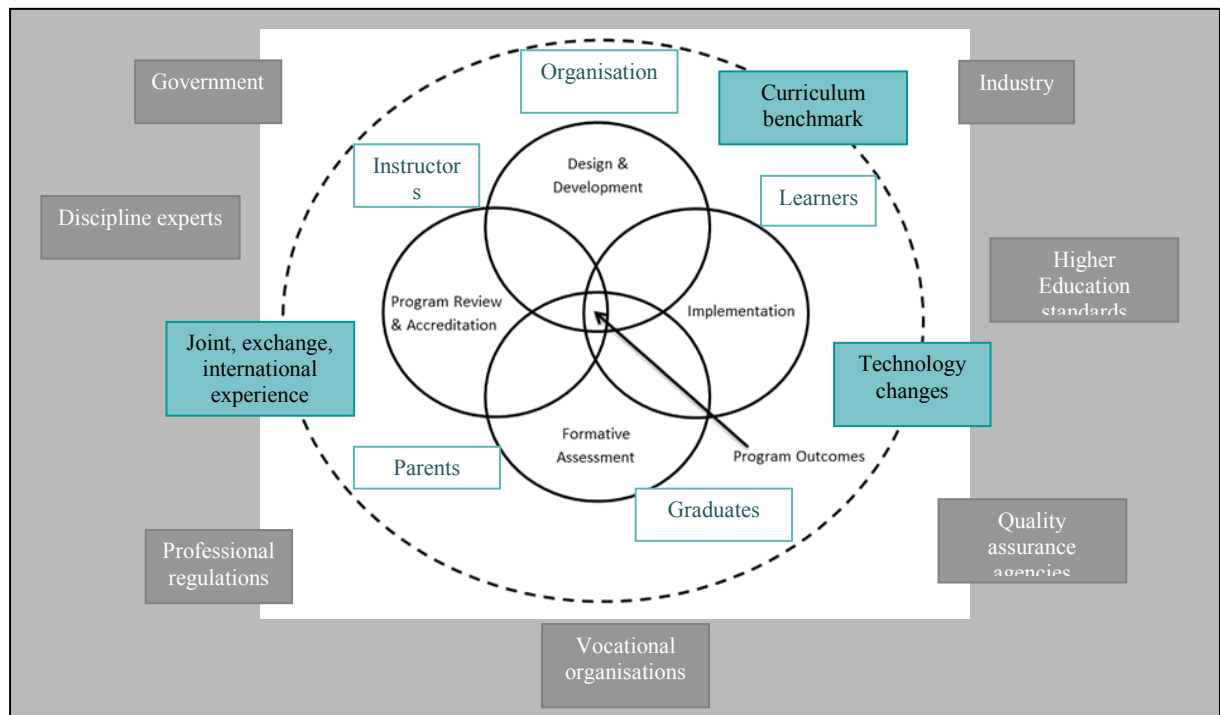


Figure II.3.4: Curriculum development process, stakeholders and boundaries

Source: Author (2015) developed from the Holmes T, (2007); Barrow, M and McKimm, J. (2009); and Wolf P, (2007), Coate (2009) and Saiful (2011)

In complex interactions between regional, national and international interests, with challenges from specialization and professional expertise and tensions from virtual and open sources academia, curriculum developers confuse how to start the development process. With the introduction of market forces in the research of higher education in general, this phenomenon impact strongly on the curriculum, on of key dimensions of institutions and programs' activities (Brown, 2010)

The aim is to identify and assess the role and the impact of the different stakeholders that influence the curriculum development process and the operation of the academic

institutions. Their influence may affect the process and / or change the program outcomes (Roegiers, 1997). Considering the program performance, the performance outcomes are normally decided and stated in the direction of the organisation's aims or purposes. The purpose of an academic institution is to offer management education programs. In this specific case, it is to offer an MBA that develops skills for the demands of the business environment. However the two forces of offer and demand do not represent all the stakeholders involving in this industry. In the case of MBA programs, a third force is involved, that is, the regulators that overview the programs and schools as they search for quality certification and enhanced the MBA branding as well as the reputations. Schools either accredit themselves in joining reputed accreditation associations, by appearing in reputed research journals, or by climbing up in reputed ranking bodies with known performance criteria; that is joining the regulation mechanisms (Trieschmann et al, 2000; Basso, Dornier, Mounier 2011). The obligations (rules, criteria or parameters) created by regulation mechanisms are a powerful regulator of development strategies and modifications of MBA curricula. Rubin and Dierdorff (2009) call them the "institutional factors in the organisational stakeholders. "Any exploration of curricular relevancy would be incomplete without the consideration of salient program-level factors that potentially exert influence on curriculum design. Presumably, curricula are designed not only toward employability and future vocational concerns, but also with respect to an institution's unique mission and strategy. Central to these concerns is an institution or program's reputation in the marketplace. Although highly imperfect and notably critiqued, no other reputation indicator has attracted more attention than that of media rankings..." and "A school's espoused mission is supposed to represent more than a statement of optimistic intentions. Rather, a mission is the foundation for designing, delivering, assessing, and justifying a school's curriculum to critical accreditation bodies..." (Rubin and Dierdorff 2009, p.212) Therefore, we suppose it is important in the literature to investigate those institutional factors separately as a third party group - regulators, beyond providers and demanders.

Following Roegiers' model (1997) of open box in analyzing education and training and Durand's study (2005) for the "French National Foundation for Education and Enterprises Management (the FNEGE) on the foresights of French management institutions, it is

possible to draw a strategic map of coordination between the different stakeholders involved in MBA programs: providers, demanders and regulators. As pointed out by Porac et al (1989), using the theory of enactment (Weick, 1979), there are interactions and feedbacks between the environment, firms and cognitive factors. The following figure attempts to group MBA curricula stakeholders into three main groups that enact either in the inter-organisation, intra-organisation and extra-organisation of business schools' boundaries, namely providers, demanders and regulators.

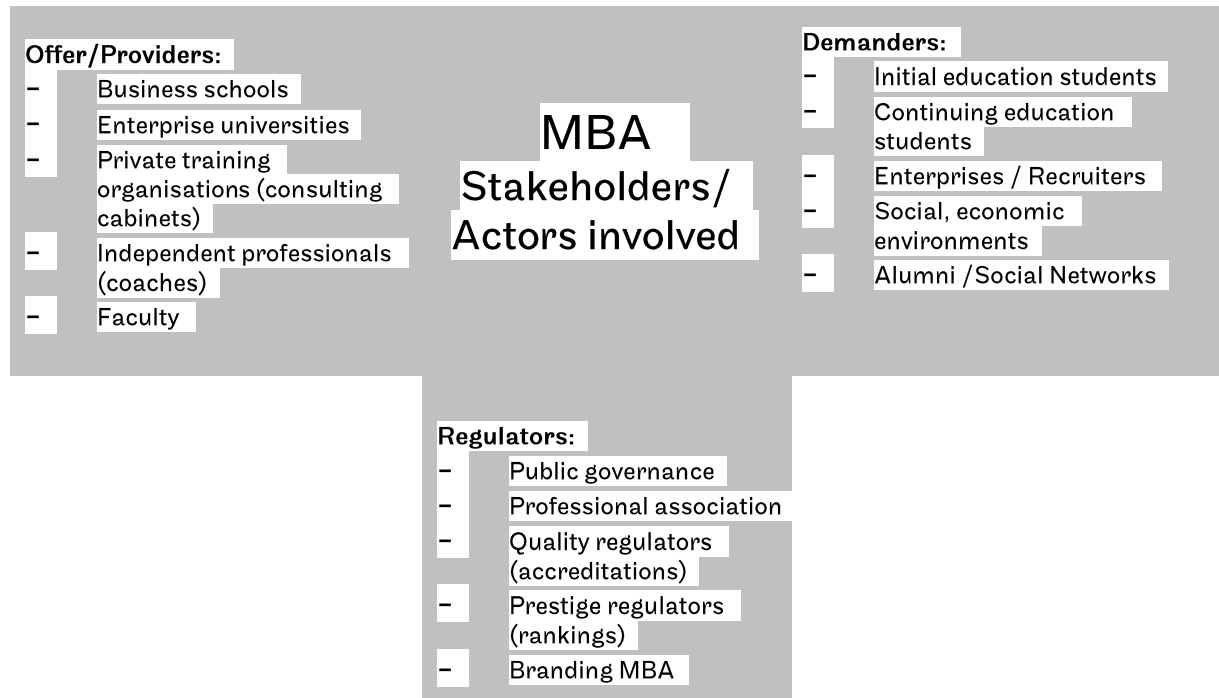


Figure II.3.5: Stakeholders of MBA programs

Source: Author (2015) developed from Durand (2005), Roegiers (1997)

3. MBA Curriculum and trends in business school curriculum development

3.1. MBA Curriculum

Curricular choices are important to the future of business schools themselves (Navarro, 2008, p.121). The four values of a management and business education to be cited the most in the surveys of Graduate Management Admission Council GMAC are Relevance of curriculum, Faculty teaching methods, Faculty knowledge, Comprehensiveness of curriculum. That is why the design and content of an MBA programs are in thorough examination to see whether they are responded to the business world's demands. However, Rubin and Dierdorff (2009) conclude that MBA programs are "being met with

escalating criticism from academics, students, and various organisational stakeholders” (p.208) and one of the criticisms is the content of MBA becomes irrelevant to the needs of the business world.

An MBA is Master-level program of study and is postgraduate in nature. The nature of an MBA program is based on the assumption of significant relevant professional experience of students that the group of founders, designers and professors of a school created. The design and the content of MBA program illustrate the objectives of preparing for strategic leadership and transformational roles in organisations, in another word, objectives of double contributions to managing at the strategic level and to assisting personal development.

MBA programs are now developed in different modes: full-time, part-time, distance learning, open learning or multi-method. A Full time MBA program is cited in the Association of MBA (AMBA) expectation as of at least one year (or twelve months) study, corresponding to the equivalent of more than 500 hours of face to face contacts and at least 1800 hours of learning efforts. An MBA program is designed in a modular basis or a multi-disciplinary basis, whether create different approaches to treat management problems in singular subjects as per a general view. In each discipline, the delivery will follow the same doctrine and teaching methods of the designer or it depends on the nature of the course and teaching habits of each professor. The methods of lectures, seminars, workshops, action learning, reading, individual and group projects, computer-based training, in-company training, simulation and group discussions, role plays, etc will be a key factor or not to differentiate one program to another and where the two directions in question are applied.

A classical structure is a two-year MBA program of courses that can be broadly divided into core and elective categories. (Segev, Raveh and Farjoun, 1999). An MBA program should encompass general business administration skills and ensure learners to acquire a firm understanding on the major areas of knowledge for general management: marketing of goods of services, financing of business enterprise and other organisation, accounting, management information system, organisation theory, behaviour, human resource

management issues, interpersonal communications, operational and strategic level of management, business ethics and policy and legal systems, leadership and entrepreneur; international dimension of all above subjects, emerging markets, global governance and globalizations. However, with a limitation on duration of 500 hours, a program could not cover completely all mentioned subjects. The design of a mandatory and optional course might be evidence for the strategic development and major objective axes of the program, either in a generalist or specialization's point of view. Rynes and Bartunek (2013) summarize the researches of previous academicians (Rubin and Dierdorff 2009 and 2011, Navarro 2008, Segev, Raveh and Farjoun 1999, Khurana 2007, Tranks and Rynes 2003) and confirm that the curriculum core (mandatory courses) is crucial.

As per Engwall (2007), history of the fundamental courses in MBA programs is constructed upon a firm's model. Management education is influenced and formed upon the significant development of economics from the nineteenth century with the industrialization era, the creation of joint-stock companies and the emerging large hierarchies' corporations. Needs of such actors for coordination between production operations, distribution systems and financial requirements generated a lot of new management problems, which supposed to have provided the "building blocks of management education."

Engwall connects the five items that draw the fundamental new management problems together. He links the three types of group (1) external providers of goods and services, (2) personnel, and (3) customers by ways of two types of flow (4) a production flow and (5) a financial flow. Goods and services are delivered from suppliers to the organisation, where personnel of the organisation act upon and later transfer goods and services to customers. Engwall argues that in certain types of operations such as education or medical services, production takes place in very close interactions between personnel and customers. In the opposite direction of the production flow, organisations have financial flows. Customers pay for the goods and services that they have received. These financial resources are distributed to internal personnel and to external providers. The financial flow is not a one-way flow; it goes in both directions between external and internal providers in the form of wages and salaries, or in interest, principal loans and dividends.







<div> <div>Actor Group</div> <div>Flow</div> </div>	External Providers	Personnel	Customers
Financial Flow	Accounting Finance 	Management Accounting 	Pricing 
Physical Flow	 Purchasing	 Organization	 Marketing

Figure II.3.6: A model of the business firm and Management education

Source: Engwall (2007) – *The anatomy of management education*

With the help of the connection between actors and flows in a business firm model, Engwall identifies six basic management problems that management education needs to deal with in their curricula: accounting and finance, management accounting, pricing, purchasing, organisation, marketing. In addition to the functional problems included in his matrix, it is part of management to adopt an integrative and long-term view, as per numerous literatures concerned with strategic issues (Mintzberg 1994, Porter 1980, etc).

The classical core courses in the management education do not evolve much since the nineteenth century's industrialization era. In the study of Segev, Raveh, Farjoun (1999) to capture and compare the program structure and curriculum of the MBA programs in 25 leading US schools at the beginning of the current revolution, they figure out core courses or concentration areas with identical titles may vary among schools but they capture primarily the unchanged core courses over years. Datar, Garvin and Cullen (2010) reuse this 1999's study of Segev, Raveh, Farjoun, then apply statistical methods to sort core courses and concentrations. Core courses in MBA remain indispensable and represent at least eighty five per cents similar among business schools, when they come to finance, financial accounting, marketing management, microeconomic, operations management and organisational behaviour. In some schools, Datar et al capture the identification of primary core courses and secondary core courses. So other "secondary core courses" refer to courses highly identified as required courses in MBA programs, including strategy,

management information, decision sciences or statistics, communication and presentation, negotiation, global business, ethics, team projects. The concentration areas are developed by MBA programs under the form of electives or majors with several modules to complete the curriculum after the core courses. Segev, Raveh, Farjoun (1999) identify six clusters of concentration areas after studying 39 variables of core and concentration courses. They are:

- Communication / Ethics
- Finance / Marketing concentration
- Decision / Public
- Economics / International
- Industrial / Human
- Information Systems

Rubin and Dierdorff (2009) also conduct a survey to compare nearly 3600 core courses of MBA core curricula and the requirements of over 8600 manager stakeholders' needs for management jobs. Six major behavioural competencies were found to underlie all managerial work; with two competency domains:

- managing human capital
- managing decision-making processes

To be more important than the other domains:

- managing administration and control
- managing strategy and innovation
- managing logistics and technology, and
- managing the task environment

The concentration areas vary from programs to programs, years to years, regions to regions, and are defined as the sources of curriculum differentiation for MBA programs (Datar et al 2010)

3.2. Trends in business school curriculum development

The Graduate Management Admission Council noticed that there are three trends of MBA programs:

- Toward **shorter** programs
- Toward program **diversity**

- Toward **internationalization**

In the prior research, we result the same trends of MBA programs within a period of 10 years. Programs are designed in a shorter duration, with diversity directions either in contents, topics, specializations or cultural focuses. Internationalization and business multicultural awareness are applied systematically in every program.

In a recent book chapter on “Evaluating management education and business schools in context, Basso et al (2011) cite a view in the academic world, withdrawing from the recessions and crises, that the goal of business education is to secure students’ future careers. In a similar conclusion, Datar et al (2010) or Rynes and Bartunek (2013) find that as business schools have modelled themselves increasingly on the academic disciplines in order to secure their foothold in the university, their research and teaching have become less and less relevant to executives and students. The reasons a student may choose an MBA are shifting because holding an MBA is no longer a guaranteed position or an immediate raise. “Students have long gone to business schools to gain entry to high-paying jobs in investment banking, private equity, and hedge funds.”

Researchers seek to explain the less relevance by pointing to the influences of key business school stakeholders on curricular design. For example, stakeholder groups such as business school administrators and professors (Gioia and Corley, 2002; Datar, Garvin and Cullen, 2010); accrediting and ranking bodies (Rubin and Dierdorff 2009; Khurana, 2007); students (Trank and Rynes, 2003); recruiters (Eberhardt, McGee, Moser, 1997; Rynes, Trank, Lawson and Ilies, 2003, Rynes and Bartunek 2013) have been interrogated and described for their roles in shaping or maintaining MBA program content.

In contrast to other studies on career employers of MBA program, Datar et al also conducted a curriculum comparison of the top ranked MBA programs from 2006 and 2007. Their findings were firstly the course content of these programs is very similar. However, there are differences in:

- The precise amount of time or attention devoted to particular topics, that show the aim of a school’s development strategy.
- The breadth of coverage of subjects they included in the core part.
- The use of cases, exercises, or problem sets,

- How rigid or flexible a MBA program is, in terms of courses sequences, required courses and elective courses.

As a result, the authors Datar, Garvin and Cullen came to a conclusion of some trends of evolutions in MBA programs. The trends are the offering of greater flexibility; increased and earlier specialization; stratified courses by experience, smaller group work; programs innovating in globalization; leadership development; integrative thinking; course sequencing

Datar et al concluded the “rethinking MBA” session with proposals from top ranked business schools to strengthen the relevance of business programs:

- A Global perspective
- Leadership Development
- Integration
- Organisational Realities
- Creative, Innovative Thinking
- Oral and Written Communication
- The Role, Responsibilities, and Purpose of Business
- Risk, Regulation and Restraint (or Understanding the Limits of Markets and Models)

Aligned with problems cited in Datar et al’s “Rethinking MBA” (2010), Lyons (2012) a macro and micro approaches for curriculum reform, with example of his own MBA program reform at Haas School of Business, Berkeley. A macro approach is considered when he finds support for curriculum reform with a leader archetype from core courses and a supporting culture, norms, values and expectation from all faculties. A micro approach is when faculty identify and judge ten best capabilities to define the innovative leaders and reflect knowledge and skills needed for success, forming skills of defining opportunities (problem framing, opportunity recognition, experimentation), making choices (revenue model innovation, valuation of ideas, risk selection), and execution (influence without authority, managing ambiguity or conflict, team creativity, adaptive governance). The macro and micro approaches are applied in curriculum reform with implementation steps from getting recognition from recruiters, reinforcing skills in core courses, to enhancing skills in advanced courses. Two courses are reformed (Leading

people, Leadership communication), and a new course is created (problem finding problem solving), form a strong skill enhancing for unmet needs in leadership and communication.

Rynes and Bartunek (2013), after doing a thorough examination of management curricula researches done by Segev et al from 1999 to most recent MBA roundtable data in 2012, conclude that at least five competencies should be taught in all MBA programs, which are:

- Functional and quantitative/analytical knowledge and skills
- Leadership, human capital management, and interpersonal skills
- Decision making and problem solving
- Ethics and corporate social responsibility, and
- Globalization

It is a thorough and concrete approach to focus researches on curriculum reform of MBA, in such a way Datar et al (2010), Lyons (2012) or Rynes and Bartnek (2013) do to raise the unmet needs or should-be-taught competencies of students after studying an MBA. As the trend of MBA curriculum reform, the research will go further into curriculum revisiting concerning Leadership theme. Nevertheless, before apply them to the curriculum strategy or implementation; one must question whether these tendencies of “unmet needs” were created by underlying causes of:

- Mimetic isomorphism? That is the tendency was driven by the researchers and reputation mechanism (ranking, accreditation)
- Coercive isomorphism? That is the tendency was driven by the crisis and other elements in the job markets
- Normative isomorphism? That is the tendency was driven by general evolution in the management education and business schools.

If the needs are created by coercive isomorphism, thus MBA programs should prepare a workforce for the business world, upon the needs of the business world; and they are in need of those who acquire leadership competencies. In such direction, business schools and management education do not train management science as a science, but just management practices, tools and techniques. The key operation system to diversify and redesign the MBA content is that simple? Is it because the business world needs more

traders in financial institutions and banks that MBA programs focus on training financial specializations? Is it because the business world are in financial crisis and it needs more people to fix the problems of crisis that MBA programs focus on crisis management? Whether MBA curriculum should prepare students with the past, current or future demands of organisations and the business world and should redesign the programs with the past, current or future tendency of the world.

In the case of mimetic creation, there are discrepancies between the theoretical models of leadership, stated in both management and research literature that are developed below, and the practical implementation in the curricula of management and business programs in the world. Finally, in case of normative isomorphism, to which extent did the theoretical evolution really influenced the reform of the curricula and is it still the case? Professors should teach global leadership practices to prepare manager with global leadership and complex situational; or they should provide a forecast for the future management trends and models. Their intentions (marked in the course curriculum and design) and their given messages (discussed and mentioned in the lectures to students) are well transferred to students. Are the results or limitations of the MBA rethinking period influencing the literature to a certain point?

4. Leadership theme

4.1. Definitions of leadership

There is not only a single definition of leadership. Leadership means differently for different people (Gill, 2011). Understanding different definitions of leadership will help us conduct a proper research on MBA curriculum reform regarding leadership theme. The first step is to position oneself towards which direction of defining leadership and towards its derivatives such as leadership styles or leadership competencies. The second step could be then how to develop leadership, always in the context and position of the chosen leadership.

As Bennis, Vroom & Jago (2007) mentioned, there are no generally accepted definitions of what leadership is, no dominant paradigms for studying it, and little agreement about the best strategies for developing and exercising it.

The simplest way to define the word leadership is to break down the word as per the rules of phonetic building in English vocabulary: lead-er-ship. In such case, leadership is the spirit or ability (ship) of one person (er) who leads.

To lead, according to several dictionaries, is either of this action:

- to guide or conduct → behaviour
- to direct with authority or by influence → influence
- to precede or be-ahead of others → traits
- to be more advanced in a domain → traits
- to tend or to reach in a certain direction → act

This definition of lead demonstrates well the scholars of common definitions and beliefs of leadership include:

- Leadership is the power to communicate assertively and inspire others (behaviours, visionary) (Westley & Mintzberg 1989)
- Leadership is the attributes to the process to make a significant change (acts) (Heifetz & Linsky 2002) at a specific culture and situation that need to make decision (situations) (Kurt Lewin 1939), or a contingent or dependent situation that defines the own style to the right situation (contingency) (Friedler, 1964, Mintzberg, 1975)
- Leadership is the ability to influence others (influences) (Adler 2010; Meindl & Ehrlich, 1987) (servant) (Greenleaf, 2002)
- Leadership is the possession of certain qualities to inspire and impose others (traits) (Jago, 1982)

Similarly, Stogdill and Bass (1990), Plane (2015) states that there are three basic ways to explain how people become leaders:

- Traits theory: some personality traits may lead people naturally into leadership roles
- Cognitive great events theory or contingent situational theory: A crisis or important event may cause a person to rise to the occasion, which brings out extraordinary leadership qualities and styles in an ordinary person.
- Transformational or Process leadership theory: people can choose to become leader. People can learn leadership skills.

Observations show that most business schools apply the latter way to develop their leadership courses. It is also confirmed in the literature that some schools “rush to offer products with titles that explicitly refer to leadership” (Thoenig, 2009, foreword, p.x) and that the topic of leadership is a contemporary publishing cliché (March and Weil, 2009). Bearing in mind that leadership is “has “no unanimously accepted wellspring”, the two authors have cited leadership relating to different contexts or great works of literature in order to describe the definition of leadership, in which it focus more on the relationships between individual well-being and the status and behaviour of leaders. Since there is no unify definition, we suppose it is necessary to investigate on the history and development of different theories on leadership.

4.2. Histories of leadership theories

In the Transformational Leadership report (2007) and in the book of Exploring leadership: For college students who want to make a difference, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass (2007), Covey S (2007) and Komives, SR., Lucas, N; McMahon TR (2007) attempt to mark the milestones on histories of leadership theories. Based mainly on these sources and other bibliographies of Warren Bennis, Victor Vroom, Arthur Jago and Bruce Avolio (2007) in American Psychologist January 2007 – Special issue: Leadership; and of Kurt Lewin et al (1939) in Journal of Social Psychology - Patterns of aggressive behaviour in experimentally created social climates (1939); different approaches in historical contexts of leadership theories could be summarized in the table below:

Approaches	Time period	Major assumptions	Major Criticisms
------------	-------------	-------------------	------------------

Great man	Mid 1800s to early 1900s	<p>Leadership development is based on Darwinist principles</p> <p>Leaders are born, not made</p> <p>Leaders have natural abilities of power and influence</p>	<p>Scientific research has not proved that leadership is based on hereditary factors</p> <p>Leadership was believed to exist only in a few individuals</p>
Trait	1904 to 1947	<p>A leader has superior or endowed qualities</p> <p>Certain individuals possess a natural ability to lead</p> <p>Leaders have traits which differentiate them from followers</p>	<p>The situation is not considered in this approach</p> <p>Many traits are too obscure or abstract to measure and observe</p> <p>Studies have not adequately linked traits with leadership effectiveness</p> <p>Most trait studies omit leadership behaviours and followers' motivation as mediating variables</p>
Situational/Contingency	1950s to 1960s	<p>Leaders act differently depending on the situation</p> <p>The situation determines who will emerge as a leader</p> <p>Different leadership behaviours are required for different situations</p>	<p>Most contingency theories are ambiguous, making it difficult to formulate specific, testable propositions</p>
Influence	Mid-1920s to 1977	<p>Leadership is an influence or social exchange process</p> <p>Leadership is an influence exchange process in different cultural style</p>	<p>More research is needed on the effect charisma has on the leader-follower interaction</p> <p>Leader-follower interaction are more complex and not limit to the three styles of autocratic, the democratic and the laissez-faire</p>
Reciprocal	1978 to present	<p>Leadership is a relational process</p> <p>Leadership is a shared process</p>	<p>Research is lacking</p> <p>Further clarification is needed on similarities and differences between charismatic and transforming leadership</p> <p>Processes of collaboration,</p>

		Emphasis is on followership	change, and empowerment are difficult to achieve and measure
Chaos or systems	1990 to present	Attempts to describe leadership within a context of a complex, rapidly changing world Leadership is a relational process Control is not possible, so leadership	Research is lacking Some concepts are difficult to define and understand Holistic approach makes it difficult to achieve and measure

Table II.3.3: Leadership theories

Source: Author (2012) develop from Komives, SR., Lucas, N; McMahon TR (2007) Exploring leadership: For college students who want to make a difference, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass and The Transformational Leadership report (2007) and House, RJ., Aditya RN (1997) The Social Scientific Study of Leadership: Quo Vadis?, Journal of Management, 23(3)

The table illustrates the disagreements among scholars about definitions and developments of leadership. The latest approach which is missing in their summaries is the leadership in multicultural context, launched firstly by the group of researchers in the project of GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organisational Behaviour Effectiveness) in 2001.

4.3. Leadership versus Management

Whatever definition of leadership is, all researchers agree on the points that leadership deals with change, and in order to deal with change, the supposed-to-be leader need to equip him/herself with a good vision.

Then why leadership is important? Why not just focus on doing one's work and running one's business and quit worrying about all this leadership stuff? Why management schools do not focus on training Management development skills but move towards courses

dealing with leadership implicitly or explicitly? The answer is it as simple as this is the age of change?

The first academic who distinguished management and leadership was supposed to be Zaleznik, when he established his first article of “Managers and leaders: Are they different?” in 1977 on Harvard Business Review. Zaleznik makes his case against modern management by comparing it with Fredrick Taylor’s scientific management theories, and concludes that managers and leaders differ in terms of their personalities. For Zaleznik, leaders are interested in substance while managers are only interested in process. Hence, leaders promote new directions while managers execute existing ones. Tichy and Devanna (1986), then Kotter (1990) also agree that managers are dedicated to the maintenance of the existing organisation, whereas leaders often are committed to its change.

Many scholars try to make the difference between Management and Leadership as well, such as Covey R Stephen mentioned two quotes that describe well this difference:

- Management is efficiency in climbing the ladder of success. Leadership determines whether the ladder is leaning against the right wall. (The 7 habits of Highly Effective People, 2004)
- Management works in the system. Leadership works on the system.

Or he coincides that “while the manager’s role is primarily transactional, the leader’s is transformational.”

David V Day has summarized points of views from pervious researchers on the two notions of leadership development and management development such as Yukls (1998); Latham & Sejits (1998); Mailick, Stumpf, Grant, Kfir, and Watson, (1998); Baldwin & Padgett (1994); Keys & Wolfe (1988); Wexley & Baldwin (1986); McCauley et al (1998); Dixon (1993); Weick (1993); Hooijberg, Bullis, & Hunt (1999). Professor Dery, in his seminar with doctoral students at the CNAM (April 8, 2011), also mentioned that the difference between Management and Leadership is that: the first deals with improving the organisation as it is and by developing it within the borderline while the latter deals with improving the organisation by question its status and go beyond the borderline.

Even though the literatures between the two areas are parallel and do overlap, the key differences are:

	Management development	Leadership development
To whom (Positions)	Performance in formal managerial roles	People with or without formal managerial roles
In what field (Scopes)	Managerial education and training to acquire knowledge and skills	Management processes are considered to be position and organisation specific
Why (Objectives)	To enhance task performance in a position and organisation specific	To enable groups of people to work together in meaningful ways
Problems (Objectives)	Problems predicted	Problems could not have been predicted
How (approaches)	Application of proven solutions to known problems	Building capacity in anticipation of unforeseen challenges

Table II.3.4: Comparison between Management development and Leadership development

Source: Author (2012) Develop from literatures

Nevertheless, there exist researchers and academics who prefers to make no distinguish between leadership and management. Henry Mintzberg (2004) is an example. He presents the words management and leadership interchangeably. Leadership is supposed to be something bigger but Mintzberg rejects this distinction, for he argues that managers have to lead and leaders have to manage. “Management without leadership is sterile and leadership without management is disconnected and encourages hubris”. As an objection of Abraham Zaleznik’s approach on differences between managers and leaders, McCrimmon (2008) concludes, management is just as important a function in organisations as leadership.

4.4. Leadership in Management Education

Going back to the late 1970’s and early 80’s, management education was criticized when writers were looking for a “scapegoat” to blame for the failure of US business to scope with the Japanese commercial invasion. The suggested outcome at that time was to

replace managers with leaders, and to replace educating old management theories with modern management theories which is leadership. (Mitch McCrommon, 2008). In fact, there is a formal shift until the 80s to call manager title with another title “administrators”. However, there is another informal shift afterwards that managers are called leaders. Collinson, from his researches from 1988 to 2014 resumes the two new definitions of “leaders” to indicate executives, managers to oppose “followers” which means workers. Followers definition is seen as insulting and demeaning to workers as it is flattering to the managerial ego, therefore, the leadership orientation emerge to the performance root where elites redefine themselves leaders (Learmonth and Morrell, 2016).

Being in accord with the undistinguishing of leadership and management in management education, Professor Gerald Smith still argues that the typical skills of either leadership or management for individuals in various positions are not the same. He summarized the curve of required typical leadership and management skills in different positions as steps of professional development including first line supervisor, middle managers, administrators and organisation executives.

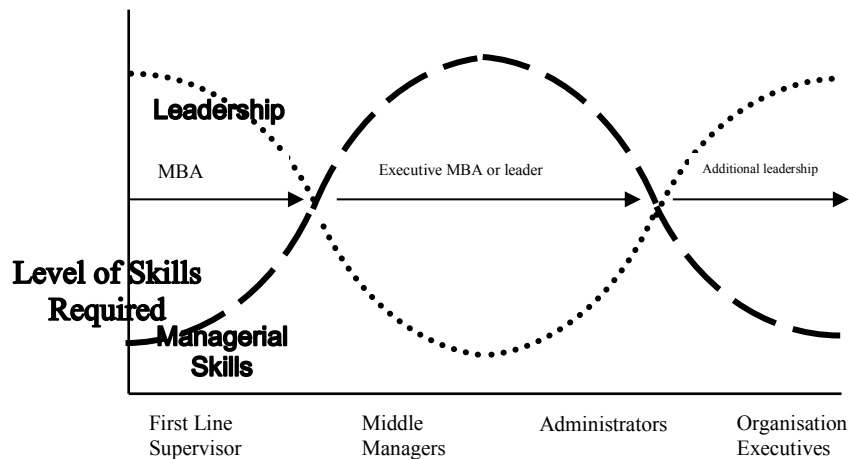


Figure II.3.7: Level of skills required for typical leadership and managerial positions

Source: Smith, G.W, *Leadership and Managerial Development: A realistic Approach* (2006)

Arguing that the typical tasks and skills required at each position are not the same, appropriate management training needs to be provided prior to one assuming a position requiring that particular skill.

Position/ Level	Typical tasks	Skills required	Training Required for current position	Developmental training
First line Supervisor	Operational Planning, Task Assignment, Worker Supervision, Motivating workers, Problem-solving	Interpersonal skills, Communication, Motivation, Counselling, Problem-solving	Leadership	Tactical Level Managerial (MBA Program)
Middle Manager	Tactical Planning, Resource Allocation, Budgeting, Quality Control	Planning, Organizing, Budgeting, Coordinating, Controlling	Managerial	Strategic Level Managerial (Executive MBA or specialized courses)
Administrator	Strategic Planning, Policy Development, Resource Allocation	Planning, Organizing, Budgeting, Coordinating, Controlling	Managerial	Visionary Leadership (Executive Leader Program)
Executive	Organisation Vision, Align Employees Behind the Vision	Communication, Motivation, Problem-solving	Leadership	Additional Leadership Courses

Table II.3.5: Training Requirements by Position

Source: Smith, G.W, Leadership and Managerial Development: A realistic Approach (2006)

Smith concludes that the training required for an individual to be successful should not focus on skills required for the individual's current position, but rather on skills required to be successful at the next level position.

Mintzberg (2004) agrees that the development of managers balancing between management and leadership will require another approach to management education,

likewise, engaging, that encourages practicing managers to learn from their experience towards new targeted experience. Caligiuri (2006) also suggests that the developmental opportunities to be offered to the people with requisite individual aptitudes (that is knowledge, skills, abilities and other intercultural training or developmental experience) will produce leaders or managers who can effectively perform global leadership tasks and activities. Given the importance of effective global leadership, research examining ways to develop global leaders has received much attention from academics and practitioners alike (Caligiuri, 2006).

Spoelstra et al (2016) have recently done a research to interview 72 scholars in the domain of leadership. The results of the research are dimmed as leadership studies are paradigmatically mainstreaming with predominance of Anglo-American scholars, they are out of touch with the day to day supposed-to-be-leaders people who try to influence in business. The conclusion of the research is a proposal that concepts of leadership and leadership studies should be engage with managers, training manager programs for transformational changes. That brings Petriglieri (2015) to raise the question whether Business Schools can humanize leadership without just simply following the main streams.

4.5. Application of leadership theories in business schools and MBA curricula

Considering both assumptions and criticisms of each leadership theory, it is raised a question of how business schools, in case they deal with leadership subjects, could apply which theory and be consistent with such theory in transferring them successfully to students.

If business schools integrate leadership development courses in their curricula, there must be an evaluation and assessment system of learning outcomes or students' outcomes. The assessment movement that has permeated higher education has also influenced leadership programs. Boatman (2000) emphasized that leadership assessments improve

performance by “assisting with the identification of leadership development needs and validating progress in them”. Similarly, Chambers (1994) highlighted the importance of adding assessment with leadership programs for four reasons:

- Student leadership professionals must examine and document the outcomes of leadership efforts on both student learning and development
- It is important that leadership development activities emphasize accountability and use of sound management techniques.
- Various publics want evidence of program effectiveness in order to justify their support
- Information about the impact of leadership programs is needed to make decisions about the future of these programs.

Concretely, in one of her researches appearing on the leadership learning community, Elissa Perry (2007) listed four broad categories of leadership outcomes, either in short term or in long term outcomes, that programs are seeking to promote:

- **Core Leadership Competencies** include: Communication, Collaboration and Democratic process, Critical Social Analysis, Systems thinking, Leadership development and Cultural Competence.
- **Personal Transformation and Mastery** combine of Self-Reflection and Awareness, Spirituality and Inner Work, Reflection and Learning, Courage and Ethical Action, Authenticity
- **Organisational Leadership Capacity** are: Leadership/Governance, Program Planning and Implementation, Learning, Sustainability, Connections/Networking/Partnerships, Social change
- **Community Leadership Capacity** is compose of: Leadership, Decision making, Social capital, Leadership development, Collaboration, Networks, and Partnerships, Civic Participation, Learning, Mobilization/Change Movements

Here, only a focus on the core leadership competencies in terms of Leadership development and Cultural competence which is in the core leadership competencies seems to be complex to assess the outcomes, with the methods to access include:

- **Self-reporting** on skill acquisition through interviews, surveys, and internal reporting systems
- **External assessments** through interviews with placement/internship sponsors, feedback from employers, and input from faculty and trainers.

Schuh and Associates (2009) broke down the link of Core-Personal-Organisation-Community leadership capacity into different items to cluster the leadership assessment and evaluation. These clusters of assessments show the coverage of all theories of leadership, to take into account all factors that could bring up the leadership. They include:

- Assessing attendance and participation (tracking)
- Assessing leadership traits, styles and attributes
- Assessing leadership behaviours
- Assessing leadership learning outcomes
- Assessing leadership in groups and organisations
- Evaluating leadership program effectiveness (including benchmarking and using national standards, conducting cost analyses and comparisons to national normative data)

The US business schools and MBA programs are in competitions of putting in service different leadership assessment systems, from online based to paper based version. Different types of questionnaires to assess leadership development and leadership learning outcomes from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) of Burns (1978) and Bass (1985) to Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) of Kouzes and Posner's Leadership Challenge (2003). All methods and systems of leadership development could not answer clearly the questions of When do we need to conduct such assessment and questionnaires? Whether it should be a continuing assessment, right after a graduation or after several years, in such case how many years, to verify the outcomes of the

leadership and management curricula and programs? How it will evaluate the effect to the outcomes that factors of leadership and international experience that sometimes students involve in before or after the graduation.

Another approach of applying leadership in management education is to use the theme leadership in groups or work teams, which is one of the areas that involve many researches of leadership from the years 1990s (Daugherty & Williams, 1997; Penwell, 1992; Riechmann, 1992). Leadership roles, decision making powers are rotated among members of group or team in the organisation. The training of leadership in management curriculum is consequently adapted to new pedagogical approaches with team work, team building, group discussion and decision making, as well as play roles in classes of organisational behaviours, negotiation and strategy.

5. Conclusion

Retrieving from the quote of Simon H at the beginning of this chapter, Sonntag (2007) confirms that curricula creation is a science of conception. Sonntag resumes two classical approaches to design a new program: the first action is “brainstorming” (Action of associative group thinking for creativity) developed by Alex Osborn in 1940; and the second action is “lateral thinking” (Action for changing concepts and perceptions, making new things) invented by Edward de Bono in 1967. Sonntag formalizes another innovative approach, called TIPS (Russian original abbreviation of TRIZ) by Altshuller in 1946, as it is the Theory of Inventive Problem Solving. The theory TIPS finds out that problems and solutions are repeated across industries and sciences. Solutions are found first by identifying problems and its contradictory and contrasting situation. It reveals patterns of evolution through contradictions and the development of an algorithmic approach to the invention of new things or to the refinement of existing ones. One solution does not lie in a compromise but it could be found in an inconsistent system. Despite the stated postulate of stakeholder approach where no one interest should be able to dominate all of the others, one of the strongest criticism on Freeman’s stakeholder theory (1984) is

that in reality a firm, an organisation, an educational institution must make trade-offs between its goals and organisation's goal and the goals of its stakeholders. Considering the trends of business schools' revisiting curriculum, especially around leadership theme, as an effort to reposition business schools at the balanced strategic position between conformity and differentiation, it is not an inventive conception. Else, taking into account all stakeholders involved in the revisiting curriculum activities, it could be seen as a solution to answer the contradictory between regulators' requirements, recruiters and actual limited resources so that the MBA program could stand on market and the business schools survive in the business schools' business.

PART III METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER 1 DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH

1. Intention of the research design

“Management education is shaped by many variables, including the needs and preferences of consumers of business education; the knowledge, abilities, and skills employers expect graduates to possess; the choice of providers available to those interested in pursuing management degrees; and the resources business schools need to serve their customers. These are among the variables that make up the context for management education, which is very different today than it was even as recently as the mid-1990s.”

AACSB report - Management Education at Risk (2002, p.6)

This statement of the Management Education Task Force to the AACSB – International demonstrates that it is not evident and easy to understand and explain the structure of a program, the reasons of creation and the factors influenced in the changes of a course or a curriculum. There should be various approaches to the market of MBA in order to understand the evolution and the influential factors of its curriculum.

Our approaches to collect data are various. They are empirical and rely on several unique sources of primary data, as well as the availabilities and transparencies of curricula information as secondary data. First, we collect detailed market data in search of understanding the general picture of all MBA programs existing in France. This data analysis consists of information regarding schools, types and specializations of MBAs, faculty and students’ characteristics, and above all the existence of leadership theme in their MBA curricula.

Second, we conduct extensive interviews with some directors of business school in France, in order to further comprehend the specificity of MBA programs in France. All interviews last more than an hour and are recorded. Besides, thanks to our professional and research activities in the field of management education, we have chances to exchange ideas, conversations and information informally with many deans, organizers and representatives of other business schools in Europe, United States, Asia, Middle East, during our various conferences and seminars⁴. Such exchanges provide further details to complete the analysis of MBA programs in France, but not all of them are recorded.

Third, we involve in a longitudinal study and observation of two business schools and their MBA programs, in order to write complete cases of the curricula revisiting in the leadership theme, with involvements from different determinants - stakeholders as providers, demanders or regulators. In order to conduct the research and explain the propositions with a focus on leadership-related modules, in each case study, three groups of stakeholders are investigated with semi structured interviews during the participating observation of the two programs. These are the unique stories that are relevant, interesting but also important to present as cases in our research. The observations and discussions are reported in our logs.

Forth, we put together all the data collected for this research in several years so that we could analyze thoroughly the market of Management Education and MBA programs in France with the temptation to give explanation and build theories on what makes academic institutions revisit their MBA curricula. The research presents a spiral model of individuals inside the organisations and the industry, and a balanced strategic position of organisations inside the industry. The development of such spiral model and balanced strategic position is assumed the result of individuals' and organisations' evolutions.

⁴ We profited to exchange and discuss with scholars in the field of management education and principally frame our research design from, but not limited to, these main conferences and seminars of 1) the 4th QS-MAPLE Higher Education Conference, 6-8 May 2014 in Abudhabi; 2) the SFM thematic seminar on "L'enseignement supérieur de management deviant-il un business?", 5 February 2015, Paris; 3) the 2nd International Biennale on Education, Training and Professional Practices, 30 Juin-3 July, 2015, Paris; 4) the 2nd European Business and Management Conference, 9-12 July 2015, Brighton; 5) the 76th Annual Meeting of Academy of Management, 5-9 August, 2016, Anaheim.

The hypotheses (propositions) grasp all three levels of individuals, organisations and industry of Management Education. The first hypothesis aims at demonstrating a spiral evolution of stakeholders – determinants that influences the changes in the MBA curricula, thus we aim at reviewing the relationship between individuals – organisations and individuals- organisations - industry. The second hypothesis focuses on positioning balanced strategies that stakeholders – determinants tend to employ regarding the changes in the MBA curricula, therefore we would like to have another look at the relationship between organisations – organisations and organisations – industry.

The research introduces the impact of personal backgrounds, historical experience and professional projects that led individuals to grow and influence the organisations and / or industry of Management Education. In order to do so, we believe that we should involve several methodologies for each step of the research. While choosing between two basic methodologies of research in social science: positivism (quantitative) and post-positivism (qualitative), we would emphasize that the objective of this research is not to gather facts and measure how often certain patterns occur, but to appreciate the different constructions and meanings underlay, which is necessary to apply both methodologies (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Lowe, 1991). Furthermore, before quantitative methods can become useful in an examination of how outcomes are achieved, it seems necessary to use qualitative methods to inductively discover all the program characteristics that are possibly affecting the outcomes experienced by the stakeholders (McKenzie, 2000), or to offer insights into complex social processes that quantitative data cannot reveal (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007)

2. Selected methods and rational for using mixed methods

Quantitative and qualitative inquiry represents two legitimate ways to investigate the researches in different academic disciplines. There are arguable many disadvantages while applying the two methods separately. Therefore, both qualitative and quantitative methods are to be applied in this same study in order to obtain a better understanding of

the research problem. This different approach is not new in academic researches, called a mixed method (Cherryholmes, 1992; Easterby-Smith et al., 2002). Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) resume the dimensions of the three methods – Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Method in the following table:

Dimensions	Quantitative methods	Qualitative methods	Mixed Methods
Research questions	Quantitative research questions	Qualitative research questions	Qualitative and Quantitative research questions
Form of data	Typically numeric	Typically narrative	Narrative and Numeric
Purpose of the research	(Often) confirmatory plus exploratory	(Often) exploratory plus confirmatory	Confirmatory plus exploratory
Role of theory, logic	Rooted in conceptual framework or theory, hypothetic-deductive model	Grounded theory, inductive logic	Both inductive and deductive logic
Sampling	Mostly probability	Mostly purposive	Probability, purposive and mixed
Data analysis	Statistical analysis, descriptive and inferential	Thematic strategies, categorical and contextualizing	Integration of thematic and statistical, data conversion

Table III.1.1: Comparison of Quantitative Method, Qualitative Method and Mixed Method

Source: Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009 p22)

Other researchers also agree that business and management research tend to use a mixed method and combine both quantitative and qualitative approaches (Krathwohl, 2004; Ivankova et al, 2006; Saunders, 2012). Moreover, we prefer the use of the mixed methods since, in terms of epistemology; the research will provide both objective and subjective

points of view based on objectivity and interaction with participants valued by the researchers. We first mobilize relevant theories to understand and identify the mechanism that we shall execute, and then become familiar with the phenomena and approaches to collect, understand and analyze such phenomena. A mixed method research, with more tentative on qualitative approaches, is supposed to capture the detail of the subject being researched and offer a better understanding of the research problem as values and figures, which are also important in interpreting results. (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009).

Very few integration of qualitative and quantitative data is made in research analysis (Scandura and Williams, 2000; Niglas, 2004; Onwuegbuzie and Johnson, 2006). The complementarities of both methods offset the inherent weaknesses of using each approach by itself, however, a study conducted by mixed methods reveals that most of the time, researchers treat the qualitative and quantitative components separately rather than bringing them together (Bryman and Bell, 2015). In order to solve this issue, we tempt to combine both qualitative and quantitative components by integrating the findings of the qualitative analysis into the quantitative phase, and vice versa. We execute both surveys on MBA programs and MBA students and depth interviews with a range of schools in France. The results of the qualitative analysis from interviews help to build the questionnaire for the quantitative research, i.e. the surveys. While the surveys focus on some questions similar to those of the interview, the survey result are used to triangulate quantitative responses. We finally gather both qualitative and quantitative data in the analysis of specific cases in order to complete the representation of the research.

2.1 Field study and Quantitative methodology

Profiting from the professional position of management program coordination, and years of experience in the environment of management education industry, it is natural and logical for us to do a field study for this research, as the second part of the case study method. We used participant observation approach to gather longitudinal data on more than 90 students who involved in the two MBA programs between 2013 and 2015. At

CNAM, we followed the three different groups: a group of Full time MBA of cohort 2013, a group of Part time MBA of cohort 2013-2015 and a group of Hybrid MBA of cohort 2015. We finally obtained 35 answers for our surveys from the three cohorts of totally 45 students, so the rate of feedbacks is 78%. At KEDGE, in 2013 we followed a group of 55 students coming from MBA in Marseille and Shanghai campuses and a small group of exchange students from Portland State University and Frankfurt School of Finance and Management and intervened by visio conference with a group of 12 students in Bordeaux campus. In 2014 we could contact all 95 students coming from four different campuses from Paris, Bordeaux, Marseille and Shanghai when they joined the week of simulation in Marseille. However, the rate of feedbacks for our surveys is only 57%, as we received only 55 answers.

By longitudinal data, we focus on the rhetorical histories of the two programs and use the rhetorical framing to keep track and analyze the development of our cases. By longitudinal data, we follow the two different cohorts, including students enrolling for full time, part time MBAs and in different campuses of the two programs. By longitudinal data, we emphasize on the fact that we collect a primary survey at the beginning of their program and we conduct group interviews during their program to examine the effects of prior expectations on adding leadership courses in their MBA curriculum. This process maximizes realism of context since it is conducted in a field setting. We acknowledge that this field study could be considered low on precision of measurement and control of behavioural variables and generalizability to the population. We intend to enlarge the experimental control and the target population in the future works.

By participant observation we mean to actively participating in their business simulation activities in the MBA program. We involved firstly in their activities as a simple observer for the first time, and as one of their instructors for other times. We aim to understand their world from the subject's point of view, both as demanders and providers. This method requests us to get to know the people we are studying better and experience the phenomena in the way the subject experience them. The observations are recorded as logs of observations while we participate in the animation of the simulation, but not in terms of observation grids. Therefore, we do not interpret the observation data into

quantitative but qualitative information in the resume of school, program, curriculum and course's overviews.

Within this field research, quantitative methodology is applied to find an answer to the question “how many students choose to study MBA programs with a focus on leadership theme?” As Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) resume in their book of methods of research, “Quantitative methodology may be most simply and parsimoniously defined as the techniques associated with the gathering, analysis, interpretation and presentation of numerical information” (p.5), we will try to do the analysis based on the numerical data collected from students in the scope of our research, in order to describe the phenomenon of interest. In order to do so, we need to preset categories in advance, i.e. choice of MBA program and curriculum, and then we label the answers using the keywords, and put into relevant sub-categories such as reputation of program, internationalization of program, content of program, etc. A survey with open questionnaire is delivered to students shortly after they enrolled in the MBA program. Based on the preset categories, we could define and count the number of respondents of the survey who refer to the sub-categories of interest. These counts might not be suitable for statistics analysis, but they provide a rough estimate of relative importance that answers our interests in concrete figures. The students being surveyed were then grouped in group interviews at a latter moment of the year in order to see if they have changes their motivations and / or their regards on leadership courses and leadership theme. The group interviews were made in around only fifteen minutes, normally in the break of their simulation class, so just essential exchanges were communicated. Examples of the categories and sub-categories with interpretation and labelling key words from students' surveys are resumed in this below table.

Categories	Sub-categories	Key words captured from the surveys
Criteria to choose an MBA	Reputation of the school / program	Ranking, Financial Times ranking, Reputation, Accreditation/Certification Creditability, Brand of the school,

		Words of mouths, Business school qualification, International Recognition, Name of the school,
	Locations	Place, Global/international, Paris/Bordeaux/Shanghai, Availability, Global exposures, Near home and business,
	Price	Cost, Study fees, Price, Company's sponsor
	Rhythm of study	Full time, Part time, Flexibility, Time, Adaptable with my work, Distance learning with some group meetings
	Meeting and Exchange	Alumni & Networking, Platform to share experience, meeting with new and different background, social and business contacts, open network and international business experience
Reason to do an MBA	Job promotion/management position	Career development of management, better career path, advance in career, open perspective in my actual job, integrate into big companies, change from engineering position to management position,
	Advance existing skills	Learn more business functions, challenge myself, personal development, develop and improve myself, update knowledge
	New skills	Different way of thinking, develop new competences, acquire new knowledge, learn new business practices, learn all basic skills for project manager,

	Diplome/Title	A systematic training on business management, Be more credible, Diploma renown for new activity
	Entrepreneur	Start my own business, Be confident for a potential entrepreneurial project, Open new professional opportunities, Have necessary toolbox to run own company,
	International position	Intercultural international development, involve in international projects, develop an international profile for work, new international opportunities

Table III.1.2: Grid Analysis for interpretation of Students' survey to quantitative information

2.2. Case study, Interviews and Qualitative methodology

"Qualitative research is multimethod in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials – case study, personal experience, introspective, life story, interview, observational, historical, interactional and visual texts – that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives." (Denzin and Lincoln, 2004, p. 2) It is very easy to figure out the main changes in the curricula on documents of schools by collecting data of programs from several years. However, it will be too obscure to conclude whether a program has modified its curriculum based on such data, as changes could be explicit in documents, or it could be implicit in the interpretation of curriculum from program's stakeholders. Since we would

like to focus on such details of “natural settings” in the organisation and development of curriculum, we prefer to focus on qualitative method to analyze our research. We understand that qualitative data consist of words and observations called narrative data, not numbers, and that this requires time, creativity, discipline and a systematic approach to analyze and interpret narrative data (Taylor-Power, Renner, 2003). Narrative data come in a variety of forms and sources. The forms and sources that we applied to collect all narrative data are open-ended questions, questionnaires, discussion group with students, interview individuals with professors, teachers, directors and staffs of MBA programs, observation logs and records, documents and brochures of programs, etc. To be precise on the choice of treating narrative data, we focus the analysis on two approaches of case study and interview to describe, analyze and build our hypotheses. The confirmation of propositions and conclusion of theory built is supposed to emerge by the development of patterns, relationships built up within and across cases and their underlying logical arguments. The comparison of cases is necessary to enhance replication logics of the newly developed theory (Eisenhardt et al, 2007).

As it has been argued, many disadvantages may occur while applying these methods separately. Therefore, in this research, we have the intention to apply both qualitative and quantitative methods. Evered and Louis (1981) assume that “inquiry from the outside” is often implemented by quantitative studies while “inquiry from the inside” is done via qualitative studies. Furthermore, in social science, scholars find quantitative methods are insufficient on their own in explaining the phenomenon they would like to study. Scholars emphasize the qualitative research on social science, especially in link with leadership (Schall et al, 2004; Conger 1998; Bryman et al 1988; Alvesson 1997), including advantages as:

- flexibility to follow unexpected ideas during research and explore processes effectively
- sensitivity to contextual factors
- ability to study symbolic dimensions and social meaning
- increased opportunities to develop empirically supported new ideas and theories, for in-depth and longitudinal explorations of certain phenomena.

Bryman et al (1988) identifies an effective and more academic form of qualitative research in the field of management and leadership; that explores several research designs at the same time: case studies using participant observation, semi-structured interviewing and document analysis. They are also the variety of methodologies we intend to use in this research.

The parameters which direct the choice of research design are: (1) a belief that existing theoretical perspectives, i.e. Deephouse's balanced strategic position, illuminate a strategic sense of development in the field of management education; (2) a desire to identify the determinants of that development and their outcomes, and (3) the consequent need for observation that was administratively multi-level and longitudinal. These considerations make our choice of a qualitative method and it is the case study method, to be precise, as a main methodology of research. Yin (2013) see case studies as being concerned with how and why things happen, allowing the investigation of contextual realities and differences between what was planned and what actually occurred. The case method allows the questions of why, what and how, to be answered with a relatively full understanding of the nature and complexity of the complete phenomenon. Moreover, the case method lends itself to early, exploratory investigations where the variables are still unknown and the phenomenon not at all understood (Meredith, 1998)

Because variables are extremely complex in the real world, traditional deductive-analytic methodologies force the research to work on the phenomenon by: (1) substituting crude proxies for difficult-to-measure determinants or outcomes; (2) assuming away some of the multidimensionality in causal relationships; and/or (3) narrowing the scope of research (Hamel, 1991, p.84). We hence focus on few cases studies as our scope of research and focus on the measurable determinants to develop our cases, while observing the whole industry with other immeasurable determinants or phenomena absent in cases or vaguely mentioned through interviews.

Interviews are among the most familiar strategies for collecting qualitative data. The interview method is a conversation with a purpose (Burgess, 1988). Interview, according

to Romelaer (2005) is one of the most used in management science's qualitative methods. Variables, data and findings could be built, collected and gathered in interview's expressions, as they firstly tell us what the interviewee's thoughts and secondly what the reality are on the subject of the interview. Interviews are a highly efficient way to gather rich, empirical data when the phenomenon is highly episodic and infrequent in such situation of our research (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007). Interviews, especially unstructured or semi-structured, offer certain research flexibilities and large amount of relevant information about the experience of interviewees could be revealed via interviews, open conversations, group discussions.

There are several types of interview as research methods, such as structured, unstructured, semi-structured, informal interviews or focus groups (Gubrium and Holstein, 2002), but we choose the semi-structured interview as it is considered best used to gather the maximum of data from an interviewee who is difficult to get more than one chance to interview and it provides opportunities to identify new ways of understanding the topic and related issues that we do not consider before the interview. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews are often preceded by observations as expected, as observations "allow researchers to develop a keen understanding of the topic of interest necessary for developing relevant and meaningful semi-structured questions." (Cohen and Crabtree, 2006)

The way we started to be deeply interested in this problem is particular because it illustrates the process of creating the research in question, similar in the way Becker inspires how to construct a research in social science (Becker, 2002). In the case of MBA programs with courses and leadership theme are repeated, the word "coincidence" seems perfectly suitable. In our work, we animate a business simulation for a program of master in management. Coincidentally we found two MBAs which do the same type of simulation and got the agreement to participate and observe, then animate the two promotions of MBA in the simulation time. It is reported by students that the business simulation is one of the courses that teach them plenty of practical leadership skills; however, in order to keep an objective eye of a researcher, we shall not investigate the leadership theme in this simulation. We only make use of the opportunities of being in the field, to develop

two case studies for this research. We interview different variables, i.e. groups of determinants, to have a complete and complement regard on the interviewees' thoughts and opinions on the subject in the same case. Each case serves as a distinct experiment that stands on its own of interest for analysis, but multiple cases are experiments that serve as replications, contrasts and extensions of answers to our research questions (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 1994).

2.3. Analysis process of qualitative data

The hypotheses assume a causal relationship between a limited set of aspects of the institutional setting and the curriculum development process (i.e., the independent variables) and organisational change over the predefined study period (i.e., the dependent variable). It is more logic to analyse the institutional and organisational process of curriculum development, which is only one per business school. This fact results in two issues when adapting a case study and field study design: the reduction of complex interrelated social processes to only a few variables and, the small ratio of cases to independent variables.

The first issue is shared by the first research question, which is a question starting with a social phenomenon to be explained and subsequently seeks to identify the factors that cause it. Questions of this type have to cope with multi-causality and infinite regress (Scharpf, 1997). We address this issue by combining the review of hypotheses with literature reviews. Nevertheless, the hypotheses deliberately bring up a limited set of potentially decisive factors.

The second issue is known as the “small-n” of quantitative sample or “many variables and few cases” problem (Mayntz, 2004; Scharpf, 1997) and leads to over-determination of the dependent variable. A number of approaches are suggested, including case study and field study. The ‘testing’ of hypotheses in this study is done in all modesty, serving as a stylised summary of our qualitative findings rather than a statistical test. Based on the complexity of the matter outlined in the case studies and the overview of the industry, we expect that

the hypotheses can help shed a focused light on a limited number of selected causal relationships, but cannot replace the much richer and more nuanced analysis in this field.

Working with qualitative data is rich and enlightening. It requires critical, analytical thinking and creative innovative perspectives. Yet, it is also a difficult, time consuming and requires a systematic approach not to be overwhelmed, meaningless or biased with narrative data. Our objective is furthermore to leverage integration of data to improve the process and develop narrative for external stakeholders. We follow Taylor-Powell's and Renner's analysis process (2003) of narrative data to do this research as the analysing qualitative data. The five steps are:

- Get to know our data
- Focus the analysis, with two approaches : by question and by group of stakeholders
- Categorize information
- Identify patterns and connections within and between categories
- Interpretation

The details of implementing each step in the process will be clarified in the tools of research after developing the hypotheses for this research.

3. Sampling

The main weaknesses of the case study methodology are the lack of scientific rigor and reliability, as well as the difficulty to address the issues of generalizability. However, the case study method gains a holistic view of phenomenon and provides a comprehensive picture since many sources of evidences are used. This method captures well the emergent and immanent properties of organisation's life where it is changing very fast. Finally, multiple cases allow generalizations with some forms of replications. (Yin, 1994) From another point of view, the choice of particular cases will legitimately show the generalization in the research (Becker, 2002)

Models and frameworks regarding operations strategies in US and European business schools are discussed in the current operations, strategies and education literature, but the focus is up to now on top-ranked institutions based on the assumption that changes

in such top-ranked institutions are frequently indicative of broader trends later (Segev, Raveh and Farjoun, 1999; Rubin and Dierdorff, 2009; Datar, Garvin and Cullen, 2010; Rynes and Bartunek, 2013). However, findings in our preliminary research on the development of MBA programs in China and France suggest a need for additional research on less known business schools in countries where English is not popularly used as an official language. On one side, disagreeing with the above mentioned argument by Rynes and Bartunek or Datar, Garvin and Cullen, and on another side, bearing in mind that MBA is a US label or an Anglo-Saxon education model; we analyze particular MBA programs in a country out of the US and Anglo-Saxon influence.

The choice is decisively focused on MBA programs in France. “French MBAs are sometimes more sector-oriented than in the US” (Durand and Dameron, 2008, p.168) thus very few programs orient leadership or managerial skills. It is interesting and particular to study the trend of modifying French MBA curricula in zoom with leadership theme, even though in France no equivalent French word exists to mention the notion of leadership. France has all equivalent words to define management vocabulary such as “gestion – gérer - gérant” for management, manage and manager, or “dirigeant - diriger” for director, direct but it borrow the same word of leadership when applied to the lessons in management courses. While leadership is still a new concept in management education in France, leadership theme and personal soft skills are considered an US-style of training current managers. These themes should be enlarged and deepened in MBA curricula and management training programs (Rynes et al, 2003; Datar et al, 2010; Rubin and Dierdorff, 2011; Rynes and Bartunek, 2013). The objective of this research is to discover the application of this new US trend of leadership in the curricula of French MBA programs, and to understand and explain the different position with different contents and processes according to cases. In the statistics of MBA Studies and Find MBAs, the online database of almost all master programs in different countries, in France there are about 130 MBA programs of all types, provided by around 50 Business schools in the school year of 2015-2016. We classify such business schools into the five following families:

- Grandes écoles de commerce (French system of Grandes Écoles Business Schools)
- Universities and their autonomous institutions (IAE)
- Other business schools

- Foreign business schools with French campuses
- Enterprise universities

Engwall (2007), Antunes and Thomas (2007) and Dameron, Durand (2008) have summarized a general picture about the Management Education and Research in France, where MBA programs gain more and more visibility in French Higher education in the context of evolving business management studies. We follow the authors to classify such business schools into three following families of suppliers of MBA programs:

1) Business schools (including Grandes écoles de commerce (French system of Grandes Écoles Business Schools), other business schools and foreign business schools with French campuses), Business schools, who try to get an international visibility as any MBA programs, launch both full time and executive MBA programs, obtain the international accreditation from both American and European organisations, and implement an International network.

2) French universities, with their public status and their almost monopoly right on doctoral programs, focus more on research and national master diploma in business and management. Nevertheless, following the strategy of business schools, universities have chosen to develop continuous education where they create MBA programs; or to authorise a relatively autonomous institute within the university (IAE).

3) Enterprise Universities yet have a less important role in business management education in France. They either concentrate more on technical specialised apprenticeship or cooperate with universities and business schools for the higher education programs. There is almost no MBA program run exclusively by an enterprise university, except the announced Next-MBA of Mazars enterprise from September 2013 (Senant, 2013).

The traditional way of sampling is to identify a population, and then to select a sample from that population with sharply contrasting characteristics that will highlight the differences being studied. According to the given MBA programs in France, we choose

some programs from each family of suppliers. The following table resumes the scope and numbers of interviews done for this study.

	Providers	Demanders	Regulators	Recorded pages
KEDGE (Family 1)	5	55	1	60
CNAM (Family 2)	7	35	2	64
NEOMA (Family 1)	2		1	
MAZARS (Family 3)	1			
IAE Aix en Provence (Family 2)	1			
SFM5	6		3	

Table III.1.3. Interviews and Conversations with Stakeholders of MBA Programs in France

The distinctions of stakeholders between groups of Providers, Demanders and Regulators are explained in the next chapter. We also integrated conversations with deans of French business schools and universities, collected from an intense seminar about Management Education held by French Academy of Management in February 2015. We believe that their points of view illustrate and affirm well our hypotheses. We collected all materials for statements and expressions of reactions to curriculum development, and used these to interpret the responses and influences on the schools' strategy and organisation, provided by the modifications on MBA curricula.

Focusing on case studies, two MBA programs from two different families are chosen in order to develop the case studies of CNAM's MBA and KEDGE's MBA. There are several reasons why we choose these two cases studies, particular at the same time as representative for their families of business schools in research. Some of the general categories in contrasts are listed hereby to justify the choice of these two cases, while the detailed analyses are reserved in the findings. Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) suggest that if the purpose of the research is not only to test but to develop theories, theoretical

⁵ The 2015 seminar "Is Management Education becoming a business?" ("L'enseignement supérieur de management devient-il un business?") held by French Academy of Management SFM, February 2015 where deans of business schools present about their schools and programs

sampling is required. That means cases are selected because they are particularly suitable for illuminating and extending the logic and relationships among constructs. We do bear in mind when selecting these two particular cases for our further research.

CNAM is a public institution with public and centralized governance but the teaching of management is the responsibility and under the control of a department or an institution. Beneficiary of public institution, the curricula and thus the diploma of CNAM's MBA as other degrees are approved and recognized nationally, yet it creates a huge interrogation for the international recognition of diploma. Curricula of public universities are assured by faculty within the national regulatory authorities (Durand and Dameron, 2008) but MBA faculty could be freely appointed and recruited or should be abound by these authorities. With the supposed financial subsidiary from the government, tuition fees of all programs of CNAM, including MBA, are rather low than other programs provided in France. However, MBA and Executive management degrees are also considered self-funding resources of public institutions. The case of CNAM's MBA become very interesting since it allows us to discover the contradictory issues of governance, internationalization, faculty and funding resources could influence the development of MBA curriculum in general.

On the contrary, KEDGE is a private business school. Moreover it is one of the three newly merged schools in France. KEDGE Business School was born out of the merger of BEM-Bordeaux Management School and Marseille-based Euromed Management School. Not only it is governed by a private system, but KEDGE is under the joint governance of two boards of fusion directions. Recognition of the curricula and degrees depend on new efforts for the branding and recognition of the new entity, but they could profit from the existing programs and their recognition nationally and internationally. MBA faculty could be enriched or troublesome with the combination of the two faculties with a more flexible faculty recruitment policy of business schools. With reducing financial supports from the regional Chambers of Commerce and Industry, tuition fees of KEDGE are fixed in the range of other business schools with a consideration of taxed residences like the US fees systems. Besides the study on its curriculum development, the case of KEDGE's MBA reveals a rising

attention on the influences of different issues in the merger and acquisition situation work on its MBA.

Though particular and different as cases, the two programs bear a lot of similar points in their operation of development. In order to build up the cases, we choose the same group of variables so that it could illuminate the comparison of the two cases without really comparing them. The most difficult point of this method is to select relevant variables for observations in order to be able to compare the differences, the agreements or the joint between agreements and differences. In order to work on cases, we recorded all related interviews and noted all observations and discussions with groups of stakeholders within or related to the cases. The number of informants and pages of records and logs is important and quasi equal so that we could build unique cases with very interesting and significant data.

In order to analyze the MBA curricula and programs in our preliminary research, we have created a matrix of comparison for curricula of different schools, in different countries, of different school years, where the programs are reviewed horizontally and vertically with different variables. The matrix and the result of the preliminary research help us to define the determinant variables that we investigate in this research for the purpose of illustrating our hypotheses. We have selected in each case to focus on certain variables: (1) the history, development and creation of the MBA, (2) its curriculum development, organisation and modifications, (3) interviews with organizers including director, manager or coordinator, staffs and key instructors in the leadership theme, and (4) surveys and interviews with students and alumni. The development of the two cases is defined based on the direct data explored from the interviews, the secondary data of promotional documents (website, brochure, reports) and academic documents (curriculum, syllabi), and the participating observations of faculty, staff and students during the simulation classes.

4. Planning of the research

We summarize the planning of our research periods, based on our work before the research (in the preliminary research) up to date:

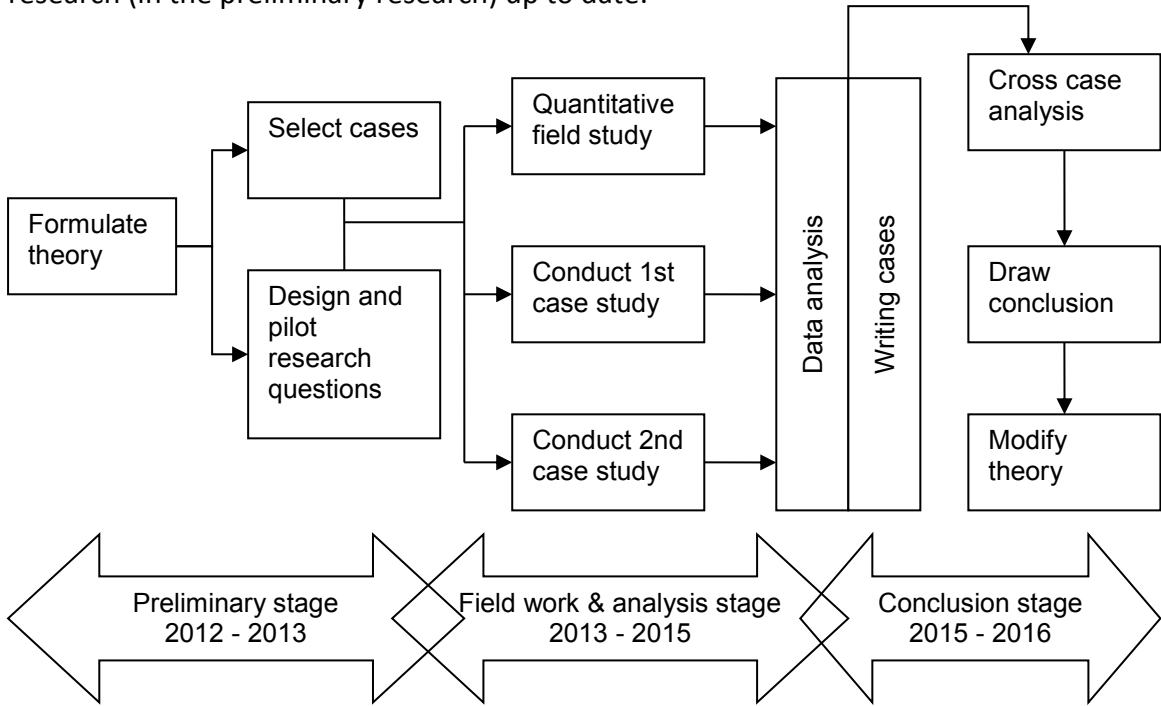


Figure III.1.1. Planning of the research

The following table present the steps of the research that we intend to implement during the research periods.

Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To clarify the strategic position of the various stakeholders involved; - To map their respective influences on the program and their roles in curricula development process - To analyze the respective strategies of the business schools regarding their MBA programs; 				
Steps	1	2	3	4	5
	Investigating the French MBA market	Identifying the influential stakeholders	Identifying the key factors that influenced stakeholders in their decision making in curriculum development	Comparing strategies of business schools regarding curriculum development	Drawing conclusions and proposing models of strategy and organisation in MBA programs
Methods	Literature reviews and Field study secondary data (Qualitative and Quantitative)	Literature reviews and Field study secondary and primary data (Qualitative)	Case studies , Participant observations and Field study (Qualitative)	Case studies, participant observations and Field study (Qualitative and Quantitative)	Literature reviews, Case studies, Participant observations and Field study
Logic	Deductive	Deductive & Inductive	Deductive & Inductive	Deductive & Inductive	Deductive

Data collection approach	Secondary data (report of French education organisations and database of online promotional websites for MBA programs)	Secondary data (report of French education organisations) Primary data (discussions, semi-structured interviews and questionnaire to students)	Primary data (discussions, semi-structured interviews and group interviews with students)	Primary data (longitudinal observation, semi-structured interviews and group interviews with students)	Deductive approach based on findings of previous steps
Processes of qualitative data analysis	Know and choose qualified data Focus the analysis on topic, period and group of stakeholders	Focus the analysis on group of stakeholders and cases Categorize information	Preset categories and define emergent categories for cases' and interviews' data	Identify patterns and connections within and between categories	Interpretation of all data and analyses

Table III.1.4. Steps of the research

PART III METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER 2

STAKEHOLDERS – DETERMINANTS IN MBA CURRICULA

Before developing further the methodologies for the data collection, we should concentrate in naming and categorizing all the determinants involving in MBA curricula. Retrieving from the literature reviews on resources of curriculum, the creation, development or revisiting of a curriculum could originate from the internal, external and surrounding environments of the education institutions. This part is aimed at identifying and assessing the roles and impacts of different stakeholders who are qualified as determinants influencing the curriculum development process and the operation of the education institutions.

Firstly, this part reminds the figure which attempts to group MBA curricula stakeholders into three main groups that enact either in the inter-organisation, intra-organisation and extra-organisation of business schools' boundaries, namely providers, demanders and regulators. It is a possible way that scholars draw the strategic map of coordination between the different stakeholders involved in MBA programs.

Secondly, this part identifies, and analyzes each typology of such three groups with complex and growing positions in different moments. The identification of stakeholders is underlined in the context of Education environment and MBA curricula in France.

Finally, this part tempts to focus on the determinants of each group and prepare for the hypothesis on the spiral evolution of such determinants in the curriculum development process and operation.

In the creation of a new program or curriculum, each educational stakeholder could think of different stakes, depending on which outcomes and perspectives they address to the

program or curriculum. Similarly, in the development of revisiting an existing curriculum, the stakeholders look further on the changes and outcomes of such changes compare to previous curriculum and situation.

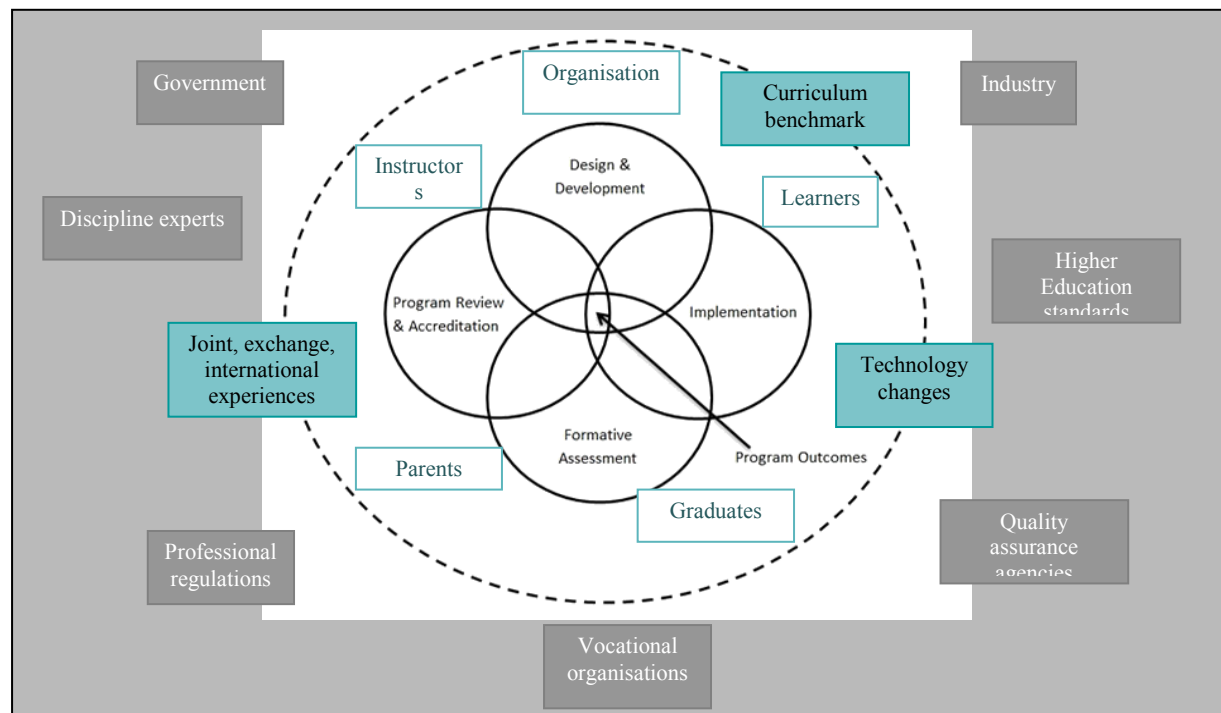


Figure II.3.4: Curriculum development process, stakeholders and boundaries (repeated)

Source: Author (2015) developed from the Holmes T, (2007); Barrow, M and McKimm, J. (2009); and Wolf P, (2007), Coate (2009) and Saiful (2011)

Krause (2009) while analyzing the dynamics of management education recognizes that “Academic roles and identities are multi-faceted and differentially influenced by the interaction of an array of factors, both within and beyond the individual, the department and the institution. As these roles become increasingly complex, there is a growing scholarly interest in analyzing ways in which they also appear to be fragmenting.” (p.413) Therefore, in order to avoid the complexity for such analysis, the factors will be treated first in a separate facet, as a provider, a demander, or a regulator.

Although some scholars (de Montmorillon, 2011; Antunes and Thomas, 2007) brings evidence that France is the crib of management education, compared to other social sciences, management known as the science for education is a rather new field in France (Dameron and Durand, 2008). Furthermore, identifying the distinctions between MBA

program and other master level (postgraduates) programs in France is essential to understand the emerging products of management education industry in France. In 1957, INSEAD became the first European and French university offering the MBA degree (Kaplan, 2014), while other management institutions traditionally provide their postgraduate degrees in management, namely “Mastère Spécialisé (MS)” or “Diplôme d'études supérieures spécialisées” (DESS), or recently Master degree in management. Compare to around 4000 MBA programs available in the US, we could find around 130 MBA offers in France⁶. With a young growth of management education, yet a strong expansion of business school's business in France, it is ideal to choose France as the studying field to track and treat the factors that determine MBA curricula revisiting.

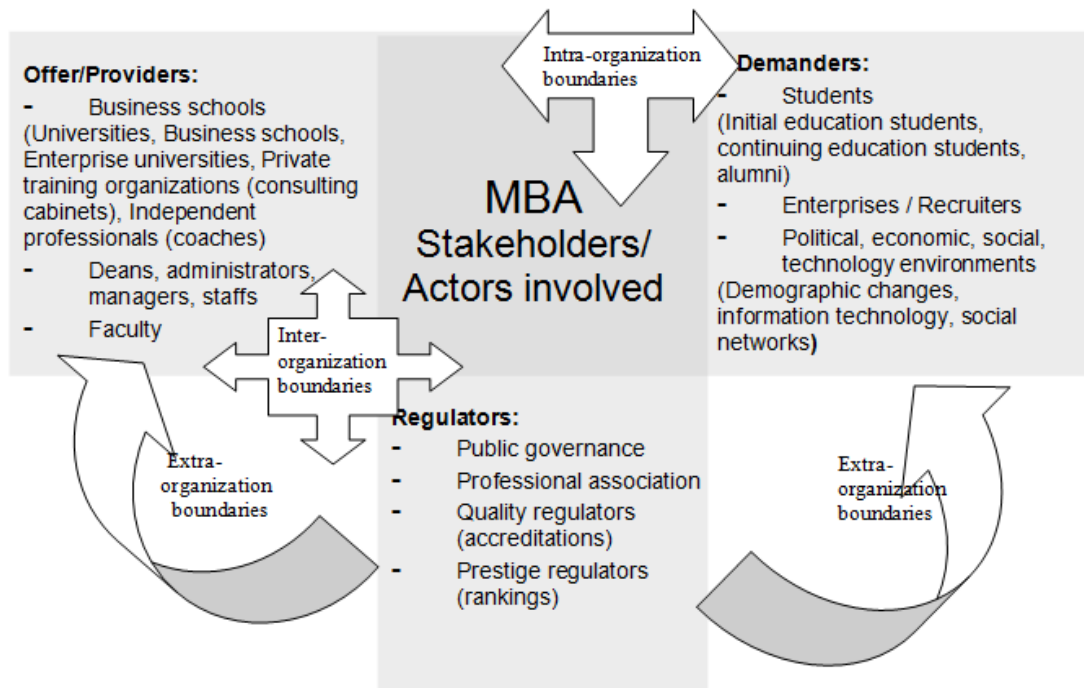


Figure II.3.5: Stakeholders of MBA programs (repeated)

Source: Developed from Durand (2005), Roegiers (1997)

⁶ Figures involved in the primary data collection and analysis regarding the French MBA market. The detail analysis on figures and factors will be presented in this dissertation – Part IV: Findings

1. Providers of MBA and management education in France

1.1 Business schools

This term concerns all institutions involving in providing and organizing management and business education to public. In France, business schools include all specific French types of Grandes écoles de commerce (GE), école supérieure de commerce (ESC), management school (EM), business school, university, institute d'administration des entreprises IAE, etc.

In the statistics of MBA Studies and Find MBAs, the online database of almost all master programs in different countries, there are about 130 MBA programs of all types, provided by around 50 Business schools in France in the school year of 2015-2016. In the previous chapter, we classify such business schools into the five following families:

- Grandes écoles de commerce (French system of Grandes Écoles Business Schools)
- Universities and their autonomous institutions (IAE)
- Other business schools
- Foreign business schools with French campuses
- Enterprise universities

Grandes Écoles Business Schools

Grandes écoles de commerce is one main and biggest family that forms the management education environment in France. For years, Grandes Écoles Business Schools have had a monopoly over management and business education. Nowadays, over 52% of business and management major students are in the system of grandes écoles de commerce (Blanchard, 2009). The system of grandes écoles in business and in engineering were created from the mid 18th century to be apart from universities, mainly by the regional Chamber of Commerce and Industry, with the aim to provide qualified technicians in different domains to the development of French economy. Unique term in the world, the Grandes écoles can be described as a French exception without precise definition or official list of institution (Blanchard, 2009). To distinguish Grandes écoles business schools to other business schools, one could specify the name of the school with the phrase Ecole Supérieure de Commerce ESC – Superior Business School. Contrary to Grandes Écoles

d'Ingénieur – Engineering Schools, who have to be recognized by a National Commission, there is no control for Grandes Écoles Business Schools. The fact leads to the explanation of numerous and heterogeneous Grandes Ecoles Business Schools in France. All the Grandes Ecoles join the French Conference of Grandes Ecoles (CGE), and the CGE accredits its members' educational programs. Among 215 members of the CGE, there are 33 schools classified in management domain only⁷, but currently, Grandes Ecoles Engineering Schools also intrude the management domain and offers MBA programs with specializations in engineering fields.

Grandes Ecoles Business Schools become elite places where students are selected from the best candidates via an extremely competitive entrance examination, graduates and alumni are high-paid entrepreneurs and leaders in industries, and faculty is attracted from the best talents and experts in the field. Tuition fees in Grandes Ecoles Business Schools' programs are claimed to be significant and high revenue, which in return provide resources and social status and academic improvement for faculty and schools. In brief, Grandes écoles Business Schools play the principal role in delivering management education in France (Dameron, Durand, 2008). They do not only dominate the ranking of the European market for their different programs: Master of Science degree and MBA programs but create an important influence in the MBA development in France as well. French MBA programs are climbing up the international reputation ladder, with well-known Grandes Ecoles Business schools such as INSEAD, HEC, EMLYON, ESCP Europe, ESSEC, etc. However, the flagship product of Grandes Ecoles Business schools in France is not the MBA but the program called "Diplôme des Grandes Ecoles" (Grandes Ecoles' Degree) dedicated to young non-experienced students, with which Grandes Ecoles try to qualify the young elites at the same competences as the experienced MBA. (Abdessemed, 2007)

⁷ Information retrieved from official website of the CGE : <http://www.cge.asso.fr/>

Universities and IAE

While Grandes écoles business schools are main suppliers of Master level programs and Executive Education, public universities in France dominate the Bachelor and Doctoral level programs, as national diplomas. Since the curriculum and the diploma are approved and recognized nationally and under the approval of French Ministry of higher education, universities normally do not offer directly an MBA program, which is only considered an institution's degree. In terms of governance and resource, faculty in universities is known keen on research activities yet lack of influence and reputation in management and field and enterprises' recruitment involvement. Moreover, universities in France are public and they deliver all degrees at a reasonably low price, in the contrast of high MBA tuitions and fees.

Some MBA programs nevertheless exist in the French universities (CNAM, Paris Sorbonne University, Paris Dauphine University) with exceptions and in particular situations such as executive programs for continuous education, or as a program done by an autonomous institute in the university (IAE), else as a joint program and dual degree with other French or international business schools. Some universities, such as the CNAM obtain the homologation in both higher education and vocational training fields. It is a coincidence that MBA programs are practical management programs for learners with prior experience. Universities can assure the MBA programs as an executive training for continuous education, not only as an institution's degree but as a national vocational qualification RNCP (In French Répertoire national de la certification professionnelle – National Register of Vocational Certification). The idea is not therefore to create a separate system but to rely on the existing certificates listed in the RNCP, hence bring the legitimacy to the degree and program. Furthermore, continuous education and vocational training could be placed separately apart from the national initial education and the low tuition fee system, which becomes a mean to increase universities' financial resources and so to improve financial compensation of their management programs and their faculty.

Thanks to the public status, French universities gain certain recognition nationwide. Nevertheless, they do not promote a global brand to establish their reputation and international visibility. A double hit target approach to reduce the internationalism gap is

to launch dual degrees (national master degree with partners' MBA degree) or joint MBA programs in partnership with other international business schools. It creates double legitimacy for students' degree recognition, that it could be affirmed in the national higher education system, yet it gained international recognized MBA diploma. For example, Paris Dauphine University has launched an Executive MBA in partnership with UQAM University in Montreal, or Paris Sorbonne University, Paris Dauphine University join with 6 other international universities (Saint- Joseph University of Lebanon; Ain Shams University in Egypt; Higher Education Institution of Management in Senegal; African Centre for Superior Studies in Management in Tunisia; Private Superior Engineering and Technology School in Algeria; International Management Development in Ile Maurice) to open the international MBA programs in French language.

The teaching of management and development of MBA programs can be done under the responsibility of an institute inside the university. IAE – “Institute d'Administration des Entreprises” is a specific term for a management education establishment in France. It refers to a relatively autonomous institution within the university, and is currently considered an independent business school beside its governing university, otherwise called “University School of Management”. There are now 32 IAEs in France and oversee French territories⁸, with 1200 instructors, 47000 students covering 30 management fields. IAEs are increasingly becoming vital providers of MBA programs in France, with actual 17 existing MBA programs.

Other business schools

We should clarify some characteristics to distinguish other business schools from the above category of Grandes Écoles Business Schools. Firstly, instead of being created and governed under the responsibility of the local Chamber of Commerce like Grades Ecoles Business Schools, other business schools could be created by private endowment (for example IPAG business school) or a group of associates from both academic and business worlds (for example. AUDENCIA business school). Hence, they are neither qualified as members of the GCE, nor abided by the recruitment from the system of entrance

⁸ Information retrieved from official website of the IAE's network <http://www.iae-france.fr/> (2015)

examinations (concours). Most of their admissions are based on academic and application selectivity, which means that they offer recognized opportunities for their students (Blanchard, 2009). Although MBA is an institution's degree, in France it should be verified whether a business school who offers MBA are recognized or not by the Higher education ministry as a State visa of "Grade de master" – master's level value degree provider (Commission Helfer in 2001). Not all business schools are equally recognized by the State. A visa is delivered by law in an administrative official decision of the ministry of higher education, for a period of 6 years. In fact, the name business school is called for 207 institutions; only 121 were recognized by the State. Among those 121, 86 offered a degree with a state visa and only 58 could confer the degree at the master's level.⁹ Though considered less prestige and recognized by MBA programs offered by Grandes Écoles Business Schools, universities and IAEs, MBA programs from other business schools are booming in France, with mainly heterogeneous US MBA model that fit with international accreditation agency recommendations and tendency to relocate or joint with other schools in other French cities or abroad that gain international visibility. This fact that the MBA is a highly regulated product in French education system emphasizes the importance and the determination of the group of regulators stakeholders in this field.

Foreign business schools with French campus

Not only French business schools look for exporting its campuses and its programs overseas, foreign business schools try to relocate their campuses and MBA programs to France, notably Paris as well. During the 2000s up to date, French business schools ensure their international and technology integration by different means: management programs, especially MBA programs, taught in English, exchange or transferred semester overseas, online and distance learning, etc. The results are opening opportunities to foreign business schools to penetrate into French market with heterogeneous English MBA programs, with full time, part time or online modalities of learning, and mainly with affirmed abroad study experience in the home campuses of their universities. On the top of the foreign business schools that are installed in France, US business schools take

⁹ Information retrieved from official website of the Commission of Evaluation Management Training programs and Degrees (Commission d'Evaluation des Formation et Diplômes de Gestion CEFDG (2015) and official bulletin of Ministry of Higher education (n° 3 of 24 July 2014)

advantage in France as US model are heading management education system, such as International School of Management (ISM), Schiller International University, or the American Business School.

Enterprise universities

Big enterprises start to invest into the market of management education. It aims to ensure that, as business schools in their time, enterprises engage in not only academic processes of excellence but up-to-date and useful management knowledge. Though it is difficult to create an excellent high level and exigent MBA program, some enterprises could not find available management education offers in existing business schools that meet their needs, therefore they create their own enterprise MBA program. It is the case of the Next MBA, created by Mazars in order to meet the needs of concrete community of leader inside the company. Claimed to be a complement but not competitive offer against those of business schools and universities, Mazars' MBA program still provide space not only to their employees but other enterprises to join their MBA.

Not many enterprises could afford or temp to create their own MBA program, in France as well as at the global scope. However, some enterprises join with universities to develop and administrate MBA programs towards complex approach, concrete subjects and upon enterprises proper needs, such as the case of MBA in International Management offered by Group Renault, University Paris Dauphine in partnership with IAE Paris Sorbonne. It could be considered legitimated academic and business resources, which gains more recognition in the market of MBA programs.

The MBA programs in France is framed by the offers of five above mentioned actors, though two first actors still play more significant roles as main providers to the French MBA market. Within the inter-organisational boundaries of these providers, we are going to identify the two types of stakeholder that intervene principally in MBA curricula development, namely MBA organizers and MBA instructors.

1.2 MBA organizers

MBA organizers link mainly to the administrative and governance side of an MBA program and a curriculum. They include deans and administrators of business schools, directors, managers and staff teams who run the programs, advisory board of either the school or the program.

Deans and administrators of business schools

Depending on different types of business schools described above, the role of deans and administrators of business schools are varied on the development of the program and its curriculum evolution. In the US, Deans are the first person involving in the development of the schools' programs and curricula. They not only take responsibility to all activities of the school but play initiative roles in changing the academic and administrative issues in their different programs. An example is the approach to interview deans of business schools that Datar et al (2010) conduct to develop the cases of curricula development for rethinking MBAs. Since MBA are often flagship programs in US business schools, deans' involvements are vital as they actively identify added values by the MBA degree with current external requests and internal resources of the school.

In France, it is the case for some but not all deans of business schools. Far from the reality when it comes to deans of universities, called differently as university's presidents. According to the education law, the president of a university is a professor who heads the university more in terms of administrative, financial, human resource issues than academic and intellectual issues¹⁰. Since presidents and deans of French business schools could be professors not in management fields, and with less involvement in specific training programs, it is more likely that their role is to approve curricula development projects proposed by programs, if any.

Directors and advisory board of MBA program

In France, directors of programs (responsable de formation) act more as responsible position with all activities happening within the program. Directors represent the MBA programs within and outside of the business schools, including with the business society,

¹⁰ Information retrieved from Article L712-2 of Education Law (Code de l'éducation)

the Schools' direction board, the programs' advisory board, faculty, staff, students, alumni, and other constituencies and stakeholders. Directors of programs are supposed to be responsible for organizing, planning, and setting priorities for allocation of resources within the program. These activities include development and implementation of program budgets, staffing, policies, and procedures, curriculum design and development, in cooperation with faculty, administrators and in accordance with the school's mission and standards. Directors manage the on-going process of program review, including assessing students and programs' outcomes, therefore adapt and propose ideas to make programs adjusted and advanced. Directors orient all activities within the programs to fully meet the requirements of accreditation and regulator bodies.

Since their primary responsibilities are to shape the vision and mission of the program, align organisational processes to strategy, plan and implement the programs, directors are expected to exhibit and commit to activities leading up to the development of the program, particularly in the academic and curricula related issues. They normally are supported by an advisory board made by school's administration members, program's key faculty and external enterprises and expert consultants. The job of the advisory board on curriculum could be specific on clarifying the tendency and needs of their industries, modifying course contents based on their expertise.

Managers and staff teams

Manager of an MBA program is called in other words as Coordinator of MBA program. A coordinator of a program generally assures the day-to-day operations of the program, with the help of his/her administrative staff teams. The primary job duty of the Coordinators of MBA programs is to administer day-to-day operations of the program, including communicating and recruiting potential students, evaluating applications for admission, and advising prospective and current students, administrating program and teaching activities, linking and supporting faculty, staff, students and alumni, keeping tracks of all financial expenses, overseeing curriculum and programmatic changes to the MBA program, prepares class schedules in coordination with the director of the program, faculty and instructors of the program.

Although in charge mainly in quotidian running of the program and the curriculum, manager of the MBA program is well placed at a coordination position to collect all requirements and feedbacks that are helpful for the development of the program and the curriculum.

1.3 MBA faculty

Faculty in MBA is those who implement and concretely transfer management knowledge, know-how and practices to students. They could be discipline experts who design the course, or those who involve in teaching as instructors, or act both roles.

In a traditional way, faculty is the academic staff of a university or business school: senior teachers, lecturers, and/or researchers. The term is most commonly used in institutions the United States and Canada, and generally includes professors of various ranks: assistant professors, associate professors, and (full) professors, usually tenured (or tenure-track) in terms of their contracts of employment. Faculty is considered an institutional asset. In business school in particular, faculty plays an important reputation role as all reputation mechanisms (accreditation bodies, ranking systems) weight high the factor of faculty, the qualification and credibility of faculty, the research quality and publication rate of articles in leading journals, etc.

Besides, some accreditation bodies require specific standards for faculty when business schools apply for accreditations. For instance, AMBA requires the faculty member to have an up-to-date understanding of business practice gained through recent managerial experience, consultancy; in short the teaching has to be linked with good practice as well as theory. EQUIS requires permanent core faculty size (excluding members of other schools employed on a part-time basis) to be at least 25 persons, to ensure the continuity of the program while assure balance between teaching, research, new program development and internal managerial responsibilities.¹¹ Faculty is then loaded with a

¹¹ Information retrieved from AMBA & EQUIS standards and criteria, which is analyzed in detail in the later part of this chapter

contradictory multi role of professor – teacher – administrator - researcher – consultant – published author.

In France, while Grandes écoles and other business schools use the US model for tenured positions (Dameron and Durand, 2008), in universities system there are three levels of tenured position: full professor (professeur), associate professor (maitre de conferences with Habilitation à Diriger des Recherches) and assistant professor (maitre de conferences). Tenured professors' roles are emphasized in terms of priority as research, program and course development and management, and teaching. As named in their position type in universities, tenured positions are teachers – researchers (enseignants chercheurs) at all times and their activities and career development depends on research and academic experience but not practical experience required for MBA teachings. The crucial role of teaching and instructing MBA classes are therefore ensured either by other types of professors or part time recruited teachers who are consultants and practitioners, so that the program could be guarantee the link with good practice as well as theory. Director of MBA programs, for instance, involves him/herself in faculty functions in maintaining an active stream, either academic or practitioner-based teaching and takes care of one course per semester. Faculty structure of a program could be consisted of one or many ways:

- Core courses are assured by core faculty team, electives and specializations are undertaken by visiting professors, part time professors, guest lectures who are mainly experts in such domain of specializations
- Theory parts of all courses are assured by core faculty team, practical and case studies are in charge by consultants and practitioners
- The curriculum is divided into courses and group of courses, where a mixture of faculty team assure each group, depending on competences and expertise but not on core or other courses

In the literature, curricula's and courses' contents are seen with indispensable involvements of faculty, either full tenured position or part-time recruited instructors. There rest a question on how their involvements shape and change the curriculum of a program. The objective is to see how a business school positions the faculty's role in the

curriculum development, a uni-function or multi-function; and whether those defined role effect the strategy, structure and design of the MBA program.

The above part identifies the actors: individuals and groups of providers of MBA and management education in France. They are identified with an analysis from horizontal examination (types or structures of business schools) and vertical observation (functions and structures of programs personnel) in regards of a program curriculum. At the level of modules and classes, courses at higher education are normally designed and assured by faculty with certain liberty on content, teaching modality based on the pedagogical approach of programs or the nature of each course and knowledge. However, at the level of programs and curricula, who takes care of the connections between classes, modules, and the evolution of the overall knowledge delivered to students in the duration of the programs? Case studies could help revealing which actors are determinants and how such determinants influence the structures and development of their curricula.

2. Demanders of MBA and management education in France

2.1 Students

Students are the first to be thought as demanders for higher education. Dameron and Durand (2008) state that students do not act as users of the educational system but more as clients or demanders, who are demanding a good return on their high investment of tuition fees compare to those of other programs. Besides, a normal profile of an MBA student is an obtainment of certain years of experience before entering the program. The Economist (2006) implies that a greater number of older, more experienced students require relevant professional education, hence enrol in MBA programs. For the fact that management disciplines are not scientific enough, management education has no or few entry requirements in terms of fundamental knowledge. Less stringent requirements apply for management-related jobs, hence the emphasis is on practical situations rather than too academic teaching. As mentioned in the literature review, business schools apply the management science as knowledge for action; in the place of fundamental management knowledge, business schools require experience from candidates. Analyzing

the different admission requirements and the student profile are to see the quality of the entrance in the programs.

In management and business education, it should be distinguished between MBA or continuous management study and initial management study where students learn management knowledge and practices through theory and professors' experience. There should be an expectation on the part of the program that the student will be able to fulfil the objectives of the program and achieve the standard required to join the program. In fact, admissions requirements for a typical MBA candidate look at criteria on number of years of professional experience, English proficiency, background and educational level and student diversity. All of those criteria are created to promote the mutual learning among students and their contributions are expected as much as the benefits they might gain. MBA candidates come from different industries and bring a varying professional experience, that makes MBA students no longer considered passive demanders but involve actively in the development of the program and curriculum. Not only with their own practical and professional experience have MBA students supposed that their plans for future career and professional development are treated in the program. Basso et al (2011) cite a view in the academic world that the goal of business education is to secure students' future careers. Hence, students' future plans should be taken into account for the reform and development of programs' academic contents and curricula.

In fact, US business schools pay more remarkable attentions on the statistics of students' demands and feedback for program development or implementation and curriculum content modification. The mba.com Prospective Students Survey Report is an example of statistics of five annual surveys by the Graduate Management Admission Council, where students' behaviours, program choices are explored to bring a global picture of candidates interested in MBA programs. This type of surveys gives ideas to business schools how to adapt their programs, curricula and recruitment policies. For instance, the 2012 surveys reveal that interest in MBA is strong and steady (55%) since 2009, though more interests go towards the non-MBA master degrees, especially masters in management, accounting, finance programs. Datar et al (2010) also remark these changes in program developments. More specialized master's degrees have proliferated, especially in finance and financial

engineering, both in and outside US, though the finance and accounting become less popular industry when students search for jobs (18% compare to 23% in products and services)¹².

New analysis shows the preferred study destinations, still dominant choices from Anglophone countries (United States, United Kingdom, Singapore, Australia, etc). United States are the top destination favoured by candidates globally, with an average of 49% of preference from candidates of different region of residence¹³. Since the beginning of 2010, France has entered the top 5 country study destinations that prospective students prefer with almost 4% of preference. France attracts great number of candidates, especially European citizens.

Destination	Students	Destination	Students
United States	80%	Singapore	19%
United Kingdom	53%	Spain	17%
Canada	35%	Germany	17%
Australia	32%	Switzerland	15%
France	22%	Italy	13%

Table III.2.1: Destination of MBA Applicants

Source: TopMBA Applicant's survey (2007)

MBA applications in European and French schools are increasing. For example, in 2012, France became the third destination (after the US and UK), where more than 7000 GMAT Scores are sent, in which 53% are for MBA applications. 2008 to 2012 MBA applications figures show that French citizens shift from choosing MBA programs in the United States to domestic programs. In France, there is no official record uniquely on MBA students. According to the French Foundation for Management Education – the FNEGE's 2015 study, 18,4% of higher education students enrol in management field¹⁴, compare to 13,5% in 2003, which counts for more than 1 million students¹⁵. Therefore, it will be a pure

¹² Information retrieved in the GMAC Global Management Education Graduate Survey and Datar et al's book *Rethinking the MBA, Business Education at a Crossroads*

¹³ Information retrieved in the GMAT Trends Tracker 2011 Report www.gmac.com/interactiveresearch

¹⁴ Information retrieved in the FNEGE 2015 book: « La compétitivité de la France, présent et futur »

¹⁵ Information retrieved in the FNEGE 2005 study: « Prospective 2015 des établissements de gestion. Cinq scénarios pour agir »

empirical analysis when we collect data on MBA students in France to see whether and how they become determinants on MBA curricula of French business schools, as demanders of the program.

In all accreditations' standards, students' assessments on program, courses and teaching activities are one of important reports to be reviewed as crucial academic criterion to assess a school or a program meets the standards of their accreditations. Programs accredited by any accreditation bodies are requested to show students' feedbacks and mechanisms to ensure adequate feedbacks and responses to students' reactions to course delivery, content and program evaluation¹⁶.

Literature however pays few attentions on students' ideas for curriculum development, not only in France but in general industry. In the literature review, although Datar et al (2010) found that as business schools have modelled themselves increasingly on the academic disciplines and their research and teaching have become less and less relevant to executives and students, or Lyons (2012) addresses a significant needs from students to reform the curriculum, all their methodologies and approaches, results and proposition for MBA reform (or rethinking) start and end with business schools' deans, faculty, recruiters. None of their researches reach students' primary data information. Strongly believe that students are key determinants in the development of MBA curricula, we should follow students' MBA program timeline from their input attributes (their professional experience and expectations) and their output features (their programs assessments and professional evolutions).

Alumni in this analysis are considered either as students when we look at their previous period when they were students and affect their attributes to the program, or as (current and future) recruiters that shape their characteristics to put pressures on the program.

2.2. Recruiters and Professional Associations

As the Association of MBA defines the MBA, Master in Business Administration is a career development generalist degree for those with significant relevant work experience, which

¹⁶ Information retrieved from AMBA and EQUIS standards. Information about these accreditation organisations are described in the following part of this chapter.

contributes to learning. If one were to ask business schools' students why they decided to pursue an MBA, it is finally not to become a manager or a leader, but the MBA studying is to assure the future career and professional development of that student.

The GMAC Worldwide MBA survey yearly rates the future career or professional development is considered important for a candidate to review and choose a school and an MBA program, so that after graduate, they can benefit of their studying and being confident in the career path. One recent study of GMAC indicates that career indicators are more important than the satisfying of candidates with their degree programs or the believe that they have developed greater skills as a result of attaining their MBA (Sheikh and Siegert, 2007)

My MBA degree has given me...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - My MBA degree has given me... - An opportunity for more challenging/interesting work in the future. - A sense of personal satisfaction and achievement. - Advancement potential. - Credentials I need to increase career options. - Respect and recognition. - Confidence I need to succeed. - The ability to switch industries. - The ability to change occupational area. - The ability to expand my international employment opportunities. - The right connections to get a good job in the future. - An increase in long-term potential through the development of skills/abilities. - The ability to remain marketable (competitive). - The potential for long-term income and financial stability.

Table III.2.2: Graduates' satisfaction on benefits of their MBA

Source: GMAC Worldwide MBA Survey Methodology (Sheikh and Siegert, 2007, p.3)

GMAC surveys of prospective students and alumni perspectives show, most individuals who pursue MBA with the stated goal of career enhancement. Most of alumni see that earning their MBA degree as part of their long-term career plans¹⁷. 76% of 2012 alumni confirmed that they could not have obtained their job without the skills, knowledge, and abilities attained through their graduate management education. Many of them saw the flexibility to become entrepreneurs.

¹⁷ Information retrieved from 2013 Alumni Perspectives Survey

Since the ultimate reason for MBA students is to assure the career and professional development, requirements, evaluations, and feedbacks from enterprises and professional world are supposed to be important for business schools to verify and modify their curricula. Taking into account recruiters' remarks to develop curricula is the way to further assure students' future career development, furthermore assure business schools' admission and recruitment processes. For instance, GMAC 2012 Corporate recruiters' survey finds out that, on top of all attributes sought by employers, leadership skills count for 51% that final hiring decision makers see in recent business graduate job applicants.

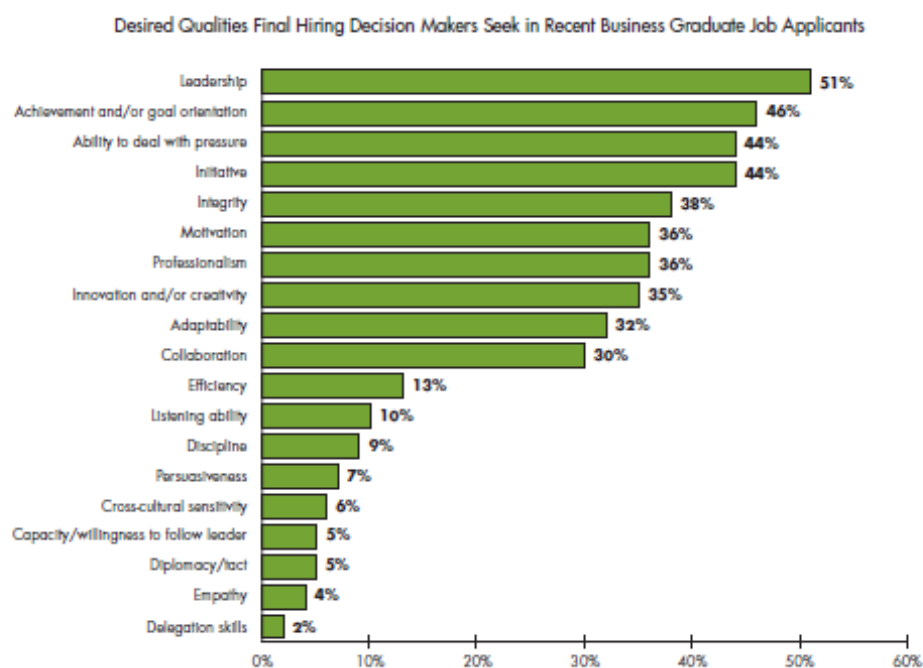


Figure III.2.1: Desired Qualities final hiring decision makers seek in recent business graduate job applicants

Source: 2012 GMAC Corporate Recruiters Survey

How does that key finding affect MBA curricula to add up knowledge and skills enhancement of leadership traits so that business schools satisfy and guarantee recruiters with their graduates' outputs? In 2010, Datar and some professors at Harvard Business School have conducted a survey to interview not only deans but business executives from broad sectors to search for current weaknesses, deficiencies and unmet needs in MBA curricula. They figure out that some business schools have already undertaken reforms on content, architecture and pedagogy, based on assessments from business sectors.

Upon 2012 Corporate recruiters survey of GMAC, in the United States, MBA hiring is up overall with almost 80% of companies plan to hire recent MBA graduates. Outside the US, noticeable increases are seen among companies in the Asia-Pacific regions, while demand for MBAs among European companies remains decreasing, together with all types of master graduates. On the contrary with US or Latin American companies' tendency to recruit a mobile workforce from global job market, recruiters in Asia-Pacific, Africa-Middle East and Europe are more likely looking to place hires in their home regions.

Similarly to the statistics relating to MBA students, there is no research on French recruiters specifically on MBA graduates. Researches and studies from the FNEGE (Fondation Nationale pour l'Enseignement de la Gestion des Entreprises – The French Foundation for Management Education) or the APEC (l'Association Pour l'Emploi des Cadres - Agency for Managers' Employment in France) refer to greater groups of management graduates and expectations of French enterprises towards management graduates from master and postgraduate levels.

Due to the specific governance of main French business schools under the management and control of Regional Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CCI) or the Conference of Grandes Écoles (CGE), French enterprises usually have a two-way effect on business schools and program system. In one way, they occupy recruiting or provide career-skill expectations to students and business schools; in another way they involve in course teaching, syllabi developing and sometimes policy making of business schools. The relationship between business schools and enterprises is strongly determined by geography¹⁸ where Parisian business schools benefit well from their proximity to many large companies, French and Multinational Corporations, while business schools in regions lack this ability to create connections with companies. Uncertain economy, segmented market orientation of managers' recruitment in France show that types of industry and sectors are region oriented as well. Commercial managers are recruited in all French territory, while Information Technology manager posts install mainly in Parisian region (Ile de France) and regions such as Midi-Pyrénées, Rhône-Alpes, Bretagne,

¹⁸ Information retrieved from 2003 FNEGE study

Limousin, and Picardie recruit managers in the research and development sectors primarily¹⁹.

In the growth of entrepreneurship tendency, types of industry and sectors are also key points that affect the curricula, such as the changes of information technology and engineering sectors involving management skills, or the changes of communications and social networks penetrating more into business. Contents, pedagogy are reviewed to adjust with new ideas, disruptive technologies, real-time projects; linkages are formed between technology and management, between incubators, university start-ups and business schools and entrepreneurship educations. Recruitments and Entrepreneurs occur more in sectors of technology, energy, consulting, non-profit and government and healthcare, while less in finance and accounting, manufacturing, products and services²⁰. 2015 APEC study on emerging businesses through APEC job offers reveals that some new businesses (such as digital marketing, smart phone business developer, etc) will be part of tomorrow's jobs, other will be led to turn, or even disappear, and doubtless emerge in the coming years new professions that does not exist today.

Assuming that enterprises and businesses play an important role in the reform of management education in general, it seems that in France the role is opaque. Recently in 2014, the FNEGE makes a study on expectations of enterprises towards the management education and research, expressing that academic products (management programs and researches) just focus on one criterion to be validated scientifically by peers and ignore the particular expectations of enterprises, who finally recruit the students undertaken such academic products. It is even more difficult to measure the role of enterprises and businesses in the particular case of MBA program in France.

2.3. Political, Economic, Social, and Technology environments

A PEST analysis is one way to analyze the exposure of a business school to the set of potential contextual factors that interact in both its external and internal contexts of

¹⁹ Information retrieved from 2014 APEC study.

²⁰ Information retrieved from 2012 GMAC's Corporate Recruiters Survey

strategic decision. PEST analysis includes Political, Economic, Social and Technology issues that influence the business school's and program's environments.

Thomas (2007) summarizes a PEST analysis of the business school education environment from different academics and journalists' sources.

Political	Economic	Social	Technology
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Standardization of business schools in Europe - Regulatory pressures for program and school accreditation - Regulatory pressure for teaching and research quality - Tighter visa regulations for international students as post 9/11 - Reduction of government and public funding for higher education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trends towards globalization and free trade internationally - Rapid growth of Chinese and Indian economies - Increased competition from consultants and private business schools - Mounting student debt and student ability to fund education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Changing societal values, ethical issues, corporate social responsibility, sustainable development and environmentally friendly - Demographic changes: age, lifestyle, cultural, ethnic, influences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Growth in e-learning and internet education - Blended learning between technology and the classroom - Knowledge revolution and knowledge information as assets for value creation in an organisation - Web-based dissemination of knowledge.

Table III.2.3: PEST analysis of business schools

Source: Thomas (2007) An analysis of the environment and competitive dynamics of management education

We here below try to apply the PEST analysis as indicators to figure out factors that influence business schools' MBA curricula.

Political environment

Political environment normally effect at the macro level and on business schools strategic management rather than directly on curriculum development. Not all the above PEST analysis issues could be treated directly as factors of curriculum development (for instance the visa regulations for international students), or they are classified as factors of providers (business schools governance quality control and funding), or regulators (accreditation, standardization of education system). However, the political environment could affect the choice of students to apply for a program in one country but not others, due to political stability or education policies. The fact of terrorism attacks recently happened in France might affect strongly the choice of students to apply for higher education in France, beyond other academic choices.

The scope of internationalization topics exist not only at the level programs, schools, researchers and academics but also in the requirements of reputation mechanism (rankings organisations, accreditation bodies) and consulting or educational cabinets. In the report CampusFrance Chiffres clés 4 (2009), key figures illustrate the disparities in worldwide mobility. Countries which traditionally host large numbers of international students, such as the United States, the United Kingdom or Australia in particular, are not necessarily those with the largest numbers of outgoing mobile students. The US is the top host country for foreign students. However, although being improved, statistics show that on the whole, very few American students participate in exchange programs. Sowa (2002) notes that less than 1 percent of all Americans enrolled in higher education study abroad. Asian students are always the most numerous ones to study abroad, and the destinations of host countries are normally the English speaking countries from the United State, the United Kingdom, Australia and Canada to Germany where English is not native but used nationwide. France is in the top three destinations of international programs in the world, thanks to the development of francophone programs in mainly African and Oriented countries. Others from Europe and North America are among the highest mobility students. However, the preference destination of North American students, especially for the majority of US students, is still Western Europe; with the simple reason that developing countries are poorly represented in student exchange and study abroad programs with few education resources and opportunities (Sowa, 2002).

Economic environment

Darden School of Business's Dean Robert Bruner recently transmits a report of the AACSB International titled "Globalization of Management Education" (2011), in which states "the rate of globalization is only going to increase", and "it will be a disruptive force for which managers need to prepare", since business schools are coming up short in their efforts to prepare students for international careers market. Based on a three year research, Bruner (2011) finds out that there is a gap between what the world needs and what management educators generally do. While business schools have made efforts to internationalize the content of their programs or their actors of their programs (faculty, staff, students), there are a lot of barriers such as cultural impediments, regulatory barriers, restrictions on the freedom of speech and association, etc; that prevent schools to totally widen globalization competences.

In an era in which many higher education institutions and their components are becoming so similar, international shared programs are refreshingly unique. Each institution's curricula and co-curricula standards, their distinctive relationships with others, and the pathways in which those relationships were developed, make that shared program like no other. (Holly, 2010). Some might see the trend as a response to the business's overcrowding at a time of recession in many of its markets. It is obvious that each school and program need to find their own way to exist, with the high competition of growing industry.

Another side of globalization and internationalization for an economic growth, inflation and unemployment are common characteristics of every economic crisis. In the case of unemployment, in all previous economic crises, a simple harsh rule is developed in this regard: the less skilful one is, the more chances of getting unemployed one holds. What different has happened in present economic crisis, makes it more cruel, as it has reversed the earlier rule and made it harsher. The people who have been a "cream" for their organisations, which comprised of majority MBA degree holders, had to lose their jobs much earlier than their front-level colleagues. (MBA Finance education vs. Economic Crises)

In a book chapter on “Evaluating management education and business schools in context, Basso et al (2011) assume that the goal of business education is to secure students’ future careers, withdrawing from the recessions and crises,. In a similar conclusion, Datar et al (2010) finds that as business schools have modelled themselves increasingly on the academic disciplines in order to secure their foothold in the university, their research and teaching have become less and less relevant to executives and students. The reasons a student may choose an MBA are shifting because holding an MBA is no longer a guaranteed position or an immediate raise. “Students have long gone to business schools to gain entry to high-paying jobs in investment banking, private equity, and hedge funds.”

Therefore, the current economic situation affects trends of MBA applications. For instance, Datar et al (2010) do a thorough state of MBA Education, part of which describes the changes and demands in MBA teaching modality between traditional full time programs to part time, online types. Their statistics record more than 40000 students enrolled at the top 36 US MBA programs in 2008, an increase of 10,7% compare to the figure of the year 2000. Among those students, a significant increase of part time and executive MBA enrolment of more than 40% while their full time MBA enrolments fell sharply. The tendency creates a difficulty to business schools, even higher-ranking schools, according to Datar et al. Schools lost one or more full sections of students, have trouble in building classes, and difficult in managing the faculty with less hiring new tenured faculty and more heavy teaching hours for non-tenured adjuncts and professors of practices. Datar et al observe the data collection and the economy situation and conclude that full time enrolments at MBAs fell during the last economic slow down of 2001 to 2003 and did not pick up notably in 2008. The 2012 GMAC Application Trends survey still shows a steady decrease of full time MBA programs and a strongest growth of 66% for online, distance MBA demand²¹. It creates a normal thought among MBA candidates that current economic situation discourages them from leaving their jobs to study an MBA.

²¹ Information retrieved from 2012 GMAC Application Trends Survey – Trends for MBA programs

Social environment

There can be few debate that culture, the multiple characteristics and backgrounds that shape individuals' and organisations' identities, perceptions, attitudes, and behaviour, strongly influences the success of business enterprises today (Egan and Bendick, 2008). There can be also few debates that culture strongly influences the success of business enterprises today. In a multicultural world and global economy, cultural misunderstandings constantly threaten enterprises' capability to operate efficiently, cooperatively and fairly (Caligiuri, 2000).

According to current management education orientation, the personal competencies respond to these requirements include flexibility, resourcefulness, tolerance for ambiguity, and ability to articulate a vision, as well as "global" competencies including cultural self-awareness; cultural consciousness, corporate social responsibilities, ethics and sustainable development. Those who cannot adapt to that future culture will neither survive, nor hired by demanding recruiters who require their employees to possess complex interactive skills. The means for learning those adaptive skills are through contact with different cultures, developing new ways of thinking, and challenging our unexamined assumptions (Connerley and Pedersen, 2005). Hence, culture and lifestyle are now reviewed at the level of multi-culture and global lifestyle rather than fixed in a particular scope.

Age is another aspect to replicate demographic changes that affect the programs. The average age of MBA students are older, signifying that people are now have increasing life-spans as a result of health advances, but also increasing employee life-spans to earn enough experience, budget and determination for the needs for further management skills and knowledge. Since candidates take further years to decide to enrol an MBA program, more experienced students will require more flexible curricula, more relevant professional education, with project or team based content and experiential learning.

Age, culture, and lifestyle of stakeholders play important roles in defining their choice and decision in their involvements in business schools' strategy and curriculum development. In demanders' group, age, culture and lifestyle of students are reflected in their

professional experience and program expectations and those factors are already supposed indicate the influences of students in the evolution of program.

Technology environment

The success growth of new technologies is applied widely in other industries and fields, including education and MBA curriculum in particular. Not only in online delivery model, full time, part time or executive face-to-face classes are supported with online technologies, such as “My lab” – a module to help students to do exercises and work with cases online. Group work discussion or simultaneous classes in different campuses evolve with web conference tools as in real business environment, to help students work independently from where they live or work.

The expansion of information and communication technologies also implies a significant rise in self-study program with the role of faculty as video-professors and facilitator, and the support of electronic libraries and databases for information gathering and research. In some schools, there is no more distinction between full time, part time or online classes, new term as blended or hybrid programs are born to cope with the flexibility of students’ studying styles, hence curriculum process and contents are required to be modified with these new structured programs.

However, the social, economic and technology factors are not considered in our cases as one of the most important and direct determinants influencing curriculum development, since 1) these macro-external environment factors equally affect all business schools, and 2) these micro-internal factors are taken into account in other factors analyzed in this chapter. An assumption is built that we choose cases of business schools from the same country with homogeneous social, economic and technology environment factors to analysis only heterogeneous factors that effect the modification of a business school.

3. Regulators of management and business education in France

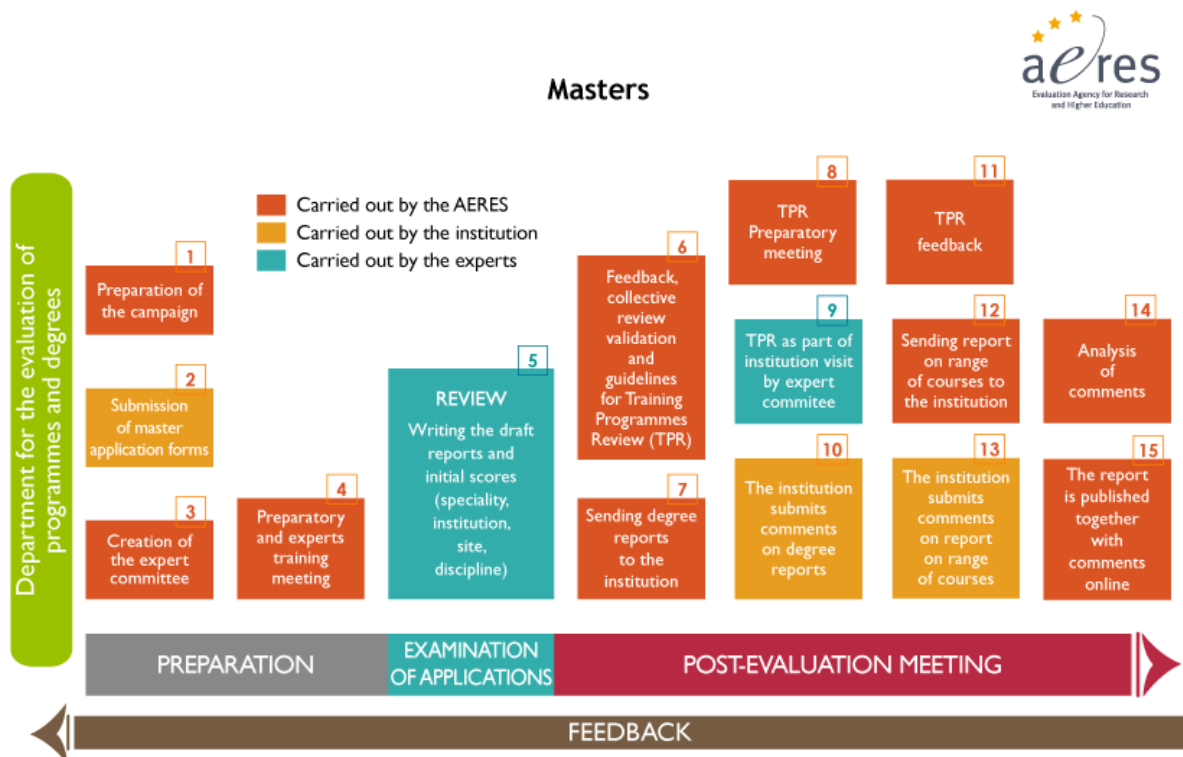
3.1 Government and professional bodies

Though MBA is a degree of institutions' level, in France, government or the French ministry of higher education to be precise, plays an important role in regulating and validating MBA degrees. As an example, we bring facts about the control of the Commission of Evaluation programs and diplomas in management (Commission d'Evaluation des Formations et Diplômes de Gestion - CEFDG) to certify master degrees to schools' programs at the beginning of this chapter. The French ministry of higher education, on the occasion of Bologna's European Agreement, used the reform of degree structures to reform the inherited habilitation system for university degrees. While business schools continue to grant their traditional qualifications, on top of those, they are entitled to grant the new grade de master for their unchanged programs. Following the European standards, French universities programs are entitled to grant the National Master degree (diplôme national de master) for two-year Master programs if they submitted them to state quality control. Grandes écoles continue to grant the Specialized Master degree (Mastère spécialisé), a highly specialized and applied, one-year postgraduate qualification.

Similar to the reform of degree structures, the reform of curricula remains largely confined to the university sector. Here, the most tangible change at both Bachelor and Master levels is the general introduction of both credits system (ECTS) and modularization, and the move from an annual examination rhythm to a semester system. At the Masters level, the introduction of the national master degree (Diplôme National de Master) required the integration of existing courses at that level into coherent two-year curricula. The distinction of a research and a professional specialisation is maintained (master recherche /master professionnel instead of DEA/DESS), but renders more flexible in terms of the timing of specialisation and transition paths between the two. The Ministry of higher education allows more curriculum diversity and institutional initiative in curriculum design, and move from a formal check of compliance of individual curricula with national curriculum frameworks to a broader evaluation of program quality. The quality control is assured by the AERES (Agence d'Evaluation de la Recherche et de l'Enseignement Supérieur - Evaluation Agency for Research and Higher Education), who evaluates research organisations and institutions and activities, programs and degrees of higher education institutions. The ministry of higher education and the also uses the

opportunity to extend its influence over the grandes écoles, who are at the same time controlled and protected by the Conference of Grandes Ecoles and Regional Chamber of Commerce and Industry. They may also take part in evaluating foreign and international higher education organisations and programs. As a master's degree is part of the school's range of training programs up to year five of the higher education cycle in a major subject area or a multidisciplinary field, some MBA programs are in the scope of the AERES quality process, under the four criteria of evaluation: 1) the educational project, 2) the specialty among the scientific and socioeconomic environment, 3) the integration into the job market and the continuation of chosen studies, and 4) program leadership.

Evaluation of a Master program by the AERES must follow its self-evaluation by the schools. The self-evaluation sets out to position each training program with regard to the institution's strategy and its declared objectives, and it shows where each program stands in the overall range available, in the way it is understood and is in keeping with the whole. Through its self-evaluation, the institution can also detect the strengths and weaknesses of its training programs and how these make use of the schemes placed at their disposal. After the self-evaluation from institutions, the process continues with the post-evaluations carried out by experts and the AERES staffs.



October 2012

Figure III.2.2: AERES Process of Master's degree evaluation

Source: 2012 AERES Evaluation report

The process of MBA evaluation is included in the evaluation of Master's degree mainly provided by universities or IAEs, for example those of Paris-Dauphine, IAE of Paris, etc. Reports on MBA evaluations from business schools like SKEMA, ESC Toulouse, etc. yet could be as well found in the database of the AERES²². Nonetheless, French business schools try to register in the RNCP (Répertoire national des certifications professionnelles - National directory of professional or vocational certifications) as an MBA is considered a continuous professional degree and the evaluation and validation from a national commission of professional certifications affirms the side of a professional habilitation and relies on the existing certificates listed in the RNCP from the traditional training system in France. In order to register in the RNCP's list, business schools need to make a report and meet certain criteria and exigencies, including those regarding curriculum content and pedagogy.

Summing up the stakeholders acting as governmental, professional, private and expert regulators on an MBA program in France, we could list the ministry of higher education, the AERES, the RNCP, the Conference of Grande Ecoles and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry. However, we wonder whether they are acting regulatory functions on MBA programs as crucial as other national and traditional degrees in France, while MBA degree obtains and attracts more international characteristics and requirements, regulators included. International regulators might play their double role of branding as regulation and reputation. Abdessemed (2007) defines that role as a new performance field, seen as legitimacy, besides pedagogical expertise, management and governance, and resources.

3.2. Reputation and Branding

Though MBA itself is a master degree – Master of Business Administration, the program and the degree is always considered distinguished from other master programs, thanks to

²² Information retrieved from the database of online master evaluation reports of the AERES

its trademark – the MBA brand. With the increasing international competition, business schools have increasingly adopted a branding strategy for their MBA program as a means of differentiating their product from competing programs (Gopalan, Pagiavlas and Jones, 2008, p372). Having a recognizable and strong brand becomes even more critical for business schools, providing either their special characters of education (Engwall, 2007) or intangibility and difficulty in assessing their perceived value without any means to examine the program before engaging in consumption (Jevons, 2006). Branding is also about positioning program values and offerings in the seeking zone of prospective students (Heslop and Nadeau, 2010). Though business schools pick up complex decisions in terms of marketing and strategy to position its MBA programs, they tend to seek for a co-branding effect, which is to select reputation mechanisms for both strategically relevant branding, regulation and reputation. An example could be an accreditation with criteria relevant to the market position of the business school and has numerous financial and career implications for students. (Miles, Grimmer and Franklin, 2016)

Reemphasizing the AMBA's definition of MBA as a career development generalist degree, a candidate chooses an MBA that suits his or her career development. On one side, it is likely that graduates from a program with good reputation, such as top-ranked or accredited school, will impress prospective employers. Reputation to a certain extent is a recommendation letter for future career development. On the other side, reputations of an MBA programs are now one of the energetic tool for schools to recruit students. Business schools are focusing on building reputation, but it seems that few fully understand what to focus on reputation (Argenti, 2000). Hence, programs search naturally for enlarging reputations and joining in the chase for reputation by either accrediting themselves in joining reputed accreditation associations or by climbing up in reputed ranking bodies. As it is explained in the literature review, both accreditation organisations and ranking bodies create certain signals, rules, criteria or parameters that business schools are obliged to respond to. These obligations become a regulator to the development strategies of the programs on the way to seek for higher and higher reputations.

- Rankings. There are a lot of types of rankings for business programs, but Financial Times ranking is considered the most recommended for a MBA program in anywhere in the world. Some schools with top Financial Times ranking might have different evolution paths and speeds from others outside the ranking. The ranking

as well plays an important role in finding the development strategies of schools and programs. The fact of reviewing the difference strategies of programs among and outside the top ranked schools could reveal the other sides of the glory. Is (Are) there any compromise(s) that programs need to accept in order to enter the top rankings?

- Accreditation of MBA programs: MBA programs provided institutional certification. Hence, the validity of the MBA diploma depends on the acknowledgement of public to the school, and the accreditation of certain establishments to ensure consistency and quality of graduate business education programs. Each and any MBA program has to be accredited by at least an accrediting body so that the program is considered in good quality and worth for studying. The objective of reviewing the programs accreditation is not to compare or rank the accreditation associations, but again, to see the constraints or adaptations that programs need to implement in order to join or keep the accreditations.

3.2.1 Accreditations

Accreditation is a process that benchmarks certain panels of qualities and business schools or business programs need to assure those qualities in order to be accredited. For instance, in the United States, where business and management education were developed well before other countries and US business schools dominate the business school landscape particularly for the MBA degree (Antunes and Thomas 2007), a college or university must be accredited as a whole before it is eligible to have its MBA program accredited. Bodies that accredit institutions as a whole include the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA): Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSA), New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (HLC), Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), and Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). The three major accrediting bodies in the United States are Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), which accredits research universities, the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP), which accredits universities and colleges, and the International Assembly for Collegiate Business

Education (IACBE), all of which also accredit schools outside the United States. The AACSB, the ACBSP, and the IACBE are themselves recognized in the United States by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).

Accreditation agencies outside the United States include the Association of MBAs (AMBA), a United Kingdom based organisation that accredits MBA (Master of Business Administration), DBA (Doctor of Business Administration) and MBM (Master of Business Management) programs worldwide; the government accreditation bodies such as the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) that accredits MBA and PGDM programs across India; the Council on Higher Education (CHE) in South Africa, the European Quality Improvement System (EQUIS) or the European Program Accreditation System (EPAS) of EMFD (European Foundation for Management Development) for mostly European and Asian schools, and the Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation (FIBAA) in Europe.

Founded from the Master of Science in Commerce, the Master of Business Administration (MBA) adapted the curriculum and entitled to correspond to the needs of the country industrialized and companies sought out scientific approaches to management in the nineteenth century. The MBA attracts people from a wide range of academic disciplines and is considered a career development generalist degree for those with significant relevant work experience. The MBA has merged as the only global degree in the sense that its model of education is relatively homogeneous worldwide (Mintzberg, 2004). Despite the fact that United States schools continue to lead the global business school dimensions (Pfeffer and Fong, 2002; Dameron and Durand 2008), emergent competitors sensitive to local market needs now exist in Europe, Asia and Latin America (Antunes and Thomas, 2007; Blackman, 2011). The MBA has enjoyed tremendous growth over recent years and is arguably the most internationally recognized. Nevertheless, MBA programs provide only institutional certification. Hence, the validity of the MBA diploma depends on the acknowledgement of public to the school and the program, and the accreditation of certain establishments to ensure consistency and quality of graduate business education programs. Institutions therefore look at some form of external institution and program accreditation in order to validate and demonstrate their commitment to quality

improvement and quality assurance. With the increasing competition among business schools, the most competitive schools are looking for benchmarking opportunities as well as quality improvement programs that will provide them with an opening to gain a thorough understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, to develop new and better programs and to prove the level of their offerings to the market through accreditation.

Triple-crown accreditations

In fact, there are three main global accreditation bodies in business education: AACSB, EQUIS, and AMBA, called the Triple Crown. While AACSB dominates the accreditation of business schools in the United States, EQUIS covers the Europe business school; AMBA accredits a school's portfolio of postgraduate business programs rather than the entire business school. AACSB has the broadest scope, as it accredits management and accounting programs at the entire university and grants university-wide accreditation. AMBA is the most international of the three organisations, having accredited schools based in 46 countries, compared with 42 for AACSB and 38 for EQUIS. EQUIS' scope ranks in the middle, as it accredits the business school but not the university and not specific portfolios of programs.

Out of 15673 schools offering business degree programs worldwide (AACSB International, 2013); only 58 schools have triple accreditations of AACSB, EQUIS and AMBA. The majority of those schools, or those with combinations of double accreditations, are outside North America zone.

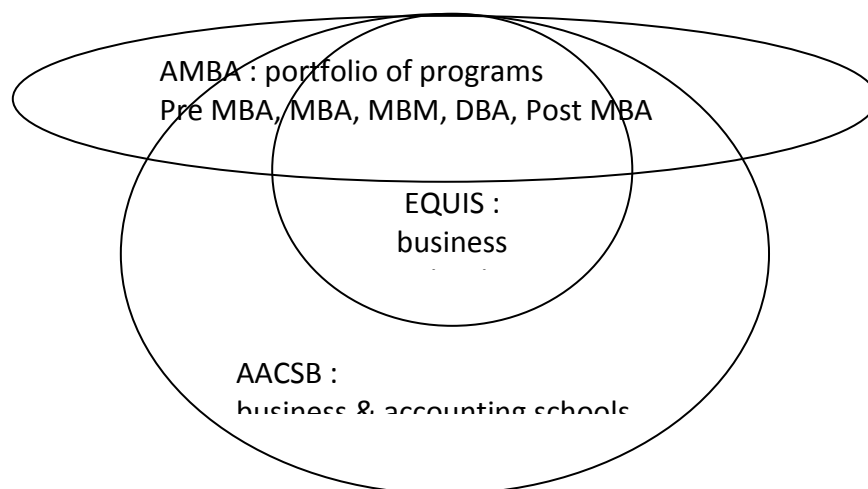


Figure III.2.3: Scope of accreditations for AACSB, EQUIS and AMBA

Source: Guidelines and criteria for evaluations of AACSB, EQUIS and AMBA

Comparison of the three accreditation bodies and criteria

When a business school chooses an association of accreditation to follow up the accreditation procedure, they have decided a part of their model of development strategy, to follow or to differentiate, since each association is different in criteria and points of view of accreditation.

Zooming up the three biggest associations of AACSB, AMBA and EQUIS, the criteria are generally said that AACSB has more quantitative criteria; AMBA has more qualitative criteria and EQUIS is in the middle between AACSB and AMBA. Faculty is a main point of difference in the evaluation system of the three associations. AACSB prescribed faculty ratios (AQ/PQ ratio) and disapproves the heavy use of visiting faculty, while AMBA has no prescribed faculty-to-students ratio and allows the visiting faculty model. EQUIS controls the prescribed minimum numbers of faculty and also disapproves the heavy use of visiting faculty, as AACSB. From the internationalization point of view, AACSB conducts the evaluation against a school's own mission, so AACSB has no internationalization requirement unless internationalization is part of the school's mission. AMBA and EQUIS on the other side have strict requirements on internationalization. AMBA has internationalization criteria for research, curriculum and student enrolment. In researches criteria, AACSB requires research in line with the mission of the school; AMBA requires research and publications in international refereed journals or proof of impact research at national level while EQUIS requires research just with an international dimension. EFMD has created EQUIS in 1998 to standardize the quality improvement of business schools, and based on the philosophy and methodology of EQUIS approach, EFMD launched EPAS in 2005 to review and accredit individual programs. Hence, EQUIS is considered European's counterpart of AACSB while EPAS could be considered equivalent to AMBA.

Figures	AACSB	EQUIS	AMBA
Year of creation	1916	1998	1967

Headquarter	Florida, US	Brussels, Belgium	London, UK
Number of accredited schools	672	142	210 schools with MBAs
Duration of the accreditation process	2-7 years	2-3 years	9-18 months
Full accreditation	5-10 years	3-5 years	3-5 years
School audit team	Peer-Review Teams comprised of volunteer deans and business school administrators from AACSB-accredited business schools.	Awarding Body composed of only Deans and Presidents of selected schools who evaluate the Peer-Review Reports	Assessment team of senior academics from leading accredited programs and a AMBA representative
Accreditation fees	\$18.500 – \$30.500	€ 25.000 - € 40.625	£15.000 - £22.000

Table III.2.4: Facts and figures of the three accreditations

Source: Author (2013) built from guidelines and criteria of AACSB, EQUIS, and AMBA

Standards, Criteria	AACSB	EQUIS	AMBA
Core values	Quality; Innovation; Continuous improvement		
	Intellectual contributions; Ethical behaviour; Collegiate environment; Corporate and Social responsibility, Sustainability	Internationalization; Ethics, Responsibility and Sustainability; Corporate links	Best and relevant business practice; Reflection of changing trends
Governance & Strategy	Distinctive mission, Approaches, Expected outcomes; Qualitative & quantitative strategies	Articulated mission; Effective and integrated governance; Coherent strategy	Appropriate mission; Well defined policies of governance; Coherent strategy;
Programs (teaching and learning)	Process management programs (objectives, design, delivery, results and evaluations) Knowledge, skills and program integration in professional projects;		
Faculty – Quality of teaching	Quantitative in numbers of faculty; degrees/experience of faculty Faculty management and development (structure and organisation of faculty, process and evaluation)		
	Allocation of scholarly and instructional practitioners /academics Active participating faculty (>75%), involving in other activities beyond direct teaching; supporting faculty only participate in teaching,	Quantitative in nationality, age & gender of faculty, Sufficient core faculty (minimum 25);	Innovative approaches to delivery & tutoring; Research activities could be replaced by consultancy activities
Students	Assessment of progression; Post graduation career; Evaluation		

	Creation, Facilitation, and Assessment of student-faculty and student-student interactions, student academic and professional engagement and transformation	Assessment of selection, clear admission procedure and criteria Language proficiency	
		Alumni relations, Language proficiency (depending on program)	Minimum 3 years of full time working experience, Language proficiency; Less exceptions of admission; student diversity; Cohort size of at least 20, mutual learning among peers.
Staff	Professional staff and/or services are sufficient and deployable; Clear division of labour across faculty and professional staff;		Core staff to administer, manage and deliver the program; Defined roles (academic leadership and administrative responsibilities)
Research and Development	If requested in the mission of the school	Academic research with international dimension	Research and publications in international referred or national level journal

Table III.2.5: Comparison of the three accreditations standards and criteria

Source: Author (2013) built from guidelines and criteria of AACSB, EQUIS, and AMBA

Why Business schools apply for more than one accreditation institution?

Looking at the education market nowadays, a lot of universities claim to be “accredited”. However, the question is by whom? Since not all accrediting bodies are recognized, it is important to always learn more about the accreditation a school holds. On one hand, the best place to start investigating an accrediting body is through the government or educational ministry where the school is located. On the other hand, a school’s accreditation may not be recognized outside of that country, or a type of accreditation could be recognized in one country but not in another one. Therefore, schools apply for more well-known accreditations for neither benchmarking nor ranking purpose but for being recognized internationally to as many countries as possible. The strengths of the leading US business schools derive from the competitive advantages associated with their gains in modelling with MBA product standardization, business school legitimization and well established brands and reputations. In the period of dominance of US-style MBA business school model, issues of image, reputation and international mind-set become important for the non-US schools, especially European schools (Antunes and Thomas, 2007) Each of those European schools was influenced by different cultural, legal and

regulatory characteristics in their home country, but they would show the greater diversity and reach the international credibility by adopting the “US flavour”. That answers the question why more European schools (37 out of 55 triple accredited schools) earn the US accreditation (AACSB) with their European ones (AMBA, EQUIS) while no US school go after the title of triple crown.

One reason of this absence of US schools in the “triple- crown” list is that they do not meet the AMBA requirement. The Association of MBAs accredit only business schools admitted MBA applicants with at least three years of full-time post graduation work experience, while most top US business schools admit fresh bachelor graduates with little or no work experience. Top US business schools also do not look for accreditations outside of North America since they obtained the AACSB accreditation in the North America thanks to the granting of accreditation based on their reputation as top schools. Another reason is some of the top business schools choose to rely only on accreditation by their national accrediting body which normally is the country’s education ministry.

The question is then raised to schools and programs when the current trend is to apply as many accreditation as possible, what are their objectives and strategies. Saying in another word, which model they follow or differentiate. Programs/Schools with a “triple crown” status could be considered high reputation and highly ranked in the business schools’ list. At this stage, accreditation system does not play only the benchmarking role but the ranking role as well. Nevertheless, the borderline of criteria sets between accreditation bodies and ranking bodies is vague. One clear point is that both accreditation bodies and ranking bodies are belonging to what is called “reputation effects” (Antunes and Thomas, 2007).

On one hand, to be accredited in know accreditation bodies is part of the game to be ranked. AACSB, EQUIS and AMBA have been necessary for years in order to be eligible for the ranking at all. For instance, MBA schools that wish to take part in the Global MBA Ranking of the Financial Times need to have an international accreditation. Up until now this included accreditation by AACSB, EQUIS or AMBA. Currently AMBA no longer belongs to this group. According to Michael J. Jacobs from the Financial Times, the main reason

for this is that in the future only accreditations that accredit the school as a whole and not just individual programs will be considered.

On the other hand, reputation effects could manipulate the patterns of competition for resources and strategic management in the business school market, because reputation hierarchies act as mobility barriers for new entrance. Triple crowned accreditation acts as a barrier for the new, upcoming schools into the elite, high reputation and qualified category of schools. European business schools do not have the same strategic orientation as US schools and fall behind on dimension such as salary, alumni and especially research criteria, which earn important weight for ranking standards. The strengths of European business schools focus on international dimensions, career progress and value for money, obviously with which they could easily satisfy the accreditations' criteria. European schools find their legitimacy by establishing the new MBA product and by pursuing for reputation, yet differentiate in the choice of reputation bodies that privilege their strengths.

3.2.2 Rankings

While accreditations just validate the coherence between the stated objectives and resources implemented to verify a school or a program is in line or not with the defined quality of the association, rankings really create the competition of reputation by listing schools or programs in a certain order where the top list names are considered better.

Though ranking activities is prominent not only in education but also in various industry sectors (Wedlin, 2007), rankings become a global phenomenon in higher education in general, and management education in particular, due to the demands from public for transparent information on the so-called-quality of programs and schools (Wedlin 2007; Marginson and Van der Wende 2007; Usher and Savino, 2007; Thakur, 2008). “Whether rankings have appeared, they have been met with a mixture of public enthusiasm and institutional unease” because there is a “tendency of institutional ranking schemes to use weighted aggregates of indicators to arrive at a single, all-encompassing quality score” (Usher and Savino, 2007, p.255)

Many different organisations provide business school ranking information. They vary from world wide prestige business magazines, such as US News and World Report, Business Week, Wall Street Journal, Forbes, and the Financial Times; to ranking websites and researches such as Times Higher Education World University (THES), Quacquarelli Symonds (QS), Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) of Shanghai Jiaotong University (SJTU), Top MBA, SMBG or now Eduniversal (France), CHE (Germany, Australia, Swiss) etc. Basso et al (2011) divide the ranking mechanisms into two main streamlines: one evaluated by companies and the other by the academic community. The first streamline, headed by top business newspapers, evaluates how well the instruction matches corporate expectations including alumni salaries, recruiters' satisfactions, job placements and admission proportion. The second streamline, headed by Shanghai Jiao Tong University, appraise academic level including quality of staff, research output, quality of education and size of institution. Other clusters of ranking mechanisms defined by Usher and Savino (2007) and Thakur(2008) can be Global Rankings (with SJTU, THES), National Rankings for different countries and zones, Web rankings, League Tables with standards in most countries with large higher education systems.

However, in Management Education and Business schools, the tendency is to focus on applying the ranking organisations produced by commercial publishing enterprises, who share some characteristics with consumer guides to different products and services. The first rankings of US MBA programs are tracked from the mid 1980s: the US News and World Report, while its European counterpart - the Financial Times published the first European ranking list of business schools in 1998. With the growth, internationalization and globalization of MBA program, international ranking lists began to assume their crucial roles in the management education industry, including Wall Street Journal, the Economist, Business Week, or Asiaweek. In the scope of MBA programs in France, it is worth to have a look on the Eduniversal ranking system, operated from 1994 by the French consulting a rating agency SMBG specialized in French Higher Education, but now expanding rankings for best business schools in nine geographical regions.

What all the rankings do is that they set up a number of factors that they think are important, collect data and measure the data of such factors and then statistically weight

these factors and emerge with a single number that depicts the overall figure of the school. Usher and Savino (2007) group the elements of data into seven groups while Wedlin (2007) forms five categories for the data, but they cover the following factors of the school or program to be ranked:

- Beginning characteristics of incoming students (or incoming class features)
- Learning inputs of resources and staffs (or school features)
- Learning outputs of skills (or program features and teaching)
- Final outcomes (or employability and career development)
- Research, and
- Reputation

The data are collected from different sources, mainly from survey data of various stakeholders of the to-be-ranked entity, university sources or independent third parties. The scope of programs and schools to be ranked is abundant and varied from ranking bodies. For example, each year, US News and World Report rank full-time and part-time graduate business programs accredited by the AACSB International. In the meantime, the Wall Street Journal ranks business schools that are accredited by the International Association for Management Education, as well as any foreign schools that are recommended by its panel of "business-school deans, business-school associations, recruiters and career-services directors." The rankings are based solely on the opinions of MBA recruiters, who are asked to rate schools on a ten-point scale for each of 27 criteria having to do with the quality of each school and its graduates. Business Week publishes rankings for full-time, part-time, and executive MBA programs every two years. Business Week's rankings are based on a combination of student and corporate recruiter surveys and an "intellectual capital component", which measures "school's influence and prominence in the realm of ideas".

In one of Martin Schatz's research in 1993 on the ranking surveys, he points out that with different criteria in selection, and with different weighting system, the rankings show different results. Hence, each ranking will answer to the expectation of each group of MBA candidates, who emphasize which reason to follow the MBA. Furthermore, high rankings do not necessarily translate into higher quality education. Rankings tend to emphasize statistics, and it is hard to quantify subjective experience. For example, US News and World Report includes undergraduate grade point average, average GMAT (Graduate

Management Admission Test) score, the school's acceptance rate, and enrolment yield as components of their Student Selectivity criterion. Or, other rankings such as Financial Times and Wall Street Journal measure the diversity and working experience of students and faculty. To determine Placement Success, they measure the percentage of students employed after graduation, the ratio of graduates to employers recruiting on campus, and the average starting salary, the usefulness of networks and the diversity of recruiters. Each of these factors can be objectively measured, and each of them might well tell something interesting about the school, but it certainly does not reveal the quality of teaching and research that goes on in the school, nor the quality and use of the facilities, and equipment. Very few ranking mechanisms count the quality of teaching with high weights. The quality of program is normally measured in peer review like the accreditation system, but counts only from 15 to 30 percent of the final result. Most of all, ranking does not measure correctly the values of the schools and the contents of programs which are of critical importance. The below table collects the overview of ranking criteria of main ranking systems for MBA programs:

Rankings	Incoming characters	Schools/ programs features	Employability	Research
Financial Times ²³	11 criteria x 0,31 Diversity of staff, board members and students by gender and nationality, and the international reach of the MBA PhD rating		8 criteria x 0,59 Mean salaries salary increase Absolute salary increase	2 criteria x 0,10 Number of articles in 45 recognized journals
US News and World Report ²⁴	Mean GMAT of new entrants to full-time program x 0.1625 Mean undergraduate GPA of new entrants x 0.075 Acceptance rate x 0.0125	Program quality assessment by peer academics x 0,25 Program quality assessment by recruiters x 0,15	Mean starting salary and bonus x 0,14 At-graduation job placement rate x 0,07 Job placement rate three months after graduation x 0,14	
Wall Street Journal ²⁵	Student characteristics (international diversity, working experience, age)	School eligibility criteria (accreditation by AACSB and EQUIS). Satisfaction from the curriculum to faculty. Program quality x 0.78, Applicable skills x 0.12 Leadership and management skills x 0,12	Access to career services, impact the program has had on a career x 0,44 Usefulness of the skills taught and overall quality of the program x 0,68 Usefulness of leadership and management skills taught x 0,8	

23 Information retrieved from Methodology: FT Global MBA Ranking 2015 - <http://www.ft.com/>

24 Information retrieved from Methodology: 2016 Best Business Schools Rankings. - <http://www.usnews.com/>

25 Information retrieved from How the rankings were compiled - <http://www.wsj.com/>

Business Week ²⁶	Students' satisfaction x 0,45 Quality of academic and career development offerings, Qualities of the student body and school culture, and students' evaluations of their own skill sets	Employer's satisfaction x 0,45 Usefulness of skills Usefulness of networks Recruiters experience with graduates	Faculty research in esteemed journals x 0,10
The Economist ²⁷	Education experience x 0,35 Faculty quality Student quality Student diversity Student experience	Career opportunities x 0,35 Diversity of recruiters, Assessment of career service Increase in salary x 0,20 Potential to network x 0,10	
Eduniversal (SMBG) ²⁸	Reputation criteria quantity (acceptance rate) and quality (acknowledgment degree of the program from other programs of the same kind) Student's satisfaction	Acknowledgment degree of the program from HR representatives Salary and the first employment after the program	

Table III.2.6: Overview of ranking factors and weighted criteria

Source: Author (2016) built from methodologies of ranking bodies for MBA ranking criteria

In the table, we could see that the highlight is systematically focused on the employability or career development of alumni. Criteria devoted to quality of teaching, program quality, curriculum and management skills are minorities in the numerous factors. Except that Wall Street Journal explicitly counts the importance of curriculum, leadership and management skills as schools' features, other ranking journals focus more on the skills viewed through career services and development. One might argue that this system of ranking is more complete when measuring different points of view from academic peer review for quality of the program, students' and recruiters' satisfactions. To some extent, it is adequate to collect all stakeholders' feedbacks in one measurement system. The objectively measuring of factors becomes subjectively manipulating intention of both ranking bodies and ranked schools.

Why Business schools apply for ranking mechanism?

26 Information retrieved from Best Business Schools 2014: How They Were Ranked - <http://www.bloomberg.com/bw/>

27 Information retrieved from Which MBA ? Methodology 2014 - <http://www.economist.com/>

28 Information retrieved from Participation eligibility - <http://classement.smbg.fr/>

Though rankings hardly show importance of schools' and programs' curricula features and value, they are an important actor of regulator group in the way that they influence other stakeholders in the management education system. "As imperfect as they are, rankings satisfy a public demand for transparency and information that institutions and governments have not been able to meet on their own." (Usher and Savino, 2007) Besides the fact that ranking systems affect students' decision making process in selecting a school and a program (Wedlin, 2007; Marginon, 2008; Usher and Savino, 2007; Thakur, 2008), Thakur (2008) points out other difference manipulations that rankings effect on schools and programs. The rankings have influenced national governments, associations and private financial resources in allocation of funding; the measurements of factors have modified schools' governance and strategy, affected schools' decision making and planning process. Rankings are influencing business schools in their work to compare with others but at the same time putting them into groups of schools for different categories of rankings. Therefore, rankings are influencing the teaching and developing a program in an indirect manner.

One reason why rankings become crucially active in MBA programs' stakeholders is because of reputation effect. No ranking could either generate data based on measures of the value added of the academic process, or focus on teaching and learning (Dill and Soo, 2005), but reputation ranking journals open opportunities to ranked schools for recycle reputation (Guarino et al, 2005) and "halo effects" of the brands of schools for whatever programs or domains to be listed as top schools (Marginson, 2007). Wedlin (2007) concludes from his research that a business school, wanting to participate in ranking system and being considered a true business school, needs to have a full-time MBA program. On the contrary, a business school having an MBA program will need to modify its academic and business values in order to enter and stay in the ranking mechanism. An MBA program considers joining ranking mechanism in order to approach customers, to belong to the international market and to be competitive in the measure of employability. Nevertheless, while rankings are manipulating and influencing management education, they will remain a part of this industry as "they fulfil a need - academic, commercial or otherwise" (Thakur, 2008, p.93).

4. Conclusion

This chapter has detailed the main stakeholders involved directly and indirectly in the development of MBA curriculum, classified in groups of Providers, Demanders and Regulators. The typology of stakeholders is specified with regards to French scope of management education and MBA programs.

Providers include business schools in all sorts, MBA organizers including deans, directors and coordinators, MBA faculty with all their professional expertise and academic status. What concerns in Demanders are students, recruiters and the overall environments affecting the demanders. Regulators involve government, public and private academic and professional institutions. While providers and demanders affect the curricula on intra-organisation or extra-organisation boundaries, regulators pressure more on the inter-organisation boundaries; influence providers, demanders and the whole industry.

Though considering Management and Business Education as an industry in this research, we emphasize through the introduction part and the literature review that this industry is a highly regulated area. The roles of regulators are not only crucial for the creation and operation of a business school and a management program; they are indispensable for the legitimacy and the competitiveness of their existence as well. Understand the mechanism of the regulators as rankings and accreditations parties (Dameron and Durand, 2011) will help understand the design and structure the models of business schools towards regulations and reputations. Providers and Demanders are logically determinants of MBA curriculum development, but Regulators are unsurprisingly key forces to be investigated in this research.

PART III METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER 3 HYPOTHESES AND ENQUIRY

1. Research question (repeated)

The following two research questions emerge in this research:

- 1) Who, among MBA's stakeholders, are the determinants of changes in the MBA curricula?
- 2) How do such determinants influence the MBA curriculum development and strategic management of academic institutions?

The purpose of this research is to finally answer the question of:

What makes academic institutions revisit their MBA curricula?

(Competitiveness and / or Legitimacy, Conformity and /or Differentiation)

2. Hypotheses (Propositions)

Theoretically, hypotheses are built in a research in order to test a certain theory. Our objectives are firstly to understand certain phenomena rather than testing them, and secondly to aim at building logics of such phenomena. Therefore, hypotheses in this chapter should be considered propositions that we intend to develop our research approaches. Our hypotheses aim at examining stakeholders' involvements in the organisations and organisations strategic positions of Management Education industry, in particular the MBA curricula development and implementation. After citing main stakeholders influencing MBA curricula in previous chapter, this chapter focuses on developing the propositions that changes in MBA curricula are results of a combination of several factors by the most pronounced direct stakeholders analysed below.

Hypothesis 1 focuses on the question:

Who, among MBA's stakeholders, are the determinants of changes in the MBA curricula?

Regulators

Management education is not similar to other industries, due to the special characteristics of education: Students are basically uninformed customers who are not much acquainted with the offer and who rarely use the product twice. Reputation is thus a crucial factor for students choosing a particular education (Engwall, 2007). On one side, it is likely that graduates from a program with good reputation, such as top-ranked or accredited school, will impress prospective employers. Reputation to a certain extent is a recommendation letter for future career development. On the other side, reputations of an MBA programs are now one of the energetic tool for schools to recruit students. High-prestige and well known institutions will accordingly be more attractive to students and will consequently have better opportunities for selecting good students and thus a better chance of producing elites, “as a surrogate measure of strong reputation or brand” (Antunes & Thomas 2007, p383). The reputation of an institution will affect the demand and the selection of its students. Hence, business schools and programs search for enlarging reputations by either accrediting themselves in reputed accreditation associations or by climbing up in reputed ranking bodies.

Furthermore, MBA programs provided institutional certification. Though recognised internationally, the validity of a MBA degree depends on the acknowledgement of public to the school, either by accreditation to certify their quality, or by rankings to acknowledge their positions in the Management Education industry. Accreditation and ranking bodies become main regulators of MBA programs. When a business school chooses an accreditation association to follow up the accreditation procedure, or focuses on aligning with ranking systems' indicators, they have decided a part of their organisation's development strategy, since each regulator is different in criteria and standards.

While accreditations just validate the coherence between the stated objectives and resources implemented to verify a school or a program are in line with the defined quality of the association, rankings really create the competition of reputation by listing schools or programs in a certain order where the top list names are considered better. What all the rankings do is that they want to measure a number of factors that they think are important, and then statistically weight these factors and emerge with a single number that depicts the overall quality of the school. However, ranking plays an important role when a school defines its strategies to attract different profiles of students. In Schatz and Crummer's research on the ranking surveys, the rankings show different results with different criteria in selection, and with different weighting system. Hence, each ranking factor, objectively measured, will answer to the expectation of each group of MBA candidates, who emphasize which reason to follow the MBA. The fact that a school aims at which and each factor might well tell something interesting about the school and its objectives, though it certainly could not reveal the quality of its programs (Schatz & Crummer, 1993).

Besides the ranking, accreditations also play a crucial role in schools' and programs' development strategies. It is worth to review accreditations' criteria in order to see the constraints or adaptations that programs need to implement in order to join or keep the accreditations. The current trend is schools and programs apply as many accreditations as possible. What are their objectives and strategies and how can they cope with all criteria of accreditation bodies which sometimes contradictory? In fact, there are three main global accreditation bodies in management education and MBA programs: The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), European Quality Improvement System (EQUIS), and The Association of MBAs (AMBA), called the Triple Crown. On one hand, to be accredited in known accreditation bodies (AACSB, EQUIS and AMBA) is part of the game to be ranked (Schwertfeger, 2011). At this stage, accreditation system does not play only the benchmarking role but the ranking role as well. On the other hand, reputation effects could manipulate competitive advantages and strategically act as mobility barriers for new entrance. Triple crowned accreditation acts as a barrier for the new, upcoming schools into the elite, high reputation and qualified category of schools.

Each and any MBA program has to be accredited by at least an accrediting body so that the program is considered in good quality and worth for studying. Looking at the management education industry nowadays, a lot of schools claim to be “accredited”. However, the question is by whom, and what is accredited? The first recognised accrediting body is the government or educational ministry where the school is located. In this case the content of the curriculum is actually reviewed. Secondly, schools apply for more well-known and internationally recognized accreditations for both content benchmarking and reputation purposes. The strengths of leading US business schools derive from the competitive advantages associated with their gains in modelling their MBA product standardization, business school legitimization and well established brands and reputations. In the dominance of US-style MBA model, issues of image, reputation and international mind-set become important for the non-US schools, especially European schools (Antunes & Thomas, 2007). Each European school was influenced by different cultural, legal and regulatory characteristics in their home country, but they would show the greater diversity and reach the international credibility by adopting the “US flavour”. That answers why more European schools (37 out of 55 triple accredited schools) earn the US accreditation (AACSB) with their European ones (AMBA, EQUIS) while no US school go after the title of Triple Crown.

The borderline of criteria sets between accreditation bodies and ranking bodies is vague. One clear point is that both accreditation bodies and ranking bodies are belonging to what is called “reputation effects” (Antunes, Thomas 2007). Joining in the chase for reputation effects, business schools therefore are joining the regulation mechanisms. Both accreditation organisations and ranking bodies create certain signals, rules, criteria or parameters that business schools are obliged to respond to. These obligations become a regulator to programs on the way to seek for higher and higher reputations rather than pedagogical contents (Zell 2001, Antunes & Thomas 2007, Khurana 2007, Noorda, 2011, Wilson & Thomas 2012) “This focus on rankings and reputation measures may, in turn, lead to resource allocation decisions which favour marketing and public relations activities directed toward image building rather than toward critical and important strategic investments in new models of teaching and learning” (Thomas & Cornuel, 2012, p330). Therefore, we predict:

The Regulators’ recommendation to make changes on MBA curricula is significant.

Providers

Providers of Management Education could be defined as academic and professional institutions that provide management and business training programs. Those institutions are named generally as business schools. Business schools are organisations (Simon, 1967), thus organisational theories and designs are relevant tools to study them. Depending on the point of view, two models are applicable to business schools: a business model and an academic model. The former focuses on contents and teaching processes (Simon 1967, Mintzberg 2004, Bennis & O'Toole 2005, Spender 2013) whereas the latter focuses on the impact of the market and globalization (Hawawini 2005, Iniguez de Onzono & Carmona 2007, Starkey & Tiratsoo 2007, Durand & Dameron 2008). On the one hand, business schools provide education. On the other hand, they are professional schools, expected to deliver valuable inputs with intention to improve students' values on the labour market.

Given the above insights between different roles and paradoxical models of business schools, each business school focuses on different sides to develop their programs and curricula. The development and the implementation of their programs, in this specific case of MBA programs, are in the hands of organizers and faculty.

MBA organizers link mainly to the administrative and governance side of an MBA program and a curriculum. They include deans and administrators of business schools, directors, managers and staff teams who run the programs, advisory board of either the school or the program. Depending on different types of business schools, the role of deans and administrators of business schools are varied on the development of the program and its curriculum. In the US, Deans are the first person involving in the development of the schools' programs and curricula. They not only take responsibilities to all activities of the school but play initiative roles in changing academic and administrative issues in their different programs (Datar et al 2010). Since MBA are often flagship programs in US business schools, deans' involvements are vital as they actively identify added values of the MBA degree with current external requests and internal resources of the school.

Faculty in MBA is those who implement and concretely transfer management knowledge, know-how and practices to students. They could be discipline experts who design the course, or those who involve in teaching as instructors, or act both roles. Faculty is considered an institutional asset, and an important resource of business school. In order to keep, enrich and improve the resource - asset, faculty members are required to have an up-to-date understanding of business practice gained through recent managerial experience and consultancy. The teaching has to be linked to practice as well as theory, because management is considered “knowledge for action” (Perez, 2011). Management must be learned mainly for and through practice, in contact with practitioners (those who are actively involved), without too much concern for academic research (those who simply observe). Nevertheless, most management researchers also collect knowledge on the field that is identifiable and, when appropriate, transferable and taught. Besides, some accreditation bodies also require specific standards for faculty when business schools apply for accreditations. For instance, AMBA requires the faculty member to have an up-to-date understanding of business practice while EQUIS requires permanent core faculty to ensure the continuity of the program while assure balance between teaching, research, new program development and internal managerial responsibilities (AMBA & EQUIS standards). Bennis and O’Toole (2005) also points out the dual missions that most business schools claim, that is educate practitioners and create knowledge through research, and “historically, business schools have emphasized the former at the expense of the latter” (p2).

Providers are therefore identified with an analysis from horizontal examination (types or structures of business schools) to vertical observation (functions and structures of programs’ personnel) in regards of a program curriculum. At the level of advance studies, especially in professional oriented programs, academics have more freedom to design curricula and this freedom may increase as areas of specialization within research and profession might feature more substantially (Coate, 2009). At the level of modules and classes, courses at higher education are normally designed and assured by faculty with certain liberty on content, teaching modality based on the nature of each course and knowledge. However, at the level of programs and curricula, who takes care of the connections between classes, modules, and the evolution of the overall knowledge

delivered to students in the framework of the programs? In the literature, curricula's and courses' contents are seen with indispensable involvements of faculty, either full tenured position or part-time recruited instructors. There rest a question on how their involvements shape and change the curriculum of a program. We should investigate on how a business school positions the faculty's roles in the curriculum development, a uni-function or a multi-function; and whether those defined roles affect the strategy, structure and design of the MBA program.

Following Habermas (1976), Antunes and Thomas (2007) and Sullivan (2011) consider that each school is influenced by a set of cultural, legal and regulatory characteristics in its home country. They differ in terms of stakeholders, communities, location, education and legal status, educational and scholarship initiatives, which Antunes and Thomas (2007) call "a social construction process". This social construction process makes those characteristics the basic differentiation factors that could help certain business schools to surpass others. However, Sullivan concludes that "most business schools do not directly incorporate innovation (something new and novel) into their own unique missions and operations" (Sullivan, 2011, p492). It means that they do not act and think systematically to change and improve their program. We highlight that:

The Providers' proposal to renew MBA curricula limits by their own resources.

Demanders

Students are the first to be thought as demanders for higher education. Regardless the three specific characteristics of students or students-to-be (students are not acquainted with the program before enrolment; students will not enrol again even they appreciate the program, students can verify the quality and knowledge learned only after a period of completing the program - Engwall 2007), MBA students are different and are considered fastidious demanders even before enrolling the program. Dameron and Durand (2008) state that students are behaving less like unquestioning users of the educational system and more like clients or demanders, who are demanding a good return on their investment.

Besides, MBA programs generally integrate participants' experience in the development of courses and curriculum hence participants' experience are one of criteria of admission. Few admission requirements in terms of fundamental knowledge or management knowledge are required; the emphasis thus is on practical situations, observations and comprehensions on corporate activities rather than academic backgrounds. Not only students' practical and professional experience is concerned, MBA students are supposed to enter the program with plans for future career and professional development which are treated in the program. Basso et al (2011) cite a view in the academic world that the goal of business education is to secure students' future careers. Curriculum and teaching activities should take into account students' past experience and their future plans in order to achieve that goal.

Since the ultimate reason for MBA students is to assure the career and professional development, requirements, evaluations, and feedbacks from enterprises and professional world are supposed to be important for business schools to verify and modify their curricula. Taking into account recruiters' remarks to develop curricula is the way to further assure students' future career development, furthermore assure business schools' admission and recruitment processes. In the project of rethinking MBAs, Datar et al (2010) enlarge their survey to not only deans but business executives from broad sectors. They figure out that some business schools have already undertaken reforms on MBA curricula based on assessments from business sectors.

It is easily concluded that all the changes of a program's contents comes from the demands in the field, but very few indicate well from which source or which request of the demands in the field. Literature however pays few attentions on students' ideas for curriculum development. In recent researches on MBA curriculum relevance, Datar et al (2010) criticize business schools to have modelled themselves increasingly on the academic disciplines and their research and teaching have become less and less relevant to executives and students. Lyons (2012) addresses a significant need from students to reform the curriculum. Though, all their methodologies and approaches, results and proposition for MBA reform (or rethinking) start and end with business schools' deans, faculty and recruiters. Rynes and Bartunek (2013) summarize the researches of previous

academicians on curriculum reform. None of their researches reach students' primary data information, except the one of Tranks and Rynes (2003) that dialogues with students of MBA about their feedbacks on courses that they have studied and links with their professionalism. Strongly believe that students are key determinants in the development of MBA curricula, should we investigate MBA students' lifeline from their input attributes (professional experience and expectations) and their output features (programs assessments and professional evolutions)? We hence anticipate that:

The Demanders' claim for changes in MBA curricula is under evaluated.

Spiral evolution of stakeholders

A specific characteristic of the stakeholders involved in MBA programs is the movement situation of the stakeholders whose positions and influences vis-à-vis the program are different. Each stakeholder could be acting two or several roles and standing at different positions at different moments or even at the same moment in a program, a business school or among different business schools. A business school is formed normally by faculty with multiple hats. Faculty is assuming a contradictory multi-role of professor - researcher - consultant - published author (providers) or enterprise professional, recruiters (demanders) or member of quality regulator groups (Basso 2011, Perez 2011). Another example could be alumni, who are considered either as students who affect their attributes of experience and future careers to the program, or as recruiters that shape their characteristics to put pressures on programs. Alumni are also considered providers as some alumni become instructors after graduation, in the same or different MBAs, or as regulators when joining a professional association to review and judge different MBAs. While analyzing the dynamics of management education, Krause (2009) recognizes that "Academic roles and identities are multi-faceted and differentially influenced by the interaction of an array of factors, both within and beyond the individual, the department and the institution; as these roles become increasingly complex, there is a growing scholarly interest in analyzing ways in which they also appear to be fragmenting" (p.413). An analysis on evolutions of each stakeholder in different positions over the years could reveal the historical development of some strategies of business schools. Such analysis might explain some common reflex and decision of business schools to modify their MBA curricula, and develop multi-literalist strategies, such as programs taught in English, joint

curricula from various countries, various campuses, etc (Durand & Dameron 2008). There might be a common reflex of certain groups of stakeholders that circulate in the same industry, but in different positions and in different business schools. Therefore, we propose the hypothesis number four as:

The changing roles of stakeholders in the organisation of management education create a spiral model that evolutionally influences the development of programs and curricula.

Hypothesis 2 aims at explaining question:

How do such determinants influence the strategic management of academic institutions?

The Conformity

Management Education is considered an industry and a market, or an academic and educational promoter. When considering Management Education in different points of view, the conformity is remarkably discovered as a process of existence and development of academic institutions. It confirms the legitimacy factor of Management Education in general, and Business Schools in particular.

In the market point of view, management education is a highly regulated market. When business schools first emerged, they were linked with the commercial world and professional agencies (Engwall, 2007; Bennis and O'Toole, 2005) before adopting the field of management education as an academic and scientific discipline. Business schools therefore mimic the more established disciplines in universities to justify their scientific and academic position in the field (Wilson and Thomas, 2012). Consequently, regulations are developed as the legitimacy factors for business schools, including governments' academic requirements and certification structures, professional and commercial standards on professionalism, and obviously quality assessment mechanism. These resources of regulation do not only intervene as individual actors for business schools but they also jointly regulate the market, which push regulated or to-be-regulated institutions to either search for a similarity effect as guarantor or form a cooperative effect as

collective negotiator (Reynaud and Reynaud, 1996). Guarantors are those who have been awarded with certifications, authorisations, rights and representations as legitimated institutions and programs. Furthermore, Management Education as one of the industries that uses alliances and competitiveness to dissolve competitive advantages. The strategic alliances which are formed in some industries such as airlines, banking, services and utilities have also been reformed in Management Education (Nguyen, 2016). Schools are no longer competitors but partners as well. Management Education is proved to be included in these specific industries. Instead of being threatened and shaped by the Porter's forces (1980), the industry of Management Education mitigate the forces with its cooperative programs. In both ways, the conformity emerges in the business of business schools, as they either mimic well established universities or well-known schools, or collectively make similarities in their strategy, activities and programs development.

In the institutional environment point of view, Business Schools also highlight the idea to communicate and mutual awareness among the competitors and pay attentions to the totality of relevant actors that "constitute a recognized area of institutional life: key suppliers, resource and product consumers, regulatory agencies and other organisations that produce similar services or products" (Di Maggio and Powell, 1983).

In order to answer the question of conformity and similarity of organisations, DiMaggio and Powell (1983) focus on forces of isomorphism, which are grouped into three main mechanism of institutional isomorphic change: coercive isomorphism, mimetic isomorphism and normative isomorphism. Force of coercive isomorphism refers to political, legal and quality influences where business schools depend on for their authorization for creation and operation. Some schools even depend on regional resources (Glaser et al, 2015) and state's standards (Meyer et al, 1981). As developed previously, MBA programs provide institutional certification and the validity of a MBA degree depends on the acknowledgement of public to the school. Therefore, a school must be legitimate first so that its MBA programs can be legitimate. In the case of French education system, the fact of obtaining the legitimacy status for the institution does not mean that its degrees are legally recognised and its programs can be freely operated. Hence, MBAs in France are special in the sense that they need to depend on both legal

organisations of higher education, professional bodies and quality evaluation agencies. Coercive pressures identify with a particular business school template, which is an assemblage of models, labels, practices and properties that can be used for adoption (normative isomorphism) or imitation (mimetic isomorphism) by other business schools, including MBA programs and their curriculum development (Wedlin, 2007)

Legitimacy and dependency on legal and standard bodies are not the only pressures that push organisation towards isomorphic changes. Uncertainty creates mimetic isomorphism where schools or programs will model itself after certain schools or programs it perceives to be successful, to avoid failures. French MBA programs have two models to follow, i) international successful MBAs, mainly made-in-USA or ii) French specialised master programs (Mastère Spécialisé) that earn strong credits in French management environment. US models in general and Harvard Business School (HBS) in particular become an evident symbol whenever discussing about business schools. HBS is arguably the best known and has become the model for many other schools in the US and around the world (Contardo and Wensley, 2004). In the French context of higher education, specialised master obtains an image of the degree for future elite managers (Basso et al, 2004).

The last type of isomorphic change is normative isomorphism, intuitively from professionalization processes that schools depend on. Professionalization exists in two main isomorphism affected aspects: level of reliance on academic credentials in management (academic professionalization or expert norms) and level of participation of management in professional associations (practical professionalization or professional norms). Regarding expert norms, Nguyen (2015) raises a question whether the triple-crown accreditations become expert norms for MBAs, as schools create a higher reliance on them in governing the program, choosing faculty, organising classes and students' activities. Accreditations do not only directly impact schools in their strategy and decisions with their standards and criteria. In some other way, they form professional norms that evoke higher education academic and business issues that schools' deans and MBA directors will think over with the school. MBA Round Tables, AMBA's Deans and Directors conferences, or in France different professional associations in a variety of domains

related to management, business and managers, are examples of professional norms that produce normative isomorphic changes to business schools in general and French ones in particular. While arguably become a professional norm, rankings increase in their role of forming practices, and forming organisations to become more alike, as they influence them to abide to some arbitrary standards (Wedlin, 2007; Wilson and Thomas, 2012). Rankings also provide signals for similarity (Porac and Thomas, 1990) as far as mimetic isomorphism is concerned.

When applying to the management education when academic credentials and quality bodies are confound, it is difficult to distinguish between coercive, mimetic and normative isomorphism. Datar et al (2010) confirm that in management education industry, “Powerful forces favour convergence and push curricula in common directions with:

- Institutions tend to mimic the leaders in their fields
- Accrediting groups impose standards
- Societal pressures and educational trends” (Datar et al, 2010, p.44)

Though MBA program is a homogeneous product offering to public since its creation, it is assumed to have recently a significant redevelopment and over discussion in curriculum issues, with similar agents and related issues. Consequently, we presume that:

The Conformity leads programs to imitate existing successful programs or adapt to regulators’ standards. MBA programs introduce, modify or adapt modules in their curricula mainly to follow conformity or regulators’ indications. (Greater strategic similarity increases legitimacy).

The Differentiation

Though MBA itself is a master degree – Master of Business Administration, the program and the degree is always considered distinguished from other master programs, thanks to its trademark – the MBA brand. With the increasing international competition, business schools have increasingly adopted a branding strategy for their MBA program as a means of differentiating their product from competing programs (Gopalan, Pagiavlas and Jones, 2008, p372). Having a recognizable and strong brand becomes even more critical for

business schools, providing either their special characters of education (Engwall, 2007) or intangibility and difficulty in assessing their perceived value without any means to examine the program before engaging in consumption (Jevons, 2006; Nicholls et al 1995), or finally just in order to takes advantage from differentiating to be less confronted with the competition (Barney, 1991).

Furthermore, according to Antunes and Thomas (2007), branding and reputation orderings are among the highest level of differentiation. The differentiation can be in various resources: institutional and national differences that could be shaped by factors such as language, culture, regulation, standardization and size; competitive differences as recipes. They include factors such as governance, funding and endowment, international mindset, innovation, knowledge transmission and corporate links. The final level, reputation orderings is linked with social capital differences such as rankings and reputation and brand loyalty factors. Branding becomes one of the tools of differentiation and effective positioning for business schools in this highly competitive market. Branding MBA programs in addition becomes a strategic managerial issue for universities and business schools. Branding is perceived differently from different stakeholders and it is about delivering on different desired outcomes. The branding and positioning program offerings on the basis of which stakeholders' group and which sought outcomes in the education market are illustrated in different studies on MBA programs (Argenti, 2000; Gopalan, Stills and Herring, 2006, Roper and Davies 2007; Gopalan Pagiavlas and Jones, 2008).

The needs to strengthen reputation and build up the school brand are in order to secure its long term competitive position. However, branding of business school, according to Hawawini (2005), is partly supported by its faculty, programs and the visibility and success of its alumni. It is firstly assumed by following accreditations from multiple agencies (Gopalan, Stills and Herring, 2006), by effects of hundreds of ranking scales of business schools that effect admission and placements (Argenti, 2000). Once these first branding activities are assured with regulation and reputation mechanisms, business schools look for other brand attributes created from natural to internal resources such as faculty and student body diversity, multicultural attributes, internationalization or localization by

continent or country or city, and innovative curriculum development with different specializations, international or exchange programs.

Their strategic management consequently focuses more on the internal environment rather than the external environment in order to cope with competitive marketplace and look for a growth. However, while looking for a growth, an expansion of scope, scale and market is a regular logic. Going international and being globalize is what the modern world is pacing. Companies and organisations are forced to follow this evolution if they do want to rest competitive, so are business schools. Internationalization, as a form of strategic alliances, is increasing its affection to almost business schools in the scope of our researches in recent years. Through strategic alliances, business schools can also enrich their internal environment with alliances' resources. Schools redesign their program in link with globalization and multicultural concepts. Examples could be a lot of schools launch its campus overseas and increase the multi-national campus network. Business schools look for modelling their programs in alliances in the international scope and scales. International scope and scales in management education could be considered cross border or transnational collaborations in education. These include, but are not limited to, new campuses overseas, faculty and student exchange programs, study abroad opportunities, joint research ventures, international degree offerings, distance education and partnership agreements, student scholar, and staff mobility and exchange, open communication systems and outputs like distance learning websites, research information, knowledge-sharing through research and partnerships, international programs and curricula. However, the most common and expense-free concept in internationalization and strategic alliances in management education is joining exchange programs. This concept is applied and multiplied rapidly in the late 2000s, with exchange of students, visiting lecturers, study trips or international experimental semester, etc. Exchanges or joint programs in several campuses globally are done in different scopes, and here we could see that top ranking schools could have easier privilege to connect to other schools or programs in different destinations thanks to their top positions. Nonetheless, MBA programs and business schools with less prestige reputations of ranking or accreditations could also differentiate their programs in adding in the curriculum short study trips or summer semesters in other business schools in the world,

in attracting other schools' students to their schools in exchange with their students for a semester. Study trips bring the same contribution as the exchange periods; that contribute to the implementation of a multicultural environment and to the focus on future global business opportunities. MBA programs have now focused on another concept of global business, or should it be called "glocal" concepts. On one side, they enrich students' multicultural environment competences, on another side; they equip students with a strong local understanding. The home culture oriented mind helps them differentiate their students with those in other countries in the world where all students are mobilized globally. It is difficult to measure whether those stated concepts are their real value added or to some extent, not to say a large extent is for marketing, for differentiate their products.

Besides globalization and multicultural concepts, business schools try to make their MBA curriculum distinguished with a variety of electives, majors, specializations, concentrations or minors aside from traditional MBA core courses. For example, 57 percent of US MBA programs allow students to pursue a specialization/concentration (Herrington, 2010). The resources for those electives or majors come from the richness of faculty's academic domains, the specific business or industrial strength of the location or particular partnerships between a school and a vocational body. Although Gupta et al (2007) finds a disconnection between what employers suppose to want and what business offers as specializations, we figure out a plentiful of MBA degrees with a variety of focuses, such as on Leadership, Entrepreneurship, E-Commerce, Human Resources, Fashion Business, Maritime Business, Wine Business, etc. or even an MBA on Educational Leadership and Administration.

Based on those examples and arguments, our proposition is:

Only when a sufficient degree of conformity is secured, MBA programs use their own resources and capacities to differentiate the contents of modules (Differentiation increases competitiveness)

The Balanced strategic position

There are two sides of the branding strategy that business schools are following: to assume the conformity, business schools follow the rules of regulations; and to assure the differentiation, they play the games of reputations. Nevertheless, reputations are associated a lot with regulation mechanisms, with ranking as a first to be mentioned. Ranking mechanisms promote and codify a template for business schools, which is used by business schools to create and sustain identities and provide identification internationally, therefore turn out to be a regulated organisation besides accreditation bodies. “The codification provided by the rankings is specific enough to secure the similarity required to recognize organisations as belonging together, while being sufficiently abstract and ambiguous to leave room for local variations and difference within the field” (Wedlin, 2007, p.36). Moreover, rankings have more effect on admissions, placement, hiring and treating faculty of business schools than any other single variable (Argenti, 2000). Business schools, with this example of rankings, cope with both conformity and differentiation strategies to develop their programs.

In fact, Business school deans face complex decisions in terms of marketing and branding. Uncertain about what is important for the brand, their students or other stakeholders, they “grasp at less-than-differentiating value propositions” (Jevons, 2006) and depend on collective actors to conform and differ their development strategy. They are not only distinguished by very specific duties regulations but they are built from different logics as well. The composition of these chosen regulations and different logics does not happen by itself and the competitive performance can be taken for granted or obtained automatically. (Reynaud and Reynaud, 1996)

At first glance, the conformity and differentiation strategies are contradictory. To conform, a business school’s brand fulfils the classic function that brands do for all offerings to which they are attached (Pitt et al, 2006), which means that the business schools enter in a similarity logic. Gopalan et al’s develop an opposite differentiate logic where a well known brand enables a business school to focus its promotional efforts and differentiate offerings from competitive schools (Gopalan et al, 2008). At a closer look, it is a virtuous cycle because a well known brand name before becoming well known must be a recognized and legitimate brand name first. The more a school is recognized, the

more the school is legitimate, the more it can differentiate offerings from competing schools, and the more its offerings can be copied from schools that search for legitimacy by similarity with that recognized school. Similarly to strategies in developing a program and a curriculum, in creating or modifying modules, providers need to look for both the legitimacy side of why they exist, and the differentiation side of how or which means they exist.

Tensions, complexity may explode between different stakeholders who may wish to differ and mutual needs of branding conformed to regulations (Roper and Davies, 2007), but in general it is the way we predict the movement of MBA programs:

MBA programs adapt their strategic management to the changes of new modules in order to achieve a strategically balanced position between conformity and differentiation (Greater legitimacy and competitiveness increase performance)

3. Enquiry

In this part we develop the detail approaches to set up enquiries to different stakeholders who are classified in last chapter as determinants of MBA curriculum development.

Enquiry to students

We start to develop the enquiry for the interviews with the survey to students. The scope of the research covers two cohorts of students in each case. We process the research with students in three steps. Firstly: an open-ended interview to students is made at the beginning of the year. Secondly, an observation dedicated to students' involvement in class is occurred throughout a module of business simulation where students are required to work in team and supposed to practice and develop their leadership skills through class activities. Thirdly, a discussion in focus groups is made during the observation period with regard to their survey answers and their modifications in direct discussion, taking into account that they might have changed their answers after a period of study at the MBA. These observations and discussions are considered at the same time longitudinal and

synchronous since notes are collected systematically within the period of observation and discussion, in comparison with their answers of the survey previously.

A survey was made with three open questions to reveal the motivations and reasons that bring students to an MBA:

1. Why do you want to do an MBA?
2. What are your criteria of choosing an MBA?
3. What MBA program that you are doing?

We believe that the open answers could reveal some of the particular characteristics and strengths of MBA programs in France, since among the groups of students of interests, there are not only French but foreign students coming specifically to France to study.

There are then two Yes/No questions on the effect of leadership courses:

1. Do you think you could learn (or have learnt) about leadership in your MBA program? If yes, in which course(s)?
2. Do you think enterprises look for leadership when they recruit employees?

These questions are to justify the needs of revisiting MBA programs with leadership theme as it is developed in the literature, in the point of view of main demanders.

The last question of “How do you understand about leadership?” is to justify the link between their knowledge and understanding of leadership and those of their instructors of leadership courses, providing that there are so many non-consistent definitions of leadership described in the literature.

The students being surveyed were grouped in group interviews at a latter moment of the year in order to see if they have changes their motivations and / or their regards on leadership courses and leadership theme. The group interviews were made in around only fifteen minutes, normally in the break of their simulation class, so we just communicated essential changes.

Enquiry to professors or instructors teaching courses related to Leadership

The primary issue is to define courses related to leadership in an MBA curriculum. The obvious first choice is those with the word “leadership” cited in the title. Glancing through MBA curricula, we could find easily courses dealing with leadership such as Innovation and Leadership, Leadership Excellence through Awareness and Practice LEAP, Leading Change, Leadership Across Cultures, Leading Innovation, Leadership Development, Leadership Seminars, etc. The second choice, as defined in the literature review, is courses in the group of Leadership, Human Capital Management, Interpersonal Skills or Personal and Managerial Behaviours’ soft skills. Examples of those courses are listed hereby that help us to search for contacts and interviews with teachers in the same field related to leadership. They are Organisational Behaviour, Negotiations, Team Dynamics, Personal Development, Change Management, Interpersonal Management, etc.

The second issue is to define the guidelines of questions in order to help us conducting interviews with professors, instructors and faculty involving in the teaching of courses related to leadership theme.

The interview guide starts with questions to understand the interviewee’s personal information. We are interested in instructors’ status as teacher for such module in the MBA program. The instructor will confirm whether they are permanent, temporary, visiting or vacancy professors for this course; and since how long. In the literature relating to Providers of Management Education in France, we listed the different roles and involvements of different types of professors and instructors. The teaching status of the interviewees could reveal the strategy of business schools in the faculty arrangement for MBA programs. It is also very interesting to see that instructors multiply their teaching of the same or different modules in different business schools with different teaching status, and their inter-business schools’ experience bring us the richness of narrative data in comparison of schools and programs without expanding the scope of the research.

The main part of the interview looks into the course itself with the following aspects regarding:

- Description of the course

- Value added / purpose of course in the program
- Position of the course in the curriculum
- Syllabus
- Provide or not the course at other programs? / other schools?
- If yes, see any differences or similarities between MBA programs (structure, organisation, curriculum, etc)
- If yes, see any differences or similarities between students in different programs

The recording of these interviews are completed with the syllabi of the courses to provide a detail picture of the course in relate to leadership theme.

With the focus on leadership theme, we need to study on their own understanding and development of leadership issues for the course and for the students and for the demand of the job market. We also focus on analysing the similarity and differences of notions in leadership between and among faculty and students in the same case of business schools.

We examine the issues by asking questions about:

- Own definition of leadership
- Any link between leadership and the course
- If yes, How to deliver leadership to students
- If yes, How to make sure the leadership is delivered and applicable to students
- If yes, How the enterprises need the leadership in their new recruits

Enquiry to providers, designers, direction and coordinators of MBA programs

Bearing in mind that this group of interviewees will provide more on the global vision of the curriculum than detailed issues of leadership theme like in the previous group of instructor, we create a guidelines of questions where the difference of concerns are mainly focused on their description of the MBA programs and their MBA program.

- Personal own description of your MBA program
 - o Program,
 - o Duration, types,
 - o Diploma recognition,
 - o Faculty,
 - o Colleague,
 - o Students, Alumni
 - o Environment,
 - o versus other MBAs
- Objectives of the program
- The program aims at which public?
- Any updates? Since? Why updates?
- Updates are at which status?
 - o Accepted?
 - o Launched?
 - o Experimental?
 - o Modified?
 - o Upgraded?

This open question about updates in their MBA program could bring us to a variety of information not only related to updates in curriculum but also in organisation, recruitment, endowment, profile or strategy of the program.

The other parts of questions are set similarly like in the interview guidelines for instructors, where at the beginning of the interview we ask for personal information and position in the MBA, or at the end for understanding of leadership theme

Personal information

- o Position & job description
- o Since how long?

The historical and professional evolution of each

Leadership theme

- Own definition of leadership
- Any link between leadership and the program
- Any link between leadership and MBA in general
- If yes, How to deliver leadership to students
- If yes, How to make sure the leadership is delivered and applicable to students
- If yes, How the enterprises need the leadership in their new recruits

In each interview, it makes sense for us to investigate interviewees' past experience and backgrounds. We try to link the answers of the interviewees, what he/she has done in the past and what he/she is really making as updates in their involvements of the current program. We believe that there is a strong connection between the previous experiences that nourish decisions for a number of updates happened in their current MBA curricula or programs.

Enquiry to members of accreditation or ranking bodies, or peer assessors for quality and accreditation

We apply the same set of questions where at the beginning of the interview we ask for personal information and position in the MBA, or at the end for understanding of leadership theme.

Personal information

- Position & job description
- Since how long?

In the question regarding Leadership theme, we spotlight the question whether leadership theme is among their criteria or among consideration issues in their assessment process.

Leadership theme

- Own definition of leadership
- Any link between leadership and the MBA

- Whether it is a criterion for regulation or not?
- If yes, How the enterprises need the leadership in their new recruits

Besides, we focus on exploring their roles as regulators in the reviewing MBA curriculum and program. We not only ask for their own definition of an MBA program, but we ask more on the criteria or assessment process as a regulator's point of view:

- Definition of MBA
- Regulation in which aspect?
- Criteria for regulation?
- Weights of criteria?

Enquiry to enterprises

A survey was made with semi-open online questionnaire to human resources department to ask for the company and the policy of recruiting employees, MBA graduates included. We use our contact with head hunters to address these questionnaires to human resources department of small and medium size enterprises, and use the contacts in the 2012's Directory of National Association of Human Resources Directors (ANDRH) to send questionnaires to big groups and large corporations.

In the questionnaire we zoom on the information about the company, including the size, the number of employees, number of MBA holders among their employees and the sector where they are operating.

The second part of the questionnaire investigate the recruitment issue

- Number of recruitment yearly
- Positions of recruitment
- Any recruitment of MBA holders
- If yes, what are the main criteria of recruiting MBAs?
- If yes, whether leadership is a criterion for recruitment or not?

Though the contacts of head hunters and the connection with enterprises are reliable, the rate of return of questionnaire is very low. We doubt that either they do not want to reveal much their recruitment policies; either they do not make difference in recruiting employees with MBA or other master degrees. We need to find other ways to find information about enterprises' needs and requirements on MBAs, or it could be a field of research for future studies.

4. Tools of research

As mentioned in the design of research, we divide the analysis of qualitative data into five steps and at each step, we apply different approaches to collect and analyse data.

Investigating the French MBA market

With the help of the literature review on the context of management and business education, we focus this step on collecting data on the French MBA market as well as a zoom on the two cases of CNAM and KEDGE for further secondary information. The data include but not limited to catalogues, brochures, public and online curricula and syllabi, official announcement, rankings and accreditations, faculty and curriculum modification, etc. For the general MBA market, we focus the collection of data by time and period or with relations to topics and variables such as: vision and strategy changes, curriculum changes, direction and faculty changes, leadership theme, academic assessments and demands. Meanwhile, for the cases, we focus the analysis on group and individuals depending on their group of stakeholders, defined in the previous chapter. As for the group of Providers, most of interviewees are Directors, Managers, key Professors and Coordinators of MBA programs. Those concerns in the groups of regulators are some exchanges with Peer assessors and Managers of accreditation organisations. Finally, interviews with the group of Demanders include MBA students and alumni.

Identifying the influential stakeholders

In order to identify the influential stakeholders, we categorize into four types of factors the data that we collect from secondary data or narrative interview and notes data. The four types of factors are:

1) The external factors, which could impact an MBA curriculum, include data collection from:

- The tendency of other schools, mostly reputed ones (literature and study with information in the domain)
- The accreditation and regulator's information (study and interviews with regulators)
- The ranking systems for business schools in France and branding's information, including national and international rankings and recognition (study on documents)
- Requirements of enterprises (literature and study with information from the industries)

2) The creators, who design, bring the concepts and contents to the curriculum. Data are collected from:

- Directors, Coordinators, Managers of the programs (individual interviews)
- Program, catalogue, brochure of program, report for accreditations (collection and study of information)

3) The academic approaches in the curriculum. This part includes the collection of data from:

- Study on curricula, with a selection on modules that relate to leadership theme (collection and study of information)
- Study on the syllabi of such modules (collection and study of information)
- Instructors or faculty who assure such modules (individual interviews)
- Participation in some modules (observations)

4) The demands from students

- Open-ended questionnaires to all students
- Group interview with selected students (in form of discussion and observations)

- Study on the alumni's activities (interviews and study with information from the alumni associations)

When interview approach is involved, semi-structured interviews were conducted; each interview lasts for around one hour and the questions mainly focus on the nature of their involvement in the MBA program and/or curriculum development. The interview responses were recorded with the interviewees' consent and the transcripts were used for coding analysis and direct illustrative quotes, as qualitative narrative responses. We also integrate conversations with deans of French business schools and universities, collected from an intense seminar about Management Education held by French Academy of Management in February 2015 as part of the data for the analysis, since we classify those sharing either in the first or second types of factors. We search for statements and expressions of that curriculum and courses that schools wish to modify, its reasons and its implementation, and use these pieces of information to construct simplified narratives of each case.

Identifying the key factors that influenced stakeholders in their decision

In order to identify the key factors of influence, we need to build a grid for data analysis where we categorize their answers with our preset categories, while fully attentive to find the themes or issues that recur in the data and become our emergent categories.

Some preset categories for the question of "who influences the changes in curriculum?" are:

- Influences of outside stakeholders, including subcategories that propositions come from:
 - Accreditation bodies
 - Ranking bodies
 - Industries' and enterprises' proposal
 - Requirements from other regulation bodies for example ministry of higher education, conference of grandes écoles, professional associations, etc,

- Inspiration from other schools' activities and curricula
- International and National special requests at a certain period of time
- Influences of inside stakeholders, including:
 - Dean's and Direction Board's suggestion
 - Nature, specialties and constraints of the school and program
 - Faculty's and instructors' specialization or initiative
 - Students' requests
 - Personal and professional experience of each stakeholders

Another set of preset categories for the questions of “What are your criteria of choosing an MBA?” are, for example:

- International exposure
- Content and knowledge
- Networking and contacts
- Diploma and educational level
- Status recognition

Within this preset, some sub-categories are set based on the selection of certain key words. For instance, all the answers of students with key words of “price”, “cost of programs”, “studying fees” or “less than XXX €” are interpreted in the same category of “Price of the program”. Elsewhere, answers with “brand of the program”, “words of mouth”, “reputation”, “ranking”, etc. are listed in the category of “Reputation of the program”. Those above are some examples of preset categories and sub-categories that we created at the beginning of our study (refer to the table III.1.2 Grid analysis for interpretation of Students' survey to quantity information). This initial list of categories is supposed to change as we work with the data and add others when they become apparent.

Comparing strategies of business schools on curriculum development

In this step, not only to data and observations in cases are explored, but primary and secondary data collected about the French MBA market are fully investigated to identify patterns, make connections and relationships between categories, subcategories and afterwards define cases. Generally, a table or matrix is developed to illustrate

relationships across the categories, but since we intend to focus on developing cases, we would rather make connections and sequences of categories within each case, leading to an inter-case comparison. Within each category, we capture similarities, and especially differences in people's responses, including the subtle variations to figure out the influences and the measure of such influences of stakeholders in the curriculum development of the case's MBA.

Drawing conclusions and proposing models of strategy and organisation in MBA programs

With the design of questionnaire and guides for interview, we would like to create several links from the analysis of narrative data including links:

- between trends of MBA new modules and their added values
- between designers' concept of leadership and the concepts that the curriculum develops
- between the different and less unified concepts of leadership and the academic methods that the curriculum selects
- between the objectives predefined for the MBA program and the values received after following the curriculum, in the regard of students
- between the objectives predefined for the MBA program and the values expected by enterprises and the job market

A highest achievement of this research is to be able to define models that business schools follow in their strategy of developing curriculum, where we could identify the determinants, their importance or their order of influencing the curriculum. We aim at this achievement but we also expect the worst situation when our data might not be qualified and general enough for the conclusions. The fact to bring data to life in the analysis and illustration of hypotheses and the development of cases on different MBA programs and curricula could make sense in our research. The least that we aim to achieve is that we try to make synthesis on what we might have found from the data and the cases, to contribute to the literature of this field a regard on French market of MBAs.

PART IV FINDINGS

CHAPTER 1

MBA PROGRAMS IN FRENCH CONTEXT

1. French Education system and the grade of Master

In France, the higher education system is formulated after the Baccalaureate, or equivalent DAEU (Diplôme d'accès aux études universitaires after 12 years of study). There exist different layers of diplomas which follow one after another. In order to harmonize the Bologna's new European education standard with the French ancient system of study for professional or academic purpose, the Ministry of Higher Education provides a table to capture all levels from BAC+ system and framework, the Bologna's Bachelor-Master-Doctorate, and the level of French professional certification called "RNCP title."

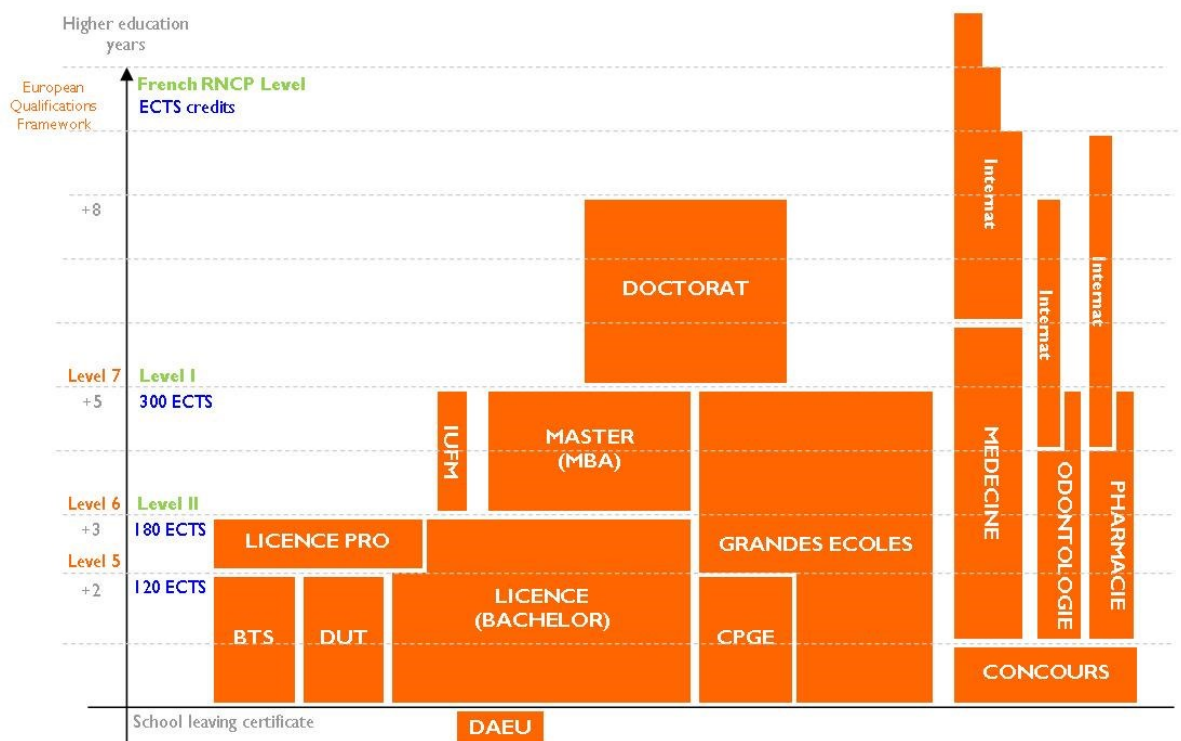


Figure IV.1.1. Higher Education systems in France

Source: French Ministry of Higher Education

In the university sector, there are four levels of diplomas:

- the DEUG (Diplôme d'Etude Universitaire Générale) and the DUT (Diplôme Universitaire Technologique), awarded after two years of study (Bac+2);
- the Licence, which is the Bachelor, achieved after three years of study (Bac+3)
- the Master, divided in Master 1 and Master 2, awarded after five years of study (Bac+5). The Master groups the ancient system of higher education with the Maîtrise (four years of study, equivalent to Master 1); the DEA (Diplôme d'Etudes Approfondies) and the DESS (Diplôme d'Etudes Supérieures Spécialisées, equivalent to Master 2). Besides, there is the standard teacher training, taking place in the Institutes to train teachers - IUFMs (Instituts Universitaires de Formations des Maîtres).
- the Doctorat, the highest level of study in the university sector, is awarded after a minimum of eight years of study. (Bac+8)

Most of the courses at university sector are open access, very few apply the selective procedure to candidates to enter the curriculum and look for their diplôme, except in schools of medicine, dentistry and pharmaceutical studies, where first-year students need to pass a “numerus clauses” entry exam to enter the second year.

In order to improve the quality and image of the degree, some of bachelor degrees, as well as all Masters and Doctoral degrees are selective, but much less rigorous and demanding than institutions classified as non-university sectors. Each type of institution has its own selective and exam procedures, from secondary school's grade to “numerus clauses” exam. The non-university sector in France covers mainly four types of institutions:

- Professional Technical Training Schools – STS (Sections de Techniciens Supérieurs), train students to obtain the technical certificates - BTS (Brevet de Technicien Supérieur) after two years of study (Bac+2)
- Special schools such as Architecture, Paramedical and Veterinary schools provide other degrees of various levels. (from Bac+2 to Bac+5)
- Preparatory High schools - CPGEs (Classes Préparatoires aux Grandes Ecoles), trains students for the grand examination of entrance in the elite system of Grande Ecole. Students finishing the training program of two years aim to enter the most

prestigious School of Engineers or School of Business in order to obtain the final degree. Hence after finishing the preparatory high schools, students do not obtain any diploma but their studies are equivalent to students having the technical certificates or universities degree after two years of study (Bac+2).

- Grandes Ecoles de Commerce (Elite Business and Management schools) and Grandes Ecoles d'Ingénieur (Elite Engineering schools) prepare and award a diploma called Grande Ecole's degree (Diplôme des Grandes Ecoles) or a Specialized Master (Mastère Spécialisé) after five years of study (Bac +5). For Elite Engineering schools, after the study students obtain the Engineer title as well. After the educational reform and the validation of Bologna's European agreement, those Grande Ecoles also open a system of European Master degree. The Master degree is still seen less prestigious than the diploma of Grande Ecole, due to the very selective procedure and examination in order to be able to enter the system of Grande Ecoles' Degrees (Abdessemed, 2005)²⁹

In France, there are four recognized grades, which are Baccalaureat, Bachelor, Master, and Doctorate. The Ministry of Higher Education recognizes the grade of Master to all programs leading to the master's degree or a different title of master level, but equivalent to five years of study after the Baccalaureate (Bac + 5). That is, the grade of master covers the Master 2 itself, the MBA, the Grande Ecoles' degrees, the Specialized Masters, the Engineer titles, the degrees of special schools in different domains.

2. French environment for MBA programs

2.1 MBA programs in France

Within this above mentioned system of higher education, MBA is grouped in the block of Master degrees, which is accessible for holders of a bachelor degree, a professional bachelor, a validation of professional acquisition for a technician certificate BTS (Brevet

²⁹ Abdessemed, T. (2005) .-Réinventer la légitimité du concept de Grande Ecole -Renouveler nos modèles pédagogiques pour faire face à la globalisation et à la professionnalisation du marché de la formation au management.

de Technicien Supérieur) or a technician degree from universities DUT (Diplôme Universitaire de Technologie). Except for INSEAD which became the first European and French school offering the MBA degree in 1957 (Kaplan, 2014), French schools introduced MBA recently into their list of postgraduate degrees in management. The educational environment and job market still pay high appreciation to the degrees of Grande Ecoles or Mastere Spécialisés, due to a very selective entrance exam and the prestige of such Schools that become a myth. According to the PhD dissertation of de Fournas (2007), the history, the organisation with entrance examination, and the development of Grande Ecoles of Management and Business follow those of Grand Ecoles in Engineering, become a myth of Grande Ecoles in a French way (le mythe de la Grande Ecole à la française)³⁰. The attentions to MBA degrees are classified privileged than those two Master degrees because of the selection criterion based on the professional experience of candidates, and the international influence of this degree. The main selective criterion to be able to enter MBA depends on candidates' professional experience. However, there are many ways of organizing MBAs for the candidates with experience or not. Therefore, it brings the ambiguity to this degree. The programs judged to provide serious MBA degrees are those who select and require a minimum 3 years of working experience from candidates. While collecting primary data on MBA programs available in France, we could find around 130 MBA offers in France, mainly by 50 schools of all types from universities, IAEs, Grand Ecoles of Business, Grand Ecoles of Engineers, Foreign Schools, Enterprise Schools. MBA is the only program that is systematically taught in English without any problem of recognition of degree according to the Toubon law that higher education in France must be taught in French language. Besides the English language, about one third of French business schools offer also MBA programs in French language, such as programs at EDHEC Business School, Audencia Nantes School of Management, Paris Dauphine University, Paris School of Business, ESCEM in Tours, La Rochelle Business School, Reims Management School, Montpellier Sup de Co Group, Institut Français de la Mode IFM, IPAC France, Group ESC Clément, Horizon University, etc. With a young growth of management education, yet a strong expansion of the business of business schools and MBA opening,

30 de Fournas, P. (2007). Quelle identité pour les grandes écoles de commerce françaises?(HEC, ESSEC, ESCP) (Doctoral dissertation, Thèse de doctorat en sciences de gestion, Ecole Polytechnique, Paris, France).

France has become more and more visible in the international management education scope. On one hand, more and more French schools obtain the international certificate of quality for their MBA, via the Association of MBA accreditation award. According to the list of schools that earned the AMBA accreditations for their MBA programs³¹, France becomes the third country with 21 schools obtaining the accreditation, just after the UK with 45 schools and China with 22 schools. On the other hand, more French MBAs climb up in the top 100 global MBA rankings of certain world famous newspapers such as Financial Times³², with names of INSEAD, HEC, ESCP, EM Lyon, EDHEC, etc. Other schools outside the Financial Times list find different ways to position themselves in the recognition and branding their images for their MBAs from international accreditations, to well known Grande Schools system in France or international partners with famous business schools.

The MBA Programs in France can be classified into different types, from rhythms of study: Full time, Part time, distanced learning, blended learning, to academic approaches of study: Specialized MBA, Executive MBA, Global MBA, European MBA, and MBA by modules. It provides a picture of variety of MBAs in France for candidates to choose. For example, The group ESG - Paris School of Business offers 36 different programs of Specialized MBA in different domains.³³ With so many choices on the French MBA market, educational and professional guidelines and researchers create intentions to guide candidates to a much selective group of “elite MBA programs”, defined by the myth of total quality as per de Fournas (2007)³⁴, called Triple Crown accreditations³⁵.

³¹ Information retrieved from the official website of AMBA in Juin 2016 <http://www.mbaworld.com/>

³² Information retrieved from the official website of Financial Times, accessed in Juin 2016 at <http://rankings.ft.com/businessschoolrankings/>

³³ Information retrieved from the official website of the group, accessed in Juin 2016 at <http://www.mba-esg.com/formations-mba>

³⁴ de Fournas, P. (2007). *Quelle identité pour les grandes écoles de commerce françaises?* (HEC, ESSEC, ESCP) (Doctoral dissertation, Thèse de doctorat en sciences de gestion, Ecole Polytechnique, Paris, France).

³⁵ The three accreditations called the triple-crown are AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, EQUIS (European Quality Improvement System) and AMBA (Association of MBAs)

2.2 Triple Crown schools in France

Together with the United Kingdom, France turns out to be the countries with the highest number of triple-accredited schools (17 UK schools and 12 French schools)³⁶. One inevitable advantage of the triple-crown image is the smooth progress of recruiting international students, while European accreditations AMBA and EQUIS criteria require internationalization standard. Such schools also gain in internationalization of academic visits, lecturers and placements with overseas institutions and enterprises (Tony Gibbs, Oxford Brookes University). Benchmarking or quality improvement is not stated as the essential benefit of having triple crowned accreditation owners. Gibbs is not a single voice on the recruitment and reputation benefits of the triple accreditation. Short individual interviews were done on the importance and value added of acquiring numerous accreditations. Three staffs working for international department of business schools participated in the interviews: Dorine Lebreton, Head of International Development of Toulouse Business school (triple accreditations); Junko Adachi, head of representative office of HEC Paris in Japan for Asia zone (triple accreditations) and Gilles Lespade, Pedagogical Director of INSEEC Business School (double accreditations of AACSB, EQUIS). Only Toulouse Business School states the value for benchmarking, organisational review, management and personal organisation strengthening. Far from mentioning the other values of each and all accreditations equipped for HEC, the staff of HEC Paris in Japan even could not distinguish the difference between the three accreditations. INSEEC highlights a link between the school's fact of internationally accredited and the improvement of professional network for students' internships. Nonetheless, all the three interviewees agree on two points. Firstly, accreditations improve their images as high quality schools for recruitment internationally. Toulouse Business School and INSEEC emphasize that accreditations could work as quality reputation certification differently in different countries. For example, Toulouse Business School acknowledges that in China, being a triple-crown school helps a lot in establishing a good image and value of elite schools since students know well about the accreditation markets. Meanwhile, in Japan none of its candidates cares about a school being accredited by one, two or three kinds. Secondly, all

³⁶ List of triple crown accredited schools is found in the annex of Nguyen, T. T. T. (2015), *La triple couronne de l'accréditation, est-elle une norme pour les MBAs d'élites? Analyse critique de l'expertise et des normes : théorie et pratique*, l'Harmattan, 215-234

the interviewees would like their schools to focus more on ranking application for recruitment push-up. Certainly, the application market is still US oriented and is familiar with rankings' criteria; international minded and performance criteria are not strong enough to ignore the salary, career and alumni network criteria. That is confirmed by the conclusion of GMAC MBA Prospective Students Survey, where students choose destinations to study based on four criteria: attractiveness of the location, better preparation for a career, chance at an international career and country's education system. The United States remains the most popular global study destination, followed by other Anglophone countries like the United Kingdom Singapore and Australia.

3. Tendencies of MBA programs in France

The results of our preliminary research have shown the trends of MBA programs within a period of 10 years from 2000 to 2010, which is identical to the remarks of the Graduate Management Admission Council in 2010 about the trends of MBA programs toward shorter programs, toward program diversity and toward internationalization. Programs are moved from a classic two-year full time model into a shorter and flexible design, with diversity directions either in contents, topics, specializations or cultural focuses. Internationalization and business multicultural awareness are applied systematically in every program. In France, we notice the two main trends of MBA programs, which are a tendency of internationalization by all means and a tendency of merger and acquisitions to form groups of alliances in the industry of management education.

3.1. A tendency of internationalization

The dominance of US business schools is confirmed by the reputation and ranking of US schools and number of MBA programs to the global market. While the highlight product of American business school is the MBA, in France the degrees of Grande Ecole or the Mastere Spécialisé is more well-known, following up by the Master's degree of Science in Management. In order to find its recognition and position in the management education system, MBAs reach their recognition and influence scope towards international zones.

The tendency towards international management education programs could be recapped with four motivations which are legitimacy with globalization trend, competitive advantages, financial issues and intangible assets.

Regarding the globalization trend, intangible assets and looking at the purpose of an MBA, we could say in another word that an MBA is linked systematically to the demand of the business and professional world. Hence an MBA curriculum should be designed to correspond to the demand of future organisations or follow the tendency of professional orientation. The tendency, no doubt is the demand for leaders to lead organisations and companies towards improvement, growth, benefits. International experience and education no longer are value-added qualities but, rather, are prerequisites for success in the global marketplace. Cultural awareness and cultural knowledge are crucial to being successful in global business, which is why international degree programs are perfect for the development of these intangible assets.

While looking for growth, an expansion of scope, scale and market is an expected logic. Going international and being global is what the modern world is experimenting. Companies and organisations are forced to follow this evolution if they do want to stay competitive. Business schools are in the same axe of development by two reasons. Firstly, their students are trained to take part in that evolution after a short period of training. Secondly, business schools themselves need to survive, to grow and to generate benefit, thus need to be competitive themselves. Globalization becomes an ultimate stage in the competitive process of business education (Abdessemed, 2007)³⁷ All MBA programs head to exchange programs, international seminars and visits, or open campuses and curricula outside France to increase the international exchange and networks of MBA students. Since 1992, international expansion in management education was already considered a trend. Like the management consultants that many of their graduates become, business schools are highly susceptible to trends. One of the latest ideas to capture the imagination of the MBA is to go international. Organizing seminars or sending students overseas or receiving students from overseas are indispensable activities of any MBA programs, not

³⁷ Abdessemed, T. (2007). Le modèle «grande école» dans la compétition mondiale. *Revue française de gestion*, (9), 157-172.

only in France but also in general, as a legitimacy of existence to any business program. However, ESCP is seen as the first school to implement a multi-campus strategy to students that creates a new identity to international French business schools and opens a trend to the others to follow (de Fornass, 2007)³⁸. The pioneer of this trend is credited to INSEAD with its campuses in Fontainebleau and Singapore, and ESCP who opened its campuses in Paris, London, Madrid and Berlin from 1973 to 1988. However, the phenomenon is multiplied only in the 2000s with French business schools opening sites in Asia, notably in China, such as Euromed Management School of Marseille, Ceram Business School of Sophia Antipolis, EM Lyon in Suzhou, Shanghai, or currently ICN Business School has established its campus in Chengdu, China in 2014. Though ESCP continues to open its other sites in Torino, Warsaw, it loses its advantages of multi-sites in Europe, as other schools create now multi-sites in the world. Examples are SKEMA with its multi-campus structure in Paris, Lille, Sophia Antipolis (France), Suzhou (China), Raleigh (USA), and Belo Horizonte (Brazil); or Toulouse Business School with its campuses in Toulouse, Barcelona and Cassablanca; or EDHEC with campuses in Lille, Nice, Paris, London and Singapore³⁹.

Competitive advantages are also the point of reflection for MBA programs to differentiate their product with cooperation and development with different international partners. In an era in which many higher education institutions and their components are becoming so similar, international programs are refreshingly unique. Each institution's curricular and co-curricular standards, their distinctive relationships with others, and the pathways in which those relationships were developed, make that shared program like no other. (Holly, 2010)⁴⁰. Some might see the trend as a response to the business's overcrowding at a time of recession in many of its markets. It is obvious that each school and program needs to find their own way to exist, with the high competition of growing industry. Not all schools could have enough resources to afford and follow the model of multi-campus structure, but they aim at a more solid structure to develop international programs rather than

³⁸ de Fournas, P. (2007). Quelle identité pour les grandes écoles de commerce françaises?(HEC, ESSEC, ESCP) (Doctoral dissertation, Thèse de doctorat en sciences de gestion, Ecole Polytechnique, Paris, France).

³⁹ Les implantations des établissements français d'enseignement supérieur à l'étranger – Les brèves de Campus France – n° 2 – February 2016

⁴⁰ Holly, L. N. (2010). Strategies for planning for the future. *New Directions for Higher Education*, 2010(150), 109-116.

exchanges or international visits and seminars. Dual degree and joint MBA programs are one of such solid models, where students obtain two or more degrees at the level of Master. Normally, this structure is an alliance of two or several business schools that accept exchange students to earn and validate their credits in the exchange period, in order to achieve two to more degrees, with an MBA and a Master degree either accredited by the regions, either specialized with other competences rather than general management. Examples are the global TRIUM executive MBA between HEC Paris School of Management (HEC Paris) ; The London School of Economics & Political Science (LSE), and New York University Stern School of Business (NYU Stern); the EuroMBA is a joint degree that take each specialized domain of each partner schools of Aix-Marseille Graduate School of Management (France), Audencia Nantes School of Management (France), EADA Business School Barcelona (Spain), HHL Leipzig Graduate School of Management (Germany), Kozminski University (Warsaw, Poland) and Maastricht University School of Business and Economics (the Netherlands); Dual MBA degree between INSEEC in Paris and London and Swiss School of Management, or simple dual degrees of MBA/MIB between Clemson University and the IÉSEG School of Management, or MBA/Master in Management of Grenoble Ecole de Management with a list of 21 schools in Canada, USA, China and European countries. The business model of dual degree structure does not only create a globalization image, a competitive advantage for international degrees but also a strong alliance in the industry of management education, where schools choose their counterparts to increase their international and academic recognition.

In terms of financial issues, a school depends much on the choice of a particular economic model and their revenue provided by executive education activities, notably MBAs. The difference in model of operation that business schools choose, to a certain extent, is the choice of financing the schools and programs. While Great Britain and the United States choice of a particular economic model that relies on alumni donations and revenue provided by executive education activities, other countries like Germany or France choose the predominance of public university programs or coexistence of tuition-paying consular

schools and public university programs. (Basso, Dornier, & Mounier, 2011)⁴¹. With the internationalization trend, not only French business schools learn to apply the fund raising and donation collection as per the US economic model, but they could justify as well the raise of tuition fees with the scope of international travels and overseas studying. The domination of US business school confirms by the reputation and ranking of US schools. Hence, US schools are at good position to apply much higher tuition fees, to recruit and pay well their professors, to provide better conditions for research projects, and knowledge transfer. It is also the same business model of French business schools, to enter the cycle of activities from obtaining reputation and ranking, raising tuition fees, recruiting and paying international professors, etc. Within the higher education system in France, there is a clear separation between almost-free tuition fees for a Master degree (from 1000 to 10000 euros for a Master program) and the prestige and high tuition fees of Grande Ecole's degree and Specialized Master for elite and bourgeois niche (between 25000 to 40000 euros for a Grande Ecole's degree in business and management). The MBA, with target public of several years of working experience and savings, with its international activities and recognition, has no problem of legitimacy or economic questions to recruit students with very high tuition fees from 30000 to 60000 euros, which is also the standard price of international MBA programs in Europe and USA.

3.2. A tendency of Mergers and Acquisitions (M&As)

In France, a number of mergers and acquisitions were recently implemented among business schools. On the one hand, international competition in higher education has increased; on the other hand the French government desires to bring together French educational and research establishments (universities, Grande Ecoles, research laboratories, etc.). This study will use three newly created French Business Schools: 1) SKEMA, 2) KEDGE and 3) NEOMA in a case study in order to analyze statements related to these mergers and acquisitions made by deans from these schools and their merged MBA programs. They are among the first mergers and acquisitions of business schools in France,

⁴¹ Basso, O., Dornier, P. P., & Mounier, J. P. (2011). 8. Evaluating management education and business schools in context. *Redesigning Management Education and Research: Challenging Proposals from European Scholars*, 155-170.

which lead to a tendency of other schools from very well-known ones like ESCP Europe and NOVANCIA (potentially), or less known business schools from the cities of Tours, Poitiers, Orléans (ESCEM), Amiens, Clermont and Bretagne Brest that formed FBS (France Business School). The three cases of SKEMA, KEDGE and NEOMA could be more concrete to analyse the fusion of MBA programs.

In the case of the merger of CERAM Business School and Group ESC Lille to become SKEMA business school, the stated objective was to create clusters large enough and with sufficient resources to be competitive at an international level.⁴² In the merger of Bordeaux Management School (BEM) and Marseille-based Euromed Management School, to create KEDGE Business School, the stated objective was new modes of teaching and personal development, connecting and strengthening its global community network and promoting responsible management practices⁴³. Finally, in the recent merger of Rouen Business School and Reims Management School to form NEOMA business school, the stated objective was to serve the interests of as many stakeholders as possible. It was stated by administrators that the new entity would leverage the skills and strengths that have made excellence the hallmark of both founding schools⁴⁴. However, the alliance of NEOMA in fact started four years before as a joint venture of the two schools for the continuous education and executive programs. “With the fact that the joint venture was successful, we discuss and see why don’t we go further and that’s why they are starting to talk about the merger, let’s make it as one school instead of a joint venture.”⁴⁵ A study of these mergers and acquisitions could reveal further objectives which reshape Porters’ five force competitive environmental model.

⁴² Extracted from the presentation of press conference of Skema – One world, One education on 30 June 2009 by Alice Guilhaon, Director of Ceram Business School and Jean Pierre Raman, General Director of Group ESC Lille, and the Financial Times interview with Alice Guilhaon on “Why business schools need to merge” – 14 September 2012

⁴³ Stated as the vision of KEDGE business school – a new business school model, available on its official website <http://www.kedgebs.com/>

⁴⁴ Retrieved from the announcement of Rouen Business schools and Reims Management school of the merger on 24 April 2013 – recorded by Bloomberg Businessweek online, by Francesca Di Meglio 25 April 2013

⁴⁵ Retrieved from the individual interview with the Director of MBA of NEOMA business school, made on 29 January 2014

Revisiting M&As in French business schools and MBA programs using Porter's five forces⁴⁶ model and Nalebuff's value net⁴⁷ model

Business schools moved from a position of full rivalry towards a position of cooperation within certain niches. As demonstrated in the above analysis of Porters' five forces, reputation could be used as a thread of performance in each force in this industry of Management Education. Cooperation between schools creates a standard reputation for the cooperating schools which each force in the industry evolves with, instead of competing for the industry's benefits, merged schools share industry' benefits. Durand and Dameron (2008)⁴⁸ present Business school mergers as a means for schools, otherwise not able, to become international. Mergers also allow merged schools to enjoy increased visibility which accompany increased size and enhanced reputations, as well as building synergistic economies of scale. Bernard Belletante, the origin creator of KEDGE merging project, stated that "Schools are enterprises. They merge to be stronger and to improve their services. Instead of two communication services, now there is only one."⁴⁹

Engwall (2007)⁵⁰ also mentions the reciprocal relationships that former competitors enjoy and a widening influence between Management Education and other entities of society such as governments, media, professional associations and management consultancies. Therefore, when Management schools create alliances among top-ranked or multiple-accredited highly reputed business schools, these alliances can act as a barrier to new entrants. These barriers to new entrants may be manifested through the promotion of new identities: an identical MBA programs with triple accreditations (AMBA, EQUIS, AACSB) culminating in top European rankings. The Director of MBA NEOMA confirmed that it is presently the only triple accredited one-year MBA in central Paris⁵¹. Recently at

⁴⁶ Porter, M.E. (1980), 'Competitive Strategy, Techniques for analysing industries and competitors.' Chapter 1: The Structural Analysis of Industries, New York: Free Press, pp.3-33.

⁴⁷ Nalebuff, B.J., Brandenburger, A. and Maulana, A. (1996), 'Co-opetition'. London: Harper Collins Business.

⁴⁸ Durand, T., & Dameron, S. (2008), The future of Business schools, Scenarios and strategies for 2020, Palgrave-MacMillan, Houndmills (UK) and New York (USA).

⁴⁹ Les Echos (Ecoles de commerce : la fusion à tout prix ? – par Théa Ollivier 9/6/2016)

⁵⁰ Engwall, L. (2007). The anatomy of management education. Scandinavian Journal of Management, 23(1), 4-35.

⁵¹ Extracted from first page of catalogue and website of NEOMA Full time MBA (<http://www.executive-neoma-bs.com/>) and from individual interview with Professor Raymond Ouellet, Director of NEOMA full time MBA

SKEMA, the school's headlines stated that five years after its founding that it has obtained its EQUIS accreditation renewal joining a small circle of fully EQUIS accredited schools, of which eight exist in France and only sixty nine throughout the world⁵². *"Once we do not have the accreditation, we look forward to it but once we have it, we are obliged to align with it."*⁵³ The director of MBA at KEDGE also emphasised its triple accreditation program stating, *"I am particularly proud of what we have achieved with our Global MBA program, which is now ranked #43 (and 3rd in France) among the Top 100 Executive MBAs worldwide by the Financial Times! I am proud of the fact that our institution is one of the 0.5% of Business Schools worldwide holding 'triple-crown' accreditation."*⁵⁴

Regarding substitutes' powers, Datar et al (2010)⁵⁵ find that business schools have modelled themselves increasingly after other academic disciplines in order to secure their foothold in the university. Some schools are capable of offering other types of MBA concentrations or a mixed program of management and technical skills as the market demands.

Accordingly, the evolution of the Management Education industry cannot be explained only by the pressures associated with substitute products. The opening of a myriad of choices of MBA concentrations and hybrids offered in different modalities, which utilize joint or exchange programs with overseas schools combined with the fusion among accredited schools, has created substitutes from within the industries own alliances eliminating substitutes from other industries.

The globalization of business also has an effect on how students choose a program. Applicants for business educations do not only emanate from one country or are at the same stage of professional life. The needs and characteristics of candidates are changing, multi-faceted and have a solid international dimension in their demands. It thus appears

⁵² Extracted from website of SKEMA business school (<http://www.skema.edu/>)

⁵³ Retrieved from the round table discussion of SKEMA's Dean Alice Guilhon, in the seminar "Is Management Education becoming a business?" ('L'enseignement supérieur de management devient-il un business?') held by French Academy of Management SFM, February 2015

⁵⁴ Extracted from first page of catalogue of KEDGE Full time MBA and from individual interview with Professor Michel Gutzatz, Director of KEDGE MBA

⁵⁵ Datar, S., Garvin, D., & Cullen, P. (2010). Rethinking the MBA: Business Education at a Crossroads, HBS Press – Anderson Center book review

that business schools have to cooperate for new exchange or joint programs in order to meet the demands of candidates and students either with international dimension or with multi-functional dimensions. All the three business schools (SKEMA, NEOMA, KEDGE) have kept their original campuses in their perspective cities in France, while founding new campuses in Paris – the capital of France, before adding international campuses (KEDGE: Shanghai in China, SKEMA: Suzhou in China, Raleigh in the U.S.) or creating study trips internationally to enrich their curricula with international and multi-functional dimensions. In order to explain more on the choice of locating a new campus in Paris, the director of NEOMA has confirmed: *“All the business and intra-training activities, which interact with companies and for companies, would happen in Paris, because Paris is the place where the companies mainly are.”*⁵⁶

In business schools, faculty plays an important reputation role as all reputation mechanisms (accreditation bodies, ranking systems) put high weight on the factor of qualified faculty. The qualifications and credibility of faculty is measured by the quality of their research and their publication of articles in leading journals, among other things. As a result of the cooperation among schools, faculties are utilized congruently, enriching the cooperative school's joint and merging resources, adding credence to their reputation's through an increased frequency of publication in leading journals. *“What NEOMA is benefiting from is a combination of the two faculties. And they are now becoming the rich and sharing resources of teaching the MBA and other programs for the school in all campuses. When we combine the schools, we jump into having almost ten thousand students at Neoma and over 160 faculties, so we just double the size thanks to the merger.”*⁵⁷

The fourth proposition formed from the above findings is that mergers and acquisitions in the Management Education industry have integrated cooperative benefits dissolving the effects of Porter's competitive forces within the industry.

⁵⁶ Retrieved from the individual interview with the Director of MBA of NEOMA business school the 29 January 2014

⁵⁷ Retrieved from the individual interview with the Director of MBA of NEOMA business school the 29 January 2014

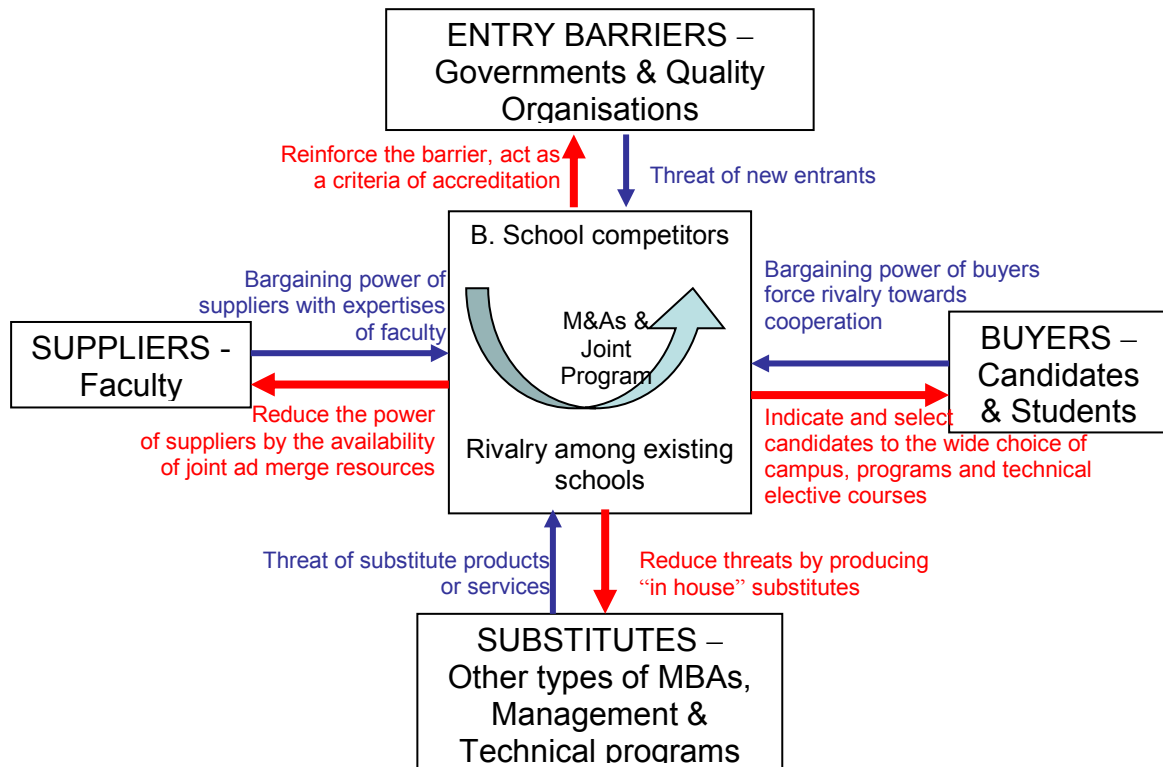


Figure IV.1.2: Porter's Structural analysis of Management Education Industry

Source: Porter M.E (1980), Nalebuff, Brandenburger, and Maulana (1996)

4. Internationalization, M&As and Alliances in MBA as one in numerous models for Management Education industry

"Management education is shaped by many variables, including the needs and preferences of consumers of business education; the knowledge, abilities, and skills employers expect graduates to possess; the choice of providers available to those interested in pursuing management degrees; and the resources business schools need to serve their customers." (Olian, 2002, p.6) ⁵⁸ This statement in the report of the Management Education Task Force to the AACSB - International demonstrates that it is not evident and easy to understand and explain the development of an education program, the reason of creation and implementation of different operations and strategies.

⁵⁸ Olian, J.D.(2002), 'Management education at risk', Report of the Management Education Task Force to the AACSB International Board of Directors, Tampa, FL: AACSB International

At the earlier stages of development, not all business schools merge and joint their management and business programs with other schools. Their strategic management focuses more on the internal environment rather than the external environment in order to cope with competitive marketplace and look for a growth. Business schools therefore search for forming strategic alliances by going international, with their own alliance designs based on their internal resources and specific variables. Thirdly, the tendency of internationalization and globalization in management education and business schools is supposed to be a key enabler of globalization in many other fields as students, managers to be, can lead in a global context in all organisations and domains, and are a critical resource for innovation and economic development (Lazuech, 1998)⁵⁹

Internationalization, as a form of strategic alliances, is increasing its impact on almost business schools in our research in recent years. Schools redesign their program in link with globalization and multicultural concepts. Examples could be a lot of schools launch its campus overseas and increasing the multi-national campus network. Business schools model their programs in alliances with the international scope and scales. International scope and scales in management education could be considered cross border or transnational collaborations in education. These include, but are not limited to, new campuses overseas, faculty and student exchange programs, study abroad opportunities, joint research ventures, international degree offerings, distance education and partnership agreements, student scholar, and staff mobility and exchange, open communication systems and outputs like distance learning websites, research information, knowledge-sharing through research and partnerships, and international programs and curricula.

However, the most common and expense-free concept in internationalization and strategic alliances in management education is exchange programs. This concept is applied and multiplied rapidly in the late 2000s, with exchange of students, visiting lecturers or study trips or international experimental semester, etc. Exchanges are done in different scopes, and here we could see that top ranking schools could have easier privilege to connect to other schools or programs in different destinations. Nonetheless,

⁵⁹ Lazuech, G (1998), Le processus d'internationalisation des grandes écoles françaises, Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales, 121 (1), 66-76

MBA programs and business schools with less prestigious reputations of ranking or accreditations could find their ways in sending students for short study trips or summer semesters in other business schools in the world, in attracting other schools' students to their schools in exchange for their students for a semester. Those study trips bring the same contribution as the exchange periods; that contribute to the implementation of a multicultural environment and to the focus on future global business opportunities. MBA programs have now focused on another concept of global business, or should it be called "glocal" concepts. On one side, they enrich students' multicultural environment competences, on another side; they equip students with a strong local understanding. The home culture oriented mind helps them differentiate their students with those in other countries in the world where all students are mobilized globally. As a counter argument, Nicolas Mottis accused the system of sending students to exchange programs is the nonsense ("n'importe quoi") activity, because there is no real control of evaluation, gain in academic and follow up from the schools for the exchange courses⁶⁰. It is therefore difficult to measure whether those stated concepts are their real value added or to some extent, not to say a large extent is for marketing.

Schools are no longer competitors but partners in order to bring students more choices to get some different perspectives and culturally rich, globally oriented experience and to bring employers more globalize competent graduates. (Bruner and Iannarelli, 2011)⁶¹. Strategic alliances between business schools and programs therefore are becoming a model leading to competitive success in fast-changing global market. Besides, alliances and partners create a synergistic cooperation to overcome competitive advantages in the industry of Management Education, with educational values from specific academic governance, knowledge management and transfer, scientific and academic models of creating the content of a program as well as implementing it. In another word, a synergistic competitive advantage is driven by the cooperation inside the industry itself. Instead of being threatened and bargained by the forces such as those in the Porter's

⁶⁰ Retrieved from the round table discussion of ESSEC's Director Nicolas Mottis, in the seminar "Is Management Education becoming a business?" ('L'enseignement supérieur de management devient-il un business?') held by French Academy of Management SFM, February 2015

⁶¹ Bruner, R.F. and Iannarelli, J. (2011). 'Globalization of management education', Journal of Teaching in International Business, Vol.22, No.4, pp.232-242

model, the industry of management education challenges the forces with its cooperative programs.

Looking separately at Porter's (1980) five forces cannot bring the whole picture of the competitive strategies driving the Management Education industry forward. Analysing each force could help a firm to position itself in the industry, but could not have the structural analysis of the industry, which is the aim of Porter's five forces model. Hence, the links and influences between these five forces are more interesting and complete when relating a firm, in this case a business school, to its environment.

From the four propositions of this paper, some specifics in the strategic management of the Management Education industry are highlighted. (1) Government policy and quality organisations are the main forces to maintain the barriers to the new entrances. (2) The rivalry of the industry forces business schools to produce their own substitutes with different programs, or with joint programs made by merging and cooperating entities among existing schools. (3) The alliance trend of joint and merged programs creates new direction in the industry and changes its interaction and interdependency towards the other forces. With such self-generated substitutes, schools reduce the threat of substitutes and raise the barriers of entrants. It is easier to make a merging network as it has fewer barriers to entry and new standards which are applied as alliance's codes of conduct to all partners. (4) Since suppliers are both insiders' and outsiders' resources, schools reduce eventually the power of suppliers by enriching their merged faculty resources, forcing them towards updated and substitute programs and using them to enforce the quality of the product as a requirement of quality barriers and attract buyers. (5) Schools also indicate to buyers- candidates and students, that the distribution channels could be far-reaching, and hence reduces the pressure on schools. In parallel, candidates are highly selected to join the program and design their own programs in different destinations, or with different technical electives that better suit them or prepare them for future positions.

Given this perspective, Porter's five forces driving the industry of competition has been diffused by Business Management schools, replaced with programs that are driven by

cooperation inside the industry. The strategic alliances which are formed in some industries such as airlines, banking, services and utilities have also been reformed in Management Education. Management Education is proved to be included in these specific industries. Instead of being threatened and shaped by the Porter's forces (1980), the industry of Management Education mitigated the forces with its cooperative programs.

PART IV FINDINGS

CHAPTER 2

CASE of CNAM – OVERVIEW LEADERSHIP

1. The CNAM's MBA

1.1. Introduction of the school

The Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers (the CNAM) was created at the beginning of the Industrial Age and in the throes of the French revolution. As the National Convention (1792-1795) replaced the monarchy with a social democracy of common workers, machines were changing the socioeconomics and geopolitics of Europe. On 10 October 1794 the Convention enacted a law to educate workers in these emerging technologies and founded the CNAM with the mission to “Improve the nation’s industry, cultivate engineering methods, teach widely and illuminate ignorance” (according to its founder Henri Baptiste Abbé Grégoire). The Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers could be then translated into English as the National Institute for Science, Technology, Arts and other Professions.

Supported financially by the public, the CNAM started to implement the missions on 10 June 1798 when it was physically installed in the ancient chapel of Saint Martin des Champs. Machines were installed in these premises for exposition, for learning, for reverse engineering, and for innovation. The CNAM experienced immediate success when artists, artisans, technicians, businessmen and future inventors came to the Chapel to learn about new developments in textiles, ceramics, mechanic construction, applied chemistry, physics and further techniques and knowledge. CNAM maybe seen as the equivalent of British “Open University” in France, and its unique position in French education could be seen as a State-owned higher education institution focusing on life-long learning and professional development, which no other university or grandes ecoles in France could compare to.

The CNAM has been entrusted with three missions, which are to offer life-long education for adults, to undertake focused research and innovation projects, and to disseminate scientific and technological knowledge. From 2013, the CNAM has confirmed its three strategic objectives and set a fourth one, which are: 1) to support professional and social promotion; 2) to accompany and promote business competitiveness; 3) to participate in local economic development; and 4) to accelerate digital learning. CNAM does not want to be seen uniquely as an institution providing technical and technological knowledge, but it broadens its academic influence into business, economic and social domains as well.

Theoretical subjects were added in the 1820's: France first Chair in Economics is dedicated to Jean-Baptiste Say, and other chairs were created at the CNAM. The CNAM was organized around four academic departments of Business and Economics; Industrial sciences and technologies; Information and Communication technologies; and Social Sciences. The Departments housed relevant Chairs, Institutes and Centres in different domains and specializations. In the early 2000s, the Business and Economics was the largest department and comprised more than 40% of all enrolments at the CNAM.

During the process of internationalization, Department of Business and Economics has decided to establish International Institute of Management (Institut International du Management – IIM) in December 2004, by grouping the Centre for Education and Research in Engineering Management (CEPRIM - Centre de Perfectionnement et de Recherche en Ingénierie et Management) created in 1987, the Institute for Organisational Science (IESTO - l'Institut des études Economiques, Sociales et Techniques de l'Organisation) created in 1955; and the Institute for Production and Operations Management (ISERPA - Institut de Management en logistique Industrielle). Following the spirit of CNAM: Modern techniques and cultures diffusion, the IIM's mission is to train the most outstanding managers and open the third division of international program taught in English. The first MBA program cohort was enrolled in April 2003. It is still currently surprising to French people when they find out that an ancient Open-School like CNAM offers an MBA program in English.

In 2010, the CNAM under the administration of Christian Forestier, announced its organisation reform from four departments to two schools: School of Management and Humanities and School of Industrial Sciences and Computer Techniques. All the ancient Chairs, Institutes and Centres are regrouped into seven departments of each school. The International Institute of Management with all its programs, including the MBA, is then a member of the Department Management, Innovation, Prospective (Department MIP) in the School of Management and Society in the CNAM.

The CNAM has its headquarters in Paris but has regional centres throughout France and is present in 29 foreign countries, notably in the francophone countries. Nearly 100000 people enrol each year in the 700 professional and management development programs across 350 different professions at all levels of qualification. 11000 students are currently studying for undergraduate, graduate or doctoral degrees. Among the 2000 people employed by the CNAM, 500 are full time professors or researchers, 700 associate professors or professionals teach at the CNAM. This high percentage of professional professors illustrates the vision of the CNAM to be the unique higher vocational and professional educator. It could be a strong position for the faculty of MBA program which focus on professional and practical education rather than theoretical education of traditional programs in universities. However, we should step back from a hasty conclusion before looking into detail the program of MBA at CNAM.

1.2. Description of the program

Looking back to history, the MBA at CNAM was initially in 1987 called the DESMI - Diplôme d'Etudes Supérieures du Management pour l'Ingénieur or Post Graduate Diploma in Management for Engineers. It was at that time run by the Center for Education and Research in Engineering Management – the CEPRIM of CNAM, with the governance of Professor Raymond LEBAN – Chair of Technological Research and Economic Competitiveness and Director of the Department of Business & Economics and Mrs Annie Luypaert as Program Administrator.

The Bologna Declaration of June 1999 has put in motion a series of reforms in Europe in general and France in particular. All the systems of DEA (Diplôme d'études approfondies), DESS (Diplôme d'études supérieures spécialisées) or DESMI (Diplôme d'Etudes Supérieures du Management pour l'Ingénieur) were transformed to the level of Master degree (le grade de Master) after the implement of the Bologna Process. With objective to make European Higher Education more compatible and comparable, more competitive and more attractive for Europeans, students and scholars from other continents, the reform of Education systems in Europe started by matching the degrees and title system and the performance with the best performing systems in the world, notably the United States and Asia. The DESMI was then changed to the dual title of French version "Manager d'Entreprise" (Manager of Enterprises) and of English version Master in Business Administration MBA. In the Official Journal of the French Republic of 18 November 2005, in view of the ministerial order of 17 March 2003 concerning the authorization of technical training titles and degrees; the title "Manager d'entreprise" (former DESMI) was registered and authorized as an official education program of the CNAM. However, the curriculum structure of the international MBA (English version) and the French MBA (French version or DESMI) were completely different. The international MBA program brought an Americanized structure thanks to an American Professor Charles Despres and the approval of Professor Raymond Leban, the Director of IIM. The manager of International MBA Program was Mrs Kim Vu. Gradually, the two versions approached and starting from 2007 the two programs reunited to one unique MBA program with one curriculum and two modalities: MBA Full time and MBA Part time.

CNAM targets the development of managerial skills, practices and operational excellence for students expecting a senior career. Keywords are life-long education and management. That is why CNAM's MBA keeps its French homologation – the RNCP title, from its start of 1991. The RNCP (Registre National des Compétences Professionnelles) title is a French famous professional title certified by the National Commission of the Professional Certification CNCP. Its French-taught MBA program existed also in Romania via an agreement between the CNAM and the ASE - INDE (Romanian Academy of Science – Institute of National Economic Development) or its regional CNAM sites in Lille, Angers

and Lyon. The program in Romania also earned the accreditation from Romania National Council for Evaluation and Accreditation ARACIS.

Having followed international standards for MBA education required by the Association of MBAs – AMBA, the CNAM's MBA program obtained the double accreditation (by the CNCP and AMBA) in September 2007, with its bouquet of programs in either part-time (over 24 months) taught in French or full-time (over a year), taught in English. The French part time MBA programs were afterwards closed in Angers, Lyon, and totally changed into English-taught program from 2008, with its open sites in Paris, Bucharest - Romania and Lille. In the same year, Martine Carbonel succeeded Professor Leban and became the director of IIM. The director of the program was Professor Michel Rudnianski and Mrs Kim Vu became the manager for all MBA programs. The reasons of limiting the programs to English-taught modality, and in only some sites, were to be able to match with the standards and requirements of AMBA. Furthermore the different structures of governance between the CNAM in Paris and other regional centres made it difficult to organize and harmonize the programs as one unique MBA, regardless the growing competitions of business schools and booming MBAs in France at that time.

Besides the double accreditation, some of its specializations have been top ranked either in France (the Project management, Insurance specialization got one of the top places in the French SMBG ranking) or in Romania (The Bucharest CNAM's MBA Program has been ranked number 1 in Romania by "Ziarul Financiar" – a business and financial newspaper in Romania).

Although the duration of the programs does not change, the structure of the MBA program was changed over the time, especially the choice of courses in the core curriculum and the specializations. In order to keep the accreditation by the International Association of AMBA, the CNAM's MBA also has to change its admission requirements and added up other extra curricular activities. Repeatedly, we see significant changes of the program with the aim to obtain the accreditation.

Starting from 2014, the CNAM starts its hybrid program, and organizes the whole program into three portfolios as mode of study for the same curriculum of MBA with orientation, core curriculum, specialization (or majors), study trips, a final project and skills development workshops:

- International MBA or I-MBA is a full time program, dispensed over one academic year,
- Executive MBA or E-MBA is a part time program over two academic years,
- Hybrid MBA or H-MBA is a sort of distant learning (called blended) program over eighteen months.

The direction of MBA programs comprises Professor Thomas Durand, Director of Department MIP, Professor Jean Michel Raicovitch, Director of MBA; and Mrs Kim Vu, Manager of MBA.

1.3. Faculty and staff

The stated methodology of the CNAM's MBA is to promote diversity to achieve a balanced mix of educational backgrounds, work experiences and cultures, and better complement the conventional classroom education. That is why the majority of MBA faculty is from the professional world but not the CNAM's full time professors, nor academic teachers who directly take part in the CNAM's activities. They are experts with a practical business experience and some professional academic or training understanding. The whole team of instructors and consulting project advisors of CNAM's MBA programs reaches the number of around 50 professors.

CNAM is a unique academic institution where the senior faculty, the professors of CNAM, are recruited because they have run excellent business before joining the academic faculty at the CNAM, where they have had connected and continue to connect the teaching to practice in one way or another. Furthermore, the faculty of CNAM is a mixture of disciplines with trans-disciplinarily, cross sections and cross disciplines. Basically the CNAM recruits professors because they are depositors and entrepreneurs in their fields of knowledge but not only in a single discipline like in universities. At CNAM they create chairs on topics that are uncommon, transverse, strange, unusual, and it is difficult to

separate the category of which discipline they belong to. However, among the MBA faculty, only ten are permanent professors of the CNAM (four are full time and six are part time – information of cohort 2012-2013). The rest are consultants from professional fields, and some came from European neighbour countries such as the UK, Germany, Switzerland, Spain or Italy. The academic faculty list at CNAM IIM's MBA is composed of a large number of part time lecturers deploying activities in the economic world either as managers or as consultants, who are recruited on one hand on the basis of their diploma, skills and competencies concerning the topic they will have to teach, and on the other hand the quality of their activities in the firms or institutions for which exert either managerial or consulting activities.

The director of the department which runs the CNAM's MBA, acting as the dean for the MBA program, shared that he was shocked to see that very few CNAM's permanent faculty involved in MBA program. *"I was very surprise that basically no professor of CNAM was teaching in the MBA. I felt that the MBA program was a flagship for a business school. Of course we have no formal business school, but I believe that IIM is what approximately a business school at CNAM is. The idea that the best professors of the place would not teach in the MBA is a shock to me."* The rate of permanent faculty of CNAM involving in teaching activities of MBA raised to 42%, with the significant creation of the H-MBA program. *"I almost started to talk to one, two, three professors that I know better than the others, and I could have asked them to teach in the MBA program. I could also put a little bit of pressure on them and hopefully some might have said yes. But I could see that some vacataires (vacant instructors) would not dare to suggest such things and stop teaching to leave places for permanent professors. And I do not want to stop something that is working.. It is among one of the reason why I thought of creating the H MBA."*

In order to keep the requirements of the accreditations, which become strong guidelines for the operation of the program by now, the CNAM's MBA organize twice per year the Professors' general meetings. Another objective of the meetings is to exchange on courses general pedagogical approaches, since vacant instructors only come to school when they have classes and rarely know others or discuss with others about pedagogical issues related to the program.

Apart from these meetings, MBA faculty decided in 2010 to set up working groups. The basis for constructing these working groups is the breakdown of the set of courses in the program into four clusters:

- Cluster 1 is about Environment, Strategy and Marketing including the courses of Economy, Strategy, Negotiations, Marketing, Marketing Management International Perspectives Entrepreneurship and Financing Start-Ups.
- Cluster 2 is about Assessment tools, comprising courses of Accounting, Corporate Finance, Technical Support for Managers (Cost Accounting and Cash Management), Portfolio Asset management, Financial Markets and Trading Techniques, Financial Analysis and Business Evaluation.
- Cluster 3 is about Social relations, including the courses in: Organisational Behaviour, Business Law and Ethics.
- Cluster 4 is about other management tools, comprising Management Information Systems, Operations Management, and Statistics.

The clustering aims at structuring the work of each of the four groups, and more precisely at proposing a pedagogical offer that provides simultaneously: i) assurance that there will no unnecessary overlaps; ii) consistency between the curricula concerning the group, iii) synergy between the various courses; iv) a relatively wide scope; and v) assurance that no topic and / or pedagogical approach is obsolete with respect to the state of the art and the emerging trends in the world of MBA curricula. The curricula will be explored in the next part, but it is remarked that the CNAM IIM's MBA would surely aim at providing topics that are emerging trends in the MBA curricula like other MBAs.

There are 8 administrative staff in the CNAM's MBA program, including three Program Managers, one Associate Manager, one relationship Manager and two Programs' assistants for all programs in Paris, plus one manager for program in Bucharest. The manager of programs in Paris assures the management of all staffs and in direct management team with the program director.

1.4. Student profile

From April 2003 until now there are more than 500 MBA students graduating from the CNAM's MBA, 80% are now working at high management level such as vice director,

president, business development manager, mainly overseas, according to the self-assessment report of MBA to the Association of MBA in 2014.

As mentioned in the inauguration of the program, the initial vision of the CNAM's MBA was that of a MBA "for engineers". The purpose was to offer people having a high level scientific background and a significant professional experience the possibility to acquire skills and competencies that would enable them to shift their careers from technical positions to managerial ones.

The potential market, especially overseas with the English-taught or called International MBA program, was largely based on CNAM's wide perimeter of activity, well established reputation in terms of academic standard and higher vocational education and cooperation with foreign academic institutions. The CNAM and its MBA program are less known to the MBA market, even in French as the school has neither a mass marketing nor promotion strategy to present in every education fairs nor a large branding budget from financial investment or donation funds like other business schools.

The first International MBA groups in the years of 2003-2004 are 30 years old on average, mainly (98%) coming from Asia. The majority came from China, thanks to the agreements between the CNAM and the Centres of Vocational Development in China called China Aerospace Talent Development & Exchange Center (CA-TDEC) and the Chinese Scholarship Council (CSC). Though the diversity of nationality was limited, most of MBA applicants had been 28 to 35 years of age with four or more years of work experience.

The CNAM considered that increasing the diversity of the students' geographic origins would generate a significant added value. Therefore, during 7 years of development, the number of nationalities improved from basically 2 - Chinese and Indians, to around 17 different nationalities from the Middle East to the South America. Since the target market of CNAM's MBA are middle management segments, currently, the average MBA student is 35 years old, has 7 years of work experience in different economic sectors from health to finance, from public administration to new technologies and telecommunication.

However, the diversity picture of CNAM students changed recently. Ironically and coincidentally, after obtaining the international recognition of AMBA accreditation, more French enrolled the program than international students. Though on the brochure, it is cited that the CNAM's MBA have welcomed more than 40 different nationalities in the past 10 years, currently ninety percent of CNAM's MBA students are French or Romanian citizens, corresponding to the Paris and Bucharest campus. Some students had dual nationalities but only ten percent could be counted as international students (2013-2014 10%, 2014-2015 12% and 2015-2016 9%). Within the ten percent of international students, some have already lived and worked in France for a while. The fact might be a hint of a marketing issue of the CNAM in terms of promoting its MBA program internationally, despite the international recognition of AMBA. The marketing and recruitment problems of CNAM also brought its MBA to a risk of not earning the accreditation due to insufficient number of participants for each cohort.

With its strong link to the CNAM's historical and traditional domains of sciences and technology, the majority of students recruited is rooted in the scientific and engineer background. The program has the original idea to build its content both on general management skills but also on majors linked to different industries, with its strong collaboration with recognised brands in France such as ENASS for insurance or ESMOD for fashion, textile and design industry. Despite the cultural diversity limitation, the diversity in terms of educational and professional backgrounds are still remained at a high mixed between engineers, banking, insurance, human resources, education, technology and arts. The average years of professional experience among students is maintained at 12, for all international, executive and hybrid cohorts.

1.5. Strengths and weaknesses of the program

The strengths and weaknesses of the program are explored from three angles: regulators, providers and demanders.

Remarks from regulators could be seen as the accreditations and the rankings' facts and figures. In our research we further explore feedbacks from the assessors, directly or indirectly from the stories of those participating in the assessments. From the regulators'

point of view, the CNAM's MBA has good accessibility in France, because the institution is considered an Open University. It is open to everybody and even giving second chances to those who are motivated to study further. However, recommendations and feedbacks from the accreditation assessment show some weaknesses of the program. For example, AMBA recommended the CNAM to provide adequate physical facilities to the MBA as well as resources for career development and entrepreneurial support. The accreditation also notices that the lack of engagement between full time faculty and part time instructors.

Remarks from the group of providers at CNAM's MBA confirmed the strengths of the program through three main points:

- CNAM is not an elite but an accessible place, so it is put in the opposite and more open position in compare with the Grandes Ecoles in France. *"In France , we do not live really in a republic but a aristocratic regime where the aristocrats are formed and graduate from the famous "grandes ecoles" - if you do not graduate from the grandes ecoles you are just nothing. People, who did not succeed in passing through the grandes ecoles in the "primary education", have through the MBA programs a way to be rescued. Because MBA is a well-known diploma which supposedly attracts considerations. So the MBA is like a flagship of the CNAM because students who do not do a CNAM's MBA but come to the CNAM and heard that the CNAM has an MBA and it gives them a higher opinion of what the CNAM is and gives them a further guarantee of the quality of teaching in CNAM".* Furthermore, the program is financially affordable compare to other MBA programs. *"It does not mean that we are low cost, it does not mean that we are low quality but because of our economical models, we are affordable in fees."*

- The CNAM respects what people have learnt through their work and careers. The programs believe that there are other ways of learning than formal education and there are potentials in students, not necessary elite ones. *"they came there because of their needs, not because they were best ones or selected ones or they passed the exams to prove that they are smart ones"* Therefore, the selection procedure is not proceeded as a normal and selective admission but is also open to personalised professional project for participants, which is coherent with the first mentioned strength. *"Our selection process is based on the person, not on the person's type. The recruitment is more open, and we*

are focusing on the potentials of the people not only on who they are right now, did they pass GMAT exam. We create links during the selection, it is like a kind of commitment of what they can gain because recruitment is a two-way process. We have to make sure the students meet our criteria but we have to propose also something that the students can achieve with us. Teachers are among the selection jury members, I guess it is putting more pressure on them to deliver what students really need, because he/she knows the students, and help them to be different in the end of the learning process.”

- CNAM is an institution that melts a lot of specializations, and somehow the MBA could be a flagship not only to the coming students but also for the researchers and professors who are in CNAM. Besides a rich and diversify agenda of conferences and seminars organised almost everyday at CNAM, the MBA has its special seminars of “expand your horizon”, in order to feed students’ professional practices by ideas from the richness of CNAM’s expertise. *“It is the opportunity for our students to hang around, to listen and to feed themselves with different practices which are not often offered or coming from the business schools’ environment but from other domains as well as from companies, enterprises.”*

A remarkable weakness that Deans, Director, Managers and Staffs of CNAM IIM’s MBA refer to is the position of the MBA in the CNAM. The program is not totally considered a flagship program inside the institution. *“Just like many MBA programs, we are facing organisation constraints on the school’s level; we are facing budget constraints and so on. And it should not be only this way because if we are more autonomous from the school, from the financial or operational point of view, we would be more efficient, we could invest more for the students, and certainly the quality would be higher.”* Constraints in organisational and financial budget; and previously mentioned lack of investment and engagement of CNAM’s faculty in MBA’s program are the main issues of programs operation and governance. Another weakness of the program currently is the ability to market overseas and diversify the participants from outside France.

When it concerns the demanders’ points of view, we look at the main reasons that students answered to our question why they have chosen this program. The result was

summarized from the 35 surveys collected from three different cohorts of CNAM's MBA (Full time 2013 cohort, Part time 2013-2014 cohort and Hybrid 2014 cohort). The program emphasizes their strengths on the accessibility and affordability of CNAM; the faculty and its special expertise; the students' profiles and commitment to their requests. Those correspond to what students appreciated the most, which are the reputation of the school that provides meeting and exchanges, the program with general management or specialized curriculum, the applicability of the knowledge and the activeness to students' requests.

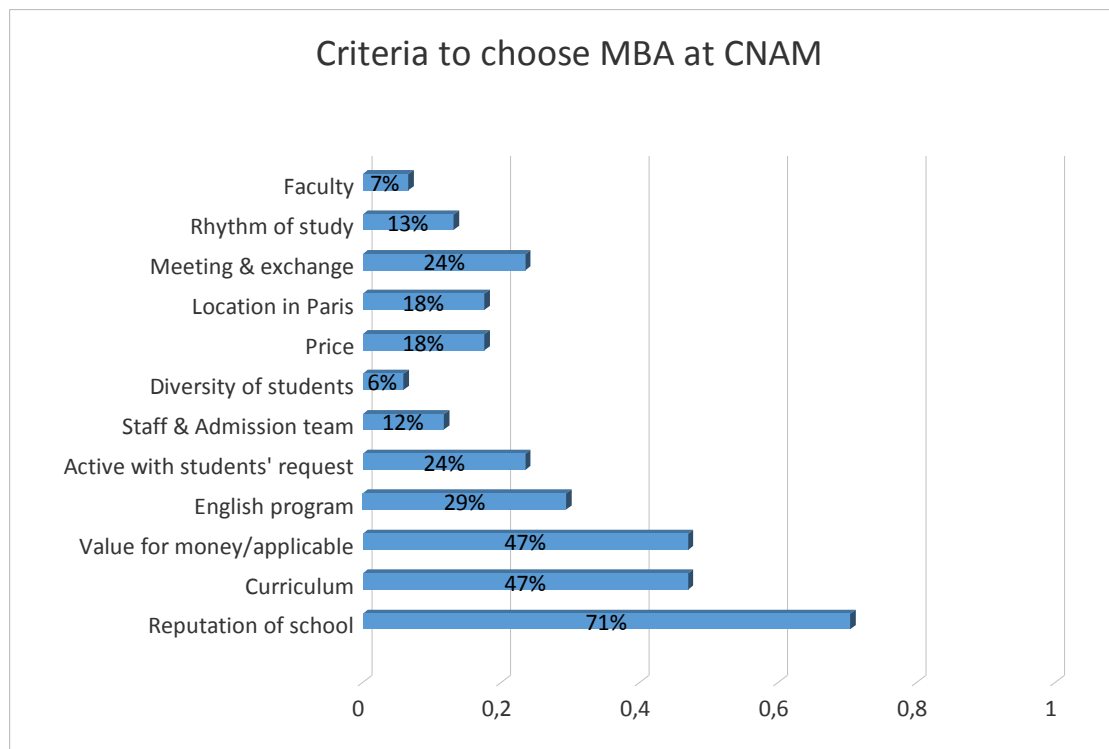


Figure IV.2.1: Criteria that CNAM's students chose their MBA

Source: Collected from 35 surveys and discussions from three different cohorts of CNAM's MBA (Full time 2013 cohort, Part time 2013-2014 cohort and Hybrid 2014 cohort)

It is true that the CNAM is very well known in France for the professional and vocational training. Therefore the program could use the name of CNAM as its branding strategy to promote the MBA in France without any difficulties. However the story would not be the same for the reputation and recognition of CNAM outside France.

The issue of affordability is not much more appreciated than the fact that the program is located in Paris. The weaknesses regarding the faculty and diversity of participants that the program is concerned about are definitely not among the main criteria when students choose this MBA. CNAM's MBA students rather choose to do their MBA at CNAM because they focus more on programs in English or programs that could adapt to their demands. It makes sense when we link to their main reasons why they look for an MBA. The answers are new promotion, why not internationally vision with the international recognition of the diplome, with new managerial tasks.

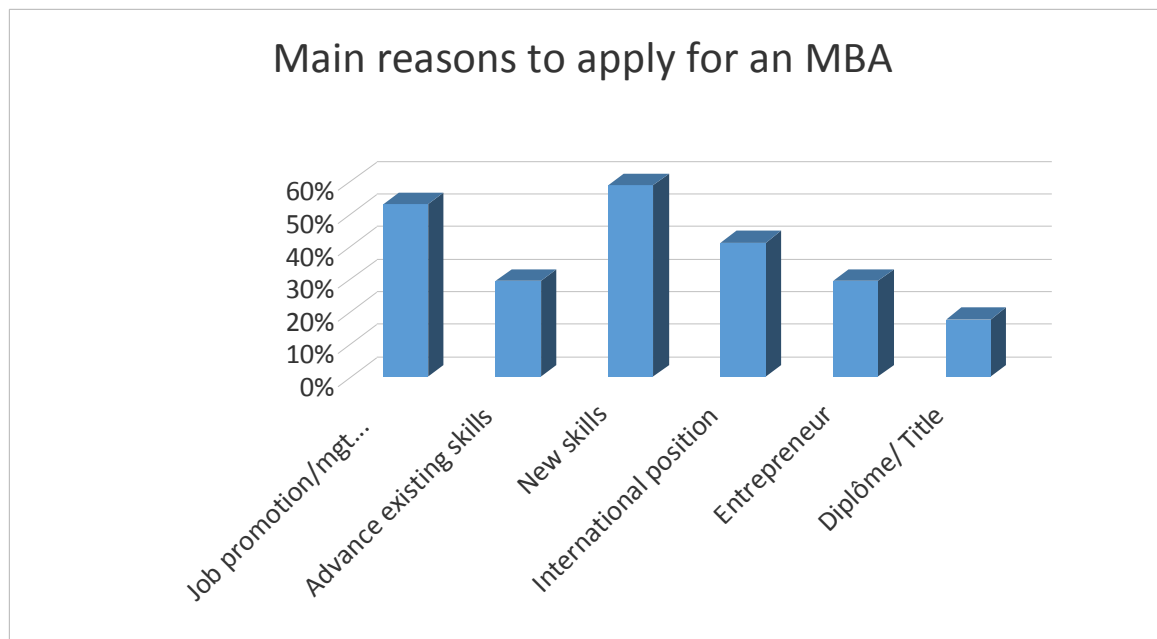


Figure IV.2.2: Reasons that CNAM's students apply for an MBA

Source: Collected from 35 surveys and discussions from three different cohorts of CNAM's MBA (Full time 2013 cohort, Part time 2013-2014 cohort and Hybrid 2014 cohort)

However, when we discussed with the alumni of who graduated from the CNAM's MBA program, some confirmed that doing an MBA could equip them with management and new skills, assure them to become entrepreneur, or open them to international exposure and position with the help of faculty's international experiences. On the contrary, the MBA as a degree could not bring a lot values in applying for executive jobs in France, as big groups in France still prefer degrees from the systems of Grandes Ecoles (of business and of engineers) while small and medium size enterprises do not know that an MBA is a Master degree. French enterprises are said, through the job application experiences of

several alumni, to be more familiar with the CNAM's certificate of competences and professional titles.

That might be the problem why the providers find it difficult to position their MBA in the French higher education market and it is more difficult to define the image, say in other words – unique selling points, of CNAM's MBA in international market. Do the unique selling points come from the curriculum, academic expertise of the program and its organisation? One manager was very sceptic about this issue *"Nothing else differs from the other MBAs of business schools, in terms of courses and content of courses. The courses that we teach here is very similar with the other MBA programs."* Nevertheless, we shall devote the next part to examine the curriculum development and organisation in CNAM's MBA program.

2. Curriculum

2.1. Core curriculum

The CNAM's MBA program lasts one year for full time students, two years for those participating as part time students, and eighteen months for those hybrid students. Each includes an orientation week, a core curriculum and a major curriculum, two study trips, a consulting project, and various skill development workshops. During the orientation week, students take part in an intensive business simulation providing an immersive framework in which the students are required to perfect their decision making skills. The aim is to:

- confront students with the complexities of management in a changing environment
- foster connectedness and teambuilding among peers

Regarding the Full time program, in the earlier of its creation, the international MBA organize in a classical American MBA with two intakes each year, the spring and the fall ones. Starting from 2005, it reduced to only one intake per year in September, similar to the Part time program. In fact, after the accreditation of AMBA, the CNAM has invested

a lot of energies in restructuring the different MBA curricula. Outcomes from the Piloting committee and professors' meetings were the change in the coherence of the courses in each trimester and the links between different clusters, and each course can be represented by a clear concept map. The level of the global MBA offer is concerned by the alignment of the contents delivered and the pedagogical approaches followed with the general expected learning outcomes from an MBA, whatever the particular track being followed by the student. Therefore the design of CNAM's MBA program combines global vision and strategic tools with skills and competencies more focused on specific activities of a company (marketing, business communication, law etc.) as well as skills and competencies more related to human factors and relations.

In this respect, the CNAM's MBA has taken into account the three different dimensions:

- Core management tools that any MBA graduate should master
- Environment (climate, cultural, economic, legal, social, political, technical) issues
- Personal development (leadership, ethics, professional development, etc.)

Still divided into three trimesters of 3 months each, the structure of the program has been slightly changed in the number of hours per course and the choice of courses. If in 2003, the courses were structured with the system of 11 courses of 4 credits, 36 hours each, at the present each course consists of ten sessions, each for three hours, and is worth three credits.

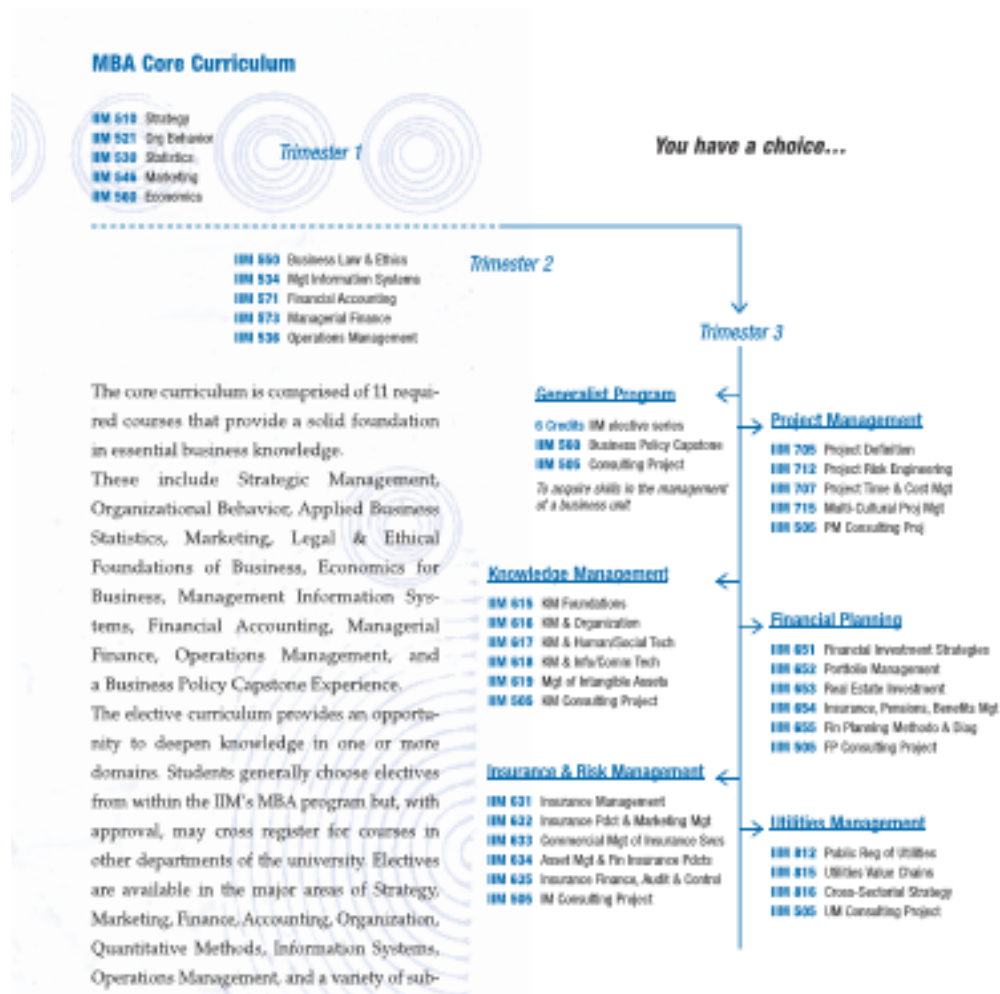


Figure IV.2.3. Curriculum of MBA – 2004

Source: Academic Catalogue of the MBA - 2004

International MBA

Assessment & personal Development (Orientation, Seminars, Activities)

Core Curriculum

- Accounting
- Finance I & II
- Marketing
- Strategy & Negotiation
- Economics & Statistics
- Organization Behaviour
- Management Information Systems
- Business Law & Ethics
- Operations Management
- Human Resource Management

Final project:

- Conception
- Group Work
- Supervision
- Realization
- Presentation

Activities:

- International study trips
- Company visits

Major:

- Fashion Management (ESMOD)
- Insurance Management (ENASS)
- Business Unit Management
- Project Management (Oxford Academics)
- Entrepreneurship & Innovation Management

Programme «Expand your horizons»

Learning over 12 months - Full time

Online options

Executive MBA

Assessment & personal development (Orientation, Seminars, Activities)

Fundamentals:

- Economics
- Statistics
- Business Law & Ethics

Accounting

- Finance I & II
- Organization Behavior
- Marketing

Strategy & Negotiation

- Management Information Systems
- Operations Management
- Human Resource Management

Programme «Expand your horizons»

ADVANCE

Development of Competencies
for Career Advancement

Career advancement track:

- Major courses including Insurance with ENASS
- Multi-disciplinary electives

CREATE

Development of Competencies
for Entrepreneurs

Creation track:

- Entrepreneurship courses
- Multi-disciplinary electives

Personal Capstone Program:

- Project Management Course
- Study trip
- Final project
- I-MBA collaboration

Personal Capstone Program:

- Project Management Course
- Study trip
- Final project
- I-MBA collaboration

Learning over 18 months - Part time

Online options

Figure IV.2.4. Curriculum of MBA – 2014

Source: MBA International & Executive Brochure - 2014

The new curriculum shows more orientation towards functional courses, such as the Human Resources; Finance towards the entrepreneurship and financial assessments; and Marketing towards the international perspectives and personal development skills such as Negotiations, Communication and establishing connections.

After completing the core courses, students could choose to register for courses in the CNAM or other departments of the university as electives. Electives are available in the major areas of Strategy, Marketing, Finance, Accounting, Organisation, Statistics, Information Systems and Operations Management, as well as a variety of sub-specialties.

The consulting project is a team-based experience that turns theory and reflection into real world action. With faculty guidance, a team of students is introduced to one of CNAM's business partners and those partners might present the project with a live business issue. The challenge is to resolve it at a high level of satisfaction from an action research or consulting perspective. The consulting project is presented to a jury composed of faculty and executives, is graded on a team basis and carries 6 credits.

Besides the functional courses, the CNAM provides from its beginning skills-development courses include Business French, Multicultural Workshops and Career Development Services but the courses contents were evaluated and modified over the time, with the evolution from both faculty's propositions and students' remarks. Some courses, however, are added with the recommendation of AMBA, such as Career Development services, Negotiation. Looking from the core curriculum of CNAM's MBA, we do agree with the MBA manager that *"Nothing else differs from the other MBAs of business schools, in terms of courses and content of courses. The courses that we teach here is very similar with the other MBA programs."* Finally, MBA can be seen as a real homogeneous degree in terms of structure and contents, as the literature has developed.

2.2. Specializations

In fact, due to the huge size, CNAM has competencies in a variety of domains, which means that the portfolio of specializations offered by the CNAM's MBA is not limited by the competencies of academic staff. This portfolio of specializations is managed on the basis of:

- comparisons with offerings made by other business schools, where they can be unique and differentiate from others.
- demands formulated by candidates and students
- trends observed and recommendations made by IIM MBA advisory bodies (professors clusters, IIM MBA Piloting Committee, IIM Advisory Board)

Starting from the launch of the full time MBA programs, CNAM offered in 2003 a set of infrequent specializations for the MBAs, which are MBA in Knowledge Management; MBA in Project Management and MBA in Utilities Management.

The MBA in Knowledge Management treats the field of Knowledge Management as a recent response to the challenges that organisations face in the post-industrial society. It provides participants with the theoretical background and practical skills needed for assuming managerial and knowledge management specialist roles in today's knowledge society. The MBA in Project Management is one of the most dynamic fields in business today. This specialization combines theory with practice to focus students on leading-edge developments in the field. The MBA in Utilities Management focuses on the management of private or public utilities that supply electricity, gas and water in regulated environments and under public service obligations.

The CNAM offers MBA specializations that respond to specific needs and interests. These are appropriate for candidates who elect to concentrate their professional development in a particular field of interest. Though presenting as rare and different specializations known in MBA education sector, CNAM's specialized MBAs are designed according to the standards noted above and tailor content but have special requirements, which meets the above mentioned categories except the demanders' side. That is why the MBA in Utilities Management was not opened due to a limited number of interests, and the MBA in Knowledge Management could run for only two years for the same reason. In 2005, CNAM's MBA replaced those specializations by the two demanding specializations in Insurance Services Management and in Finance and Financial Planning.

The aim of opening other specializations is to offer courses that:

- enable to develop the skills and competencies requested by the economic environment
- meet the students demands
- meet the academic requirements concerning both the content and the pedagogical approach

- can be managed dynamically, while obviously respecting the different types of constraints from academic and administrative staffs.
- partnerships developed between IIM and other institutions, in particular ENASS (Insurance), ESMOD (Fashion Business Development), Collège de Polytechnique and Oxford Royal Academy (Project Management)

The offer of specializations, which was evolving in the first period of the MBA (for instance Financial Planning was replaced by Financial Management), has now ended up in only four directions:

- General Management or Business Unit Management
- Project Management
- Fashion Business Development
- Insurance

2.3. Extra-activities:

In order to change the studying environments in other countries and in different industries, CNAM's MBA program, whether full time, part time or hybrid, includes two trips abroad in the curriculum:

A one week trip depending on the specializations:

- Either to Oxford (UK) for the students who have chosen Project Management as a specialty (with Oxford Academy),
- Or to Brussels (Belgium) and London (UK) for those who have chosen Insurance Management (with ENASS School of insurance),
- Or to Lyon and Cholet (France) for those who have chosen Fashion Management (with ESMOD School of fashion)
- Or to Bucharest (Romania) for all other students in Paris campus
- Or to Paris (France) for all students in Bucharest campus

A one-month trip to California includes:

- A course on Venture Capital linked to the courses on Entrepreneurship and Financing Start-Ups that were delivered in CNAM
- A course on Business Process Engineering

- Companies presentations and visits
- Internships

Beyond their specificities, the trips contribute to the implementation of a multicultural environment and to the focus on future global business opportunities. Indeed with these two trips all students have access during their MBA studies to three countries – two European (France and United Kingdom or Romania) and one in America (USA). Consequently these trips participate in the development of an MBA environment characterized by a high degree of diversity which corresponds to the CNAM-IIM's vision. This is a very important part in the academic life of the CNAM's MBA students, to let them receive additional knowledge and information in a different eco-cultural environment, put them in close contact with local companies and entrepreneurs to enrich their practical awareness and experiences, and create for them opportunities to practice their interpersonal communication skills and organisational behaviours. Their grades are evaluated based not only on the academic performance but mainly on participation, initiative and contribution to the trip.

Additionally, in order to help students to understand and anticipate the major stakes of the business environment, improve curiosity, critical thinking and intellectual autonomy, the CNAM's MBA organize monthly seminars called "Expand your horizons" guest lectures. With the objective to expand students' horizons, the CNAM's MBA requests students to learn beyond the classrooms' walls by attending these conferences and prepare summaries on sectors previously unknown to students, such as the future of Europe, the impacts of globalization, green business, criminology, forecast and prospective, big data, etc. The majority of topics are the specificities and strengths for which the CNAM's faculty is known in France. Therefore the MBA makes full use of these specificities in order to create the difference in comparison with MBAs in other schools, French or international.

2.4. Organisation of curriculum

CNAM's MBA curriculum benefits from inputs of the corporate world in many different ways:

- the MBA Advisory Board which is made up of academics and of representatives from the corporate world
- the faculty group which includes lecturers who hold managing position at a senior level
- the employers' forums and the Friday speakers enabling the MBA faculty to connect with the world of management
- speakers at conferences organized by CNAM (Expand your Horizons)
- specific relations developed between the MBA Managing team and professional organisations like the ANDRH (Association Nationale des Directeurs des Ressources Humaines) or ADETEM (French association of Marketing Directors). ANDRH, for example, provided pilot inputs so as to develop the cross-cultural management issues in the MBA programme. The Final Project conducted by CNAM's MBA students in high level business complexity environment with a clearly stated objective of delivering real added-value to the business world. Employer's involvement in the tutoring and jury of the MBA Final Projects

The statement implies that the CNAM, though evaluate very strongly the particularity of its students' profiles and requests, does not integrate or survey students as an important input for the curriculum design. Regulators' requests, providers' own contributions and adaptations count the most in the movements in the CNAM's MBA curriculum. In reality, the program does not change its program structure from its creation, but more on naming the same course or specializations. *"It is very interesting to notice that we have a lot of changes in the name of specializations. In the beginning we have a specialization named General Management. General Management as a name of a specialization is a kind of contradictory. We always have a discussion to think how to make it more appropriate. At one time we called it Business Unit Management. Fashion Management also, it was before a Fashion Business Development and finally somebody in the MBA management board*

said that everything should be management so Fashion Business Development is changed to Fashion Management, but nothing changes in the contents.”

We could see the main differences between the program in 2004 and 2014 are the addition of some modules such as Human Resources Management, Negotiation, Personal Development Activities, as well as some changes of some specializations. The comparison from the promotion documents of 2004 and 2014 is confirmed by discussions with Deans, Directors, Managers and senior teachers. The addition of module Negotiation is explained firmly as a response to recommendations of the accreditation. *“The second change that I remember is due to AMBA recommendation, in 2012, when it hold the first accreditation of AMBA. They checked the program, they checked the content of the program and they suggested why some skills, for example, negotiation is not there. They also remarked that the content of the program is quite classic, nothing new, nothing innovated in the program so they suggested Negotiation in the program, and there we added Negotiation course, mainly due to the recommendation of AMBA”, and “When I took responsible of the Academic Head of MBA in 2008, I discovered that demand of AMBA to add the course of Negotiation has not been satisfied. So in order to prepare for the intermediate report of AMBA accreditation of 2010, we decided, together with the manager of the program, to set up this course in the curriculum.”*

As for the changes in specializations, explanations were derived from the richness of CNAM’s professional specialties and partnerships. *“Recently we have added one more specialisation which is entrepreneurship and innovation management, and it links with the strength and the trends of the CNAM. As in the department of management, innovation, prospective, we have a new team, new professors and faculty in this field so we think it is good to use our resources to suggest this course. It is also a new trend as 10% of our graduates open their own company. Those courses are also very special, thanks to our partners with companies.”* Students’ remarks are solely recognized when they link to the addition of personal developments, reasons given are quite a mixture of requirements from every side: *“This course added is based on the discussions with students and based on my judgement and feelings.”*

Given the fact that the CNAM is a public institution, with governance, resources constraints, the organisation of the curriculum is said to be difficult. *“Our objective and policy of the CNAM is not totally economic and not totally social promotion so the decision making power of the MBA sometimes is beyond our control at the program level.”* What was required in order to develop the MBA is a stronger financial and resources assistance from CNAM, a light and flexible administrative procedure, a deeper engagement of full time professors and faculty, an increasing number of staff in managing the program as well as in recruiting and marketing for the program. Though presenting differently in the organisation structure of the program with the Dean, the Director, the Managers, Professors and Staffs, the organisation of courses is noted to depend mainly on managers who has to cope with all constraints and sometimes academic criteria are put backward in the priority of treatments. It is obvious when we interview instructors that they do not communicate with each other well. From the strategy side, the professor of strategy assures that leadership is not his domain, while the professor of leadership highly expects the existence of leadership in the syllabus of strategy, which means that he even does not read the syllabus of his colleague giving classes on strategy. Further more they say very frankly that they are not familiar with each other. Therefore, it is not a surprise that the Dean, the Director and some faculty sometimes doubt about the existence and the organisation of courses, clusters of courses within the duration of the program. *“I suspect it is the MBA requirement or suggestion. I’m not sure.”* Since the program was built at the beginning with “almost 100% of vocational teachers, instructors”, who are not university professors, not professional teachers but they could have main job as well in companies or in other universities and business schools, even in the government, the organisation and planning of the program become an adaptation of vocational teachers’ availabilities, and we do not see the explicit prerequisite academic criteria in such organisation. *“Normally it should be in the first semester, but it is just the matter of agenda of the manager, she proposes me days and dates and if I’m available, I say OK.”* Another instructor said *“I have no idea where my course is in the curriculum. Sorry, I do not know and no one has explained that to me.”* Students also complain about the organisation of the courses that made them confused *“The course of Strategy was organised as a capsule project. We should have more important volume for this course and it should be placed at the end but not in the middle of the program like actually we have had.”* Students

do not have a global picture of the program, as for them it was introduced before their enrolment but then it keeps changing or updating during the duration of the program.

In balancing between the beyond-controlled strategies of development, limited internal academic and administrative resources, classical standards and new trends in different knowledge fields, the CNAM's MBA still satisfies the accreditation bodies. The alumni also appreciate the good image and the professional and diversify network of the CNAM, and the value of overview management that the program brings to them.

3. Leadership orientation

The main objective of CNAM's MBA is to confirm graduates with a solid base of business knowledge in functional and strategic management. Leadership is only mentioned as a capacity improved by developing communication and interpersonal skills.

As mentioned before, the program, in the temptation to satisfy the accreditation body and obtain the next accreditation, apply well all recommendations in the modification of the curriculum such as adding Negotiation Course or Career Development Services. Besides, what is not recommended will not be considered as priority, such as leadership. *"In the case of CNAM, they (the AMBA assessment committee) make no remarks on leadership of the organisation, but they do not like that there is no representative of the school so AMBA saw it as the school is lack of consideration for its MBA. Until June 2012 they do not ask to add the course/topic of Leadership, but after that I do not know"*. There must be confusion in interpretation between the theme of leadership as a pedagogical topic in the curriculum, and the organisation of the program or academic leadership in the industry. Similarly, in the criteria for self-assessment of the program, repeated words of academic leadership, internationalization and sustainability in curriculum make the program systematically embrace the words in their curriculum design and presentations.

The CNAM's MBA is not objectively designed to teach leadership to students. The program states clearly, from the Director to the Managers, that *"It is difficult to teach leadership, but CNAM believes that leadership can be learned differently. Different activities in the*

programme enable students to develop their leadership: group work, oral presentations, coaching and career development, and final project.”

Personally, the organizers do not believe that MBA is to train leadership. From the Dean, it is captured: *“I don’t think MBA should aim to train leadership”* to the manager: *“We do not have really any movement in the content towards leadership. The word leadership is mentioned in many courses by the professors, strategy, marketing, negotiation, organisation behaviour, human resources management, nearly every course, not from the beginning but since 2005, 2006 for international version, but for French version maybe later, from 2009. The reason is that the tendency as a whole in different business school, in different context, in different situation, some human problems happened, and then managers try to find the reason, and the word leadership is like a very fashionable word, sometimes they use that word to express their opinions, analysis, recommendation. Personally I don’t think that it says much thing.”* Yet, since leadership is like a fashionable trend in MBA curriculum, there must be some overview of leadership in the whole program of MBA. From the providers’ points of view, classes involving interpersonal and communication skills such as Organisational Behaviour, Business Communication, Multicultural Management, Negotiation, Human Resource Management, Career Management, and Business Simulation are to help increasing the leadership resources to students. The last two courses are organized in the form of game simulation and seminars of personal coaches, to help encourage leadership transformations in different situation. Nevertheless, discussions with professors and instructors in charge of those classes give contradictory feedbacks on the integration or inspiration of leadership development to students. CNAM’s MBA students’ answers also echo the contradictory feelings of leadership existence in the courses. According to the instructors of Negotiation, Business Communication and Human Resource Management, his/ her course does not link to leadership because they are separate issues. Meanwhile, instructors of Organisational Behaviour and Business Simulation clearly see that leadership is one of main skills students obtain after the classes, though the title of the classes are not highlighted with the word “leadership”. However, an example where the issue of whether leadership skills really exist and well developed in the MBA courses is discovered with a sharing of the instructor of Organisation Behaviour (OB) *“It’s absolutely a strong link between the*

leadership and OB. Leadership is a strong part in the course of OB but it is not a backbone of OB. I myself am still researching on leadership, and I wonder whether authentic leadership is something that can be taught or it is just an innate; or something just alliance. I don't know." With his own doubt on leadership, how can the instructor transfer and teach, or develop skills of leadership for students? Another doubt is whether France is the right place to develop and practice leadership, as *"What bothers me about France is there is no word for leadership, like it is no word for empowerment. So it means there is no sense of the idea of inspiration, because when I look at the cultural side of France, I see that culture is very highly hierarchical, we must absolutely have a boss, we depend on that structure, we are more comfortable in pyramid structures than team structures."*

Nevertheless, starting from 2013, the CNAM's MBA officially added a non compulsory seminar on the theme leadership, instructed by Adjunct Professor Olivier Basso. This seminar was modified later into one, then two elective courses with credits in the program, which are called "Leadership and Change", and "Cultivating Leadership Impact". The very reason counted as the origin of the creation of Leadership courses is stated *"I decided to hire Olivier Basso for Part time professor at CNAM-IIM for other things to develop company in-house training and because in his contract he has to teach, I ask what he is interested in teaching, and he said leadership. I prefer that he teaches OB as we need someone for that subject but he insisted on teaching leadership. So the CNAM has leadership courses because we have an expert or resource that can provide leadership theme."* Students' feedbacks echoed that the workshop in leadership theme is interesting, so from time to time the manager open a workshop like that for students, and changed it to courses with credits. The aim, as the instructor emphasizes, is not to provide them a class on the leadership only but ideally it is to provide them as well the class of leadership, not only to have analysis and theories on leadership but also to practice some issues of the leadership. *"At least by the goal it is more of leadership than on leadership."*

One student, when mentioning this course, said that the seminar was not enough, and if it is not compulsory students do not see the importance to take it. So finally basic leadership skills are only partly satisfied with the courses. Upon some students, *"the development of a program is not about changing names or labels of the program but it is*

about changing the way of organizing the learning by experimental exercises.” We could see in the syllabus of the two courses of leadership a lot of experimental exercises. The pedagogical approach is more about practicing leadership attitudes and exploring one’s own aspirations than a class on leadership and change. The theories and frameworks are said to be based on the classes of Organisational Behaviour, so the classes are organized with sharing insights from students’ own experience and experimental sessions on leadership, as well as on change management. Theories are provided as key words for leadership, which could be listed with the idea of transformational leadership (of Bass and Burns)⁶². Other theories focus on the topic of change management rather than leadership, such as leadership and change approaches (of Kotter)⁶³, Theory U (of Otto Scharmer)⁶⁴ that makes a link to Kurt Lewin’s resistance concept⁶⁵. The instructor believes that *“a part of the leadership content can not be really thought only through theoretical conversation or analysis and sharing of experiences (business and past) but students also need to create an onsite experience, something to allow participants in the class to live some leadership situations.”* Since the instructor defines leadership as a competence that one can use when he/she does not have a predefined task to organize collective actions, which is very much associated with change, he organizes the classes in the sense that leadership and change are inseparable topics. The topic of change is going around the central concept of resistance to change, where he explains how it is related to the profiles of the leaders and the awareness of the leaders with the question of how to resist to some changes.

⁶² Read the part of leadership theme in the literature review (Part II, Chapter 3, part 4) for theories of Transformational Leadership of Bass and Burns

⁶³ Kotter, J. P. (1996). Leading change. Harvard Business Press.

⁶⁴ Scharmer, C. O. (2009). Theory U: Learning from the future as it emerges. Berrett-Koehler Publishers. Theory U is presented in a book “Presence” of Otto Scharmer. Presence is a book that describes a new theory of change and learning as it unfolds through wide-ranging conversations held over a year and a half between organisational learning pioneers Peter Senge, C. Otto Scharmer, Joseph Jaworski, and Betty Sue Flowers. The theory U consists of seven capacities and the activities they enable. Each capacity is a gateway to the next activity.

- Suspending – seeing our seeing, transforming perception
- Redirecting – seeing from the whole
- Letting go
- Letting come
- Crystallizing – envisioning what seeks to emerge
- Prototyping – realizing transforming action, enacting living microcosms
- Institutionalizing – embodying the new (from <http://www.ottoscharmer.com/>)

⁶⁵ Lewin, K. (1947). Quasi-stationary social equilibria and the problem of permanent change. Organisation change: A comprehensive reader, 73-78.

In the second course of “Cultivating Leadership Impact: through voice, breathing, and presencing (the sense of presence of the leadership)”, the aim is to cultivate a sustainable leadership posture with all exercises to breathe, to inspire, to talk and animate, to recharge and boost energy, to enhance the presence and communication. The posture is said to be not fixed, as it is changing at any moment. In fact, throughout the exercises and explanations, it is not clear to define the difference between a manager’s posture and a leader’s posture. As managers follow processes, they may use innovate strategy at times for creativity and errors, they will switch into leaders’ posture in the long term. As leaders, they follow the U theory of Otto Schamer, from trying and going from uncertainty to forming processes, they will move from leaders’ to managers’ posture. With that confusion created by the classes of leadership, we remain a question of why we have to distinguish between managers and leaders, or highlight the classes of leadership in the programs of management.

In fact, the CNAM’s MBA highlights the classes of leadership in only 30 hours out of almost 600 hours of lectures and seminars. In a short period of time, the seminars of leadership debrief all the studies of leadership development, but not theories on leadership itself, from developing self awareness (Kouzes and Posner, 2003; Bass and Burns, 1985)⁶⁶ to understand that motivating people will be very different according to the profiles of people in front of them, to experimental sessions in groups (Penwell, 1992; Riechmann, 1992)⁶⁷. The courses also explore the posture of leaders and provide students with practices to train themselves to self presenting and be comfortable as a leader, in a complex situation which the instructor mentioned “VUCA” – Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity situation of business environment nowadays. The objective is at the end of the class, the students improve in terms of leaders rather than to know more about leadership. It is more about learning, and developing leadership rather than focusing on leadership studies.

⁶⁶ Read the part of leadership theme in the literature review (Part II, Chapter 3, part 4) for theories of leadership

⁶⁷ Read the part of leadership theme in the literature review (Part II, Chapter 3, part 4) for theories of leadership

In the survey of students following CNAM's MBA, the majority of students stated that they do not join the program in order to look for leadership, but they thought that they would be learning leadership during the program, through classes of Leadership, Marketing, Human Resources and Strategy. With an assumption that leadership is taught, transferred, developed during the classes of MBA, including and even beyond the leadership theme we also asked them to give their definition of leadership and made a comparison with the definition of leadership given by the instructors, faculty of such courses. It could be a great influence from knowledge of instructors in Leadership theme to the students, or it could be no influence at all as each person will cite different understandings on this questionable theme of leadership. In the case of CNAM's MBA, all the direction and management of the program and the instructors interviewed as well as 41% of the students in the sample group define leadership is influencing, inspiring and empowering others for a collective vision. As a result, although doing only overview on leadership theme, the CNAM's MBA could bring quite a unity in the collection vision about leadership. Said by one manager of the program, leadership is learnt differently, not only with classes on leadership or classes of leadership. *"To deliver leadership to students, which (leadership) means the capacity to lead people, in my intension, I think it is very useful and helpful with experiential learning. Nowadays, the word leadership is too much used but not really much learnt nor practised. Our program is quite hard, heavy in terms of hours, exercise and time. Twenty courses and a lot of exams in the same week so the students can not survive, and fulfil the requirements without working with the others and through the others, asking others to share the jobs. It is the way we teach them to lead the others, to manage the others, to make the others work."*

4. Conclusion

All the group of providers at CNAM's MBA agree that the program aims at training students to reach the level of middle managers or more, hence their MBA focuses on managerial training with MBA curriculum and specialized courses. Their curriculum development is well categorized in the study of Smith, G.W (2006) - a realistic approach

between Leadership and Managerial Development⁶⁸. One matter is clear that leadership is not the ultimate objective of the MBA program at CNAM, but some topics of leadership development are. The program refuses to be “trendy” like other MBA programs that systematically say about leadership training. Being different from the trend makes the CNAM’s MBA program become a traditional one with few revolution in curriculum with essential managerial topics and a pedagogical approach that allows them to develop leadership competences and postures. The program never presents their focus on leadership, nor attracts students with leadership courses. With a coincident reason, it is still seen as an overview presentation on the topic of leadership to students with short elective courses. The reason of having the classes of leadership because of the recruitment of a permanent professor who is interested in teaching leadership seems to be absurd but could present also a realistic phenomenon of the organisation management programs in France, especially in universities.

Leadership is explored as other topics for business and management understandings. The definitions of leadership development are not explored enough and limited to the act of leadership through practice and transformation. Without a remarkable attention on the leadership development, students do not see the importance managers’ development in balancing between management and leadership or obtain prerequisite attitudes to perform a leadership tasks and activities, such as in the studies of Mintzberg (2004) and Caligiuri (2006)⁶⁹. The time devoted to this subject is not enough for students to see, absorb and practice the objective of the courses, which is to maximize their impact and capacity to lead oneself or others. They feel that the courses are to give them another regards on managing the behaviour of themselves and others’ in changing situations, as the courses link a lot with change management. Hence, it is a harmonizing position between the program not emphasising on leadership and the public of participants not looking for leadership in an MBA. MBA students come to CNAM to look for managerial skills, to become entrepreneurs, to have professional networks and to obtain job promotion at managerial level, with international development scope. They then devote

⁶⁸ Read the part of leadership theme in the literature review (Part II, Chapter 3, part 4)

⁶⁹ Read the part of leadership theme in the literature review (Part II, Chapter 3, part 4)

more time at CNAM on other expertise, techniques and specialized skills and tools rather than leadership development.

PART IV FINDINGS

CHAPTER 3

CASE of KEDGE – OVERDOSE LEADERSHIP

1. The KEDGE's MBA

1.1. Introduction of the school

KEDGE is a new born business school in France, among the new generation of Merger and Acquisition Business Schools. It was officially created on 1st July 2013 from the merger of two schools Bordeaux Management School BEM (Bordeaux Ecole de Management) and Euromed Management in Marseilles. The new born school was named KEDGE, an English name, which has nothing to do with the two previous entities, but as a symbol to mark the existence of the new entity, with new direction and international ambitions. The term "KEDGE" means a jet anchor, used in navigation to direct the boats. The meaning of this word is to navigate the two schools from the two sides of France, one from the Atlantic Ocean and the other one at the Mediterranean Sea, to use this new directional anchor – a turning point for BEM and Euromed. The word KEDGE also helps to highlight the will for each of Bordeaux and Marseilles schools remain "anchored" in their territories and not to forget their roots, even if this new school is intended to go international with the English word.

The origin of the merger project is credited to Professor Bernard Belletante, who was then General Director of Euromed Marseille Business School. Professor Belletante aimed to bring the new merged school in the top 15 of European schools, look for an alliance to reinforce the image and operation of Euromed. *"With a goal of 50 campuses in the world, we want to become world architects of knowledge"*, believed Professor Bernard

Belletante⁷⁰. *“Euromed has already made its mark in the international rankings. But, ultimately, they would have fallen into international attractiveness. To aim the top 15 European, Euromed had to ally with BEM, as well as a school that exists outside of Paris. It is the only way to increase the quality of the shared investment.”* The merger is aimed to focus on and be joined between two equal and healthy structures to be an accelerator of growth and both business schools are both tops in the rankings.

So KEDGE is a new born of 2013, but its roots are registered from the years of 1870s, with the creation of Ecole Supérieure de Commerce de Marseille, predecessor of Euromed, in 1872 and the creation of Ecole Supérieure de Commerce de Bordeaux, predecessor of BEM, in 1874. Like all the business schools in France, the two schools were supported financially by their Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Marseille and Bordeaux respectively, for all classes related to business, trading, and commercial activities.

The two schools have changed names in the year of 2000 to become Bordeaux School of Management (2001) and Euromed Marseille School of Management (2003) before finally turning out to be KEDGE. The name, with its objective to mark a new start of a new entity that grouped two previous known entities in their region and in the industry, created tough work for the communication staff to recruit for the programs, to communicate about the school and the programs.

Not only the name and the branding have to be readdressed, the financial support and governance of KEDGE are to be discussed as well. KEDGE Business School is founded by Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Bordeaux and Marseille equally. It is governed by a Board of Directors composed of business leaders and representatives of local authorities from both regions of Bordeaux and Marseille. This Board of Directors is structured into five committees, holding 65% of the voting rights. The project was initially supported by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Marseilles, where Belletante conducted Euromed as an enterprise. With a governance promoting initiatives, the school of Euromed has associate status, while BEM is a department of the Bordeaux Chamber of

⁷⁰ Le Point - Les écoles en fusions (Anne Noémie Dorion – 14/02/2013)

Commerce. Soon, with these two different cultures and governance, KEDGE was in a difficult post-merger situation. In plus, affected by chronic funding problems, schools are questioning how to ensure their sustainability in the new entity. The reform of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, called on to restructure since 1 January 2013, has compounded the problem. The transformation of the Chamber of Industry and Commerce laws including the collection of the apprenticeship tax irrigated institutions, created the risk of loosening their ties and forced the institutions to find new sources of funding.

The merger was planned to be an equal fusion, *"In the case of KEDGE or SKEMA, none of the original schools has taken precedence over the other. They have created a new identity with a sufficiently strong and dynamic project,"* stated Bernard Belletante⁷¹. However, since the project began, the two founding Chambers of Commerce and Industry have struggled to discuss together. One professor of Bordeaux campus said that *"In Bordeaux, we had the feeling that Marseille took the hand."* Another teacher from Bordeaux, on condition of anonymity, shared on the local newspaper South-West that *"Everything was done chaotically, totally opaque, in contrast to the basic rules of management that we are supposed to teach."* However, from Marseille, Mr. Belletante felt that the Bordeaux Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and BEM were very conservative and had strong resistance to change. The BEM was criticized by Belletante to be *"a conservative and very expensive education,"* which resulted in the construction of 30,000 m² of new premises *"unsuitable to modern education"* with *"huge lecture halls with inadequate angles, not possible for mobile classrooms"* which would require 5 million euros for a digital upgrade, for example⁷². In plus, in Bordeaux, it was the schools that finance the Chambers of Commerce and Industry but not the reverse. *"The job of our schools will undergo a total revolution in five years"*, said Belletante, director of Euromed at that moment. *"It is urgent to act."* However, seeing the difficulties of culture and governance issues in the merging period, Belletante resigned from his position as General Director of KEDGE Business School after 6 months of its creation. Professor Thomas Froehlicher, who headed HEC

⁷¹ Les Echos - Ecoles de commerce : la fusion à tout prix ? (Théa Ollivier – 8/6/2016)

⁷² L'Obs - Ecoles de commerce : menaces sur les fusions ? (Patrick Fauconnier 20 may 2014)

Liège, and former director of the Nancy ICN, succeeded Bernard Belletante to become General Director from March 2014 until recently.

KEDGE Business School has been committed with the mission to create new modes of teaching and personal development, to connect and strengthen its global community network and to promote responsible management practices. These three missions are encapsulated by its brand signature of CREATE – SHARE – CARE. Although the fusion project made by Belletante aimed at an ambitious strategy to enter the new school in the top 15 global business school within 5 years, and to raise the budget up to 150 million euros, Belletante resigned too soon to implement actions towards this strategy. It is now up to Thomas Froehlicher to lead the school to obtain those objectives or not. The new management was supposed to recruit 14000 students in 2017 and increase the investment up to 52 million euros within 5 years to be able to face the new prospects and challenges that are defined as globalization, the development of distance education and the rise of competition.

To finance its development, KEDGE counts on tuition and further training abroad, where they hope to eventually achieve between 35 and 40% of its turnover, especially in emerging markets. KEDGE wants to strengthen the reception of foreign students on its ex-Euromed's and ex-BEM's campuses in Marrakech, Dakar, Shanghai and especially Suzhou where they train around 500 students a year and aim at 1,700 students within five years. Besides existing campuses in Marseille, Bordeaux, Toulon, Marrakech, Dakar, Suzhou, KEDGE opens a new European campus in Paris with the objective to attract and answer best meet the needs of foreign students. This Paris campus currently focuses primarily on training managers and international participants, for programs as Executive MBA, tailor-made programs and Specialized Masters but eventually it is also a destination for international students on a Bachelor program taught 100% in English. The school also creates a new concept of "Ephemeral campus" to meet the needs of distance and part time learning; that is during eight days, students of a geographical area and a team of KEDGE teachers will gather in the premises of a business partner for workshops in a course deepening project. This ephemeral campus plan has started with MBA programs and programs of higher education in the system of grandes écoles' degree.

To support this development, KEDGE recruits new teachers and researchers, whose number will increase from 154 to 244 full time professors by 2017, as well as 40 instructors who work as business leaders, managers or educators outside, to work either as full time faculty on improving the profile of students or be responsible for assisting and accompanying young people in project realization, personal development, etc. Growth also requires the development of academic partners and research centres to support the different areas of specializations that the school inherits from the two ex-business schools, such as logistics, wine and spirits, maritime, luxury marketing and purchasing. The school will also need to invest in a pre-incubator, research and teaching about social entrepreneurship to fully implement the strategy towards its initial goals. After three years of merge, the key figures of KEDGE business schools are recorded with 7 campuses, 31 programs of management, 289 academic partners, 12000 students in which more than 3000 foreign students, 196 permanent faculties and currently at the 29th rank of European Business School. As a school focuses only on business and management program, MBA is KEDGE's flagship program where it represents the origin of its creation and evolution from the ex-schools before the merger to the Global MBA program of the new entity.

1.2. Description of the program

Looking back to the history of existing, the MBA at KEDGE was initially in 2001 in Bordeaux, with the first specialized MBA in Wine and Spirits. The so called Part time MBA program was also tracked at Euromed since 2001 under the management of MBA director Gérard Mitilian, who is also Professor of Management Accounting and Finance. The program in Bordeaux did not change its specialization since its creation, to be firmly undersigned by the wine industry of the region, while in Euromed, several types of MBA programs were created. In October 2004, Euromed Marseille launched a full-time MBA, called the World Mediterranean MBA, which took place in seven countries (France, Greece, Italy, Spain, Lebanon, Egypt, and Morocco). The original features of this MBA were diversity and multicultural management. They wanted to present new non-standard management, to underline that there would be many ways of practicing management, especially when it

comes to facing different business situations within a multicultural context. The new MBA was supposed to give participants an opportunity to actually encounter different business situations in various countries that are culturally different from Europeans and even different among themselves. Meanwhile the part time program offered to students either a general vision of management or a focus on a professional orientation such as Brand Management, Financial Planning or Bio Science Management. Euromed opened in 2003 an executive part time MBA in China in partnership with Antai Shanghai Jiaotong University. In September 2008, Euromed added a new specialization linked to its location at the seaside and its maritime activities and business of the port of Marseilles, a new executive (part time) MBA program in Maritime Management. The World Med MBA then became homogeneous, flexible with three different formats: 2 year Part time path, 1 year Part time path and Modular path. The latter was the most flexible path to allow a participant to start the MBA at any time and complete it within 4 years. Emphasizing on flexibility, the program was stated and characterized with highly individualized, personal development focus, integrated flexibility, richness and diversity as well as employability. Right from the beginning all the MBA programs either in BEM or in Euromed are taught fully in English, with the international standard of an MBA program. Nowadays with KEDGE, the MBA program is named Global MBA, with Professor Michel Gutsatz as Associate Dean and MBA Programs Director at KEDGE, and exists only in the format of Part time Executive MBA. The program keeps its flexible character when it allows students to choose their campus and their path among the four campuses of Paris, Marseilles, Bordeaux and Shanghai, with an average 4 days for classes per month during 2 years and two to six weeks of two international business seminars. The program is built with 18 core modules and 11 specializations or majors placed in one of the four campuses.

Both schools of BEM and Euromed obtained the accreditation of AMBA for its MBA programs in 2007. Besides, both schools obtained the prestigious Triple crown accreditations title before the merger, with EQUIS accreditation (BEM in 2001, Euromed in 2005), AMBA accreditation (both in 2007), and AACSB accreditation (BEM in 2009, Euromed in 2011). With the creation of KEDGE, its MBA program reinforces the international accreditations of Triple Crown, as well as the accreditation by the Ministry of Education of China. In terms of recognition, the last Financial Times ranking of the top

Executive MBAs worldwide placed KEDGE's MBA in the 23rd position, climbed 20 places in the list compared to the Financial Times ranking in 2013. KEDGE's Global MBA has now become the 4th executive MBA in France and the 12th in Europe, but it is very proud that it is listed number 1 worldwide for salary increase of 114%. *"The objective of my MBA program is like any objectives of any executive MBAs. It is to give to executives with very diverse background training in global business administration. On top of that, the degree of MBA is a way for them to boost their career in their company or outside their company and this is the major leverage for recruiting people, because they know that once they have this degree,"* said the director of the MBA at KEDGE.

The program aims at diversified and multidimensional learning platform with face to face, e-learning, personal development and coaching, strong leadership modules, international seminars and international visits with other MBA partnerships from Australia, Brazil, India, China, the United Arab Emirates, South Africa, Europe and the United States.

1.3. Faculty and staff

The stated methodology of the KEDGE's MBA is to promote a unique mix of participants with scientific, engineering and managerial backgrounds with an investigation of the complexity and diversity of international markets and cultures. That brings to the fact that KEDGE focuses on recruiting faculty with such dimensions of diversity in terms of profession and research, culture and nationalities. The KEDGE Business School faculty is composed of nearly 196 permanent professors and hundreds of part-time professional and academic lecturers working in 6 campuses, which is the pool of resources for all faculties of MBA programs. The Faculty is divided into 5 departments: Management, Strategy, Marketing, Accounting Management, and Operational Management - Finance. Most of permanent faculty hold PhD degrees and continue their research activities, which help KEDGE to record a height of research activity such as publishing books, attending high level conferences and publishing more than 100 scientific papers per year. Other faculty, mostly visiting type faculty, are active business practitioners who undertake world-class research and business relevant to the courses that they intervene at MBA or consultants for major international companies. In fact, the choice of MBA faculty is to select very

specific profiles, because, as the MBA Director said *“We need people first of all who can teach in English because our program is 100% in English both in France and in China. We need people that can teach at executive level meaning who know sufficiently the business and are not 100% researchers. Sending a 100% researcher to a MBA class is suicidal. We need people who have themselves a recorded business and then we need people to be up to date in business. When I say up to date, I give you an example that when I give lectures in China, my colleague already warned me to be careful with my cases, use recent case studies and recent figures. It is to say that if you use the cases of 2010, in China they consider it old, in France they don’t care. So the level of expectation is very high. So you have got to be able to change every year and update it.”* The program supposes to highlight the professional richness of MBA faculty as a differentiate point, but we reckon that it is supposed to be the standardized point conform to the expectation of any MBA students.

Whether students choose any campus among the four in France or China, they have access to the same MBA faculty and benefit from the same high-quality pedagogical support, and leadership development program with different learning experiences. This is why KEDGE’s MBA is supported by three different actors performing as faculty to help students to learn, experiment and exchange. They are business experts, coaches, and teachers, together with the forth actor: classmates or team workers to complete the learning process at KEDGE.



Figure IV.3.1: Actors in the MBA learning process

Source: <http://www.KEDGEbs.com/en/globalmba>

There are 65 faculties in the MBA program. Most of the faculty is from KEDGE, and they use almost the same faculty for the same modules in France and in China. It is recorded that 20% are not from KEDGE, but they recruit people coming from outside France such as from Canada, from the US, from England, from China. We are surprised to discover that nationality diversity is also as important as professional expertise for KEDGE, for the reason of demanders and regulators' satisfaction. *"We want to mix the faculty to have not so much French teachers. It is one of the criteria for choosing a program among the participants but of course it is also a ranking criteria and accreditation as well. This is the issue of diversify faculty by nationalities. We already have many French participants, if there are too many French teachers, it becomes less attractive and less international as a global program."*

Faculty normally teaches in all campuses, but some Chinese professors who only teach in the campus in Shanghai, and KEDGE Euromed and Bordeaux assures 10 out of 18 core courses in all 4 campuses, while 8 core courses are assured by externals. However, the MBA manager confirmed that only one third of faculty members come from KEDGE, the others are not permanent but counted as visiting, contracted instructors. With an e-learning version of basic preparation courses available to MBA students, courses with instructors should be really made in a professional way with people coming from the domain of expert. For example, the faculty is praised by a student as a good mix of professionalism and academism as *"Professors who have returned to the academia after certain years of experience in their professional sector, for example our professor of multi national finance has spent a large part of his career in multinational banks, so he's coming to share his experiences and talking about multi national finance, it is much more interesting than from someone who comes purely from the academic sector. Same thing for the professor of strategy, he's talking about mergers and acquisitions in Asia from his own personal experience. So when he's sharing what he is living through, that is something irreplaceable in the program. But then we also have professors who are academics, and I think there is a role for them as well. For example we are talking about the classes of Corporate Social Responsibility or Business Ethics who brings theoretical perspective from their academics position."*

Administrative staff of KEDGE's MBA program could be counted from the Associate Dean - Director of Executive Programs and MBA Michel Gutsatz, the General MBA/DBA Program Manager in Marseille Caroline Floch, three Program Managers in each campus, one Coordinator for Partnerships and International Seminars, and several Programs' and logistics assistants in different campuses. The General Manager of programs in Marseille assures the management of all staffs and in direct management team with the Associate Dean.

1.4. Student profile

The statistics of KEDGE's MBA program register around 1200 MBA alumni over the world, thanks to the merger and the development of this program in different campuses.

The program is aimed at providing general or specialized management skills to a mix group providing different backgrounds from scientific, engineering to managerial ones. Hence, the program does not look for a specific profile of student but opens to very different backgrounds and professional experiences. The objective is to look for those who have already high level managers but have a strong growth potential afterwards. KEDGE is now targeting more to the executive MBA than just the MBA, hence the program is requiring more and more years of work or professional experience, and hence the participants enrolling in the program are more and more senior. The admission requirement is five years to apply for the MBA but the average years of working experience is 10 to 12 years. The average age of an MBA participant is 39 years old. The number of nationalities is recorded as 24 among all alumni and students.

Thanks to regional professional and enterprise partners developed from the epoch of two schools, KEDGE developed and maintained the relations with professional associations of maritime, air-force and military, supply chain and logistics (with campus in Marseille), wine and spirits (with campus in Bordeaux), financial institution and commercial unions (with campus in Shanghai). Besides, with the organisation and promotion of sectorial clubs and mentorship activities in the Alumni, students at the same time reinforce their skills in

their professional domains and open network and experience in different areas. One participant is very contented with the professional profiles of his classmates *“We have wide range of professional profiles. Among people in the program we have people from the military, we have people from private sector, public sector, in different positions, we have people who are interested in developing within large companies, we have people who are interested in changing completely their career path or starting their own companies. So all of this different mix of profiles maybe probably the strongest point because it allows different people to benchmark and to be able to make comparison with what they see in their own career experience and others having seen from their experiences.”*

KEDGE considers that diversity and multidimensional experience are important for students. Therefore the cohort of MBA participants in different campuses are mixed frequently for a period of time, for several courses, where students have always new meetings and collaborations with classmates from different campuses and exchange students from KEDGE’s partners in different countries.

However, the variety and diversity picture of KEDGE students used to be at stake. In 2012, the cohort had only 11 participants in Marseille, then improved to 30 for 2013, but only 12 participants in Bordeaux. The majority of participants are French, and in China there is no problem for the size of the cohort, but the diversity does not go far from gathering Chinese participants. In 2012, the AMBA accreditation has alarmed KEDGE about the insufficient size of a cohort of MBA, which might affect their accreditation. In 2014, the figures are 35 students in France and 100 students in China. And the objective of the MBA Director is in 5 years to have 100 in all three campuses in France and 100 in China, which becomes more and more difficult in nowadays’ fierce competition in the MBA market.

1.5. Strengths and weaknesses of the program

The strengths and weaknesses of the program are explored from three angles: regulators, providers and demanders.

Remarks from regulators could be seen as achievements in accreditations and rankings' facts and figures, or feedbacks from the assessors. Besides the success of being one of 58 triple accreditation holders, KEDGE earns the position 23 in the list of Financial Times ranking of the top Executive MBAs worldwide and number one in salary increase and the only one sitting higher than 100% of salary increase between the start of the program and three years after graduation in the Financial Times Executive MBA Ranking. From the regulators' point of view, KEDGE's Global MBA has strength in international seminars and visits, because it provides the coherent strategy and development of a real global program. *"The international visit component of the part-time KEDGE MBA is one of the strongest and most substantial elements of this kind that assessment panels have observed in accredited part-time programs"*. However, recommendations and feedbacks from the accreditation assessment show some weaknesses in recruitment and size of cohort in France, as well as the capacity of marketing and follow-up towards the potential candidates.

Remarks from the group of providers at KEDGE's MBA are consistent in three main points:

- KEDGE provides a real global MBA program with fully international dimensions. *"International dimensions of the program, which I think are very important and you can see with the number of trips that we organise. We are trying to really build a global business concept. As you can see some of the Chinese students have come over here working with the French students, which is one example of the international dimensions of the program. I think today international dimension is fundamental. Today you can not organize an MBA program without it being global or having an international dimension, because we are here to train executives that are going in the future to lead companies globally. It's the same thing in France and in China. In China so many managers and executives have no global experiences, they've never left China, or they've been to countries in south east Asia only. And simultaneously we have French people who never went out of Europe, maybe to US but they've never been to emerging countries. And I think it's a shock for both and I think it's important that we train them to discover world and work with people with very different country background."* However, the international dimensions should not be limited to the number of trips that the program organizes. As

an observer, we could see the richness in students' participations with their own multicultural profiles, and the considerable contributions of exchange students that come to KEDGE for some international experience and networking.

- KEDGE MBA program emphasizes on the flexibility and modular for each participant, with their rhythms, their work and their profession schedules. Student could choose to complete their core and major courses in any of four campuses, from 14 months to 4 years, and join a major that is only provided in a specific campus from 2 weeks to 2 years, as well as plan for 2 to 6 international business seminars within 4 years maximum. That is really thoughtful for the group of working people to continue study and work at the same time, so that they could modulate their time, work and study with different rhythms.

- The leadership modules which did not exist at all before, now become the major issue. These modules encompass the entire scope of leadership development from individual assessment, leadership courses and management workshop. The core curriculum is highlighted with the "leadership path" aiming at developing each individual with highest leadership skills up to produce his/her own leadership project and attain his/her full leadership potential.

The weakness that providers-interviewees at KEDGE refer to is the branding of KEDGE in France and in the world. The name is too new to build a strong historical position, despite the achievements in accreditation and rankings. In China, thanks to the partner Antai college of Economics and Management in Jiaotong University of Shanghai, one of the most prestigious universities in China, the program earns its success in China but it is much less known by the name of KEDGE in France. One of the staffs in Marseille said that it is a big challenge for the communication and recruitment team, but also to others, with the name of the school changing several times. *"There is a big problem when we change the name. Even here for the people of Marseille, who live in Marseille their whole life. When they ask where do you work and you say that you are working at KEDGE they do not know what it is. When I say "Euromed", they do not know neither. When I say SupdeCo Marseille, they understand "Ah, ok", while the name of SupdeCo Marseille has changed for 20 years. Clearly there is an issue of continuity and branding that has to be addressed."*

The demanders' points of view reflect the strengths of the program described by the regulators and providers. 55 surveys are answered; from different cohorts of MBA (Marseille and Shanghai 2013 cohort, Marseille, Bordeaux, Paris and Shanghai 2014 cohort) where revealed the result of why they would chose the program at KEDGE. Students, especially a high population of Chinese students, choose this program because of the reputation of triple accreditation and the brand of Jiaotong University. They also appreciate the flexibility of the program that allows them to work at the same time as studying, and the international or global dimension of the visits and seminars. Students assess the difference in tuition fees more than the curriculum of the program, or the components and profiles of students and alumni higher than the profiles, experience or competencies of faculty.

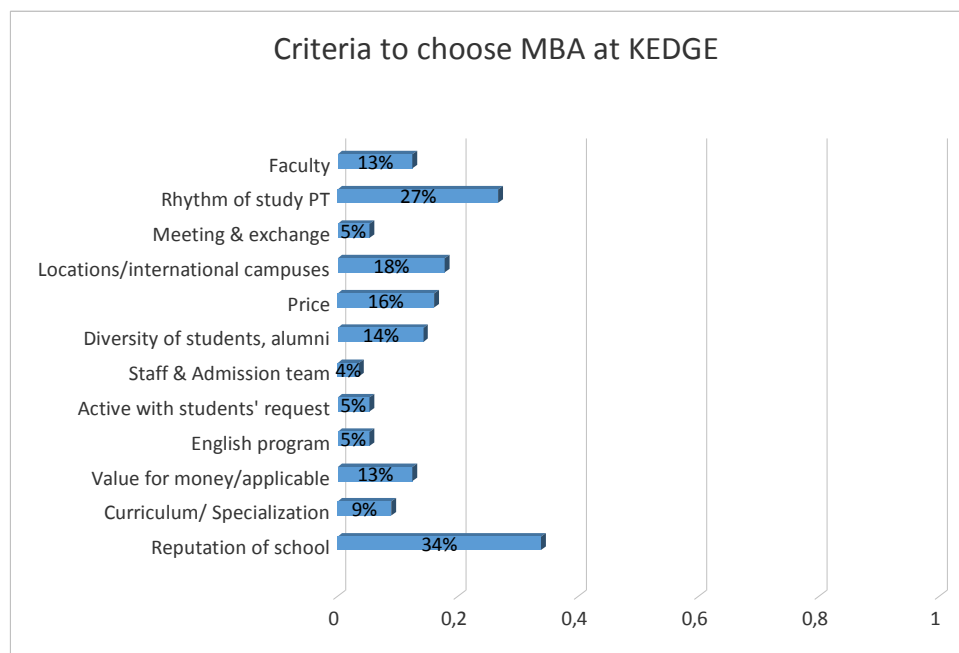


Figure IV.3.2: Criteria that KEDGE's students chose their MBA

Source: Collected from 55 surveys and discussions from different cohorts of MBA (Marseille, Shanghai 2013 cohort; Marseille, Bordeaux, Paris and Shanghai 2014 cohort)

The majority of students are already involved in international experience before joining global program so by default they do not think or appreciate the fact that the program is in English. They search for the degree in order to use the network and the recognition of

the school, eventually to develop their career path. It makes sense when we link to their main reasons why they look for an MBA, where they look more for assuring, advancing and updating managerial skills, and a widened network and exchange experience.

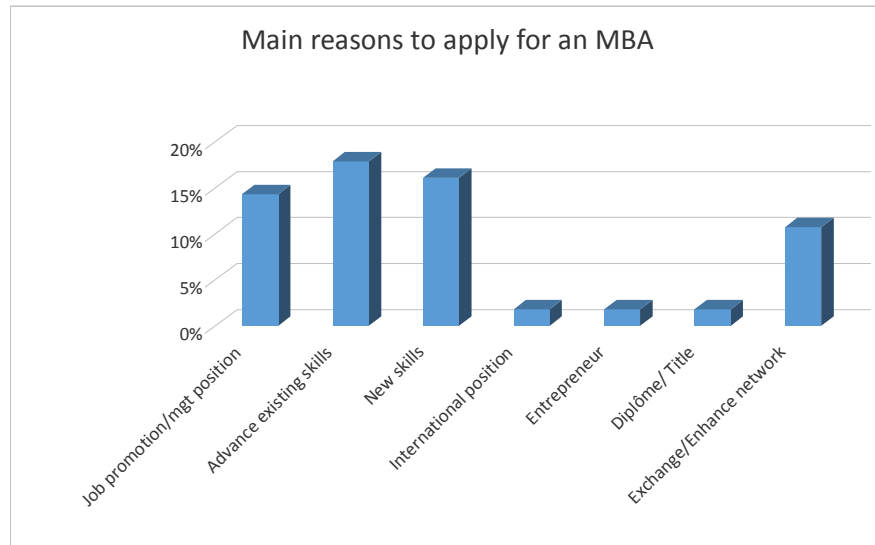


Figure IV.3.3: Reasons that KEDGE's students apply for an MBA

Source: Collected from 55 surveys and discussions from different cohorts of MBA (Marseille, Shanghai 2013 cohort; Marseille, Bordeaux, Paris and Shanghai 2014 cohort)

International experience, multidimensional exchange, alumni and students' network, flexible program rhythm are repeatedly mentioned in the surveys, and very few emphasize the considerate curriculum and the added value knowledge of the program. Out of 55 students, we could see only 5 students mentioned their appreciation of specializations that KEDGE offers them. Nevertheless, we should investigate further on KEDGE's MBA curriculum and its focus on leadership.

2. Curriculum

2.1. Core curriculum

The different formats of KEDGE's MBA program throughout the years are organized by blocs of core modules, specializations or majors to substitute optional modules; and international seminars, workshops. The curriculum is composed of 460 hours of participative courses and 260 hours of workshops, seminars and coaching that a

participant, depending on his/her own schedule, could tailor his/her program by taking available modules in one of the campuses, from eighteen months up to four years to complete the curriculum.

The curriculum is structured with five categories: Professional Projects that counts for 54% of the whole program, and four other parts count for around 10% each of importance in the program, namely Core courses (13%), Major (13%), Coaching and workshops (11%), International Business seminars (10%).

In this respect, the Core curriculum of KEDGE's MBA is programmed as followed:

- Core management tools with 18 modules to reinforce the management knowledge. (Business Models, Economics, Finance, Strategy, Operations)
- A personal and leadership development path that defines and prepare for each participant a plan of professional development (Assessment centre, Management workshops and Leadership modules)
- A Global Geostrategic vision provided by international visits and seminars in different area in the world (International development, Innovation and Entrepreneurship)
- A Specialization focus provided as a specialty of each campus, in different functions, sectors or strategies.
- An action learning which concretely bring to professional Business Development projects with the help of faculty members.

The curriculum of the new KEDGE's MBA program is largely based on the one of Euromed Marseille before the merge. Previously, the program was not similar in France and in China, though the name is identical as the MBA of Euromed Management School. The program before the merge was said to be much simpler, composed of only 12 core compulsory courses and 2 to 3 optional courses called "The summer school".

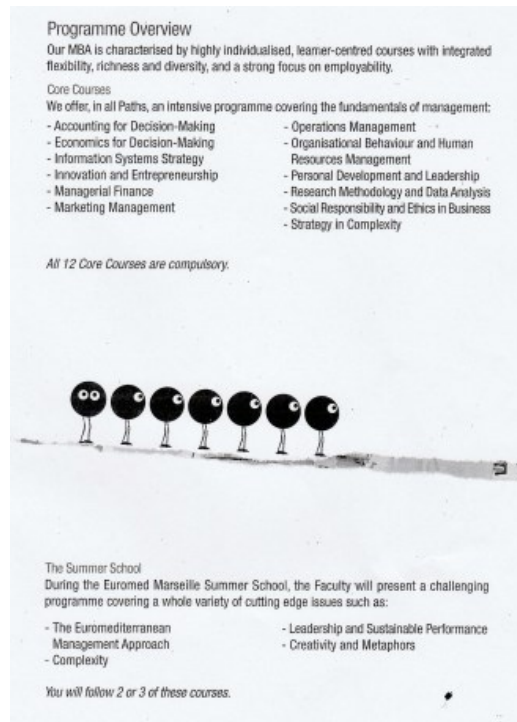


Figure IV.3.4. Curriculum of MBA – 2008

Source: Academic Catalogue of the MBA - 2008

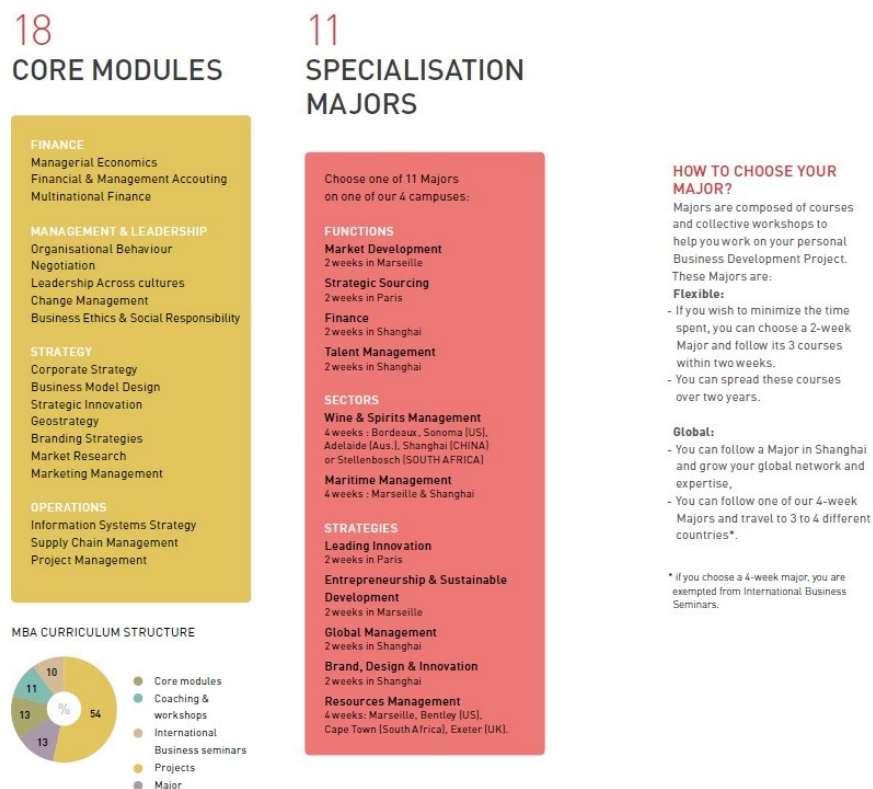


Figure IV.3.5. Curriculum of MBA – 2014

Source: Global MBA – A part-time Executive MBA Brochure - 2014

The new curriculum made a clearance in grouping core functional courses, into Finance, Management and Leadership, Strategy, and Operations. New fundamental courses are added, with a visible orientation to international business development, such as Multinational Finance, Leadership Across Cultures, Geostrategy, Change Management as well as new functional modules such as Project Management, Marketing Management, Branding Strategies, Supply Chain Management, and Negotiation. Some modules does not exist any more in the new curriculum, such as Research Methodology and Data Analysis, or Personal Development and Leadership is no longer a lecture but modified to become a whole coaching and project concept.

Besides completing the core courses, students could choose to register for specialization majors; which are composed of courses and collective workshops in a variety of domains. The majors cover from functional advanced courses in market development, global management, resources management, strategic sourcing, finance, etc. to specific sectors of wine and spirits or maritime, sustainable development, brand and design, etc.

All MBA participants will lead Business Development Projects with the help of faculty members, in order to develop company-oriented and/or personal projects and to turn theory and reflection learned from core MBA-length into real world application of all management tools and techniques learnt.

2.2. Specializations and extra-activities

The change in the curriculum was to create majors instead of electives. A major is compulsory, it is like a mini specialization track, unlike an elective which is optional, so this change leaves fewer choices and less flexibility in taking or dropping classes. Majors are done in two weeks. Participants can do their majors either in Shanghai or in France. If they do them in Shanghai they will do the global management major, that is to take one of the 4-week travels to three to four countries. The global management major is said to be very general with a lot of travelling. If they do in France they focus mainly on the entrepreneurship because the school thinks that students *“in someway can use it at some point”*, said the director. The standard majors have three courses but KEDGE has also

longer majors which are 3 or 4 weeks like the wine and spirit management with less travelling as students do not do the international seminars, they just complete their major.

In fact, its majors or specializations are the fruits of the networks of the two merged schools, the Chambers of Commerce and Industry, their Boards of Directions and Member Companies with different industries such as the Maritime industry, the Wine industry, the Pharmaceutical industry and the Military industry.

The students could choose a two-week format to complete the major of three courses, or they can spread the three courses over two years. KEDGE decides to offer the majors that respond to specific needs, interests and specialty of each campus. For example, the wine and spirits management has to be placed in the Bordeaux region of vineyards, or the maritime management is placed in the two commercial and tourist port of Marseille and Shanghai. The participants when staying four weeks in the place do not only follow the major but could enlarge the sectorial context, the contacts and the concentration to their professional development in a particular sector of interest. Otherwise, they choose a shorter period of major, where they can be nourished by different functional and strategic ideas for their strategic business project.

The offer of specializations and majors are defined in three directions, with specific campuses where participants plan at the same time the idea of apply the major in a specific situation:

- Functions
 - o Market Development in 2 weeks in Marseille
 - o Strategic Sourcing in 2 weeks in Paris
 - o Finance in 2 weeks in Shanghai
 - o Talent Management in 2 weeks in Shanghai
- Sectors
 - o Wine and Spirits Management in 4 weeks in Bordeaux
 - o Maritime Management in 4 weeks in Marseille and Shanghai
- Strategies

- Leading Innovation in 2 weeks in Paris
- Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Development in 2 weeks in Marseille
- Global Management in 2 weeks in Shanghai
- Brand, Design and Innovation in 2 weeks in Shanghai
- Resources Management in 4 weeks in Marseille.

In terms of geography, Shanghai campus hosts 5 out of 11 majors, while Marseille hosts 4 majors, Paris provides 2 majors and Bordeaux just keeps 1 major. Considering the same purpose, the fact that students travel either for the major, or for the international business seminars, describe the objective of KEDGE's MBA to offer participants a global studying environment.

To further emphasize the global studying environment in other countries and in different industries, MBA students are obliged to plan at least two trips in different countries/campuses where their main campus bases. The two-week major is already served as one required trip. Otherwise, they involve in seminars with different topics in one of the universities partners of KEDGE. The list of partners of KEDGE is quite long with 273 international academic partners, 164 of which are with accreditation from five main regions of Europe, North and South America, Asia-Oceania, Africa and Middle East⁷³. For MBA exchange and international seminars, the choice of places and partners are more selective and it comes in different ways. The simple way is *“just looking through the top ranked schools in a country and targeting, contacting several times and opening lines of communication.”* Another example that the coordinator of MBA partnerships and international seminars mentions is to use the reference of the faculty members who have worked or cooperated personally with the institutions. *“There's certainly a pressure to find the best schools. We think that working with schools is much better than working with agents who just send candidates to seminars and link with companies. We want seminars with 2/3 academic contents and 1/3 of company visit so if we want that ratio to maintain, we need to keep our views that it's better work with institutions, not with travel agents of even educational agents.”* Options for seminars in specific topics in specific country are listed for example as:

⁷³ Kedge Business School Activity and Sustainable Report 2013-2014

- To the USA to learn about Lead Business consultancy projects
- To India to learn about Indian Entrepreneurship
- To Brazil to learn about Innovative businesses
- To Morocco and the United Arab Emirates to learn about International Development
- To China for learning about Doing business in China

Beyond their specificities of each destination, the trips and seminars contribute to the networking and the implementation of multidimensional business context that students need to improve for their professional development. One student said that they appreciate the fact that they belong to a global cohort where they could always meet and study with new classmates, two third of the class comes from other campuses or exchange programs that help them to have new contacts, new observations and adaptations to group work with different cultural and professional habits.

KEDGE also organizes monthly extra-curriculum activities, one of which is called “Open your mind” conferences. The monthly conferences help students to have pertinent business topic, new insights and “out of the box” ways of thinking, and of course pertinent development of MBA community network as well.

2.3. Organisation of curriculum

The organisation of the curriculum of KEDGE’s MBA is based on the organisation of the ex-program at Euromed Marseille. It is emphasized and embedded in the three dimensions of the slogan of KEDGE (Create-Share-Care), which was voted at the moment of the merge by the Board of Directors, the management and administrative departments, and the majority of students (74%)⁷⁴. The MBA program benefits from this slogan to enrich the curriculum from various inputs:

- Create:
 - Get set for new professional challenges or entrepreneurial ventures

⁷⁴ Orientations – Quand les étudiants de Kedge décident du future slogan de leur école (Julien Pompey – 28/03/2013)

- Empower your business development project with the help and monitoring of MBA professors and experiences tutors
- Share
 - Connect with MBA Alumni during the International Business Seminars, to build new business and develop new partnerships
 - Share experiences, ideas and fun with great classmates (for life)
- Care
 - Refresh skills and enrich the network with free alumni access to one MBA course per year
 - Improve and develop sustainable business practices for oneself and the organisation

The slogan implies that KEDGE focuses on networking, maximizing students' employability as leading objectives for the changes in curriculum. However, when we try to figure out the origin and motives of changes, stated by interviewees involving in the program, the answers are sometimes confusing whether it is due to regulators' requests, providers' own contributions or students' requests that modifications are made in KEDGE's MBA curriculum. Information is contradictory when the MBA Director claims for his contribution: *"The curriculum of the MBA as it is designed today is created by myself (MBA Director), based on what existed here (of Euromed) when I came in but it has changed quite a lot over the last five years. There was no MBA at Bordeaux, only a wine and spirit MBA (called specialized MBA) but not general MBA."* and other staffs state that *"we do everything and Michel (the MBA Director) is rather here for the role of director for the brochure and the face of the program."* Nevertheless, all interviewees as Providers homogeneously agree that the Regulators do not make any impact on the changes of the contents. *"We do not create some courses or change others because of accreditation. When accreditation assessors ask us to change some thing, it relates to the number of participants to be more important, or the method of class evaluation, how to trace the feedback, rather than influencing the contents of the courses. MBA curriculum is quite basic that is very simple to drive. What makes an MBA different is all around the curriculum, which is a compulsory essential."*

Though having the same compulsory core courses in other campuses, curricula implementation in Bordeaux, or Shanghai, were totally different and independent to the one in Marseille. *“We offered students the same MBA in parallel in Marseille and in Shanghai since 2003. But for many reasons the two programs operated in isolation, so they have only one program in parallel in name only. They had no real interactions. What was designed before I get here was to create individual specializations which are either delivered in Marseille or in Shanghai or now in Bordeaux which are 2 weeks in duration and then through that specialization that leads to the independent business development project which is the thesis.”* The program is quite different between the one of 2008 in Marseille and that of 2014, where we can see new modules, workshops and seminars, but especially the new process of personal development path from the assessment centre, one to one coaching to simulations and business projects.

As for the changes of some courses, explanations are from the process of quality improvement and students’ feedbacks, but it is only recently done. *“First thing is to change the way we track potential students and follow them up. Secondly, to monitor quality, take into account all the hots and colds in our students’ – customers’ remarks, so we made systematic feedback and reporting. It has only been one year that I did work on feedbacks and force teachers to improve courses, putting teachers in competition with their feedback. We know well that some assessments are not correct, so digging the information with the teachers we change the way to handle the course. And thirdly we have feedback on our administrations and organisation of MBA, that allows us to modify throughout the whole program steadily. We are all here to listen to feedback from students, except Michel (MBA Director).”* Students’ remarks are sought and treated here at KEDGE as customers’ after sales services. However sometimes the organisation of the school makes it difficult and rigid to treat customers’ feedbacks, such as in the case of changing instructors who are permanent teachers. *“To dismiss a bad or negligent teacher, we must argue a lot, with students’ feedback, to several rounds up to the Dean of the school, especially if the teacher is permanent here. Normally we were asked to give him/her a second chance, but after the second chance if the class feedback is always bad we make all efforts to remove him/her.”* Or, *“A permanent teacher might be good in*

research, but teaching with quoting research articles is not interesting to students and has no applicable value in an MBA program.”

Another reason for the changes and addition of some courses, is counted for the excellences of faculty and area of expertise of campuses. With private status plus a better attention and allocation from the school for the flagship program with highest tuition fees income inflow, the program also has better resources to select and propose highly appreciated instructors to work for the MBA program. *“We must select the best teachers in the basic modules, but regarding majors, one can use the specialties of our campus, so we can put in the curriculum a course because the teacher is the specialist in that field. We build the course because it is the one of specific specialization courses in our school. We want that course in the MBA and that teacher because he/she is good, and it has a theme that can be integrated and can build something useful and makes sense to students.”* The organisation of classes to bring best teachers to the curriculum creates a situation when best teachers, especially visiting ones, do not know about the curriculum but just their classes. One teacher confused when answering the interview about the position of the course in the program. *“I just come to teach, I do not know the position of my course in the curriculum. My course can be positioned either at the beginning or at the end.”* Sometimes, they do not distinguish the public that they teach are executive MBA or else, and they do not fully understand on the structure of the program, neither the curriculum. They find that it is normal they just focus on their course and classes.

The organisation of curriculum has to be flexible to meet the criteria of flexibility in students’ choices of campuses and courses, and it is observed as a permanent criterion of managers and staffs to deal with the flexibility. Sometimes it is put before the academic criteria, therefore almost no prerequisites or academic orders are established for students to follow different classes. Sometimes, instructors are those who figured out the structure of the program and put a chain link to the series of classes and seminars. *“Last year I discovered the topic of the seminar after my course and I said what would be perfect is to build a week around the topic and giving students chances to think about it and applied it into the seminar. Last year I did a class on strategy that has no link with the next seminar and I felt it was pity. So this year I submitted the proposal and KEDGE said “Fine”. It is the*

matter of negotiating with the instructor what they are good at and what they are going to teach. In KEDGE they are very flexible about that.” But not all instructors take such a good care of the other courses except theirs. One student remarks that two instructors of the same course do not communicate with each other. Sometimes it brings the advantage of having two views of one thing, but sometimes it creates contradiction or redundancies and overlaps in information.

3. Leadership orientation

It is evident to say that modules of leadership are extremely highlighted, when looking at the curriculum at KEDGE’s MBA. Right from the Foreword from the Director, to the structure and organisations of leadership modules and the personal development path within the program, leadership is mentioned everywhere.

If in 2008, there was only one optional class on Leadership and Sustainable Performance in the summer school at KEDGE, the program has been modified and modules of leadership become major issues. The Director of MBA claims his achievements in designing leadership modules, with explanation that *“Before, I would say that my predecessors at Euromed were not really interested in that domain, and they did not have the same business experiences as I have. And it is when you have business experience that you have seen the critical importance of leadership. I see the requirements from the real world, real life experience, not from the requirements of someone.”*

The Director explains further the design of leadership modules *“We have to have leadership skills. It is a current requirement of managers. You cannot do management studies at this level without teaching leadership skills. Before, it is insufficient; we had only one course of leadership, and one course of leadership is not sufficient. We need to have something much more sophisticated. A course is not only just a course that is why we introduce coaches, workshops, role-plays, a project, of course the assessment centre. It is a mixture of pedagogical methods to address the topic. It is the multi-dimension. If you just keep one course they are not going to learn anything about leadership. Maybe just the definition of leadership, but they will not learn anything about themselves. They will not*

learn about how they manage people.” This explanation is captured in the design of the learning process for students at KEDGE, with a very positive regards, while we also recorded another regards much more criticized from a staff. “KEDGE focuses a lot on leadership. We start with an assessment centre where the students are given a different tests, personality tests and results of that and analysis in order for them to identify from a third party perspective where their strengths and weaknesses are and then putting them into one to one personal coaching where the objective is to work on their strengths and weaknesses as well as to identify the strategy where they want to go and how they are going to get there. We then give them three collective workshops: lead oneself, lead strategy and change and then the students complete a group leadership project where they identify the projects which is really to bring them together to work in team and observations of the others as the team and the leadership skills and styles and then we have a three day leadership and personal development course. All the leadership things are too much for a student to digest.”

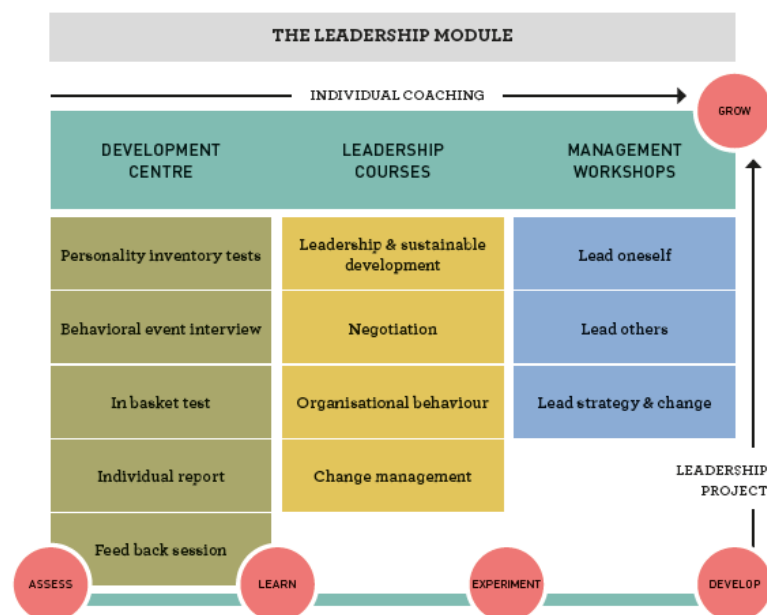


Figure IV.3.6. The Leadership Module structure at KEDGE MBA

Source: Global MBA – A part-time Executive MBA Brochure – 2013

The course of Leadership and Sustainable Development, the core module of leadership courses, was created from the previous years as elective class. It was assured by two permanent professors of KEDGE: Vinca Bigo, Associate Professor in Gender, Ethics and

Leadership; and Maria Kakarika, Assistant Professor of Leadership and Organisational Behaviour. Classes were designed by combining theoretical work and individual project to develop leadership skills, with the focus on “Being a leader” and “Enabling leaders”. The classes develop different theories and approaches of leadership, from Total leadership of S. Friedman⁷⁵, Transformational leadership of Bass and Burns for the part of “Being a leader”, and the Romance of leadership of Meindl and Ehrlich⁷⁶ for the part of “Enabling leaders in organisations”. As pedagogical approach, believing that leadership is a subject best taught in an interactive way, the instructors treated the tools and concepts of leadership both in theory for a clear understanding, then with case studies, role-plays, practical exercises and in-class dialogs with students. The final leadership project is the main part of evaluation for the module, in team project with the help of MBA administration to create a professional project or to involve in a teaching project in a high school with the participation of students from less privileged backgrounds or in KEDGE’s summer school program in Marseille. The projects aim at challenging students with leadership input but also humility and obedience. The leadership development skills are trained as a hint in the syllabus of this course “Indeed, to lead you must first learn to obey and show humility, for a cause higher than your more immediate personal interest. You should also demonstrate total commitment to meeting the challenge as a collective effort.”

Besides the main course of leadership, students follow several other workshops and seminars on management and leadership. As an example, a visiting professor from KEDGE’s partner, Portland State University in the US, a professor in Marketing but was interested in and willing to give a class on Global Leadership Development before students

⁷⁵ Friedman Stewart, D. (2008). Total Leadership. Total Leadership was created by Stew Friedman, founding director of the Wharton School’s Leadership Programs. “Total” because it is about the whole person and “Leadership” because it is about creating sustainable change to benefit not just persons but the most important people around them. The purpose of Total Leadership is to improve performance in all four domains of life: work, home, community, and self by creating mutual value among them. The Total Leadership concept rests on three principles: Be real: Act with authenticity by clarifying what’s important.; Be whole: Act with integrity by respecting the whole person; Be innovative: Act with creativity by experimenting with how things get done. (from <http://www.totalleadership.org/>)

⁷⁶ Read the part of leadership theme in the literature review (Part II, Chapter 3, part 4) for theories of Transformational Leadership of Bass and Burns and The Romance of Leadership of Meindl and Ehrlich.

start a business simulation. *“The idea is to give students chance to get to know new people from different countries, talk about leadership styles and competencies and to reflect on what they are good at for their own development, prepare for the Eurosim Business Simulation, and their field trip to the winery. So they have some aside articles, some cases studies, lectures, lots of discussions and sharing around leadership.”* The lectures on leadership are made on the basis of leadership development definition and concept of Coleman called Primal Leadership⁷⁷ before going further into leadership in a global environment with concrete subjects and examples for discussion. Subjects for discussion involve the organisation of the seminar, such as own experience sharing of leadership styles in different countries or cultures that participants bring from their places, or the family winery as students visit the winery after the seminar, or the business simulation. Teachers and organizers think that it is a good way to present and recall the subject of leadership to students by different activities and classes. *“It is the combination of all, because at other classes they have to work on these things. So they make commitment in the leadership classes to work on certain things and in the follow up classes, in classrooms and certain projects, they can see how they can do things by different ways.”* However, feedback from students shows that they do not appreciate much the overloaded work with leadership subjects. *“We have so much talks, and conferences, and publications, leadership here, leadership there, and there again... that for me, it becomes quite generic, and overused, like anything about the topic of sustainable development that were talked 10 years ago.”* Or another MBA student said that he was fed up with all those talking about leadership and the particular reason is that there is no room for everybody to be a leader. Although being taught and trained leadership subjects with the theories in leadership-followership and collective dimensions, the student does not accept that it should be

⁷⁷ Extract from the interview with the visiting professor: «We talk about different types of leaders, so pretty much the topics in the book of Coleman “Primal leadership, learning to lead with emotional intelligence (HBR Press, 2002). We talk about four different styles and how they connect the styles in their careers, and then how they might act in the simulations, which might be appropriate in different situations. Then we talk about leadership competencies divided into four areas: self-awareness, social awareness, self-management and relationship management. If you do not have competencies in each area, over a long period of time you can be derailed and you can fail as a leader even if you know the things, you know what to be done but people don’t want to work for you anymore because of the way you are doing it. Then we talk more about two more of the leadership styles which can be helpful but sometimes make troubles for the people studying and commanding, then we are talking about the able to use all the styles all together, depending on the situations.”

trained like that, because for him *“Leader has an obvious part of the participations meaning by default that the followers participations are less appreciated. Everybody who is the follower is viewed as less intelligent, less autonomous, less imprudent, and less charismatic. Then basically who wants to be that follower. So nobody wants to be in the position of followers, but then at the same time not everybody can be a leader. If you put five leaders in a room and everybody is trying to lead then you will end up with complete chaos. So I think there should be a new approach to the leadership, a new calibration and definition to leadership, maybe more of followership and integrate followers in that new concept of leadership, to teach participants to be an active followers, active members of a team without having to give yourself a sub standard definition of being just a follower.”* Another student made an indifference comment on the leadership project *“You know, it is like any kind of assignments for other classes. So many readings and assignments for the same subject and sometimes we do not have enough time to digest what we want to do with leadership.”* One staff shares that there is not very good feedback from students about the necessity regarding leadership teaching at KEDGE.

The course of Leadership and Sustainable Performance was maintained until summer 2014, and was replaced by another module named Leadership Across Cultures. We doubt that one of the reasons was feedback of students but we were not recommended to contact the teachers of the course, who are permanent teachers at KEDGE, as the program has difficulties in removing their teaching out of the curriculum. Some of the students’ feedbacks are: they are giving too many theories of leadership rather than practical skills. The professors themselves are not professional practitioners, they are more with academic approaches. In 2014 they replace the course title, content and recruit an adjunct instructor, Kathleen Dameron, who is said to be a specialist and consultant in intercultural management. Besides being in charge of the course Leadership Across Cultures, the instructor assures the coaching to students as well. The course is designed in the way that students focus on self leading with self discovery, what one’s values are before discussing different styles of leadership between public and private leadership, multicultural leadership and what expectation is normal to be a leader in different cultures. Her pedagogical way is to organize the class like a game of miming and role-play. *“Some of the participants did not expect that we work on leadership because they already have the*

leadership course there. So I work on like we do a game, being relaxing, Also, my course reminds them of what the leadership preferences are, and they have done some in their work. A lot of leadership issues are already done, so they start questioning what it is. In order to work on multicultural leadership we need to have the grounding in leadership. So when I come to them they said that they have worked on leadership. So I ask them to write down “who am I as a leader? What are my values?” Then I ask them to imagine the same question when they are managers in a different country? Everyday you have heard about what is right and what is wrong, what you should do and you should not do. So how do people do that on a duty? How do they do in a multicultural environment? How do you do with your emotions? That is really important to look back the question of leadership again, in a multicultural environment, in my opinion.” Bearing in mind that students have learnt quite a lot of leadership courses and themes before, the instructor does not provide any theories of leadership except the multicultural leadership – leadership in a multicultural context, through the introduction of the GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organisational Behaviour Effectiveness) project⁷⁸.

In the survey of students following KEDGE MBA, all students noticed that leadership is taught in the program, but only some could recognize that leadership development skills are prepared in other courses or activities rather than modules with leadership title (16 out of 55 answers). The presence of modules with leadership title is overdosed for some students. *“I am only in my third class but I feel already leadership is a leading underlying message of the program.”*, or *“Leadership, like anything else, can not be taught until you have been exposed to it in real life experience. So all those “lead oneself”, “lead others”, “lead the organisation” and “lead across cultures” can not be developed if students have not experienced and grasped the essence of it before in their life.”* Another one thinks that *“It is quite substantial as it forms a large percentage of leadership from the overall contents in terms of hours. I think it is certainly a valuable point because, it is important and creates values and I would not suggest abandoning it, but it is a lot. It is a lot in percentage of a program and I am not sure that by the end of all of those components in leadership the students are not over saturated.”* Trying to give a reason on the fact that

⁷⁸ Read the part of leadership theme in the literature review (Part II, Chapter 3, part 4)

leadership is substantial but oversaturated in the program's curriculum, that student says *"It is important to discuss leadership in the MBA because a lot of people, especially in France, have problems with the definition of leadership and mistake it with hierarchical executing control. Second reason is because leadership is very trendy at the moment, every program talks about it, so it comes to be what MBA participants expect. Then if you do not cover courses in leadership in your MBA, they feel that the program is missing something. It would be like they would not have a finance class. It comes to be an expected course in the foundation classes of MBA. But then it is not substantial because it becomes so trendy that it is losing its meaning. If you look at numbers of publications recently the keyword of leadership has been exploded. You can not go out of a class or a conference in business or management sector without being bombarded with discussions on leadership."*

4. Conclusion

It is the fact that the MBA curriculum at KEDGE is completely dedicated to leadership development, however, with all those findings, we have the reaction that it is overdosed with leadership development subjects. Courses are added with a great intention to build a complete leadership development plan to students, yet the usage of the image of leaders and definition of leadership or leadership development are mixed and overused. Courses are organized with a dense rhythm with a variety of subjects that link to leadership. All courses are presented with the layer of leadership but the core content of the topics might not be focused on leadership development. Similarly to other US business schools and MBA programs that are in competition of putting in different leadership assessment systems, KEDGE also develops an assessment service. After the assessment, different lectures and seminars provide students with varied but also overlapped definitions and theories of leadership, together with the ambiguous objective to raise awareness of students with leadership subject in different business and context domains or to help students experiment or become leaders. The time devoted to this subject is too much, which creates an overloaded work on leadership so students are fed-up with the subject, being confused that the program is to prepare leaders. There are a lot of focuses of the curriculum on leadership while they are looking mainly for advanced and new

managerial skills, meetings and networking. As developed in the literature review, Mintzberg (2004)⁷⁹ agrees that the development of managers balancing between management and leadership will require another approach to management education that encourages practicing managers to learn from their experience towards new targeted experience. We would say that leadership is an advanced or a new managerial skill in current business curriculum, in order not to confuse students who is affected by the side-affect of the overloaded talking about leadership. Following all the researches on leadership studies and their applications in management education (Mintzberg, 2004; Caligiuri, 2006; Perry, 2007; Komives et al, 2011; Kouzes and Posner, 2003, Smith, 2006)⁸⁰, we find that there is a deficiency and inconsistency of scholarly knowledge about leadership in the curriculum development of the MBA program at KEDGE. We find that the overdose leadership application in the curriculum serves as an innovative and differentiation nature to be remarked and distinguished with other MBA programs in the industry, rather than a systematic development with scholar studies of the field.

⁷⁹ Mintzberg, H. (2004), *Managers Not MBAs: A Hard Look at the Soft Practice of Managing and Management Development*, Berrett-Koehler Publishers

⁸⁰ Read the part of leadership theme in the literature review (Part II, Chapter 3, part 4)

PART IV FINDINGS

CHAPTER 4

INTERCASE– BETWEEN SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENTIATIONS

Before approaching the discussion on the whole industry of management education and MBA in France as per our research scope, we dedicate this chapter to focus our analysis on the two previous cases. This chapter will explore the comparison of the two cases with elements in the observations of the two cases, and interviews of those who involve in activities of both cases. This chapter will also examine immeasurable determinants or phenomena absent in the cases or vaguely mentioned through interviews. We got in touch with two instructors who occupy the teachings of same courses in both KEDGE and CNAM for several years, and some students who considered and applied both programs, so their provided information is reliable enough to allow us not to jump into a generalized statement with our own observations throughout the years.

1. It is the same

It is a surprise for us when we did the observation throughout three years in two programs and we learned that the two schools have quite a lot of similarities in the organisation, the development and the implementation of MBA curriculum at KEDGE and at CNAM.

1.1. Compliant curricula to international standards of accreditation

Similarities could be very easily noticed on the presentation of the curriculum of the two programs. In addition it is confirmed by several interviewees that they are the same for general or core courses like any MBA program. *“It’s the same like in other business schools so we have marketing, organisation behaviour, team building..., we have many soft skills*

courses.” Or “Nothing else differs from the other MBAs of business schools, in terms of courses and content of courses. The courses that we teach here is very similar with the other MBA programs.” If we link this point to the reasons students state that they chose to do an MBA to get new skills or advance existing skills, we could provide them with a courageous suggestion that they could choose any MBA and will be satisfied with their requirements with knowledge contents and skills improvement. Anyhow, it was already the case when one student at KEDGE shared to us that he used to get information, discussed the staffs of the two schools, visited the campuses and considered the two schools before choosing KEDGE. “I considered the two programs at that time, HMBA at CNAM and Global MBA at KEDGE Bordeaux. It seems to me the two programs are very similar. Classes in both schools seem to be very interesting, teachers’ profiles are very professional so both MBAs are very realistic and approach the business world. I did not choose one to the other based on the content as they are the same, preparing good managers.”

Logically, the design and structure of an MBA is defined to meet certain standards and requirements from different parties so that it could be recognized everywhere in the world. Opposite to the Mastère Spécialisé and the Diplôme des Grandes Ecoles which are elite degrees in France, MBA is not a French degree, neither in its name (Master of Business Administration) nor in its curriculum structure. The MBA degree claims the recognitions and influence in international scope but not uniquely in France, so the program has to be compliant to international standards of accreditations, rankings; and to be convincing to the demanders who aim at international market. An MBA student explained the necessity that programs conform to international standards so that the legitimacy and recognition of the MBA is assured for all parties: programs, students, or market demands. *“It is true that today there is one business degree which is recognised everywhere in the world, the highest level of business degree and it’s the MBA. So if you are taking an MBA in the US, in Europe or in Asia, when you say it is an MBA everybody knows an MBA. The only difference is it is accredited MBA or not accredited MBA. So it dictates itself the profile of the program you are looking for: people who wants to position themselves in the international market, who wants to have recognition for their program internationally.”* No one argues that the core program of an MBA should be different, and

we doubt that if it is different, it could earn the attention and assurance of quality from International Regulator bodies. To argue on this point, we could read in the accreditation criteria of AMBA concerning the curriculum: “The curriculum should be generalist in nature and must cover the core business skills: marketing, the economic and legal environment of a business, accounting and quantitative methods, finance, organisational theory, interpersonal skills, information technology, risk, ethics, CSR, entrepreneurship, and the processes and practices of management. Each core subject should be addressed by a course of instruction, although integration of these core subjects is vital. The programme must have a rigorous, appropriate and well implemented assessment strategy.”⁸¹ *“The ranking bodies do not give advice or judgment on contents of the program, but,”* as one program manager said, *“There are some criteria that are unavoidable but they are basic criteria to be able to be accredited. They are basic contents of MBA that are very simple to implement.”* Because of these conformities in the regulators’ requirements, structure of courses is almost the same in all accredited or wish-to-be-accredited MBA programs, with the ones of KEDGE and CNAM as example. They formed the curriculum into blocks of core modules and the rest of the curriculum.

One instructor who provides teaching activities for several types of management training, from MBA programs (such as EDHEC, ESC Rennes, CNAM, KEDGE, Arab Gulf University in Bahrain and EPF Lausanne in Switzerland) to master programs for French schools, grandes écoles of business and engineering, IAE and universities, give us her feeling from what she observed about the course organisation. *“Regarding the course organisation, I find that MBAs in general, receive from their institutions more attentions than other programs. More human and financial resources are allocated to them. It seems to me that competition, rankings are put among schools and those competition and rankings are pushing schools to keep its rankings, which gives certain standards for schools.”*

⁸¹ AMBA Accreditation Guidance for business schools – Association of MBAs, extracted from <http://www.mbaeworld.com/en/Accreditation.aspx>

CORE MODULES	Core Curriculum
<div> <p>FINANCE Managerial Economics Financial & Management Accounting Multinational Finance</p> <p>MANAGEMENT & LEADERSHIP Organisational Behaviour Negotiation Leadership Across cultures Change Management Business Ethics & Social Responsibility</p> <p>STRATEGY Corporate Strategy Business Model Design Strategic Innovation Geostrategy Branding Strategies Market Research Marketing Management</p> <p>OPERATIONS Information Systems Strategy Supply Chain Management Project Management</p> </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accounting • Finance I & II • Marketing • Strategy & Negotiation • Economics & Statistics • Organization Behaviour • Management Information Systems • Business Law & Ethics • Operations Management • Human Resource Management

Figure IV.4.1. Core Curriculum of MBA – 2014

Source: Academic Catalogue of the MBA KEDGE and MBA CNAM - 2014

Besides the core courses, organisation of study trips and seminars are observed with very similarity attitude, plus a final project that students need to work through to terminate their MBA program. We remind the assessment on the structure of the program that “The program must be designed to build on the significant work experience and diversity amongst the student cohort. Particular attention should be paid to the international dimension of contemporary management.”⁸² Hence, the two schools have some notions that are very identical, in names and in the nature of organisation activities to improve the experience and international dimension of students:

- “The other new thing is definitely trying to package and a work through via all of the conferences we do at CNAM. We call it “expand your horizon”, in order to feed their professional practices by ideas with the richness of CNAM’s expertise, to help them connect the dots from different domains as well as enterprises, companies.”
- These “expand the horizon” seminars are very similar to the series of “open your mind” conferences that KEDGE organizes monthly in order “to help students to

⁸² AMBA Accreditation Guidance for business schools – Association of MBAs, extracted from <http://www.mbaeworld.com/en/Accreditation.aspx>

have a thorough exploration of a pertinent business topics with unique insights and latest research developments, to have network with alumni, participants and candidates, and to think out of the box for un-conventional topics”

- Personal and professional development coaching for each participant from the individual assessment or it is called in KEDGE one-to-one coaching.
- Compulsory study trips with seminars in international campuses and visits to international companies. Each topic of specialization or major will lead to the choices of several international visits that link to the specialization and major.
- A final consulting project (called in MBA CNAM) or a consulting or business development project (called in MBA KEDGE) is required in the way that students organise and they have to solve the problems for companies or propose something immediately to improve their companies or feasibility study for their entrepreneur project. Ironically, both organisers of the two programs mentioned this project as their unique and difference when comparing to other MBA programs.

MBA curriculum organisation is not only similar in terms of presentation and structure of courses. At KEDGE and at CNAM, it is observed and noted with a lot of common points in the way of implementing and administrating the curriculum, faculty selection and students' profiles.

1.2. Same pools of Providers and Demanders

The core administration of the programs at KEDGE and at CNAM is very similar, though the governance above and around the programs can be different at first site. The program is organized with a Director of program who defines, directs the program, and manages the organisation of the program including academic issues and faculty members, administrative surveillance and staff members. Just below the MBA Director, an MBA General Manager is positioned to coordinate all quotidian life of the program, the organisation of the program with his or her sub managers and administrative staffs. Observations and replies from instructors and students show that the MBA General Manager is the heart of the program, the one who is essential for the performance and

advancement of the program. Though it should be the Director of the program to be in charge of curriculum organisation and faculty discussion, it is repeatedly said by the faculty, and students, each time we ask about the position and organisation of the courses in the program's curriculum: *"you have to see Kim/Caroline for that question."* (Kim and Caroline are MBA Manager at CNAM and KEDGE, respectively). Some staffs in both programs even dared to confess that their director was just for the role of director for the brochure and the facet of the program, but the real work to keep the program alive was assured by the general manager. Both general managers mentioned that their difficulties are to assure the programs, organize and manage the staff team, organize students' admission and recruitment and the most difficult issue is to keep and recruit excellent professors for their MBA programs while the role of faculty recruitment must be the Directors'.

Though KEDGE and CNAM are operated in two different regimes and governed by different systems essentially public and private management, they bear the same way of recruiting most visiting professors for their MBA programs. Saying in another word, visiting professors are vocational instructors, who are not permanent teachers but having their main jobs either in companies, government, universities or in other business schools, and who are interested, passionate, and experienced enough with given subjects in the curriculum that they are recruited only for those subjects, to share, to transfer knowledge and experience to our students. Both MBA managers confirmed that the programs used more than half of vocational instructors to ensure the operation of the programs. The reasons of program dependency on external faculty are because *"Teachers were chosen because of their great professional experience and extensive experience in higher education. The success of an MBA is the richness of the diversity of teaching."* In a same market of management education in France, all MBAs have the same references of faculty and instructors so it is normal when some students puzzled out that their teachers were in fact faculty of other business schools. One CNAM MBA student said *"I am surprised to see LinkedIn profile of my teachers of MBA, a lot of them give lectures at HEC, ESSEC or NEOMA. So why do I have to spend more money for an MBA program taught in well-known schools but by the same profile of teachers that I could find here."* The fluidity in recruitment without engagement and the expertise domain of each teacher bring him/her

the choices of working for one or several business schools and programs. That fluidity becomes a network of MBA vocational faculty that circles within different schools, business and management programs. One program manager affirmed that it is the phenomenon of all schools, not only the two cases we are discussing on. *“When I attended the different conferences of AMBA and we discussed with other AMBA accredited programs’ directors, other schools do the same way to recruit vocational faculty. This happens not only in France but in other countries as well. They are called fly-in vocational faculty or something like that.”* One specific example is that we could encounter and discuss at least with two teachers who taught at the same time in both MBAs at KEDGE and at CNAM.

The richness in experience within an MBA program is not limited to the excellence and qualification of professors. It comes from the diversity and experience of MBA students’ profiles, which was mistaken to be homogeneous in business and finance profiles. KEDGE and CNAM both recruit students who are from a wide range of professions, who are interested in developing their managerial career within large companies, or changing their professional path, or else starting their own companies. When passing the interviews with both schools, they were very proud about their mixed profiles of students and thought that it is their unique strength but ignored that we obtained almost the same information from counterparts of other programs. *“We do not look for one single profile of students”* versus *“We have wide range of professional profiles”*. *“We have several students who were pilots for Commercial Airline companies or Military Air Force”*, versus *“Some students came from the military, who work in the Air Force”*. *“We define that there is a need for engineers to learn courses in management, to have double competences and to be able to join the management position in the executive board of enterprises so they need managerial skills and knowledge”* versus *“We have a lot of students finishing their first diploma in technical fields, engineers, and due to the evolution in their career they find themselves in a much more soft skills interpersonal management situation where they are now dealing with people but not just with machines or computers.”* Those are some examples to show how coincidence it is to see how they present the variation of their students as their uniqueness.

If course contents are similar to satisfy the accreditations, faculty members are selected from the same pool, students are enriched with diversified profiles and complimented experience, could we dare to say that various MBA programs converge to one conformed program? Could we distinguish between this MBA to another one and could we see the differences between programs?

2. Yet it is different

We could not compare and spot the evidence in the governance of the two schools. KEDGE is a merged business school with a private status, a joint-venture governance, a domain of education focused on management and business education and an organisational flexibility depending on programs and campuses. CNAM, on the contrary, is a grand public institution, rigid and centralized governance with a lot of domains of education from engineering, humanities, management and continuing education. Yet, this evident difference in governance affects a lot in the differences of the two MBA programs.

The first remark comes to the allocation of resources and priorities or attentions that the school pays to the flagship MBA program. *“According to me, at business schools like KEDGE there are more resources, both human and financial resources are dedicated to the MBA, while in the university system like CNAM, it depends only on the human resource, to be precise, it depends on only some good persons who manage to care and bring along the program,” said a faculty who teaches in both programs.* The human resources and investment seemed to be unsatisfactory and depends on only some key persons at CNAM, turns out to be a principle of class organisation at KEDGE. Examples are *“At KEDGE, systematically before each class starts, the Dean of the school, the Director of the program and the staffs come to greet the teacher and students. Here at CNAM, though I have been teaching here for several years I never saw the Dean of the university or know who the director of the program is. It seems to me that the organisation and governance is more flexible in the business school, and centralized and rigid in the university.”* Similarly, another instructor described to us all the differences in the curriculum organisation between the two schools that he teaches at the same time *“Similarities can be found in topics and subjects that are related to business. So in both cases you have classes in*

marketing, finance, management information systems, so a number of courses look the same. However, the teaching style and the environment are probably quite different.”

According to him, the teaching style seems to be too academic and structured where students are always gathered in a classroom for the whole day, with coffee breaks in a coffee shop or a coffee machine, with group discussions divided into different tables but still inside the same classroom, and with administrative or other logistic people in another isolated location that makes the courses more closed, formal. On the other side of the comparison, for the environment at KEDGE, students and instructors are welcomed on a campus, not in a room. They move around, get to different rooms for discussions, connect to other students from other campuses with a large screen and review with colleagues. Students at KEDGE use the technologies much more than at CNAM for group work and discussion. Besides, they have a table with coffee and orange juice and biscuits and candies all day so they can have a cup of coffee during the class, there is not a strict border between the classroom and the outside. *“At KEDGE, the logistic people are always in the rooms or close to the rooms for the class. Questions are treated on the spot. For example, in Shanghai the logistic person is permanently in the room to answer all kinds of questions. It might save time and we have the feeling that students focus on the studying, they are not disturbed by other administrative questions for example. At CNAM they are in a remote area. If you want to ask anything you have to find them during the break, so either a coffee or your questions answered.”* The same feedbacks from a candidate of the two schools is that the CNAM seems to be too schooling for students, while MBA students treat themselves not like students but participants in the training process, so they prefer the business school’s concept for reception, location and attitudes of all the staffs who pay attention to them, from the guard of the buildings to the logistics people. They feel like MBA program do not deserve a higher attention than other programs at CNAM, and *“students are treated with social attitude but not with business attitude”*. It is justified with the strategy of each school, to be a prestige top business school and an open university accessible for everybody.

The second remark regards the recruitment and selected profiles of students. Instructors agree on the fact that in both programs they encountered very various profiles of students, but they still point out the differences. *“The first difference, I believe that is*

depending on the institution style. At KEDGE, in Marseille for example, they have some agreements with the air-force base, the navy, we have the feeling that it is integrated into a number of human resource management department of large organisations. They have good agreements so that each year they have one or two students come from the same company. That brings us feeling that the program does not involve only people but also organisations. At CNAM, though I know some students come from companies but we do not have this feeling of involvement of organisations, they are quite personal.” Students’ maturity in profession and the experience sharing are claimed to be the second difference in the profiles of students. Though both instructors are very concerned with the comparison between a group of around 40 students and a group of around 90 students, they have the feeling that *“at KEDGE, students have more formal maturity in profession”*. One explained his feelings that *“The feeling I had with the students at KEDGE is that the majority of them are involved in their professional life, they are not looking for a job, they are already at work. At CNAM I had the feeling that students might have a job but they tend to change or they are in the change period. It is a turn in their professional life, either because they have no job or because they intend to change or they have the feeling they will need to change in the future. When at KEDGE the feeling is more with students who want to expand into their current job. So at KEDGE they have a more formal maturity in profession and there is a real good experience sharing. At CNAM, from times to times it happens, but I had the feeling that when students share, they give the feeling like “hey, I know. I’m better than you are. It is not the sharing in an open minded state of mind, to share is rather than to show the other one that I’m better than you are. So the atmosphere and the course environments are quite different.”* Arguing for this point, both instructors doubt the reason comes from the different organisation of classes, where students stay with their cohorts from the beginning to the end of the program at CNAM, while they are obliged to mix with other students in different campuses at any new module. *“I think the format is quite different. Something I’m not sure it relates to the students or it relates to the organisation of the school. For example here at CNAM the students would start and finish with one cohort only, and possibly the course will be reworked one year later, something like that. But in general, students are up together from A to Z. They have study trips but they are almost with the same people. At KEDGE, absolutely not! They have different starting point during the year, and it can be someone starts in Bordeaux, and may*

attend the class in Paris. In the classroom usually I would say one third of the students are not from the city of the campus. They come from other cities. It is a complete mixture between campuses and very often, one third of the students did not know any other one before the course. It helps them to have an open mind to know and discover the mates.”

These differences in favour to KEDGE are all acknowledged by CNAM as their weaknesses, they show the identity of the school to be open, accessible and affordable. We might think about other identity of the program from the comparison, such as rigid, formal and academic environment. Information collected in the recent school years show that the MBA program at CNAM starts to organise the cohort with different entrance dates, different modalities of studying so that students are mixed with different groups during the year. However, in the scope of this research, we shall not go further to the current changes in both schools.

Specializations and majors claims to be the last difference in the organisations of the two curricula. Both programs explore the strengths of their schools to employ a structure of extra-modules rather than core business skills, which help students to have another focus in their management competences. Once compliant to the standards for the core curriculum, each program tries to distinguish their curriculum with the specializations or called in KEDGE “Majors”. The majors highlight the specialties of the school, as well as their identity that other programs might not be able to duplicate right away. In the case of CNAM, besides general management and project management, they have added new specializations like innovation, entrepreneurship, and fashion business management, insurance. *“Those courses are quite unique and different from other business schools. Those courses are very special, thanks to our partners with companies and our own trademarks in certain domains”*. Indeed, the specializations are claimed by students and alumni to be very solid, well organized and bring an in-depth focus on management in the specific fields. The specialization courses are organized full time during the whole trimester, compared to the three-module majors at KEDGE that last in general two weeks. However, the major is very realistic, as the teacher at KEDGE gives an example *“Probably the majors are more professional at KEDGE. If you go to Shanghai you choose finance and you go to the stock markets, you are dealing with real companies in the stock markets with onsite classes, so you are learning from real cases. And they get better international*

exposure at the same time with such international seminars.” KEDGE takes advantage of its multi-campus to explore the benefits of each region to increase the on-site visits, expert - guest lectures to provide students not only some knowledge in the field but contacts in the respected field for future business development. That is why they explore Finance, Brand, Design and Innovation in Shanghai, the Asian hub of financial and fashion, or they count on castle and vineyards in Bordeaux to discover the wine and spirits business experience, or they bring students to fragrant and essential oil production region of Aix en Provence with family businesses in order to discuss about entrepreneurship and sustainable development. The model of organizing these majors is similar to organizing intra-enterprise training programs on certain theme, added into the core curriculum of MBA. Organizing majors in a short period of time with visits and on-site lectures is intense but quite flexible, therefore they could easily multiply the number of majors but we doubt that KEDGE implemented all majors for the cohort, although they are open to all 90 students in all campuses. Majors that were cited the most by the students we surveyed are Global Management (in Shanghai), Market Development (in Marseille), Wine and Spirits Management (in Bordeaux) and Finance (in Shanghai). Unfortunately, we could not figure out how they realised, organised and managed the other majors with few or no students interested in. Internal operation of this part was not revealed by the organisers. However, after all, MBA is to provide students with general management skills and overall management capacity. Do MBA programs really need to present and advertise so many majors? We would devote our future research on why schools need to present a lot of majors to show the richness and diversity of specializations, domains and sectors.

The organisation of specializations at CNAM is different. In fact, thanks to the partners with their well-known and professional reputation, specializations at CNAM are constructed with courses for the whole three months, done by partners’ experts in the respective fields. Visits are also assured with professional relations from partners, to make sure that students are trained with focus to develop their career in the respective fields. For example ESMODE is very famous in fashion so lectures on Fashion Management are done by ESMODE’s teachers to be specific in the field of fashion business development, with visits to Cholet, a region known for its expertise and its network of companies in fashion and textile. ENASS is another example of a CNAM’s institution dedicated to

actuary and insurance, with long cooperation with the association of insurance. Hence the CNAM provides and delivers the MBA specialised in insurance to the people working and participating in the association of insurance, with teachers and experts coming also from the association, and visits to big actuary and assurance companies in London. The specializations at CNAM are organized nearly like a specialized management degree, as an academic head of one specialization said, *“The specialisation modules are very special, they are very long and in-depth and it is designed only for CNAM; almost similar like a certificate of competence in the specific field. What I would like to mention more is: the specialty of this MBA here is really to train the specific professionals for companies.”* These various offers of specializations or majors interest certain percentage of students to make their decision to choose a school, especially in the case of CNAM - 47% of students choose the CNAM for the specific curriculum with specializations. Specialization is much less concerned in the case of KEDGE, as majors are compulsory but not deep enough in terms of duration, class hours. Nevertheless it creates another atmosphere of focusing on a domain but not too specialized within it. But specialization or major distinguishes this MBA program to another one. So in some cases, developing certain specializations becomes a strategy of differentiation for a program to bring the uniqueness or revolution of its curriculum in compared with others.

The visible issue which creates the difference in the curriculum organisation of KEDGE and CNAM is the leadership theme. Between *“We do not have really any movement in the content towards leadership”* and *“Leadership modules become a major issue”*, there lies a big gap between the explorations of the theme of leadership. The following part will discuss profoundly on that topic.

3. Leadership – the rhetorical art or the strategic arrangement in curriculum development

It is difficult to compare or discuss equally about the introduction of leadership theme into the curricula of the two schools – KEDGE and CNAM. We first focus on the courses

precisely named with the word “leadership”. In each case, we have emphasized on their different characters of integrating leadership in the curriculum: *overview* and *overdose*.

It is seen as an *overview* presentation on the topic of leadership to students at CNAM, with three reasons:

- Courses are added without pure intention, just because of the recruitment of a permanent professor who is interested in teaching leadership. The program clearly aims at training a 360° general manager for managerial functions in the businesses and believes it is the real objective of an MBA curriculum
- Courses are organized at the beginning as short seminars, then as elective courses so that it is not enough and not a compulsory element for students to see the importance of the topic. Leadership is explored as other topics for business and management understandings. The definitions of leadership are not explored enough and limited to the act of leadership through practice and transformation.
- The time devoted to this subject is not enough for students to see, absorb and practice, while the objective of the courses is to maximize their impact and capacity to lead oneself or others. They feel that the courses are to give them another view on managing the behaviour of themselves and others’ in changing situations, as the courses link a lot with change management courses. Besides, MBA students at CNAM devoted more time on other expertise and specialized skills and tools with specialized classes.

At KEDGE, the presentation of a curriculum completely dedicated to leadership development, however, is discovered as an *overdose* subject, equally with three reasons:

- Courses are added with a great intention to build a complete leadership development plan to students. According to the director who claims his initiative in introducing of the leadership courses, the curriculum at KEDGE has to be much more sophisticated with leadership, because the objective for business school is not only to develop the skills of managers but to train and prepare future leaders for businesses. The usage of the image of leaders and definitions of leadership or leadership development are mixed and overused.

- Courses are organized with a dense rhythm with a variety of subjects related to leadership. However, it brings the feeling that leadership is added as a systematic term but the core content of the topics might not be focused on leadership development. On the other hand, with different types of classes, seminars, lectures, guest speakers, the definitions of leadership are either varied or overlapped in different ways from situational, behavioural to transformational leadership. The richness of classes, instructors and the time devoted to leadership bring to a curriculum as many debates as in the current literature of leadership.
- The time devoted to this subject is too much and that creates such an overloaded work on leadership that students are fed-up with the subject. The program wants to prepare leaders with a lot of focuses of the curriculum on leadership while students are in fact looking mainly for advanced and new managerial skills, meetings and networking. Could we say that leadership is an advanced or a new managerial skill in current business curriculum, in order not to confuse students?

The aim of this research is not to measure what the proper dosage of leadership theme is in the curriculum. We just observed and noticed that the two MBA programs try to emphasize on their difference or indifference with leadership, in order to remark on their attitude of curriculum development, in regards to the tradition legitimated curriculum of an MBA. Both schools see that leadership is one of the important skills for future business executives, but each of them interprets it differently in the development of their curriculum. From one end, everything needs to be defined with the leadership and explicitly integrated into the curriculum, to the other end where there is no need to mention more or make any difference because leadership is embedded into each and every course in a typical MBA curriculum. All the people involved in the creation and development of the curricula of both programs, when being interviewed, coincidentally agree on the point that “leadership is trendy at this moment”. We see the efforts of some programs, KEDGE included, to surround all topics with the leadership theme. Leadership is the first of five dimensions associated to success in business⁸³, believed the director. Hence it is the first pillar in the innovation of the KEDGE’s MBA curriculum. *“There are five*

⁸³ Leadership, managing uncertainty and complexity, innovation and agility, results-orientation and customer-orientation (Interview Michel Gutsatz for the News of Kedge on 21 august 2014)

pillars to our innovative learning approach: Developing leadership, developing a global strategic vision, reinforcing management knowledge, specialize and be prepared for career progression through personal business projects.” Making a differentiation from others by the focus on developing leadership is KEDGE’s way, while for CNAM’s providers; it seems that they do not want to focus too much on leadership to become similar to other programs. *“Nowadays, the word leadership is over-used. And people use that for different meanings and I do not want to be lost in giving definition. What interests me is the use of the concept and quality of the person, job done, process, moving, change, but not a name or the status.”* Being different from similar differentiation is another way of CNAM to avoid conformist to the trend of leadership.

Despite the effort not to become conformist to the trend of leadership, there are still courses of leadership in the curriculum of the MBA at CNAM. The two modules of “Change and Leadership” and “Cultivating Leadership impact: through voice, breathing and presencing” confirm to potential demanders who expect leadership in an MBA like any fundamental classes. The two modules confirm the legitimacy of their MBA that they do have leadership in their curriculum, but they are not trendy like other MBAs just focusing on leadership. In the cases of MBAs at KEDGE and CNAM, Deephouse’s theory of balanced position is applied. The similarity of having leadership courses converges for the legitimacy, but then diverges for differentiation in the choices of which business aspect leadership skills should be explored. It is associated with Change Management, or it is associated with Multicultural Management, or bizarrely it is associated with Sustainable Performance.

The fact that there are so many different definitions of leadership in the literature in business and management domain leads to a chaos in the interpretation and implementation of courses, pedagogical approaches and study programs. Each one could interpret and implement the leadership as his/her chosen definition. Each student, therefore, could absorb and think of leadership differently. Students’ surveys reveal their different understanding of leadership. We have interpreted their understandings into different categories based on the definitions and characteristics of leadership theories in the literature.

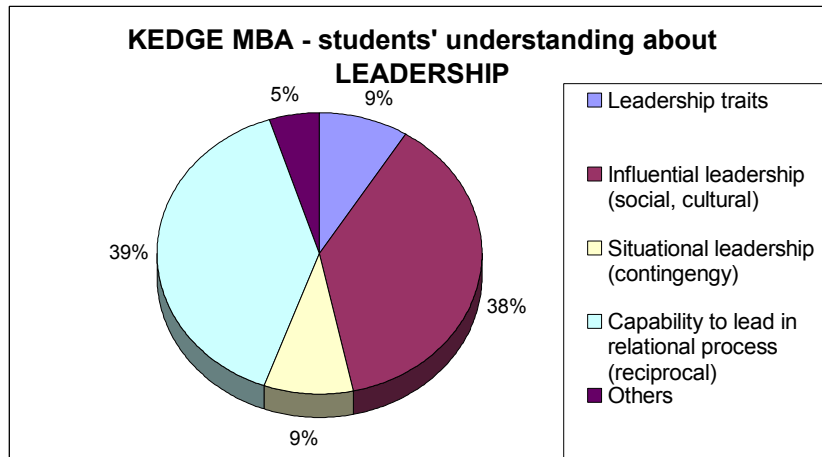


Figure IV.4.2. MBA students' understanding about leadership at KEDGE

Source: Collected from 55 surveys and discussions from different cohorts of MBA (Marseille and Shanghai 2013 cohort, Marseille, Bordeaux, Paris and Shanghai 2014 cohort)

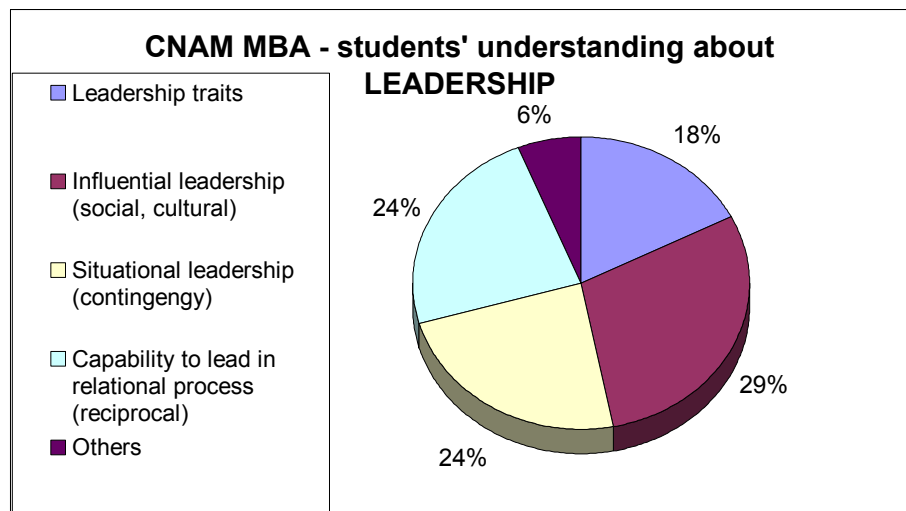


Figure IV.4.3. MBA students' understanding about leadership at CNAM

Source: Collected from 35 surveys and discussions from three different cohorts of CNAM MBA (Full time 2013 cohort, Part time 2013-2014 cohort and Hybrid 2014 cohort)

The majority of students think of leadership as a capacity to lead and to create relational or influential processes to influence, empower others. From KEDGE, with lots of leadership dedicated classes to CNAM, with very few leadership dedicated classes, students are divided into three groups of answers to the question “Do you think you could learn of have learnt about leadership in your MBA program?” They form groups who

- 1) do not think that they have learnt about leadership in the MBA (14%),

2) think they have learnt about leadership through all the classes, or classes not only with the title of leadership (32%), and

3) think they have learnt about leadership through leadership classes and workshops (54%).

It is surprising to notice that students of KEDGE are found in the former group of answering that they have not learnt about leadership, despite the dense presentation of this theme in brochures and repeated topics in their program. Maybe it corresponds to their answer of their understanding of leadership: leadership is not learnt, it is processed by certain traits through experience. The majority of students recognized they have learnt leadership through the leadership classes or seminars, and workshops related to leadership development plan. We make an assumption here: if we would take the word “leadership” out of the names of their leadership oriented courses, we see that the meaning of such modified courses titles could still be validated for the objectives and learning outcomes of those courses. In general it is the case. For the course on Leadership and Change Management at CNAM, we could indeed see the focus of the course on change environment and challenges. The name of the course is listed in the group of courses dedicated to management and leadership at KEDGE. Another course on Leadership Across Culture could be interpreted in the sense as Multicultural Management, a course that is added frequently in management curriculum. However, the course Leadership and Sustainable Performance does not say much if we just keep the title Sustainable Performance, as it would direct the thinking towards sustainable development which is a totally different domain in the management and business. However, through the course purpose and objectives, as well as the bibliography and cases used in the course, we could also interpret the course title differently as Business Ethics or Social Responsibility classes, except that it is already added in the list of core courses at KEDGE. Our argument here is whether MBA programs have added the word “leadership” in courses for a branding purpose - an art of rhetoric in building and communicating the curriculum to public? *“It is like a hollow but magic word nowadays in MBA to attract participants to join the MBA to acquire certain charismas and empowerments to become leaders”*, said one ex-director of MBA program. In the environment that all providers of the two schools confirm that “leadership becomes a kind of a trendy word”, repeating it non stop is a way to get audience’s attention. If it is not

the case, does the above result of surveyed students change their opinions whether they have learnt leadership in the curriculum?

One limitation of this research focusing on cases is that we could not get into contact with other variable category in the group of demanders, except students and alumni. Through the surveys and discussions, we could obtain some ideas of the recruiters. Students, alumni are much separated in their feelings whether enterprises look for leadership when they recruit MBA students. Almost one forth of students think that enterprises always look for leadership, “especially for managerial position the leadership ability is crucial” and “companies need leaders to manage team, department or for the whole business of companies.” Another one forth of students are prudent with their positive answer, reserving that it depends on the position and the job requirements. The rest half of students are sceptic about the criteria of leadership in job recruitment, as it is the most difficult value to figure out in recruitment. Given reasons are more or less in the context of French job market, where:

- *Usually “leaders” are already there, so they try to avoid recruiting other leaders to substitute them*
- *I doubt that enterprises in general have a clear idea of leadership*
- *Simply because there is no good human resource structure to really qualify the candidates on that issue*
- *It depends on the level of hierarchy and organisation, but generally leadership is not yet become a known skill that enterprises are particularly interested in. They will be interested in the technical skills in the first place. Some may even be frightened of juniors showing too much leadership*
- *I do not believe it is the case for the majority of companies in France*
- *I think big and international companies might look for MBA and leadership for managerial position, but for small and medium enterprises in France some do not even distinguish an MBA with other degrees.*

Interpretation, understanding, implementation and application of leadership are all mixed up in management education, from providers and demanders. The ultimate objective to prepare an MBA, nevertheless, is to help students to advance in their professional career

towards executive positions, with expanding their knowledge, increasing their capacities, extending their network and developing their skills, spirits and desires to improve themselves. The profile of students with certain years of professional experience allows them to withdraw their own needs to improve in which field and which domain after the curriculum and training process. One instructor having taught the same class for students at KEDGE and CNAM gives us a very interesting remark on what students from the two programs feedback to him after finishing his identical course. *“I can see that both MBA programs at KEDGE and CNAM prepare for students for leadership, but I would not say that one is prepared better than the other, but I would say they are prepared differently. I can give an interesting example in the same type of feedbacks of students. When I finish the course at CNAM, usually the students came and said “I would like to have more technical skills. I know now the entire essential tools for project management and leading, but what missing to become a good project leader is techniques, so I would go more to management techniques”. Almost the same course with the same approach, lessons, skills, case studies and very similar teamwork, at KEDGE when it comes to the end students would say “I should learn more about human resource management and human relationship to become a project leader.” I am not sure if it is related to the image of the institution, the faculty or the profile of students, but we can see that at CNAM the students would like to go more into technology and hard skills, engineering part of the topic. KEDGE students would like to go more into soft skills.”* The example does not mean anything that one is more prepared to leadership than the other one, but the students of CNAM might suppose that good leadership skills have to be associated with better understanding on the topic, with being a technical expert of the topic within the project. KEDGE’s student, on the other side, might think that to lead better, one should know more about the conflicts and human factors in the project. Again, the remark of the instructor shows that the theme of leadership is passionately debated in other courses in MBA and curriculum with inconsiderate concept of leadership and rash usage of the theories, both are still questions of many management researches.

PART IV FINDINGS

CHAPTER 5

SPIRAL EVOLUTION AND BALANCED STRATEGIC POSITION OF STAKEHOLDERS IN MBA CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

This chapter will primarily report the general findings of all the interviews done within the research scope. That means we analyse all the interviews conducted and conversations exchanged with different groups of stakeholders in MBA programs in France. While focusing on different groups of stakeholders in different MBAs, we cite narratives that enhance replication logic of our developed proposition and balanced strategic position theory. The narrative data in quotations, though sometimes long and repetitive in information, show the richness of ideas of differentiation that resume in the same direction. Furthermore, those informative quotations do not only help us to understand the phenomenon in different angles in the management education industry but they also show the steps of a model we would come up with. The chapter will also present the model emerged from narratives, that stakeholders in MBA programs are in moving positions which evolve themselves over the years to different groups of determinants. In order to do so, we make interpretations on the influences and evolution of stakeholders in MBA programs. In the meantime, we analyse the trade-offs between the differentiation and conformity that stakeholders position the MBA products, i.e. courses, curricula, approaches, etc. in the industry of education management and business schools, using narratives for coding and analysing common reflects and decisions of business schools.

1. Tendencies of groups of stakeholders

In regards to the development of a program or a curriculum, we emphasize the important roles of organisers of the programs or instructors of courses. In another word, curriculum development is implemented by the group of specific stakeholder that we categorize in

this study as Providers. This category will be the guidelines to explore other external stakeholders, who are Regulators and Demanders, in order to observe their influences on curriculum development and delivery.

Three thematic categories emerged during the interview data analysis: a tendency towards an immediate action to the regulators' request of modifying the curriculum or organisation of a program; a tendency towards a principled use of own experience or contingent process to make modifications in the curriculum and in concrete course contents; and a tendency towards a delayed or reluctant use of students' feedbacks or research to apply new knowledge and modalities to the content of the program.

1.1. A tendency towards an immediate action to the regulators' request

Responses to the question "Are there any modifications in your program since you are involved in this position and why are there such modifications?" are often captured with the same code: regulators' indirect or direct request. One MBA director asserted:

"When I took responsible of the Director of MBA, I discovered that demand of AMBA to add the course of ... has not been satisfied. So in order to prepare for the intermediate report of AMBA accreditation reapplication, we decided, together with the manager of MBA, to set up this course in the curriculum" (CNAM). It is also the case of another school "The second change that I remember is due to AMBA recommendation"(IAE Aix en Provence).

Or "Another thing when we talk about innovative curriculum is we are part of the association called the MBA round table (formed by GMAC in the U.S.) and they often have conferences and events where they talk about the innovations that are taking place, and it is clear that the inputs of leadership are coming from the demands that companies are making, on the kind of skills that they expect of students graduating from an MBA. Companies are telling the MBA roundtable that we need to have more leadership courses, in the same way not as long ago it is said for business ethics, and values and business. So

the trends now are adding classes on business ethics, leadership and critical thinking.”(NEOMA)

This dominating orientation of using suggestions from regulators’ group to modify the curriculum was further confirmed by other directors who illustrated their points in the following way:

“Firstly we try to be compliant to the international standards of the MBA. I think it is logical to evolve the program with updated MBA standard... What I mean by updated MBA standards could refer to those discussed in the annual AMBA seminars.” (CNAM)

It becomes more complicated if a program is running for different accreditations and regulators. As one director said, *“the reality for a school is to be accredited you have to go to AMBA or EQUIS or AACSB, and there are a lot of pressures on different criteria and standards such as faculty, research production, internationalization, etc in the institution at different time they apply accreditations.”(NEOMA)* Though the accreditations make no explicit requirements on curriculum development, we see that it is the core of the changes. One director admitted that *“just like we have a double accreditation, we are obliged to comply with both French higher education standards and international standards in terms of language, in terms of topics, in terms of career development and so on.” (CNAM)*

In the 2015 seminar “Is Management Education becoming a business?” (“L’enseignement supérieur de management devient-il un business?”) held by French Academy of Management SFM, a round-table discussion was dedicated only on the effect of business model on the content of the courses and curriculum. The content is said to be an illustration of a school’s strategy and it depends on the school’s governance, faculty, students, environment and researches. Deans echoed in the fact that strategies of business schools are defined in regard with criteria of accreditations and rankings as a constraint towards quality improvement actor in the domain. *“Once we do not have it, we look forward to it. Yet once we have it, we are obliged to align with it”.*(SKEMA) The debates on business models and its dependence on regulators such as accreditation

associations and ranking bodies were divergent in two factions; none of factions looks at this actor of regulators as quality confirmation.

The first faction criticized that contents of programs are modified in a subjective and dishonest way to meet accreditations' and rankings' standards, because *"they do not show clearly the quality of schools but they become an important actor"* One dean even censured schools that try to interpret their changes in content as accreditation's request and make up the comprehension of that request, but *"it seems that they simply tried to copy others who have earned the accreditation"*(MAZARS). *"One point request in the ranking is research. So here we have something wrong with the models of business schools that we have, where the faculty has two layers. There are a lot useless research and then they claim that they do a lot of research and they spring the knowledge of management, and they deliver the knowledge of management. It is not true, because in their institution the teachers who teach executives and practical management programs are vocational; they are external experts from the industry, who never publish. So more or less they are cheating on what they sell to the public for rankings and accreditations"* (CNAM).

The second faction saw accreditation process with peer audition as a new managerial tool to enhance or employ the strategy *"For me, it is a very cheap and invaluable consulting. You know, four top people coming from outside for a minimum amount of money and reviewing all the processes, and certifying them from the outside, as well as internal people binding in the processes and advocating for the strategy and the program,"*(MAZARS) or in other case *"I must say that it's very useful because it put pressures on the teams to move and it put pressures on the institution to accept things that the institution did not want to accept. It shows that we use the outsiders' requirement, in this case, regulator's requirement to obtain what we are trying to obtain and have difficult to obtain."* (CNAM) Maybe because of those latter reasons, regulators are frequently cited as key actors who become motives and reasons for content modifications, even though the majority of interviewees of different categories confirm that regulators do not intervene directly on the contents of a program.

1.2. A tendency towards a delayed or reluctant use of students' feedbacks

Though the ultimate motive for curriculum development is to serve students, only few interviews acknowledge the reason of modifications in the course or curriculum are based on students' or alumni's requests. Schools and programs argue that *"The public does not look at research of a school or pedagogical themes before choosing a school,"* (MAZARS) hence they ignore the rights and responsibilities of students in the curriculum development process. When one dean aggregated that *"You can build an MBA over a morning. Seeing the numbers of MBA nowadays, the importance is either the brand (recognition) or the content"*(NEOMA), another manager of an MBA program confessed that *"What I remember strongly from my experience with students is that students asked for international recognition, which for them is international standard."*(CNAM) Nevertheless, the role of students should not be neglected in the curriculum and content development. A group of students, being interviewed about the understanding of the curriculum that they are following, confessed that *"students do not have a global picture of curriculum; even we almost complete the program."* (CNAM)

The development of a curriculum is not exclusively about the design and renewal of course contents; it regards the structure, the position of courses in a curriculum and the courses' frequency in the program. One student mentioned *"For example the course of strategy which encapsulates all issues of the program should be placed at the end of the program but not in the middle of the year like this."*(CNAM) The instructor of this course of strategy stated another opinion to position his course in the curriculum *"Normally it should be in the first semester, but this year it is in the second semester. You know, it is just the matter of agenda of the program manager, she proposes me days and dates and if I'm available, I say fine."* Students are informed the subjects and courses that they are to follow during the program, but they are vaguely informed the structure and positions of the courses in the curriculum. Moreover, some instructors, especially vocational ones, involved in the program are not informed about the program structure either. *"I have no idea. Sorry, I don't know and no one has explained that to me. I don't know whether it is in the first or*

second year, or even if that matters or it has to be organized in a different way. I just received the feedbacks for my classes and tried to improve my classes to meet students' request. If it has been explained I missed it, or if it has not been explained, I probably need to understand it.”(CNAM)

Since the classes are sometimes partitioned from the global picture of the curriculum, it is not surprising to see one student's confession to his program manager *“One of the MBA participants said to me the other day that he was fed up with all those talking about leadership. But a curriculum with a lot focuses on leadership is too much.”(KEDGE)*

“Regarding leadership teaching at ..., there is not very good feedback about the necessity from students. It is important and create values and I wouldn't suggest abandon it, but it is a lot. It is a lot in percentage of a program and I'm not sure that by the end of all of those components the students are not over saturated. ” (KEDGE)

Among all the interviews made in this research, only one dean stated clearly the involvement of students (participants) in the design of curriculum design, *“We tried to build something new but we want to be consistent so we went through the offers, we kind of synthesize over 200 MBAs and we came down to 64 core courses that are regularly given in MBA. We identified, of course sometimes combining things similarly in different MBAs that could be addressed to the public. Then we gave these to our participants and said “let's choose 16 courses out of them!” before planning the curriculum.” (MAZARS)* That program involved the companies as well:

“At the very beginning we immediately gather an advisory board from the external members and participants from companies and these people helped us design the program but they were also potentially clients for this MBA.” Another program also consolidates its curriculum development plan by asking the advisory board, but as a referenced option: *“However, the advisory board members are not academics; they are companies so they do not know and can not tell you that you have to open this or that course. They do not have qualifications to say so. We just ask them whether it is necessary to add this or that course, and they'd answer based on their feelings, and judgements. Moreover, they are recruiters and they are the end users of our graduates.”(CNAM)*

Another initiative is recorded from the observations of the program towards students' needs and feedbacks, such as *"at that time I found out that engineers or even international students, they kind of lack of communication skills. And it's very important for managers. So what I suggested to the program is to add business communication course. This course added is based on the discussion with students and based on my judgement and feelings."* (CNAM)

Or *"Through the executive MBA we identify a number of companies that might be interested in participating in consulting projects. At the same time, it also comes from the students with tasks to identify a company that would work with them. They have to identify the company in the beginning. They have to work on the company throughout the length of the program and make recommendations directly to the company's senior management. We have also some of the students coming to the program and they want to start their own company. In such case they rather not work in the group of consulting project, they will work individually in an entrepreneur project. So they also can start from the very beginning, get access to the resources from different incubators and work with those to come up with their business ideas. So at the time they graduate, they've spent effectively time through all of this stuff, but they also spend a year developing their own idea. So it does not matter that we are jumping from one to another subject, students keep the same project and it's more about what really matters from the perspectives of the companies, what they want to see and what kind of MBA students we want to turn out at the end of the program."*(NEOMA)

Besides those few initiatives, students' needs, requests and feedbacks are rarely investigated in researches on management curriculum development, they are also underexploited in reality when a program and a curriculum is designed, renewed and implemented. It is pity not to use demanders' leverage as powerful stakeholders when making changes and improvement for their sakes and on their behalf.

1.3. A tendency towards a principled use of providers' self-experience

Some of the interviewed managers, and faculty, however, confessed their preference for a mixed influence between regulators' requirements, public requests and demands, MBA

benchmarking and their own remarks or strengths in certain domains before deciding to modify the program and course contents. As one interviewee elaborated:

“At some point you see that we have a leadership seminar with the French military. That’s something different that business schools are doing recently, you know. HEC does it, ESSEC does it, we do as well in the executive MBA with the marine military, but with this new full time MBA we are doing with the Air force. We have good contacts with the military and the sport association to train Olympics activities and the activities of boxing. We are developing a leadership program which will include the military and the sports. This will help students to have some insights of the differences of leading soldiers, athletes and business person.”(NEOMA)

“With my previous experience and contacts I could help internationalize the faculty of the program. Since I’m here, I just consistently fire bad teachers and bring in great ones. We also choose a faculty because of his/ her profound experience in the profession and in the higher education. Therefore we could not impose on them a too detailed content. The richness of an MBA is the diversity of the teaching from different faculties.”(KEDGE)

However, the issue of faculty’s experience being transferred to the program only limits to contents of classes that faculty is in charge. Few deans complained that *“there is no engagement of faculty with institutions and programs because they are either focusing on research as required by accreditations, or recruited from external resources as vocational teachers.” “There should be more integration of teachers in the spirit of the programs, especially for the case of French schools.” (SFM)*

In other cases, very often the richness of a program is limited to the faculty’s own resources or preference of course. *“I decided to hire ... for other tasks to develop company in-house training and because he has to teach, I ask what he is interested in teaching, and he said leadership. I prefer that he teaches Organisation Behaviour as we need someone for that subject but he insisted on teaching leadership. So we have leadership course because we have an expert or resource that can provide leadership theme” (CNAM).*

“In order to construct the specializations after the core curriculum, one can use the specialties of our school. We can offer a course because the teacher is the specialist in that field. In this case, you want this course and this teacher because it is good, and it has a theme that can be integrated and can help build something that makes sense to students.”(KEDGE)

“Recently we have added one more specialisation which is entrepreneurship and innovation management, and it links with the strength and the trends of the school. As in the department, we have a new team, new professors and faculty in this field so we think it is good to use our resources to suggest these courses.”(CNAM)

As stressed earlier there is an element of influence from providers’ own experience. The following illustrates many aspects such as the importance of their background, their networking, their seniority in the domain of management education from their previous to current positions. The multi-facets and experience of providers are claimed to be the root of their initiatives in influencing the curriculum:

“I’ve graduated from an MBA in 2003. So at that time I started a comparison to what I have done in my MBA and what I was supposed to do and what I intend to do for this MBA.” (CNAM) or “I graduated from INSEAD and that MBA inspired me a lot in thinking and creating this new program of MBA at ... such as the approaches, the classroom size.” (NEOMA)

“After browsing on the net, and looking at the programs of major business schools, especially major MBAs, I discovered that there are such kind of courses in many other schools, we have other decision making and game theory in the MBAs at other schools. And as you know I am a game theorist in my research, it was a very good opportunity for me to try to add in the curriculum some of my skills and competencies in my research domain without at any moment adding any techniques of mathematical analysis, because in MBAs, people are not mathematicians”. (CNAM)

“Before, I would say that my predecessors at ...were not really interested in that domain of leadership, and they didn’t have the same business experience as I have. And

it's really when you have business experience, you have seen the critical importance of leadership. I see the requirements from the real world, real life experience.” (KEDGE)

“I am myself a member of EQUIS board; I also am a member of the committee of educational ministry in France which delivers the grade of masters. I spend my time reviewing schools, getting to know faculties, evaluating them and I do at least two audits a year in around the world. So we are sure to know who the best professors in the field are in our criteria and how to make it the best choice for the program.”(MAZARS)

“My background is marketing. And marketing for me is the voice of the customers and we have to follow the voice of the customers. So I do not see, I try to follow the voice of the customers. Since I am here, I am in constant interviews with participants, who arrive, who are in the middle of the program and who leave. I have all the quantitative evaluations and try to see what they need before proposing any modifications in the program.” (KEDGE)

“I am just a visiting professor here. But last year I discovered the simulation they had done after my class and I said wow, what would be perfect is to build a week around leadership development and giving students chances to think about the leadership styles and applied them into the simulation. So this year I just put a chapter on the simulation in my class to prepare them in advance.”(KEDGE)

It is interesting to see that interviewees systematically mention previous experience to explain to their decision making process. Their background and experience influence strongly in the development of MBA curricula.

2. A hybrid model of spiral evolution of stakeholders in the organisation of Management Education

A model of research design has emerged after some interviews. We propose a hybrid model of spiral evolution of stakeholders in the organisation and management of business schools and MBA curriculum. One of the interviewees, when listening to my proposition

of defining determinants that influences in MBA curricula, countered the interviewer with this question:

“Regarding your proposition, you are talking about the inside and outside forces and actors. In which category will you put me in? I arrived from the outside, I’ve been imported as an external force and my idea of the new modality of teaching MBA does not come from within nor from outside...”

“And precisely in your case, inside or outside, what about me. I am on the frontiers. So at the same time you have to categorize, put my involvements into boxes, but you also have to make sure that you are not deceiving yourself by your own boxes. You must make sure that those boxes are not so clearly cut.”

It is important to be aware of the movements of the various stakeholders at different periods of time in order to understand their respective influences in MBA curricula design and implementation.

That is why in each interview, it makes sense for us to make a link between the answers of the interviewees with his/her past (what he/she has done in the past) and what he or she is really making updates in their involvements of the current program. There is a strong connection between the previous experience and the reason of their mentioned updates happened in the MBA curricula or programs. It is not surprising to see that a lot of interviewees review their current activities with their previous experience, even though they were not in the same position in the past. The discussed position here is not viewed as a kind of promotion in an organisation. It embraces the changing roles of individuals in an organisation and the scalable and creative roles of individuals in different and new organisations. One interviewee stated *“I have known well business schools for years, as a student long time ago, as a professor, a peer reviewer, an organiser of the program, as financial auditor and a consultant for the board of directors. At each moment, the previous experience as different functions served me well to help me complete the current job.”* (MAZARS)

For the purpose of research, we certainly have to create boxes of categories of stakeholders, but those boxes must be considered in a certain time frame, because in a different time frame, the boxes of categories move, and become different stakeholders. And the movement of stakeholders across and beyond boxes of categories shows a spiral evolution of the organisation in the whole process of influences within the program. The interviewee mentioned at the beginning of this part, after being explained about this spiral evolution, has totally agreed with this new idea:

“Ok, I understand your point, that makes sense and it’s clear that I’m part of the spiral model.”

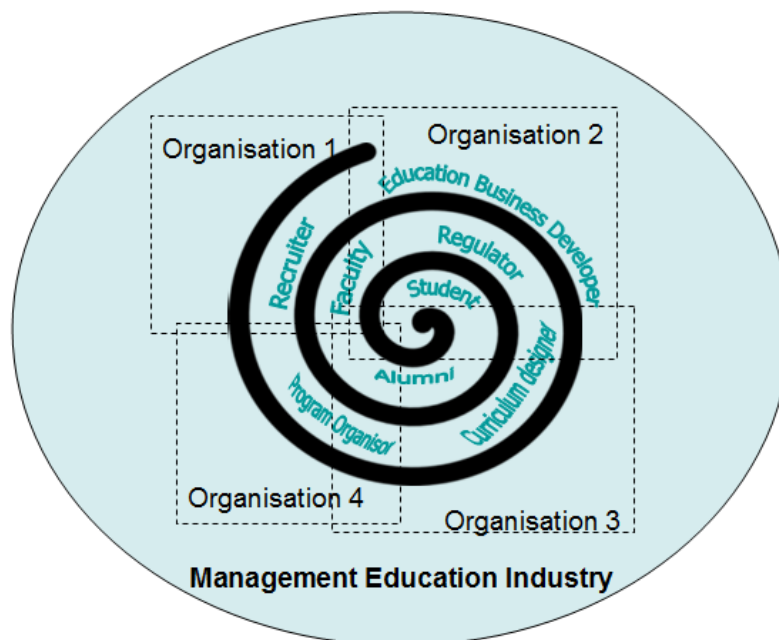


Figure IV.5.1: Spiral changing position of stakeholders in MBA programs

One can argue that this spiral changing position of stakeholders can be applied in other professional education such as medical education. Although there are many commonalities in teaching, learning and assessment methods between medicine education and management education, the object or problem (content) focus of the two fields are not the same. In the book of Science of the Artificial, Simon Herbert (1996) sums up the difference between the influence of contents of management education and those of medical education or other education fields:

Object	Description Comprehension	Theory Action, Concept
Human Social Arts	Psychology Sociology History Economy	Management Science Education Science Economics Science Politics Science
Nature Physical body Space	Physics Chemistry Biology	Hard Science (physics, chemistry, mathematics) Information Science Medicine Science

Table IV.5.1: Tran disciplinary in education field

Source: Simon Herbert (1996) *Science of the Artificial*, third edition

While medical science only focuses on the nature and physical body, the management and education sciences deal more with human and social effects. The spiral changing position of stakeholders says more for the human side, in terms of psychology, sociology, history and economy that affects the movement of individuals within and beyond organisations of the industry of Management Education.

3. Strategic balance position as a means to improve performance

From another point of strategic management view, there are two tendencies that go parallel in almost all conversations and interviews in the framework of this research: the tendency of conformity and the tendency of differentiation. The tendency of conformity emerges from the narratives of business schools' interviews, as they either compare themselves and mimic unconsciously well established and well-known schools, or collectively make similarities in their strategy, activities and program development. The tendency of differentiation emerges from their comparisons between themselves and other MBA programs and business schools. Both tendencies are for the objective towards the performance of the stakeholders in the management education industry.

Management Education is a highly regulated market. Regulations are developed as the legitimacy actors for business schools, where any resources of regulations could act as a confirmation for the legitimate activities of business schools. Regulations include governments' academic requirement and certification structure and officers, professional and commercial standards or professionalism requirements, and quality assessment mechanism. Citing them equals to having a guarantee for the decision on schools, programs and courses activities. Coercive and normative isomorphism is a way leading to the legitimacy of their existence in this industry. Most of our interviewees mention the different standards and requirements from AMBA, and show that it is an evidence to tune in their program following such standards and requirements, just in order to obtain the accreditations. None of them have questioned back why the requirements are created in such ways or see that the legitimacy reasoning makes schools conform to others.

"These are the requirements of AMBA to have formative & summarise assessments including written and oral assessments, with written feedbacks from instructors. So we have to do so for the AMBA accreditations." (CNAM)

"AMBA has very general requirements, concerning the number of students, the balance in the courses, the diversity. So we need to follow such requirements for the accreditation"... "The accreditations requested us to change some points such as having more students, evaluations of participants towards instructors and grading need to be registered in written form."(KEDGE)

"If you attend one of the AMBA seminars, you could understand that MBAs are involving in a definite complex and competitive environment. MBA is certainly a diploma which serves as a passport for international management jobs. So this passport is definitely influenced by certain standards of topics, the workload, and the number of hours that you are teaching, what kind of selection process you need to go through, what kind of procedure you need to have in order to select your professors, to manage the program, to assess students' progress and so on. Those are the standards which are useful to position yourself to the other schools." (CNAM)

Another MBA director cites something different from the requirements of AMBA, which is GMAT influence:

“GMAT is now introducing in their testing system critical thinking components. If you are looking at what the test is involved, you’ll see the evidence of the kind of thinking is going into curriculum and what’s going on in US Schools and basically the MBA is American model then it’s a sort of way out into different parts of the world.”(NEOMA)

One of the academics with years directing business schools and MBA programs provides a critic on the isomorphism phenomenon of business schools, where accreditation bodies and regulators create procedures of accreditation in a way to mix managerial and political issues, and accreditation is another rhetoric and persuasive way to convince internal and external stakeholders about the quality of their programs and their schools.

The coercive isomorphism and normative isomorphism are not the only way business schools prove their legitimacy. When not mentioning any standards, schools tend to compare and mimic other schools, especially known ones, and it becomes much conformed in their logic of developing a program or a course. *“HEC does it, ESSEC does it, we do as well”* (NEOMA)

“I think 40% of the changes are from the public requirement and 60% of these activities are from the fact that all MBAs do. It is also trendy because we have big schools and great schools doing it so we have to do it as well. And we have schools who argue that if we don’t do it our graduates will not be able to look for a good job like those in other schools. And I’m pretty sure that it is a global issue not only in France with French schools.” (KEDGE)

“In international MBA, we followed the American model so it’s the same like in other business schools so we have marketing, organisation behaviour, team building, we have many soft skills courses.” (CNAM)

“Browsing on the net, and looking at the programs of major business schools, especially major MBAs, I discovered that we have such kind of courses in many other schools, for instance HEC has the course of decision making in their MBAs.”(CNAM)

“Leadership is very trendy at the moment, every program is talking about it, and it comes to be like MBA participants’ expectation. Then if you don’t cover courses in leadership in your MBA, they feel that the program is missing something. It would be like they’d not have a finance class. It comes to be an expected course in the foundation classes of MBA.”(KEDGE)

“We tried to build something new but we want to be consistent so we went through the offers, we kind of synthesize of over 200 MBAs and we came down to 64 core courses that are regularly given in MBA. We identified, of course sometimes combining things similarly in different MBAs that could be addressed to the public.” (MAZARS)

We strongly believe that schools are conscious and proceed their strategies deliberately to such isomorphism with the aim to seek for legitimacy. Especially when a programme is new in the above narrative, the program needs to show that legitimate side that it respects the MBA standardized programs and similar to over 200 other MBAs. At the same time, they look for reasons to differentiate themselves, after earning their legitimacy.

“What is the basic legitimacy of an accreditation? It’s not just commercial. Of course it is, but not just that. It primarily helps you to improve what you do by the inspection from colleagues, from peers from other places. It comes from peers, so it does not come from nowhere, it does not come from the business community. When you just have peers in the panel, they know the business but they give you hints or indications when they ask you to involve in ways which are kind of similar to what the insiders would have said, if they have been feeling or taking time to do it. But since they are peers, whatever the criteria peers impose, they impose the same strategy to every business school that they accredit and audit. And we put a name on that. We call it strategic convergence, imposed by the accreditation bodies onto business schools.” (CNAM)

“That is important to us because, again many schools are doing it, but it is almost like having a frequent reliable program linear to the industry. The first one just does it and

benefits from it for half a year or so, and then everybody copies it. It is the same thing with other things that MBA programs do, whether it is changing the program and having more leadership, one school might do it and next year every school is doing it. Same issues are with the accreditation. We are one of the first five years ago, but now if we look around, the schools are fighting and find ways to differentiate themselves, if they are HEC, INSEAD, they don't even have to be accredited, because they have such a strong reputation already." (NEOMA)

"Repositioning our MBA is not something skyrocketing because we are talking about something which is very generic - the MBA program. But at least we rephrased what we want to target, what is the content of our offer and how do we implement and how do we deliver what we want to offer to the students."(CNAM)

Deans and directors of business schools participating in the previous mentioned seminar "Is Management Education becoming a business?" repeatedly mention the word differentiation when stating their strategies of French business schools:

"Skema quitted the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Nice, became auto-governance and build a multi-site schools and a different business model from business schools. Skema organises as an enterprise, design its own strategy, does not earn much profit to pay the shareholders but enough to reinvest into the development for now. The performance is measured by Balance Score Cards, like in enterprises." (Alice Guilhaon, Dean of Skema)

"We have to construct the differentiation in our business model, which are "hybridizing of competences" and "corporate social responsibility". We work in partnership with all schools from engineering, design, technology and in international scope, and we have always based our decisions on the collective of actors in the business schools." (Franck Vidal, Dean of group Audencia)

"We built our model of "excellence". We do not do differentiation, we play on the uniqueness. All of the school actors are stakeholders in the decision making process." (Frank Bournois, Dean of ESCP)

"We are an UFO (unidentified flying object) and we need to cultivate this identity of the UFO. Because we are an UFO, we are not entering the ranking list, once we enter

the ranking list, there is only one way to go up the ladder. And then you have to act by following the rules of the games: adapting to the rules imposed by the ranking bodies. Our track is to be different. How we can be different? Because we are accessible, affordable, solid quality and we try to adjust to new topics, etc.” (Thomas Durand, Director of CNAM Management Innovation and Prospective Department)

“We are not only a business school, so we needn’t only align with business schools, we should define our ways, So we try to avoid to compare with others because the CNAM is unique.” (CNAM)

Schools without reputations will find all the ways to differentiate their brands, products and programs, the targeted public, the delivery and the pedagogical approaches. All the details of operating a program will be examined in order to differentiate their programs, especially in France where *“MBA and education system in France is not well known and understood by international market.”* (IAE Aix en Provence)

The objective of business schools to distinguish themselves in the market, French and international united, is to focus on reinforcing branding and market public, improving performance and earning advantages. Coincidentally, the main differences that schools make out from others are targeted markets, student profiles, schools’ specifications, persons or reputations.

“In comparison with Parisian MBA programs I think that lots of them are quite large, about 150 students a year, much more homogeneous in terms of profiles, lots of them from the financial sectors so I think less room for interaction, less room for seeing a wide inspiration of different experience. So our MBA student profiles are totally different from one to another and from other Parisian programs” (KEDGE)

“Another different one that distinguishes us and other MBA programs is the students. In business schools students are selected by tests, by exams but here the students were not selected that way. They came there because of their needs, not because they were best ones or selected ones or they passed the exams to prove that they are smart ones and therefore they were selected in the program.” (CNAM)

“All programs are trying to find international students to participate. We are not creating a campus outside, we do not do like INSEAD or HEC or others, we say that the international activities will be happening within the program, from the students themselves coming in, as well as the faculty that we have. We are looking around the world which is the big challenge to find good candidates that are interested in going to Pairs. We try the major zones to try to diversify the classes from the point of view of nationalities.” (NEOMA)

“Our collective assessment process in recruitment is distinctive from other programs and schools, I think we impact the profile of our students and we reshape to higher standards and make different profiles and influence expectations of the students because working collectively, we are more efficient and proactive to recruit, so it is creating a positive expectation from our students and it is creating a good pressure on us. I said we reshape the expectations for the program to a high standard because it creates our commitment to the students when we involve in the recruitment from the beginning to know what they are looking for in the MBA.” (CNAM)

“The other new thing is definitely trying to package and a work-through via all of the conferences we do at CNAM. We call it “expand your horizon”, in order to feed their professional practices by ideas with the richness of CNAM’s expertise.” (CNAM)

“A unique thing is the year-long consulting project, to equip students that they might say after graduation that they have hands on such field, such domain and activities and international experiment with different group of people, which many US business schools can not do that because they have a high proportion of American students in their programs so it is something we can leverage here.”(NEOMA)

“The MBA contents are very simple to operate. The difference of MBAs stays in the teams operating the programs” (KEDGE)

Nevertheless, some interviewees admit that *“Nothing differs from the other MBAs of business schools, in terms of courses and content of courses. The courses that we teach here is very similar to the other MBA programs.”*(CNAM)

In the interviews with directors and managers running MBA programs, we always feel MBA organizers wanting to conform and to differentiate at the same time.

“Of course we need to take into account the others, because we are talking about international standards, in terms of contents, in terms of structure of classes, we do take into account. But for me we do not have the same audience with big names. We do not look for the same students like theirs, and the same students do not look for going to our school and famous schools at the same time. So we are not competitors because we focus on different targets.” (CNAM)

4. Differentiation is a diverse image of Conformity

What is interesting in doing the interviews is that the more we ask about differences, the more we find the similarities. Interviewees' points of view on the differentiation efforts that their schools distinguish themselves from other schools finally joint on a lot of points so they are not unique or different as they thought but they are implemented by other schools as well.

One interviewee states that *“we are not doing the same thing as French business school, in six points.”* Though in each point he tries to compare with some examples, we find that all the six points are very common strengths that almost every business schools market themselves on their websites, such as:

- *The program is entirely in English (versus “I believe HEC is the same although they might have a French component in their program”),*
- *International faculty with a business schools' approach rather than academic university approach (versus “when you are in HEC, Dauphine, you are more in the environment more as in an university than in a business school”)*
- *What we do with this program is to force students to take more ownership for what's going on in their program and once we start integrating the critical thinking that I know other French schools are not doing, such as forcing students to ask question in a way or different.*

- *Our curriculum is based on interactions, discussions, simulations, and in other innovative ways that we can start interacting with students.*
- *A lot of schools do a lot of study abroad somehow, we used to do it at Reims' program but we no longer do that. Study abroad is more or less how can we go and get more knowledge in a different place and expose to that place. This is to help you provide students with knowledge and courses that you don't have.*
- *We do not only emphasise on the program delivered in Paris but also the triple accreditation (now schools that open campuses in Paris could profit this strength).*

In another case, if we put this narrative without mentioning the name of the schools, it can be from any schools as almost all of them follow the same differentiation direction in making the links between experts and classes.

“We have a wide range of professors in the program as well. Professors who have returned to academia after certain years of experience in their professional sector, for example our professor of multi national finance has spent a large part of his career in multinational banks, so he's coming to share his experience in multi national finance, which is much more interesting than that from someone who comes purely from the academic sector. Same thing for the professor of strategy, he is talking about mergers and acquisitions in Asia from his own personal experience so when he is sharing what he is living through it is irreplaceable in the program. But then we also have professors who are academics, and I think there is a role for them as well. For example we are talking about the classes of Corporate Social Responsibility or Business Ethics who brings theoretical perspective from their academic position. So we have different people here for different reasons”

Some interviewees realize this fact and do not naively mention that thanks to the professional teachers they are different from others.

“We can say at the beginning, for the international version of MBA I worked with, almost with 100% was vocational teachers, instructors. Vocational means that the faculty of MBA is not university's professors, not professional teachers but they could have main job as well in companies or in other universities and business schools, even in the

government, and then they are interested or passion with a subject that they come to share, to transfer the knowledge and experience to our students. It's quite interesting and different with most of business schools at that time, but now it is no longer the case. The other schools they do the same way to recruit vocational faculty, cause I attended the different conferences of AMBA and we discussed with other AMBA accredited programs' directors. This happens not only in France but in other countries, they call vocational faculty flying in or something like that. (CNAM)

Several schools are very proud of their wide range of professional profiles which, in their opinion, are what makes their program different. But we find it repeatedly in:

"All of this different mix of profiles may probably be the strongest point because it allows different people to benchmark and to be able to make comparison with what they see in their own career experience and others' having seen from their experience. It is from my own perception because from what I've gain as information from other Parisian MBA programs or with MBAs of our partners, they are more homogeneous profiles."(KEDGE)

And

"The profiles are becoming more and more diverse and international. Many of them have already economics and sales, social science background so there are not only engineers. Now the objective is closer to that of other MBA programs to train qualified and efficient managers for companies."(NEOMA)

Or

"The profiles of students in our MBA are particular, I suppose. This year for example we have students as medical doctors, a pharmaceutical guy, we have engineers in IT or else, almost all of our audiences are educated except that for management. So the profiles of students are much diversified." (KEDGE)

"I can say that we are welcoming very different types of people, we do not look for one single profile of students. Our selection process is based on the person, not on the person's type. So the recruitment is more open, and we are focusing on the potentials of the people not only on who they are right now." (CNAM)

Besides undeniable standards and similarities in program structure and courses, some schools present their final projects as a pedagogical differentiate method to help students distinguish themselves after graduation.

“A distinct thing is the year-long consulting project, to equip students that they might say after graduation that they have hands on such field, such domain and activities and international experiment with different group of people.” (KEDGE)

And

“The format of the evaluations (exams) is not the same, because usually in business schools we have to write a dissertation and a lot of documents, theory, writing and defence, not a lot of follow up and used of the documents that we have made in this MBA, just a consulting project. It’s interesting because students organise and they have to solve the problems for companies or propose something immediately to improve their company or their work place. That’s the difference with other business schools.”(CNAM)

Conformity and differentiation are no longer contradictory. Though following different logics of similarity and differentiation, schools enter a circle where the more a school is recognized, the more the school is legitimate, the more it can differentiate offerings from competing schools, and the more it’s offerings can be copied from schools who search for legitimacy by similarity with that recognized school. To understand the legitimacy-differentiation contradictions that business schools faced, we argue that schools’ transitions and strategies are following the logic and the theory of balance strategic position. Furthermore, in the balance strategic position, schools who aim at strengthening their legitimacy and highlighting their differences subsequently reproduce legitimacy with a diverse image of conformity.

5. Conclusion

The findings reported in this chapter have important managerial implications, especially in the field of strategic management and organisational management in management education and MBA programs.

In the first regard on strategic management, the chapter summarizes the strategic position of involved various stakeholders and maps their respective influence and roles in curricula development process of the program. The curriculum of an MBA program is consistently in review for improvement, with regards to systematic recommendations of regulators; reflective perspectives of organisers and few requests from demanders. Changes and development in MBA curricula are the results of decisions made by those most involved and direct stakeholders. From the four propositions and findings of this study, some specifics in the management and curriculum development of MBA programs are highlighted. The curricula are claimed to be in development for students' sake, but not at their direct demands. The curricula are reviewed and renewed under the pressures of regulators and reputations effects and benchmarking, in order to seek for legitimacy, as legitimacy is associated with similarity or conformity in strategies conferred by regulators, norms and the media (Deephouse 1996, Dacin 1997). The curricula are managed and developed by various resources of institutions and diverse experience of top management people, aiming at modelling their curricula as differentiation or uniqueness. Though various and diverse, the experience and resources frequently reflected the same reactions and involvements within the same industry of business education, leading to the same differentiation ideas.

In the second regard on organisation, the chapter finds a spiral evolution between individuals in an organisation and individuals in the industry that aggregate such organisations. The spiral evolution model creates a synergistic grow in the organisation of management education industry, to enable both organisations and the industry to be more efficient. Weick (2002) mentions the fact that individual interacts or evolves in an organisation will consequently make that organisation changes. This new regard and perspective on the spiral evolution of stakeholders (as individuals) in different organisations in the same industry will open a new reaction and reflex on the growing organisation. The spiral model demonstrates as well a contingent strategic process where decisions are multiplied or disappeared contingently based on the evolutionary movements of stakeholders. Those evolutionary movements of stakeholders at different periods of time

and the non-presenting and invisible stakeholders such as experience and backgrounds in the decision making process show an impact manipulation in the organisation and their respective influences in MBA curricula design and implementation. “The ultimate relationship between strategic similarity and performance depends on the relative strength of the differentiation and conformity propositions over the range of strategic similarity.” (Deephhouse, 1999, p20) Strategic balance position is considered a means to improve performance of organisations, and in such organisations with spiral evolution model, the roles of each stakeholder as developmental individual ensure the similarity with the industry but at the same time reveal the differentiation of the organisation.

PART V: CONCLUSION

“An MBA Free-for-All: Applications at Arizona State’s b-school nearly triple after tuition is waived”

(Lindsay Gellman, The Wall Street Journal, April 7, 2016)

Chapter 1

CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The research begins with a strategic, management and organisational view on management education. Within the streamline that business education is considered a market or an industry, this thesis is organised to analyse business schools as organisations, MBA program as flagship products or services and MBA curriculum development as a strategic management tool.

The literature review has been structured to highlight the core theory of this research: Deephouse’s balanced strategic position of organisations, between conformity and differentiation, within an industry. “The ultimate relationship between strategic similarity and performance depends on the relative strength of the differentiation and conformity propositions over the range of strategic similarity.” Deephouse (1999) opens a suggestion on this research when he suggests further development of this theory can help researchers better understand the trade-offs between differentiation and conformity, and that further research should examine if strategic balance theory applies in other markets facing strong competitive and institutional pressures. The research explores the relative strengths of competitive forces in the market and legitimating forces in the institutional environment, before questioning whether a strategic balance position is established in the industry of management education. Some elements of balanced position or trade-offs between differentiation and conformity in higher education have been mentioned in the literature, but it becomes a phenomenon in recent literature after scholars’ debates on the legitimacy and the reforms in MBA curricula (Mintzberg, 2004;

Starkey et al, 2004; Bennis and O'Toole 2005; Antunes & Thomas, 2007; Engwall, 2007; Durand & Dameron, 2008 & 2011;). This is not the first time management education and MBA are the centre of the debate on conformity and differentiation. Datar, Garvin and Cullen (2010) describe the state of MBA Education and Curriculum as an inconsistent state between **differentiation** *"As in graduates and post graduates programs, many of the critical elements of the curriculum are subject to discretion and tailoring, with limited efforts to impose standardization or uniformity"* versus **conformity** *"Powerful forces favour convergence and push curricula in common directions with: Institutions tend to mimic the leaders in their fields; Accrediting groups impose standards; and Societal pressures and educational trends"*

However, their research focuses on top ranked business schools, arguing that changes at top-ranked institutions are frequently indicative of broader trends. It could be satisfying to show the conformity tendency but differentiation could occur at many different levels such as ranking, program location and its cultures, country or region specialities. Moreover, they state the unmet needs of students after following the MBA programs, yet their approaches do not involve any direct connections with students or alumni. Instead, they interview deans of business schools, business executives and review portraits of curricula through public data collection from websites and publications, conversations and correspondence with school administrators, faculty and deans. Features on how courses were designed and delivered are fully examined, but it seems to be incomplete with feedbacks on how the courses were captured and used from students' side.

Considering that the research field is still underdeveloped to look at the trade-offs between differentiation and conformity in management education, we implement this research in a different approach, using stakeholder theory to assess the roles of actors in and within an organisation's environment (Freeman & McVea, 1984, 2004; Damak-Ayadi & Pesqueux 2005; Roegiers, 1997; Durand 2005). The stakeholder theory approach reveals the operational and management of educational organisation, to figure out the groups of actors in the management education industry, including groups of providers, demanders and regulators. We consider that the trends of business schools' revisiting curriculum, especially around the leadership theme, are an effort to reposition business

schools at the balanced strategic position between conformity and differentiation. That is why we focus in the MBA curriculum development with the introduction of leadership related modules, as the field of research. Interpretation, understanding, implementation and application of leadership are all mixed up in management education. It brings us an idea that leadership should be redefined as how to efficiently, flexibly and creatively work in or for a team for the best performance. There, we could see all the determinants in the curriculum development would focus on working with courses, with or without leadership title, in order to optimize and develop their skills necessary for future professions. Furthermore, taking into account all stakeholders involved in the revisiting of curriculum activities, it could be seen as a solution to answer the contradictory between regulators' requirements, recruiters and actual limited resources so that the MBA program could stand on market and the business schools survive in the business schools' business. The MBA curriculum development activities reveal the whole structure, business model, governance, strategic management and organisation of business schools.

Far from criticizing the approaches of "Rethinking the MBA – Business Education at a Crossroads", we would rather use the results of their research and conduct our own research with a complement manner in order to understand further the state of current management education business. Increasing number of MBA programs offered in this Management Education industry in the world (in the United States, in English speaking countries as well as in non-English speaking countries) make an obligation for business schools to differentiate or standardize in the competition.

We conduct a deep study on the MBA curriculum reform in France where influential actors representing the forces in different organisational boundaries affecting the schools' strategy and their respective MBA curricula, to look for their positions and trade-offs between differentiation and conformity. In order to do that, we use mixed methodologies with empirical data, rely on several unique sources of primary data, as well as the availabilities and transparencies of curricula information as secondary data. We present the context of MBA market in France, with extensive interviews with some directors of business school in France. We then involve in a longitudinal study and observation of two business schools and their MBA programs – CNAM and KEDGE, in order to write complete

cases of the curricula revisiting in the leadership theme. Profiting from the professional position of management program coordination, and years of experiences in the environment of management education industry, it is natural and logical for us to do a field study for this research, as the second part of the case study method. We used participant observation approach to gather longitudinal data on more than 90 students, interviewed 29 faculty and staffs who involved in the management of MBA programs between 2013 and 2015. Since we would like to focus on such details of “natural settings” in the organisation and development of curriculum, we prefer to focus on qualitative method to analyze our research. Qualitative research has not a standardized research design, but it has the richness and integrity of the research to establish trustworthiness, or relate the trustworthiness with generalization in the research. To be precise on the choice of qualitative method as treating narrative data, we focus the analysis on two case studies and interviews to describe, justify and build our propositions.

1. Main findings of the research

In order to answer our question of research: What makes educational institutions revisit their MBA curricula? (for differentiation and/or for conformity), we establish our main findings into four points. The findings have important managerial implications in the field of strategic management and organisational management for management education and MBA programs.

1.1 Internationalization; Mergers and Acquisitions; and Alliances in MBA as one in numerous models for Management Education industry

Going international and being globalize are what the modern world is pacing. Companies and organisations are forced to follow this evolution if they do want to rest competitive. The strategic management of business schools focuses more on the internal environment rather than the external environment in order to cope with competitive marketplace and look for a growth. However, while looking for a growth, an expansion of scope, scale and market is a regular logic. Students are trained to take part in that evolution of international business. Business schools search for forming strategic alliances by going international in order to gain competitive advantages, with their own alliance designs

based on their internal resources and specific variables. The tendency of internationalization and globalization in management education and business schools is supposed to be a key enabler of globalization in many other fields. Indeed, management students, managers to be, who can lead in a global context in all organisations and domains, are critical resources for innovation and economic development. Internationalization, as a form of strategic alliances, is increasing its affection to almost business schools in our research in recent years. Schools are no longer competitors but partners, creating a synergistic cooperation to overcome competitive advantages in the industry of Management Education.

1.2. Leadership – the rhetorical art or the strategic arrangement in curriculum development

The findings in the two cases of MBA curriculum development at CNAM and KEDGE show that the two schools have quite a lot of similarities in the development and the implementation of MBA curricula. Both programs are defined in the way to be compliant to international standards of accreditation, using same type and ways to explore human and resources, but very different in the technical and financial resources allocation. It is difficult to compare or discuss equally about the introduction of leadership theme into the curricula of the two schools, as in the case of KEDGE, the theme is overly used, while in the case of CNAM, it is not enough of attention paid to the theme of leadership. All the people involved in the creation and development of the curricula of both programs, when being interviewed, coincidentally agree that leadership is so trendy that both schools show efforts not to become conformist to the trend of leadership. Making a differentiation from others by the focus on developing leadership is KEDGE's way, while for CNAM's providers; it seems that they do not want to focus too much on leadership to become similar to other programs, in another way, being different from similar differentiation. The fact that there are so many different definitions of leadership in the literature in business and management domain leads to a chaos in the interpretation and implementation of courses, pedagogical approaches and study programs. We argue that certain MBA programs have added the word "leadership" in courses for a branding purpose - an art of rhetoric in building and communicating the curriculum to public. Repeating the trendy

word non stop is a way to get audience's attention, as an MBA director said; curriculum could be shown as a competitive advantage to attract candidates.

1.3. Differentiation is a diverse image of Conformity

The findings summarise the strategic position of various stakeholders and map their respective influence and their roles in curriculum development process of the program. MBA curriculum development activities are the results of decisions made mainly by the groups of regulators, providers, and demanders, in the respective order. The curriculum of an MBA program is consistently reviewed for improvement, in a standardized process, with regards to systematic recommendations of regulators; reflective perspectives of organisers and few requests from demanders. The curricula are claimed to be in development for students' sake, but not at their direct demands. Rather, they are under the pressures of regulators and reputations effects and benchmarking, in order to seek for legitimacy. The curricula are managed and developed by various resources of institutions and diverse experience of top management people, aiming at modelling their curricula as differentiation or uniqueness. However those differentiation efforts are often implemented in the same reactions and involvements, therefore differentiation is considered as diverse image of conformity. Divergent path in an accreditation environment nowadays also encourages conformity. We have tried to interpret the narrative data to show an alternative explanation about the process of strategic position. On one side, schools really copy the leading MBAs to be classified in the same strategic group as leading schools. On the other side, schools truly want to make difference but it converges to develop unconditional isomorphism.

1.4 A hybrid model of spiral evolution of stakeholders in the organisation of Management Education

The multi-facets and roles of one individual in different organisations and in the industry confound the identities of stakeholders. After capturing some interviews, a model of research has emerged to design how the different roles an individual takes can shape and influence the curriculum. One of the findings shows the model as a spiral evolution between individuals in an organisation and individuals in the industry that aggregate such

organisations. The spiral evolution model creates a synergistic grow in the organisation of management education industry, to enable both organisations and the industry to be more efficient. The evolutionary movements of stakeholders at different periods of time and the non-presenting and invisible stakeholders such as experience and backgrounds in the decision making process show an impact manipulation in the organisation and their respective influences in MBA curricula design and implementation. The tension between mimetism and differentiation between schools and MBA programs produces the spiral model within the stakeholders. The tension of the industry is evolutionary predictably because the organisations and individuals also evolve. In another regard, the spiral model demonstrates a contingent strategic process where decisions are multiplied or disappeared contingently. Strategic balance position is considered as a means to improve performance of organisations, and in such organisations with spiral evolution model, the roles of each stakeholder as developmental individual ensure the similarity with the industry but at the same time reveal the differentiation of the organisation.

2. Research significance

This research contributes to the identification and the assessment of the determinants in the stakeholders that lead academic institutions to revisit management programs. This research attests the contradictory strategic management of schools between conformism for legitimacy and differentiation for competitive advantages, through the examples of introducing leadership related modules. It analyses the optimized organisational evolution and strategic management of schools and management programs in a very specific model of spiral development, for individuals, organisations and industry. This research could open a new trend of researching optimized development of business programs, where academic sector develops in a more solid and successful way, or could prove a certain halo effect in the business education environment. On the track of researching optimized development and reform of business and management programs, where academic and business concepts are mixed, this research is also an attempt to answer the question of how to develop and improve the offers of management programs in MBAs.

The limitation of current literature on business schools and management education is that they limit their data and comparison just among top ranked business schools and mainly in the U.S. To overcome this limitation, further research on MBA programs case study should be conducted in other zones or less known MBAs, with comparison to those in the U.S. In fact, management education and development become one of the important axes of research in the academy of management. The Academy of Management 2016 has created a session to present and debate the topic of a Business and Management Education driven model of business school distinction⁸⁴. From the debate, critical issues of research on management is the overwhelming disciplines among 12 other disciplines in business, however, the research-teaching practice connection is limited to individual instructors and researchers but not at the institutions' level and an almost ignorance to researches in other languages rather than English, or researches on other institutions out of the US, UK or former colonies of UK⁸⁵. There are indeed few research or papers in France on management education with the regards to the governance, the strategic management and the functions of French management institutions in their development of management programs. This research contributes to literature on management education and development in France, and we hope that it could be marked as a potential field of research for French management science.

3. Open Discussion: What is the business model of MBAs?

The MBA program has enjoyed marvellous growth over recent years and is arguably the most internationally recognised degree for business management. However, for a degree that is often positioned as the business world's academic answer, it has also received considerable criticism on its business model. With the increasing competition among business schools, there has been a parallel and quite critical discussion about the value, role and relevance of business schools in developing its MBA programs.

⁸⁴ the 76th Annual Meeting of Academy of Management, 5-9 August, Anaheim, US

⁸⁵ Communication in Plenary session of Arbaugh J.B "Business and Management Education (BME) Research: Last Frontier of Business School Differentiation?", 8 August 2016.

The debate on conformity and differentiation in management education becomes the issue of regulation and reputation of business schools and MBA programs. When it comes to this question of which exists first between schools' applying regulation and branding position, the question turns out to be the existence of an egg or a chicken.

In France, MBA is not as popular as degree and is not considered as prestigious and elite management degree compare to the degrees of Grande Ecoles. However, as any insider of any business school in France knows, MBA is an indispensable and fundamental degree for business schools to obtain international accreditations and gain international visibility in Management Education sector, as well as a fortunate degree to increase the incomes of business schools. Putting aside the conformity aspect that this research evokes, we look at the financial budget and investment resources that the accreditation and ranking processes derive. Once a program reaches the prestige position with accreditations and international visibility, they are engaged to reinforce the quality and image of the program, and incur more expenses on selecting best candidates, recruiting best instructors, engaging expensive extra-curriculum activities and facilities. However, the collection of high tuition fees of the MBA program is not enough to cover all the expenses and is not affordable for the market, especially the niche is narrowed to the high qualified candidates in order to keep and meet the ranking's and the accreditation's criteria, consequently generate few incomes to business schools. Hence there is a question on the business model of MBAs.

Another phenomenon is recently added to highlight the debates on business model of MBA, regardless the prestige image of the program. Recently, one MBA program in the US has announced to open a Free-For-All MBA at W.P.Carey School of Business, Arizona State University⁸⁶. The applications tripled for the Fall 2016 cohort. Comparing the difference in economic and financial figures is quite easy. The school not only loses from \$54,000 to \$90,000 tuition fees for each recruited students, but they also need to expand extra salaries for overtimes and new administrative staff since the program is overloaded

⁸⁶ Lindsay Gellman, An MBA Free for All - The Wall Street Journal, April 7, 2016

with recruitment and admission work, or simply with answering prospects that the free MBA decision is true.

It becomes an ideology that business schools could make profits with their MBA programs, as it seems that economically, business schools loses its profits with the exigent operation of MBA. Whether MBA generates profits to support business schools or business schools spend a fortune to support MBA in order to keep the other intangible profits or image of prestige of schools, this question could open to further debates.

Chapter 2

LIMITS OF THE RESEARCH

The lacks of research direction and methodologies are our limitation, as we start to do research spontaneously and base mainly on experiences and intuitions in the beginning. The subjects and questions might be developed in the two extremes of being too large or too narrow. That is why at the time the proposals for this research were made, we did not provide a clear set of plan and methodologies for the years of research. A fundamental aspect of an academic work is the methodological work. Getting it right, mixed and matched between what we want to research and the methods and tools to help us find what we want to research is the most difficult thing. One of our advantages is we do the research in the field of education. Though focusing on the management side of education, we are in the academic environment. Therefore, the interviews with people involving in this research do not only provide the facts, figures and evidences for the findings of the research, but they give guidance in the directions and developments of the research as well.

When we dedicate our research in the field of management education, we were alarmed with a remark from Spender⁸⁷ that management science is not considered effective, research has no value for managers but changing management phenomenon is the model

⁸⁷ Spender J.C.'s speech as a guest lecture about Business Strategy for PhD students at CNAM 14 February 2014

for researchers to focus on. Researches have to make a link with real management situation and must provide critical points. Practitioners know more how to work on the field, but they do not have a break down, expose the contradiction analyses of the field and provide critics like academics. It is not easy to criticize, but “it is the only thing academics and researches could provide and it is the only true academic asset.” By collecting and presenting the contradictory evidences in our research and observations in the milieu of business schools in France, we would like to bring our own critics on struggling strategies of schools in general, between conformism and differentiation, between mimetism and innovation for the development of programs, schools and the management education field. Nevertheless, the criticism could be seen as light and lack of scientific rigor and reliability, due to the weaknesses of narrative qualitative methodologies as well as the difficulties to generalize the issues from cases studies only in French schools and French MBA programs.

Information availabilities in schools and programs in this research are not standardized, especially when it comes to information regarding the governance of the school and the strategies to develop programs and curricula. As stated in the site selection part, it was not an entirely random selection of programs to meet with the mentioned criteria. We have tried to look for further cases and select samples from that population with sharply contrasting characteristics. Although, general information was still mainly collected from programs’ brochures, other information is not easily accessed due to the sensibility of the subject and the objective to reveal internal strategies and development processes of schools and MBA programs. Though we aim at developing three and more cases to increase the reliability in the general analysis and model building inductively, we are limited with the access to contact our targeted interviewees in some schools. Some MBA directors at ESSEC, EDHEC, IAE Aix en Provence, IAE Paris Sorbonne already gave negative or no answers to our corresponding contacts without meeting us, while other MBA directors at NEOMA, MAZARS hesitated to give us green light to contact different groups of stakeholders in their programs. Cases with schools and programs that represent the standard of management education in France like HEC, ESSEC could be considered much reliable and unavoidable to generalize the model, concepts and critics for management education in France. However, with experience working inside the sector, with personal

observation and involvement in managing management education at CNAM IIM and exchanges with managing colleagues at conferences and meetings , it is clear to us that information collected from public documents are not enough to understand thoroughly a program, a structure or a development strategy. To some extent, given information and observation as a participant sometimes bias the analyses and we need to step behind the position of a manager to incarnate the role of researchers.

Time constraint is a limitation. Being a full-time working person and mother of small children limits the time available for research. The question of managing time to read relatives bibliographies sometimes is raised more often than the question of selecting the bibliographies. Furthermore, the research covers a large domain of management, management education and business schools, leadership, internationalization; all key words are lively discussed in the research world that it is hard to select the bibliographies. The issue of establishing the agenda to interview people and observe classes, discuss with groups of students is tough in an already overcharged planning of work and business trips. Therefore, the contacts to all representative groups of stakeholders are limited. We regret not to have enough time to investigate directly an important group of stakeholder: enterprises who recruited, or supposed to recruit MBA students in French MBA programs.

Chapter 3

FUTURE RESEARCHES

Current research has been greatly influenced by the knowledge and educative roles of Management Education. As a consequence, studies have tended to examine the same set of values of Management Education but few researchers have measured the management and organisational aspects of Management Education, or investigated business schools or educational institutions as firms. The contribution of this research is to open some perspectives regarding Management Education and to study it from the following viewpoints:

- Management Education as any business that follows all economic rules and theories,

- Management Education as one of the industries that uses conformism as differentiation and alliances to dissolve competitive advantages.

It would therefore be interesting to conduct further researches on the joint programs, internationalization and strategic alliances models of business schools not only France but in different countries to confirm the model of alliance and the internationalization in Management Education. Furthermore, though there are numerous researches on the tension between academic model and business model of business schools and management programs, we think the particular regard on strategic and economic model will contribute to the academic world.

During the current research, we have collected many logs from the observations of students' activities and behaviours through business simulations. The theories of leadership and the studies on leadership are not totally explored in this research which focuses on strategic management of business schools. In order to overcome the limitations of this research, we would like to investigate the practice of leadership skills in the job market and integrate remarks of enterprises on the necessity of training leadership for their future needs in the business. We would be interested in doing further research on the approaches and gaps between theories and applications of leadership development in management and leadership trainings.

Another track for future researches is raised in the 2016 Annual meeting of Academy of Management that we are honoured to participate in. A topic of future Business school 2.0 is passionately debated where traditional courses are put in organisation question to compete, harmonize or integrate with online courses. Online management education is a new regard in academic papers, especially in France, that needs certain attentions to understand the functions and develop models of management.

This current research on strategic management and balanced position between similarities and differentiations of MBA curriculum development and management education goes to its conclusion. Nevertheless, it is just a beginning of our future research

in the field. After finishing this research, we aim at expanding and exploring further research on this field of Management Education in France, where there is not enough attention in academic works and literature.

As young researchers, we are motivated to current and future research activities by a simple encouragement and an idea of the creative process presented by Howard Becker:⁸⁸ *“Nobody is ready for research, or for doing something, and afraid of choosing a wrong decision. The subject of research is not important, the way you make the subject done is more important and interesting, because we could never predict what we have found. So keep doing research, finding something interesting and get to know more, defining the question to study, finding a way to do it, redefining, and being ready to change or adapt to uncertainty. That is the creative process to be involved in research.”*

⁸⁸ The Creative Process : How Sociological Work Really Gets Done - Rencontre avec Howard S. Becker", Faut LIRSA !, 17/10/2014

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Part IV: Findings

Chapter 1: MBA Programs in French context

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Part V: Conclusion

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ANNEX 1**LIST OF NARRATIVE DATA**

This thesis could not have been done without the sharing of different people involving in the MBA programs, in France and in other contexts. However, we face a conflict between conveying detailed, accurate narrative data and protecting the identities of the individuals who participated in the research. In order to respect their confidentiality and certain personal requests, we list here below all participants that we had chance to discuss, interview, survey, or listen to their sharing in different contexts. Rather than mentioning clearly the functions and the schools where narrative providers come from, we associate their names with three groups of actors, as mentioned in the methodology: D (Demanders), P (Providers) and R (Regulators). There are totally 315 people involved in the collection of narrative data.

The types of narrative data collection are categorized with C (Conversation, mostly without record), I (Interview, mostly recorded), S (Survey), GI (Group Interview), O (Observation), CS (Conference's and Seminar's communication)

Name		Group	Type of narrative data
ABDELALEM	Tarek	D	S, O
ACHKAR	Charbel	D	S, O, GI
ADACHI	Junko	P	C
ADAS BLANCO	Elena	D	S, O
AGAZAR	Nicolas	D	S, O
AHONGBONON	Moise	D	S, O
AITCHISON	Andrew	D	S, O
ALACHBILI	Nizar	D	S, O
ALBALLAA	Kalid	D	S, O
ALBELLA	Arnaud	D	S, O
ALEXANDER	Odermann	D	S, O
ALI CHERIF	Younes	D	S, O
ALLENET	Maria-Luisa	D	S, O
AMAMI	Monia	P	I, C, O
AMORY	François	D	S, O
AMOS	Jon	P	I
AMREIN-MARIE	Christophe	D	S, O
ANSARI	Adeel	D	S, O
BALAYN	Fabrice	D	O
BARNETH	Kathleen	R	C, CS
BASSO	Olivier	P	I
BATSCH	Laurent	P	CS
BAUMANN	Serge	D	S, O
Name		Group	Type of narrative data

BECKER	Peter	D	S, O
BEKALE	Jean-Cédric	D	S, O
BEUSCART	Sophie	D	O
BIGO	Vinca	P	O
BIRCHLEY	Sarah Louisa	P	C, CS
BOLINGER	Alexander	R	C, CS
BOUNEZOUR	Imed	D	S, O
BOURNOIS	Franck	P	CS
BRACI	Mohamed	D	S, O
BRANNENS	Mathias	D	S, O
BRICOT	Julien	D	S, O, GI
BRISEBOIS	Bertrand	D	S, O
BRONNER	Hervé	D	S, O, GI
CAI LIJUAN	Bonnie	D	S, O
CAJUSTE	Ernest	D	S, O, GI
CALVARESE	Stéphane	D	S, O, GI
CALVO	Miguel	D	S, O, GI
CANDILLE	Valeri	D	S, O
CAO LI	Sophie	D	S, O
CAPARROS	Fabien	D	S, O
CARBONEIL	Julien	D	S, O
CARBONEL	Martine	P	C
CARRUBBA	François Antoine	D	S, O
CESAR	Charles	D	S, O, GI
CESSAC	Laurent	D	O
CHAMLA	Sabine	D	S, O
CHANG LIWEN	Nancy	D	S, O
CHEN	Si Min	D	S, O
CHEN	Hao	D	S, O
CHEN	Jian	D	S, O
CHENG	Xin	D	S, O, GI
CHOAINE	Laurent	P, R	I
CLOTTEAU	Marilidia	D	S, O
COLAS	Hervé	P	I
COSTELLO	Damien	P	I
COUASNON	Arnaud	D	S, O, GI
COURAU	Gildas	D	S, O
CREVELIER	Celine	D	S, O
DAI YUE'E	Cici	D	S, O
DAMERON	Kathleen	P	I
DAMERON	Stephanie	R	CS
DAUBA	Cédric	D	O
DAVID	Ludovic	D	S, O
DE ROZARIO	Pascale	P	C
DELARUELLE	Bertrand	D	O
DELOGU BONAN	Sandrine	D	S, O, GI
DELORME	Philippe	D	O
DENIS	Jean Philippe	P	CS
DIOP	Babacar	D	S, O
DIOP	El Hadji Malick	D	S, O
Name		Group	Type of narrative data
DODE	Gilles	D	S, O, GI

DOMANOVA	Maria	D	S, O, GI
DONG KAIJUN	Kevin	D	S, O
DOWNING	Kevin	R	C, CS
DREWETT	Laura	D	S, O
DUBOIS	Pierre Louis	R	CS
DUCHATELLE	Lionel	D	S, O, GI
DURAND	Thomas	P	I, C, CS
DUSSCHEE	David	D	S, O, GI
EDME	Dominique	D	S, O, GI
EHRENFRIED	Philipp	D	S, O
EL HABA	El Mostafa	D	S, O
EL HIDAOU	Madani	D	S, O
FAHRNI	Michel	D	S, O, GI
FENEYROLS	Alice	D	S, O
FIMBEL	Eric	P	C
FLOCH	Caroline	P	I
FONTAINE	Sebastien	D	S, O
FOURQUET	Louise	D	S, O
FRIDENSON	Patrick	R	CS
FU JINGYUAN	Steven	D	S, O
FUSS	Aurélien	D	S, O, GI
GALINDO	Paris	D	S, O, GI
GAUTHIER	Bernard	D	S, O, GI
GAY	Le Brun	D	S, O
GERARD	Christophe	D	S, O
GERBING	Bradley	D	S, O
GERONA	Thierry	D	S, O
GIL	Jean-Raphael	D	O
GIORDANENGO	Sophie	D	S, O
GONG	Xiaoqing	D	S, O
GOUBA	Nadine	D	S, O
GUI YIQIAN	Cathy	D	S, O
GUIGNARD	Damien	D	O
GUILBERT	Ludovic	D	S, O
GUILHON	Alice	P	CS
GULA	Yuliya	D	S, O
GUPTA	Jyoti	R	C
GUTSATZ	Michel	P	I
GUZMAN	Georges	D	S, O
HANSEN	Katie	D	S, O, GI
HATEY	Emmanuel	D	S, O
HAUPTMANN	Eleonore	D	S, O
HE	Haifeng	D	S, O
HE LEI	Henry	D	S, O
HEALEY	Nigel	R	CS
HO	Nga	D	S, O
HUANG	Shuming	D	S, O
HUANG JIEPING	Jacqueline	D	S, O
HUANG MINYAN	Vivian	D	S, O
Name		Group	Type of narrative data
HUANG XIAOQIANG	Sting	D	S, O
IBOVI	Benoît	D	S, O

IGNACZAK	Stéphane	D	S, O
ISLIWA	Salah	D	S, O
ISSIMI-NDONGO	Tchen Landry	D	S, O
JANSEN	Ralph	D	S, O, GI
JARQUIN	Karla	D	S, O
JENS	Kellner	D	S, O
JENSEN	Karina	P	C
JIANG	Qian	D	S, O
JIANG XIN	Jiang Xin	D	S, O
JOAO	Carla	D	S, O
JOB MENICAGLI	Nicolas	D	S, O
JULIEN DEBAY	Sophie	P	C
KAKARIKA	Maria	P	O
KARYOTIS	Catherine	P	C
KELLER	Fabrice	D	S, O
KLING WUST	Martine	D	S, O
KNOLL-RASK	Gretchen	D	S, O
KO CHUN KIN	Danny	D	S, O, GI
KOUASSI	Melissa	D	S, O
KRESLINS	Karlis	R	C, CS
KUCKEIN	Burcu	D	S, O
KUKHTINA	Olga	D	S, O
LABIGNETTE	Alexandre	D	S, O, GI
LALLEMAND	Raphael	D	O
LAMARQUE	Eric	R	CS
LASSALLE COTTIN	Francoise	P	C
LASSERRE	Bruno	D	S, O
LAULANET	Vincent	D	S, O
LAUNAY	Damien	D	S, O
LEBRETON	Dorine	P	C
LECONTE	Pascal	D	S, O
LEDGISTER	Sharron	D	S, O
LEFEBVRE	Charlotte	D	S, O
LEFEVRE	Vincent	P	C
LEITAO	Mozarte	D	S, O
LESPADE	Gilles	P	C
LI	Hui	D	S, O
LI	Mingzhi	D	S, O
LI JIAHUA	Jason	D	S, O
LI TIANEN	Peter	D	S, O, GI
LIN	Song	D	S, O
LIN	Yi	D	S, O
LIU YI	Daniel	D	S, O
LLAMBIAS	Fernando	P	C
LORRAIN	Marie Josee	P	C, CS
LU	Hanglin	D	S, O
LU	Hongwei	D	S, O
LU YUN	Vivian	D	S, O
Name		Group	Type of narrative data
LY	Thanh Tuan	D	S, O, GI
MA JIA	Ma Jia	D	S, O
MACKE	Jean Sebastien	D	S, O, GI

MADEC	Lionel	D	S, O, GI
MAKINOU	Aaron	D	S, O
MALICA	Corinne	D	S, O, GI
MANINE	Pierre-Marie	D	O
MANN	Michael John	D	S, O
MARTIN	Pascal	D	S, O, GI
MASSE BIBOUM	Roch	D	S, O
MAVLYUTOVA	Elina	D	S, O
MCCATHY	Brian	P	I
MCLACHLIN	Alexander	D	S, O
MEDJAHED	Abou El Kacem	D	S, O, GI
MEINRAD	Hervé	D	S, O
MENDES	Nathalie	D	S, O
MENG YIN	Nicol	D	S, O, GI
MOHAMADOUISA	Nasime	D	S, O
MOHTASHAMIPOUR	Reza	D	O
MOTTIS	Nicolas	R	CS
MOUKOKO KINGUE	Michel	D	S, O
MOYAL	Moise	D	S, O, GI
MOZZO SEBASTIANO	Sebastiano	D	S, O
NATALIYA ANDRIIVNA	Savych	D	S, O
NAVES	Frédéric	D	S, O
NDIAYE	Alioune	D	S, O
NGUYEN	Dan	D	S, O
NGUYEN	Ba Hien	P	C
NICO	Bremer	D	S, O
NIKOLAIDI	Maria	D	S, O
NIU XIAOYAN	Senera	D	S, O, GI
NOMOTO	Makiko	D	S, O
OKADA (FENNELLY)	Colleen	D	S, O, GI
OLIVAS-LUJAN	Miguel R.	R	C, CS
OUEDRAOGO	Ousseni	D	O
OUELLET	Raymond	P, R	I
OUYANG	Gewen	D	S, O
OWOOD	Kurt	P	C
PAN	Wei	D	S, O
PAQUEREAU	Jean-Baptiste	D	S, O
PATEL	Trushar	D	S, O, GI
PATRICK	Merz	D	S, O
PAVESIO	Marie	D	S, O
PECHIKOFF	Nicolas	D	S, O
PEGUIN	Marine	D	S, O
PENG	Yuemin	D	S, O
PFUHL	Andrea	D	S, O, GI
PILET	Jerome	D	S, O, GI
PIOLI	Elsa	D	S, O
POCHON	Nicolas	D	S, O
Name		Group	Type of narrative data
PROCIDA	Carole	D	S, O
QIN	Gang	D	S, O
QUINAUD	Maud	D	S, O
QUINTANA	Amelie	D	S, O

RABENJAMINA	Ugo	D	S, O, GI
RAICOVITCH	Jean Michel	P	I, C, O
RAKZA	Nordine	D	O
RAYMOND	Leban	P	C
RIBEYROL	Emmanuel	D	S, O
ROBERT	Emmanuel	D	S, O, GI
ROCHEFORT	Emmanuelle	P	C
ROCHER	Noel	D	S, O
ROCHIN GARCIA	Luis Guillermo	D	S, O
ROCTON	Stéphane	D	S, O
ROCVES	Terry	P	C
ROGNOL	Sandrine	P	C
ROLLAND	Michel	D	S, O
ROVELLOTTI	Lau	D	S, O
RUCHLEJMER	Gilles	D	S, O
RUDNIANSKI	Michel	P, R	I, C
SAGNIER	Alexandre	D	S, O
SAIDI	Zoubir	D	S, O
SALTER	Charles	P	C, CS
SANCHES-MATEUS	Fernand	D	S, O
SAVELLI	Jean	D	S, O
SAVIO	Alain	D	S, O, GI
SCHÄFER	Anja Carina	D	S, O, GI
SCHALLER	Franck-Olivier	D	S, O
SCHLESINGER	Josh	D	S, O
SCIALOM	Olivia	D	S, O
SEBASTIAN	Growe	D	S, O
SEIGNE	Eric	D	S, O
SEMSOUM	Mohamed	D	S, O, GI
SHEN ZUWEI	Kevin	D	S, O, GI
SHI	Wei	D	S, O
SHI	Yuli	D	S, O
SOLERE	Pierre François	D	O
SON SANGWON	Toby	D	S, O
SONNTAG	Michel	R	C, CS
SPENDER	JC	P	I, CS
SUONG	Soriyactra	D	S, O
TAN	Jinyu	D	S, O
TAUZIN	Helene	D	S, O, GI
THOMAS	Geisbüsch	D	S, O
TISON	Charles	D	S, O
TORSAN	Vesselina	P	C
TOUATI	Guillaume	D	O
VALERIO CASCAJO	Leticia	D	S, O
VALLET	Gilles	P	I, C
VALLS-RODRIGUEZ	Ludovic	D	S, O
Name		Group	Type of narrative data
VERNEAUD	Odile	D	S, O, GI
VIDAL	Franck	P	CS
VILLAIN	Arnaud	D	S, O
VIVIER LIRIMONT	Sebastien	P	C
VU	Kim	P	I, C, O

WANG	Huiling	D	S, O
WANG	Lijuan	D	S, O
WANG	Qi	D	S, O
WANG	Zhihua	D	S, O
WANG LEI	Leo	D	S, O, GI
WANG XIAOJING	Charlotte	D	S, O
WEI	Jianhua	D	S, O
WEN	Yi	D	S, O
WRIGHT	April	R	C, CS
WU	Haiyan	D	S, O
WU	Rong	D	S, O
WU	Zhaoxia	D	S, O
XIE	Fang	D	S, O
XU	Zhijun	D	S, O
XU	Shanshan	P	C
XU WEI	Danny	D	S, O
YAHIAOUI	Mohand	D	S, O
YANG	Jun	D	S, O
YANG LIN	Jimmy	D	S, O
YANG YINGJIAN	Ken	D	S, O
YIN JILIANG	Gerald	D	S, O
ZALVIDEA	Santiago	D	S, O
ZHANG	Feng	D	S, O
ZHANG	Lu	D	S, O
ZHANG	Sheng	D	S, O
ZHANG	Ying	D	S, O
ZHANG	Yun	D	S, O
ZHANG YING	Stephanie	D	S, O
ZHAO	Meng	D	S, O
ZHENG	Xiaorong	D	S, O
ZHOU JIANLAI	Andy	D	S, O, GI
ZHOU JUN	Pixie	D	S, O
ZHU	Huiyu	D	S, O
ZIMMOVITCH	Henri	R	CS

ANNEX 2

EXAMPLE OF INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Name:

Date of interview: 18/12/2013

Position, from when: *Assessor for AMBA accreditations, since June 2012.*

I've done 2 visits, the idea is the peer to peer.

I've visited a British university and a university in Moscow.

Reasons of being in the position of assessor:

Firstly, it is because they knew that I'm the academic head of the accredited MBA, and I participated in the yearly meetings of MBA deans and directors. Then they were looking for assessors because AMBA has significantly developed its activities world wide and now you have more than 200 business schools in the world that are accredited. So if you considered that an accreditation is for 5 years, so you need at least 40 accreditations or reaccreditations per year. In fact it is much more than that because there are cases like the case of XXX MBA who are not accredited for 5 years but for only 2 or 3 years.

There are a lot of issues that the accreditation team decided to review and not to provide a fully accreditation, for example the case of XXX we have not a proper amount of staff, the classroom was not good, we have many people who are not full time professors. Some schools are closed, some others are opened. So in general the amount of accreditations of AMBA should be around 50 to 60 cases. I don't have the exact figures.

An accreditation team is usually 4 persons, so they need to mobilise at least 200 people per year for the assessors.

The team must have enough seniority in order to read all types of documents given by the school (publications, books, program syllabi, etc)

Job description:

First I must read extensively and intensively the accreditation report provided by the business schools, within a specific format which is given by AMBA. I must read intensively in order to see whether it is compliant with AMBA requirements, and if it is consistent, because if you read reports you'll often find some inconsistencies.

Secondly, I go to visit the school, and I spend 2 days there to talk with the deans, with the presidents, with the directors, with the students, with the professors in order to provide yourself a report in which you will recommend the accreditations for 2 3 or 5 years or no accreditations at all.

AMBA does not give me a list of criteria to fill in, but there is an agenda. AMBA does not give us a specific agenda for each university, but there is a standard agenda.

For example of an agenda: the first day you'll have lunch with the leading team (dean, academic heads of program, president or vice president of the university). In the evening there is a dinner with the MBA team. The next day: the lunch time with the accreditation team in a private room in order to open discussion. At 4 o'clock, you'll go back to the amphitheatre to see the local team to give them the results and the recommendations will be to give to AMBA.

What are you looking for in order to see whether the program is worth having the accreditation?

There are many factors, if we go chronologically, then it will be:

- *recruitment: applicants accepted only if they have 3 years or more of professional experiences of managers or equivalent, and the cohort of minimum 20 people (where we*

might have problem here at CNAM when this year we have only 12 students in the full time program)

- *We have a very close look at the programs to see whether programs correspond or not to what is expected from an MBA graduate. All the programs in details have to be provided in the room of the accreditation team, and all the books must be there as well, so that the MBA has eligibility and quality to provide students a general management (360° view of company)*
- *We look at the research performed by MBA professors. For AMBA research become something of core importance. They want less and less teaching teams with no research. If there is no research at the level of teaching team there is no accreditation, and the school has no accreditation as well if the research is considered as insufficient by AMBA. Ideally they want every professors and instructors of MBA to do research and to publish. Books and publications of professors are given in the room for accreditation team to examine the value of publications and give the idea of the intellectual level of the team.*
- *We see as well how school takes care of students; how it accompanies them, how it supports them, what are the resources (room dedicated to MBA students with computers, with libraries),*
- *Coordination with private sector is an important point (person in charge of relation with companies, in charge of career development of students)*
- *Assessments of courses must be both formative and summarize. What is the availability of each instructor when students have problems and how they solve problems or manage failures of courses*
- *Career development of students: what are the positions of students before the MBA, 1 year or 2 years after graduated from the MBA,*
- *Level of cooperation with companies, not only at the level of career of students, but what is the network of the business school with private companies and professionals (do they have contracts with companies to develop new tools, do they make some applied researches)*

The document for accreditation is more or less 100 pages, very details.

Whether the Leadership is an issue raised during the accreditation:

There are two levels: 1) is the level of courses, and 2) is the level of the organisation of the MBA team. AMBA looks very careful on the way the MBA team is organised, they want it to be consistent and efficient, and they will look at the leadership task of the organisation of the MBA, who is the leader, how the power is distributed, how does school/ MBA team control that the decision is made and implemented, but they do not explicitly mention the word leadership.

The phenomenon of leadership currently appears in almost all MBA curricula:

It must be controlled but I personally think that probably schools would like to show it up as a competitive advantage to attract candidates— come to our school and you'll be a leader, means you'll be the boss.

There is an article with a good view that people come to an MBA wants to be a leader, so if MBAs add up courses in leadership it might give students a kind of belief.

ANNEX 3

EXAMPLE OF EXCHANGING EMAILS

Le 01/05/2014 à 14:48, XXXXXX a écrit:

Dear Tra,

I haven't written earlier because I've been overwhelmed... and am overwhelmed by the nature of your request. I'm afraid that what I've given you to date is all that I can do. The challenges we are facing with the merger make it most inappropriate for me to put you in contact with faculty in charge of courses. It's really not the moment.

So unfortunately you can't count on me at this time to help you further with your study.

Kind regards,

-----Message d'origine-----

De : Tra NGUYEN [mailto:thi-thu-tra.nguyen@CNAM.fr]

Envoyé : lundi 24 février 2014 22:53

À : XXXXXX

Objet : Re: TR: brochure

Good evening Professor XXXXXX,

Thanks a lot for your time and help. I understood that it is not easy to get such information, and it will be more difficult to get the one of XXX Business School.

I do not loose hope for the positive answer from the person in charge of Quality for the syllabi, meanwhile, could I ask for a favor that you introduce me for short interviews with certain professors in charge of courses at XXX (that I figured out in the brochure). They are mainly in charge of courses relating to the topic of leadership; so it will be more precise for me to build the case with live voices from professors.

They are:

Once again I would like to thank the supports that you offer to my study.

I appreciate a lot.

Best regards,

Tra Nguyen

Le 24/02/2014 à 14:48, XXXXXX a écrit:

Good afternoon Tra,

I'm sorry it took so long to get you this... it took a while to get the right person in the right place. As you can see it is the last IMBA brochure from XXX. I will now ask for the same from my colleague in Rouen.

As for syllabi etc. that is much more complicated... we may have to see if the person in charge of Quality can provide access to the archive. To do it for both XXX may be impossible. But we shall see.

Enjoy the brochure.

Best regards,

ANNEX 4**EXAMPLE OF STUDENT SURVEY****QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MBA STUDENTS**

Currently a doctoral student at CNAM (Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers), Paris, France (www.CNAM.fr), I am doing a research on evolutions of MBA programmes, emphasizing on the development of leadership approach in MBA curricula.

In order to be able to analyse the advancement of MBA curricula in that parameter, I am trying to identify and measure weights of various determinants, including MBA students, which lead to the introduction and development of leadership-related modules. The quantitative and qualitative data collected from the responses of MBA students to this first questionnaire and the possible interviews afterwards will provide me useful information regarding the importance and evolutions of leadership-related modules in MBA curricula from students' and graduates' point of view.

Interviews, survey responses will be treated in an aggregated, neutral way and remain confidential. The main objective is to identify the determinants and the relationship of these determinants with other benefits for the MBA. Copies of the research results will be provided if requested.

Tra NGUYEN (thutra.nguyen@gmail.com; tra.nguyen@CNAM.fr; +33 6 99 52 68 36)

1) Why do you want to do an MBA?

1-Self-assessment, 2-Develop my career path by leveraging from experiences acquired so far, 3-Learn how to build own business, 4-Become more aware of what is going on outside one's environment, 5-Get to know new people

2) What are your criteria of choosing an MBA? (please cite 5 criteria at most)

1-Flexibility, 2- Alumni network, 3-Reputation, 4-Quality of programme and teachers, 5-Tuitions

3) What MBA programme that you are doing? (full time/ part time/ executive, global, major, etc) Why do you choose this type MBA?

Part-time Executive MBA; because I cannot quit work as I have to earn my living.

4) How do you understand about leadership?

Leadership is something subtle that everyone tries to understand and explain but only a few know what it is really about.

For me leadership consist of a mix of wide angle vision together with deep down level analysis that applies to not only on people but also to organisations, processes,...which requires as many soft skills (EI) as hard skills (QI) and not the least MUST be tailored to the given situation at present time hence subject to evolve constantly so to make sure of the right momentum any time.

5) Do you think you could learn (or have learnt) about leadership in your MBA programme? If yes, in which course(s)?

Leadership, like anything else, can't be taught until you have been exposed to it concretely in real life experience and you have grasped the essence of it. Only then (even though this is not the only mean) you can develop it thanks to MBA classes including "lead oneself", "lead others", "lead the organisation", "Leadership across culture", personal assessments with the coach

- 6) Do you think enterprises look for leadership when they recruit employees? Please explain why yes/no?

It depends on the level of hierarchy whether they are looking for leaders, but generally leadership has not yet become a renown skill that enterprises (or their management) are particularly interested in – they will be interested in the "technical" skills in the first place; some may even be frightened of people younger / more junior than themselves showing too much leadership.

- 7) Personal information (optional)

Your name:

You are /were in MBA programme at **KEDGE**

You've been working for **24** years:

Your main working experiences are in the domain / industry of **engineering, software, finance, client services**

You prefer to discuss further and receive feedbacks on this subject via:

Email

Telephone: / skype:

☐ Do not have time

Thi Thu Tra NGUYEN

Revisiting the determinants of changes in MBA curriculum in France:

The introduction of leadership-related modules in MBA, between differentiation and conformity

Résumé

Dans la littérature récente en management, l'enseignement de la gestion est décrit comme une activité commerciale qui s'exerce sur un marché dont le produit phare est le MBA. En cherchant à promouvoir leurs MBA respectifs dans cet univers concurrentiel, les écoles de commerce sont ainsi amenées à renouveler ce cursus en permanence. De ce fait, l'industrie de l'enseignement de la gestion est devenue un important terrain de recherche en management.

Le MBA bénéficie désormais d'une reconnaissance quasi mondiale et il a connu une croissance remarquable au cours des dernières décennies. Il est par ailleurs abondamment critiqué, notamment au regard de la teneur et l'organisation des enseignements qui y sont dispensés.

Cette étude porte sur les relations et les influences croisées des parties prenantes dans le développement du cursus du MBA, en particulier en ce qui concerne l'introduction de modules liés au leadership.

Cette étude qualitative longitudinale, menée sur un échantillon de MBA en France, permet de préciser les rôles stratégiques et les influences respectives des principales parties prenantes que sont les régulateurs, les fournisseurs et les « clients » dans le processus d'élaboration d'un programme MBA.

La constante amélioration de ce diplôme répond en effet aux recommandations des régulateurs et à la perception des organisateurs, mais rarement aux souhaits de demandeurs. Nous proposons un modèle de croissance en spirale des parties prenantes dans l'organisation du MBA, qui met en évidence une dynamique permettant à la fois à l'industrie et à ses acteurs d'accroître leur efficacité.

Mots clés : formation management, MBA, leadership, stratégie, école de management

Résumé en anglais

In recent literature, Management Education is frequently described as a business industry, with the MBA program as its flagship product. Whilst attempting to position their programs in an increasingly competitive market, business schools continuously develop and renew the MBA. As a result, Management Education has become a new area of management study.

The MBA has enjoyed a remarkable growth in recent decades, to the point that it has become a globally recognised degree. However, it has also received considerable criticism, especially regarding its curriculum content and organisation.

Using a qualitative interview-based research on French MBA programs and curricula development, this study focuses on the interaction of stakeholders in the MBA curriculum development, notably in light of the introduction of leadership-related modules.

Its main findings evidence the strategic role and influence of the main stakeholders, i.e. regulators, suppliers and “clients”, in the MBA curriculum development process. The continuing improvement of the MBA curriculum reflects the recommendations of the regulators as well as the perspective of the suppliers, but the influence of demanders is more limited.

This research led to the identification and the specification of a spiral evolution model, for the interaction of stakeholders in the organisation of MBA and Management Education creates a synergistic growth in the industry that enables both organisations and the industry to be more efficient.

Key words: management education, MBA, leadership, strategy, business school