PARTICIPATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION:

PROBLEMS IN COMPARING BRITISH, FRENCH AND GERMAN

BUSINESS EDUCATION SYSTEMS

Charlotte Huntly
MSc by Research in Business Management

THE UNIVERSITY OF ASTON IN BIRMINGHAM

December 1993

THE UNIVERSITY OF ASTON IN BIRMINGHAM

PARTICIPATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION: PROBLEMS IN COMPARING BRITISH, FRENCH AND GERMAN BUSINESS EDUCATION SYSTEMS

Charlotte Huntly
Master of Science
1993

This research set out to investigate and compare student numbers in Business Education in Britain, France and former West Germany and to make some evaluation of the differences and their implications for student mobility between the countries. It focused on entrant, participation and graduation rates with a view to making an initial estimation of survival rates in this subject in the three countries.

There were three main trends that formed the background to the project: firstly the moves towards closer integration of the European Community, particularly in the field of education where student mobility between countries is being encouraged; secondly the general democratisation of higher education and the moves towards increasing student participation in higher education; and thirdly, the growth of Business and Management studies.

Following a description of the general systems of education in Britain, France and Germany, and the structures of Business Education in particular, the research looked at existing data from official sources and the intention was to use these figures to compare student participation and survival in Business Education.

As the research progressed, however, it became clear that there were considerable methodological problems involved in the use of the secondary sources, and the experience of other organisations involved in similar studies served as a useful pointer to potential hazards in making comparisons.

The main subject of this research therefore became an analysis of the inherent problems of this form of international comparison. It has highlighted the variations in educational structures and statistical administrative systems, as well as the cultural and historical differences in Business Education in Britain, France and Germany. The research has shown how it is only in the context of these differences that comparative statistics relating to student participation in higher education can be fully understood.

Keywords:

participation in higher education
problems of international comparison
student mobility in Europe
business education

CONTENTS

GLOSSARY

An explanation of foreign terms commonly used in the research project

FRENCH

Grandes Ecoles	literally 'Great Schools'; this term refers to the selective engineering and business schools that run parallel with the university sector in France.
baccalaureat	the series of examinations taken by French students at the end of secondary stage 2, more or less equivalent to 'A' levels in the UK
licence	a qualification that normally takes three years after the baccalaureat, similar to a Bachelors degree in the UK
maitrise	similar to a Masters level degree in the UK
études supérieures	literally 'higher studies', can refer to higher education in general
classes préparatoires	literally preparatory classes, these are studies undertaken post-baccalaureat by students wishing to apply for the competitive entrance examination for the Grandes Ecoles

GERMAN

Fachhochschule	Higher education institution offering courses of a more vocational nature. Similar in some respects to the former polytechnic sector in the UK but different in that they do not offer courses of equivalent value to the university diploma
Diplom Kaufmann/frau	the German qualification in Business Administration
Gesamt-hochschule	combined institution incorporating Fachhochschulen and other higher education institutions but excluding universities. Only in Hessen and Nordrhein-Westphalen
Betriebswirt-schaftslehre	nearest translation is probably Business Economics
Volkswirt schaftslehre	Economics/Political Economy
Grundstudium	basic studies - first part of degree
Hauptstudium	advanced studies - second part of degree following successful completion of Grundstudium

ABBREVIATIONS

A list of abbreviations commonly used in the project with their full meaning.

BTEC	Business and Technician Education Council
BTS	Brevet de Technicien Supérieure
BWL	Betriebswirtschaftslehre
CEC	Commission of the European Communities
CPGE	Classes préparatoires des Grandes Ecoles
DES	Department of Education and Science
DEUG	Diplome d'Etudes Universitaires Générales
DEUST	Diplome d'Etudes Universitaires Scientifiques et Techniques
DFE	Department for Education
DUT	Diplome Universitaire de Technologie
ECTS	European Community Course Credit Transfer Scheme
ERASMUS	European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students
FH	Fachhochschule
FTE	Full-time equivalent
HND	Higher National Diploma
ISCED	International Standard Classification for Education
MEN	Ministère de l'Education Nationale
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
SB	Statistisches Bundesamt
VWA	Verwaltungsakademie
VWL	Volkswirtschaftslehre

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

France

Germany

PARTICIPATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION: PROBLEMS IN COMPARING BRITISH, FRENCH AND GERMAN BUSINESS EDUCATION SYSTEMS

CHAPTER I

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH PROJECT

1.1 FOCUS

One of the aims of the European Community (EC) is to bring member states into closer political and economic union. The Single European Act (SEA) which came into operation on 1 July 1987, commits the EC to the establishment of a single market defined as "an area without internal frontiers in which free movement of goods, persons, services and capital is ensured" (DTI, 1989: 4)

The European Community Council Directive of December 1988 relates more specifically to the free movement of people and professions. In order to facilitate both professional recognition and student mobility within the EC, it indicates that employers and institutions should recognise the equivalent value of courses in higher education.

The aim of the EC was not, however, to standardise educational systems. In the later "Memorandum on Higher Education in the European Community" (CEC, 1991) the Commission restates its primary objective as being closer integration through promotion of common aims such as increased participation, while at the same time preserving the "rich diversity" of individual systems (CEC, 1991: 12).

The original interest of the current research was in exploring some of the 'rich diversity' in business education studies in the Britain, France and former West Germany and comparing the different systems, particularly as regards **participation** in higher education, one of the keywords in the European Community's Memorandum on Higher Education. This can be defined simply as the number of students enroled in higher education but it can also, in its broadest sense, include the patterns of access and completion.

Thus the project sets out to look at the data available in terms of numbers of entrants, participants and graduates in higher education in order to compare student participation rates in business and management education in the three countries. A valid comparison of the three educational systems was hindered, however, by national variations in the collection and presentation of data. Isolating and understanding the data and recognising some of the problems of comparison has in the end been the major outcome of this research.

1.2 BACKGROUND

There are three main areas of background to this research which are all interconnected. The first of these is the **closer integration of the European Community**. The second is the democratisation of political systems in Europe and the drive towards opening up **opportunities for a wider range of people**, including in the field of higher education. The third area is the growth of interest in management skills and the parallel **development of Business and Management Studies** in Europe.

1.2.1 The closer integration of the European Community

The EC legislation aimed to promote closer integration in higher education in the EC has indicated that employers and institutions should recognise the equivalent value of higher education courses of at least three years duration, until recent changes the normal minimum length for a Bachelor degree in the UK and for the licence in France.

There are, however, various differences in the educational systems of Europe, for example entrant rates and qualifying examinations for higher education, participation rates, programme lengths and structures, and graduation rates.

Employers, professional associations and higher education providers are having to look very hard at their requirements in order to make decisions as to the equivalence of the various qualifications they will meet over the next few years.

There is, so far, no hard and fast ruling as to the equivalences, and it is left to representatives from each member state to offer general guidelines for individual institutions or employers to refer to. There is no central EC body whose scale of equivalences is accepted by all member states except where some of the professional organisations have met to look at the equivalences within a particular occupation such as medicine or law. Decisions remain with an individual educational establishment or employer.

The EC has been slow to set up an organisation that will collect and collate statistics related to higher education in order to offer more information on the variations. The EC Statistics Office in Luxembourg exists but the most up-to-date attempt to compare inputs and outputs in higher education has been conducted by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). One of the main outcomes of this study has been to demonstrate some of the drawbacks of trying to compare different systems.

Part of the move towards greater integration in higher education has been to encourage student mobility between countries as part of their degree. EC funded schemes such as the ECTS (European Community Course Credit Transfer Scheme) have led to some research being done to facilitate student mobility and credit transfer but recognition is based on mutual trust rather than on standardisation. Institutions are being encouraged to accept their differences.

1.2.2 Democratisation of Higher Education

The belief that education should be available to all is central to most political systems with the smallest claim to democracy. During this century education has become compulsory throughout Europe and the minimum age at which young people can leave school has been raised considerably.

Higher education still remains optional but there is a stated aim in the EC (CEC, 1991: 11) to raise numbers of people participating in education beyond the minimum school leaving age both for the benefit of the individual and for the benefit of economies which increasingly demand higher skills and knowledge.

The democratisation process normally sees the development of participation from a highly selective elitist system to one that expects a high percentage of an age cohort to go on to higher education. This process has been referred to as the massification of higher education (Scott, 1991).

In 1961/62 a major survey was carried out in Britain concerning participation in higher education. Chaired by Lord Robbins, the Committee on Higher Education went on to produce a report which has influenced developments in higher education in the UK over the last two decades. One of the main principles of the Robbins report is that "courses of higher education should be available for all those who are qualified by ability and attainment to pursue them and who wish to do so" (Fulton, 1981: 5).

Similar trends have been developing in France and former West Germany but to greater effect than in Britain. The higher education systems in these two countries have a less selective entry system to higher education where students achieving the baccalaureat or Abitur, the equivalent to 'A' levels in the UK, have an automatic right of entry to the university system. There are however other ways in which selection takes place later or in parallel to the university system, such as in the Grandes Ecoles in France.

Britain is still often quoted in the press as having one of the lowest participation rates in Europe (e.g. Sanders, 1992: 4 & 5). France and Germany are often cited as models of

high rates of participation and hence closer to the concept of mass education (Sanders, ibid). The figures normally quoted, however, hide some of the consequences of high participation rates, namely, high non-completion rates, figures which do not appear so often in political statements, though in the UK there is pressure to recognise them as an important performance indicator in higher education (CVCP, 1987: 4).

In order to assess the real rates of participation, the output figures are as important as the input figures. It is important to measure the levels of success not just the numbers allowed to enter the system. The selection procedures and the relative likelihood of success or failure influence the whole student culture. If there is a high probability of success once a student has passed initial stringent selection procedures as in the UK system and the French classes preparatoires, the process of learning is still demanding but students have reasonable confidence in their success. In the German and French university systems, access to higher education is much more open but the likelihood of completing a long course of study is not as great.

Business and Management Studies provide an interesting example of some of the variations both in selection and participation.

1.2.3 The development of Business and Management Studies

Over the last two or three decades, the range of programmes offered in Business and Management Studies and the numbers of students participating in these courses has multiplied in all three countries.

This has been due to various factors, one of which is the economy and the desire to improve management practices and hence productivity.

Another factor is probably students' interest in moving as quickly as possible up the income ladder.

The historical development of business and management studies has also influenced the way that selection systems in this area have developed over the years, particularly in France with the unique system of the Grandes Ecoles.

1.3 RESEARCH AIMS

My research interest is to look at a particular aspect of the higher education systems in three countries of the European Community in order to discover what variations exist.

It focuses specifically on first level degree programmes that entail a minimum of three years of study. This period of study was taken as the basic length of a first degree qualification which was recommended for mutual recognition by member states in the 1988 Directive (CEC, 1988). This level is classified by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) as ISCED level 6 (See Appendix 1).

It focuses on Business and Management Studies as an example of a subject area where there are less clearly defined goals than, for instance, in Medicine, but where it might be assumed **at first glance**, that the transfer of skilled personnel between countries would pose fewer problems.

The research does not aim to look in detail at the different content of the programmes except in fairly general terms. It focuses instead on the different participation rates in the programmes, specifically the entrant rates, the overall participation rates and the graduation rates in order to see what variations exist. This is particularly important where students have the opportunity to study in more than one country as both the students and the host universities have to be able to understand and adjust to different levels of experience.

It aims to describe and compare different systems and to make some evaluation of the differences and their implications for student mobility between the countries. It does not, however, seek to evaluate the different systems of education.

As the research progressed it became clear that information available from secondary sources presents various problems for comparison as the data has been collected and presented in ways that are not always comparable. Much of the final analysis, therefore, looks at the problems of comparison from current secondary sources, illuminated by information from interviews and discussions with key informants.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The project set out to look at the entrance, participation and graduation rates in first degree level courses in the field of Business Education in France, Germany and Great Britain in order to compare the input and output figures in these countries. For existing literature it has therefore relied largely on official publications from the three countries but also on a range of other literature in all three languages to provide a context on their higher education.

As proposed in the introduction, there are three main trends that form the background to this research project and these have generated a considerable amount of writing and research.

The first of these is the **closer integration of the European Community**, particularly moves towards allowing free movement of people and professions across national boundaries, including students in Higher Education.

The second is the democratisation of the political systems in Europe in the latter decades of the twentieth century which has led to the drive towards opening up **opportunities for a wider range of people** in the field of higher education.

Thirdly is the growth of interest in the nature of management skills and the parallel **development of Business and Management Studies** in Europe.

The three areas are necessarily interlinked and some of the publications overlap into more than one area.

2.1 THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

The first area of literature concerns the development of the European Community (EC) and much of the literature relating to higher education in this context has been generated in connection with initiatives encouraging student mobility within the EC.

Much of the literature to which I will be referring is from circulars and official documents relating to the EC directives and initiatives and their implementation.

2.1.1 General Developments

EC publications to which particular reference has been made include the Resolution of the Council of Ministers of Education of February 9th 1976 concerning the acceptance of the diversity of educational provision in the EC and the decision not to harmonise it, and the EC Council Directive of 21.12.88 concerning the recognition of higher education qualifications.

The General Directive concerning the rights of professionals to practice throughout the EC came into force in theory in January 1991 but it is currently still only in certain areas, such as medicine, where this is becoming effective in practice. Developments in other areas have been the subject of various conferences, with resulting papers (e.g. Neville-Rolfe, 1989; Dalichow, 1991).

2.1.2 ERASMUS, ECTS and NARIC

The European Community has been involved in various projects aimed at facilitating closer links between institutions and mutual recognition of qualifications.

The European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students (ERASMUS) programme aims mainly to promote student mobility between institutions in EC and latterly EFTA countries, though it also funds other forms of institutional cooperation as well. The European Community Course Credit Transfer Scheme (ECTS)

is part of the ERASMUS programme and specifically aims to encourage institutions to recognise each others courses so that students can take credits with them if they wish to study in more than one country. The pilot project initially involved a selected group of institutions in five subject areas, including Business Studies. Each participating institution produces a detailed prospectus about what is on offer to students. The comparison is based on the idea of equivalent credits, with various factors taken into account. Recognition is based largely on mutual trust and the different patterns in, for instance, teaching methods and assessment, are accepted as part of the cultural diversity of the higher education systems (ERASMUS Bureau, 1990).

Informal feedback on the success of the project (e.g. conference papers, ERASMUS meetings) is interesting but follows the same line as the regular reports from the ERASMUS Bureau (e.g. CEC, 1989, 1990/91) in that there are considerable numbers of students wishing to come to study in Britain for a short period of time, normally one semester or one year, and linguistically qualified to do so, but fewer numbers of students being "exported". The principle of free movement of occasional students through the ERASMUS and ECTS programme is being resisted by some institutions in Britain because of this numbers imbalance (ERASMUS meetings).

Another initiative in this field is the system of National Academic Recognition Information Centres (NARIC) "a system of nationally designated units whose purpose is to provide students, higher education institution and employers with authoritative information on the value and recognition of educational credentials obtained in other countries." (CEC: 38). This organisation publishes information on the equivalence of a wide range of degrees and diplomas and acts as a point of reference for admissions tutors across the Community.

These initiatives have acted as a catalyst to encourage cooperation between higher education institutions across the Community and have helped to promote understanding about respective programmes.

Waterhouse (1991) has been particularly critical about the ECTS and highlights some of the shortcomings of their principle of mutual trust. He gives as an example the

dissimilarities of the level and experience of students at the "zero point", i.e. the point of entry to higher education. He also mentions the problem of credit equivalence because of the differing study methods and assessment procedures. A consortium of higher education institutions has been set up as a supplement to ECTS which aims to look in more depth at these matters. The TEXT consortium, however, tends to be heavily dominated by the former polytechnic sector in the UK, where institutions have tended to become more involved with moves towards credit transfer. With the disappearance of the binary divide, this could become a challenge to more established universities.

Warman's paper (1990) describes some of the ways that the ECTS has used input/process/output divisions both at the level of the system and the individual discipline in order to make comparisons between institutions easier.

Both discuss the problems related to international recognition of degrees and diplomas, the acceptance of a common marking scheme, credit transfer and the progress of the ECTS scheme and show some of the work that has been done towards setting up common variables as a means of comparison for the different systems.

Various research has been generated by ERASMUS and apart from the annual reports, surveys have been carried out into students' experiences (Teichler, 1991; Baumgratz-Gangl & Deyson, 1990). These have looked at the experiences of students involved in ERASMUS in terms of both their academic and social integration. This includes organisational problems such as accommodation and expenses and also problems of cultural integration.

Other research being conducted through the ERASMUS programme often takes place between institutions who have established links. Literature on this is often connected with the development of "double" or "dual" qualifications and information at this level is not always available in published form except as minutes of meetings.

The various publications highlight the differences between educational systems for instance in terms of student experiences, methods of teaching and learning, language ability and attitudes of students to study abroad.

2.1.3 The Memorandum

1991 saw the publication of a report by the Industrial Research and Development Advisory Committee of the Commission of the European Communities (IDRAC) entitled "Skill Shortages in Europe", and the report on a conference in Sienna entitled "Higher Education and 1992: Planning for the year 2000".

In December 1991 the Commission of the European Community published the "Memorandum on Higher Education in the European Community" based on the conclusions reached at these conferences.

One of the main recommendations of the Sienna conference was that "in the light of the future higher knowledge and skill requirements in the Community as well as the general social advancement of its citizens,...Member States should encourage increased participation in higher education" (Commission of the European Communities, 1991: 5).

As with many published statements about access and participation, the accent in the Memorandum is on increasing the numbers entering higher education. There is also, however, recognition that if more students are to achieve success in one form or another, the systems will have to adapt to meet the needs of a changing cohort of students. The report goes on to suggest ways of making this possible, including through encouraging systems of more flexible learning, such as distance learning and opportunities for credit transfer across national boundaries.

The Memorandum seeks to promote further cooperation between the countries in the European Community by highlighting common aims such as increased participation. "Closer integration within the Community itself remains the primary objective. The Community has a rich diversity of languages and culture and the process of integration must be such as to preserve this diversity" (CEC, 1991: 12).

The preservation of diversity alongside the recognition of equivalences has posed numerous questions among institutions of higher education and has led to some

controversy, such as the relative value of the British BSc qualification compared to the diploma in the French Grandes Ecoles or the German Diplom Kaufmann/frau.

The Memorandum was a document that asked for discussion and feedback from higher education institutions and it has, therefore, spawned various conferences and papers in response to its proposals, for instance the paper published by the Committee of Directors of Polytechnics, and the papers presented at various conferences aimed at discussion of the implications of the proposals in London and other major cities.

The response from the Committee of Directors of Polytechnics supports the EC drive towards systems of more open learning, the continued encouragement of student mobility through ERASMUS and other initiatives, and the continued development of language competence. They suggest, however, that certain areas such as access should be addressed locally (CDP, 1992: 6).

2.2 DEMOCRATISATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The second main area of literature is concerned with higher education and its development over recent decades. It includes some discussion on its aims and objectives as well as a range of descriptive and comparative literature.

2.2.1 What is higher education?

A number of recent books about the nature of Higher Education have been published by the Society for Research into Higher Education (SRHE). These have contributed towards the theoretical discussion on the aims and objectives of higher education (e.g. Allen, 1988; Barnett, 1990; Wyatt, 1990) and have suggested definitions of higher education which have contributed to the conceptualisation necessary for this project.

The philosophy of education has a long and confused history and I do not intend to review it in detail here. The question as to what distinguishes 'higher' education from

other education requires some answer, however. This is discussed to varying degrees in some of the books cited later (e.g. Locke, 1989; Barsoux and Lawrence, 1990, 1991; Lane, 1989).

Part of the discussion revolves around the distinction between academic and vocational education. Traditionally higher education was always considered to be connected with academic study and hence the university sector, though this has always included some strongly vocational subjects such as law and medicine.

This has been complicated over the last few decades by the development in the UK and Germany of the non-university sector, and the arrival of more vocational subjects, such as business studies, into universities. The predominant association of higher education with the university sector and the realm of academic thinking has gradually been broken down and now it is understood to include a wider range of institutions, many geared more to the vocational needs of an industrial society. In the UK in the 1950s and 60s, terms such as "advanced further education" and "public sector higher education", were often used to distinguish the new polytechnics and colleges of education from the university sector (Stewart, 1989: 142). More recently, "higher education" has tended to refer to all post-secondary education (Allen, 1988: 10). With the dismantling of the binary divide in the UK, however, the term "university" may again be seen as becoming synonymous in status terms with the term "higher education", particularly with the demise of the CNAA and the current need for many of the remaining colleges to have their degree courses accredited by a 'university'.

In former West Germany, the development of Fachhochschulen (higher vocational schools) and other forms of more vocational education followed a different path to the university system and the universities retained their more elitist status. Whereas there were basic structural similarities in the degree programmes offered in the British university and polytechnic systems, there are still noticeable differences between the two equivalent systems in Germany, for instance in the minimum qualifications accepted and the length of the programmes. The term 'Hochschule' refers to a range of higher education institutions but the title of 'Universität' still retains a particular status connotation.

The development of the higher education system in France was very different, with the parallel development during the nineteenth century of the university and the Grandes Ecoles system. The Grandes Ecoles were initially engineering schools designed to train leaders of industry whereas the universities were seen more as the training ground for political leaders and civil servants.

The reputation and particularly the selective nature of the Grandes Ecoles in France has led to them retaining a higher status in the engineering and business world than the university sector. The Grandes Ecoles system has certain similarities to the polytechnics in Britain and the Fachhochschulen in Germany, in that they offer education of a more practical vocational nature, but whereas historically, for various reasons, the vocational sector in Britain and Germany has had a lower status than the university system, this is certainly not true of the top range of Grandes Ecoles approved by the French Ministry of Education. In fact, the term 'Polytechnique' is the title of one of the most selective and highly respected institutions in France.

"L'éducation supérieure" has therefore included a wider range of institutions in France for a much longer period than in Britain and Germany and the status of 'vocational' higher education has been better.

It is also worth making some distinction at this point between education and training. In the UK the term training has distinctly practical connotations and is often associated with learning experiences carried out in employment. The accent tends to be on the idea that it is employer led for specific purposes in line with the goals of a particular organisation. It is rapidly becoming more difficult to make the distinction, however, as employers and professional groups become more active in the assessment and certification of vocational qualifications, for example through the development of competence based accreditation systems by the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) in the UK and the Chambers of Commerce in France. The advent of credit transfer and the acceptance of work experience as credit towards a qualification in some areas is also blurring the distinctions.

2.2.2 What is higher education for?

Some of the different definitions of the aims and objectives of higher education serve to illustrate some of the confusion about the aims of higher education:

- "knowledge: its preservation, transmission, creation and application" (Allen, 1988: 148)

- "status distribution" (Teichler, 1980: 12)

- "to impart the highest standards in the mastery of professional skills...to foster independent judgement, creativity and "esprit critique" and to confer the ability to range across the boundaries of disciplines, cultures and countries" (CEC, 1991: 2).

- "meeting national needs" (Davies, 1992).

- "the provision of technically trained persons to fill the needs of industry, agriculture, government, and the welfare services" (Burn, 1970: 5).

In brief, (if one can be brief about a discussion that dates back to Confucius, Aristotle and beyond), there is confusion as to whether higher education should be valued more for its contribution to knowledge in general, or for its contribution to society. Should the choices and needs of the individual have greater importance than the needs of society? Much of recent political debate centres on the conflict between student demand and society's requirements in terms of skills. To what extent should students have a free choice as to what they study and how much should study opportunities be influenced by the needs of the economy?

The discussions continue, influenced of necessity by the current political structures in each country. For instance, the new trends towards accountability and changes in the structure of university funding in Britain are making universities seriously reconsider their goals in terms of research and teaching. In Germany, employers are questioning the value of the lengthy theoretical education in the university system where students emerge

often at 27 or 28, an age at which some would consider them too old to train (Richards, 1992: 8). In France, the Grandes Ecoles are questioning the mathematical nature of their courses as opposed to humanist aspects, and their lack of research expertise (Handy, 1989: 102; Malherbe,1991).

Allen (1988) suggests that universities have particular difficulty in formulating goals, in that an organisation has to reach some agreement in order to do this and "many authorities suggest that it is difficult to persuade the members of a university to agree on anything" (Allen, 1988: 25)!

2.2.3 Structures in higher education

There is a range of descriptive and comparative literature available on higher education, much of it originally commissioned by national and international bodies such as government committees, the European Community (EC), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Carnegie Commission, the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP).

Some are concerned simply with describing the system in one country (Sharp and Dunford, 1990; Lewis, 1985; Ministere de l'Education Nationale, 1989), others compare several countries (Wijnaendts van Resandt, 1991; DES, 1985). Some focus on higher education (Stewart, 1989) including discussion on its historical development, and others place it in a wider setting such as the needs of the labour market (Teichler and Sanyal, 1982).

Other publications are more comparative and often concentrate on particular aspects of higher education such as vocational education (CEDEFOP, 1984), development of systems within a sociological framework (Scotford-Archer, 1979; Teichler, 1980), governance (Daalder and Shils, 1982), assessment (Heywood, 1989).

One problem is that, because of the current speed of change in the European Community and other political developments, they are not always up-to-date. For information on

current developments the most useful sources tend to be newspaper articles, for instance from the Times Higher (Educational Supplement), minutes of meetings such as the Rektorenkonferenz in Germany, the Conference des Grandes Ecoles in France and the CVCP in the UK, conference papers and other less formal sources such as key informants.

Scott (1991), for instance, addressed the problems created in the wider world by the development of mass higher education in Europe. He pointed out the effects that increased participation of home students is beginning to have on foreign students. Davies (1992) discussed current developments in higher education in Britain and the probable consequences of the new government White Paper.

Other useful reference material concerning selection includes official publications such as the UCCA handbook, and other documentation such as prospectuses which contain information aimed at students about application procedures. These have the advantage of being produced annually and are relatively up-to-date.

2.2.4 Participation in higher education

There is no shortage of interest and publications relating to selection and participation rates, many published either by governmental or professional bodies (e.g. OECD, 1992; Kelly, 1990) or under the auspices of the groups such as the Society for Research into Higher Education (SRHE) (e.g. Fulton, 1981). These themes also often appear in journal articles (e.g. Keen, 1989).

These can be divided into literature more concerned with the theoretical framework and material related to empirical surveys.

Some publications which deal with selection procedures and access to higher education and are of particular interest at a more theoretical level are those concerned with the development of Turner and Hopper's theories on Sponsored and Contest Mobility (Hopper, 1971)and Trow's theories on the development of societies from elitist to universal educational systems (Trow, 1981).

As the principle of democracy has been put into practice in France, Germany and Great Britain, the accent over recent years has been to increase numbers entering higher education.

Hopper developed an idea generated by Turner where education systems are classified according to the way that selection takes place. The typology is based on the theory that education in industrial societies is the main means of upward social mobility and the forms of selection either encourage or discourage movement between the social strata.

Sponsored mobility is based on selection by an elite who thereby limit access to within a certain group of people. The UK system is cited as an example of this, though much of the original research was done when the 11+ was still a common form of selection at the end of primary education, and before the main development of comprehensive schooling.

Contest mobility is based on the idea that everyone starts off with a more or less equal chance and the "winners" of the "race" are selected to move up through the educational system. The USA was originally cited as an example.

There are various models associated with this theory which offer a possible way of making a preliminary classification of all educational systems. The suggested dimensions are based on the following questions:

a How is selection done?

b When does it take place?

c Who does the selection?

d Why are certain candidates selected?

Hopper also talks about the effects of different forms of selection and how people cope with them. Potential candidates for mobility have to be "warmed up", encouraged to take advantage of the education offered. When selection takes place society offers ways for

the "losers" to cope with their failure, or "cool out". The different forms of selection influence the degree to which candidates can adjust to failure.

These theories are based on various assumptions, one being that education is the main source of social mobility, and, linked to this, the assumption that educational qualifications are a significant factor in selection processes for high status occupations.

Trow developed a similar model concerning elite, mass and universal higher education systems. He classifies educational systems according to the numbers of students allowed to participate in higher education. He defines elite systems as being those which prepare 15 - 20% of the age cohort for high status occupations; mass systems prepare up to 50% for a wider range of "white-collar occupations"; and universal systems prepare larger numbers for "life in advanced industrial societies, severing the link between post-secondary education and occupations" (Trow, 1981: 119).

An elite system, such as that presently in the UK, selects early and only a relatively small proportion of an age cohort will enter higher education. Systems such as the French or German system are geared to higher numbers of students continuing their education beyond the baccalaureat/Abitur stage. France has recently been quoted as aiming for 80% of young people to pass the baccalaureat (the standard which qualifies them for entry to university) by the turn of the century (Sanders, 1992).

Trow (Trow, 1981: 90) argues that the expected development towards universal systems of education has slowed down and that parallel elite systems have survived in countries where the trend has been towards mass education.

Teichler et al (1982), also support the view that education is related to status distribution. They put forward the idea that the drive towards mass education will eventually create a reaction to itself as the social hierarchy is threatened. The "warming up" process becomes too successful and there follows a need to find some other form of status distribution, for instance by ranking higher education establishments within one country or finding an alternative criteria such as occupational status.

Examples of the development of ranking systems are present in Britain, France and Germany. In Britain they have been developed by the government in connection with university funding. Universities are ranked according to their research and teaching output, based on peer review.

In France, the existence of the Grandes Ecoles is already an example of the survival of a group of elitist institutions within a system which is moving towards mass education. Even within the Grandes Ecoles, however, the ranking is important. The government is involved to the extent that it recognises some schools and courses and not others but even within the top group of schools the competition to be ranked higher than others is very strong. Magazines such as L'Express, L'Etudiant, L'Expansion and Le Monde de l'Education publish regular rankings based on various criteria (e.g. Lamoure, 1993: 71-86).

In Germany, the idea of ranking universities is relatively new but it has begun in recent years (e.g. Spiegel, 19.4.93: 80-101) mainly based on student opinion.

These are all examples of the survival of forms of elitism in educational systems and support Teichler et al's premise that "social inequality has been largely preserved despite reduction in inequality of educational opportunity" (Teichler et al, 1982: 134).

Since the mammoth surveys conducted prior to the Robbins report in the UK, systems have been set up in the UK to collect and publish regular statistics on student participation and graduation rates. Their limitations accepted, figures are now published annually by organisations such as the Universities Statistical Record and by the DES on higher education and these statistics act as performance indicators in the assessment of higher education institutions.

With the disappearance of the binary divide, the different method of collection and presentation of data in the two sectors will eventually be rationalised by the new body being set up to provide statistical data - the Higher Education Statistics Agency.

Likewise in France and Germany research into participation rates is conducted by similar bodies. In France, this is mainly the realm of the Ministère de l'Education Nationale whereas in Germany it is centrally the domain of the Statistisches Bundesamt though regional statistics are the responsibility of the individual Länder.

There are also European and international organisations with a brief to collect data for comparative purposes, for instance the EC statistics office, the EURYDICE databank and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Figures usually quoted for participation rates in Europe, for instance in the Memorandum on Higher Education in the European Community (CEC, 1991; 6) tend to look at numbers of new entrants only. Surveys which tend to concentrate on the initial point of entry to higher education will often show a distorted view of the selection processes. The high numbers of students entering higher education in France, for instance, tend to be the figures most quoted in the press (e.g. Henderson, 1990: 11, Henderson, 1992: 11). What tends to remain hidden, however, are the drop-out rates, a result of the continuing selection process that takes place during the period of study.

There is continuing discussion about the development of performance indicators in the UK and the use of input and output factors. One of the major recommendations of the joint CVCP/UGC Working Group (CVCP, 1987) was that more work should be done on the development of performance indicators related to outputs. The evaluation of higher education and performance indicators, including output factors, is also of wider European interest (e.g. Maheux, 1989).

Two publications of particular interest are the joint publications by the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) in the UK, the Center for Higher Education Policy Studies (CHEPS) in the Netherlands and the Hochschul-Informations-System (HIS) in Germany (CNAA et al, 1992) in which they sought to develop "a valid, reliable and efficient method for comparisons of quality across higher education systems in several European countries" (CNAA et al, 1992: 5). This was intended to give students and

institutions some more effective guidelines about the nature and quality of comparable courses in different countries of the European community.

The first stage of the project was to collect various data based on a checklist of input, output, process and environmental features. The second stage was a comparison of systems in the three countries (Britain, the Netherlands and Germany) through a peer review involving members of staff from institutions in each country. Case studies were used to compare study programmes in economics.

One of the main conclusions was that further work needs to be done on comparison of learning outcomes in terms not only of process features such as the length of time of study but also in terms of levels of attainment. The problem of within-country variations was also recognised and the problems of making generalisations from a sample of case studies. Particular mention was made of the ERASMUS programme and the individual quality assessment that goes on where it is decided which level students enter when they study abroad.

A second publication resulted from the project (CNAA et al, 1992). This was part of the background information prepared for the peer review and describes the three higher education systems based on the 'systems theoretical approach' with a brief comparison. Their conclusions regarding output data are similar to those of other surveys in that the effects of process differences such as the length of study programmes makes comparison difficult and generalisations at this level have to be treated very carefully.

This can be seen to be true in other studies published over the last few years, for instance by the OECD (OECD, 1992), and the UK Government Statistical Service (DES, 1992, 1990).

These publications have looked at international figures for entrants, participants and graduates, but are of particular interest because they have also dealt with survival or qualifying rates. All highlight the problems involved in this kind of survey. This is discussed in more detail in chapter VII.

The results of the OECD survey were quoted in the press (MacGregor, 1993) and in cases such as this they are often taken at face value without a full understanding of the underlying factors:

> ..because of differing educational systems, traditions and terminology, international comparisons always present difficulty (DES, 1991: xix).

The CNAA/CHEPS/HIS project used economics as the basis for a case study for the comparison of educational systems. This research project focuses on Business and Management Studies and this is the third area of literature reviewed here.

2.3 BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT STUDIES

There are numerous publications relating to management and business studies but the main ones of interest for this research project are comparative studies relating to management in general in Britain, France and Germany and those relating to its development as a discipline in higher education.

2.3.1 What is management?

The three countries have different conceptions of management and different interpretations of what management skills are considered most important.

There are a variety of publications that look at the development of the understanding of management and business in individual countries (Barsoux and Lawrence, 1990, 1991; Gaugler and Grochla, 1990). These do not set out to compare management across national boundaries but rather to look closely at the unique characteristics in one country and explain their development.

In a more comparative framework, Lane sets out to look in more depth at the differences in the industrial enterprise in Britain, Germany and France and the different patterns and styles of work practices, including the different understanding of the concept of management. She comments on the problems of conceptualisation for a comparative study across cultural boundaries but offers a definition of what a manager is required to do, which can be summarised briefly as planning, organisation and control (Lane, 1989: 86).

Handy et al admit that:

> to some extent the differences lie in semantics: different countries have different names for the same things (Handy et al, 1989: 13).

The word "manager" is very much of Anglo-American origin. In Britain it used to be a relatively low status term "used for the more lowly service functions of catering manager or transport manager with the top officials called principals, partners, directors or even permanent secretaries" (Handy et al, 1989: 163).

In Britain, managers have traditionally worked their way up through the system. Studies on the educational backgrounds of British managers (e.g. MSC et al, 1987) show that they are poorly educated compared to their counterparts in other countries.

The French word for their elite young managers - cadres, has its origins in military terminology. It has a definite legal status in terms of pay and status. This status can be obtained either through qualifying at one of the elite engineering or business schools or by promotion through the hierarchy based on continuing education.

The German understanding of management is complicated by the fact that there is no term which serves to identify a group of people as managers in the same way as in the French or British context. The head of an engineering company will be qualified firstly as an engineer, often to a high level. Lawrence argues that the concept of Technik, i.e. technical knowledge of the specialism, is more important to a German company than

managerial skills (Lawrence, 1989: 152). This is also reflected in their higher education in that the nearest equivalent to Business Studies or the French diploma at the Grandes Ecoles is Betriebswirtschaftslehre (BWL), more accurately translated as Business Economics and still closely related to more traditional Economics programmes.

The European Community has shied away from attempting to harmonise education and hence also Business Education. Handy et al suggest that each country should have its own model (Handy et al, 1989) and this has recently been developed in the UK through the Management Charter Initiative. The CNAA, in cooperation with the British Institute of Management (BIM) and the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), set out to produce a model for the British manager in the framework of a new system of certification in management linked to the developing NCVQ guidelines (CNAA, 1989,1991).

This seeks to define managers in terms of the skills and knowledge that graduates may need in order to become 'good' managers and provides a checklist of competencies which can be matched against their achievements in higher education.

Thurley and Wirdenius (1989), however, have suggested a checklist of skills that they believe could be used across the European Community and have attempted to draw on what they see as common values and necessary skills.

These publications form part of the wider debate (e.g. Lane, 1989; Locke, 1989; Handy et al, 1989) as to whether there are common characteristics in management that could potentially form the basis for a common European curriculum in Business Education. Lane and Handy suggest that this is not the way forward as each country has certain features which make their particular form of management unique. The differences in definition and understanding of the concept of management are one example of this.

2.3.2 What is Business Education?

Some publications also look more specifically at the training and education of managers, often on a comparative basis (Locke, 1989; Handy et al, 1989; Byrt, 1989; Gaugler, 1990; Forrester, 1986; Lane, 1989).

Handy et al distinguish between business education and management development, the first being the basic foundation necessary as a starting point and often acquired outside the workplace, and the second being the knowledge and skills which can only be acquired after some experience (Handy et al, 1989: 12).

Business education as a discipline began to grow when it was accepted that management skills were something that could be learnt in the classroom as well as on the job.

Locke (1989) looks at the rise of business studies in higher education in France, Germany and Britain from a historical viewpoint. He concludes that the different cultural traditions and institutional patterns in the three countries have led to systems that differ significantly, both in structure and subject content:

> The subject of business studies is itself a cultural phenomenon...And it also means that the form and the effectiveness of business studies will be, because cultures vary, different in each country. (Locke, 1989: 55).

In Britain, the elitist university system geared to producing leaders in politics rather than in industry, meant that there was no strong tradition of economics being linked to business. British industry tends to rely on taking young unspecialised graduates and teaching them the real techniques of management during their first few years of employment. The influence of the behavioural sciences from America and the lack of a strong link between business and economics in the UK has also meant that business studies largely ignores the mathematical side that tends to symbolise the French approach to management. The development of Business Studies in Britain, particularly with the setting up in the 1960's of the London and Manchester Business Schools, has been more

on the practical side with the emphasis on experience in the MBA selection procedures. Links with industry have been strong and this is reflected in the number of sandwich degrees offered in business studies, building practical experience into the first degree programme.

The Grandes Ecoles in France, by comparison, have existed since the early 19th century and the tradition of excellence in the cadres has hardly altered. The French university sector is only now beginning to offer competitive qualifications in business studies.

Mathematics has always been a central feature of the Grandes Ecoles system though it is still used more as a means of selection than necessarily because of its usefulness (Handy, 1989: 96). The strong engineering and military tradition in the French Grandes Ecoles system and the legal status of the cadres is quite unique in Europe. French management studies have no background in research as they have developed away from the more academic university sector. The practical case study orientation of the programmes sets them well apart from the heavily theoretical nature of German studies.

In Germany the tradition has been for managers to come from the engineering sector, to be specialists in the particular industry they have been trained in, rather than specialists in management as such. Management as a concept does not really exist in Germany (Lawrence, 1989: 151-152), and the closest discipline to it - Betriebswirtschaftslehre (BWL) has only become a popular subject for potential managers over the last few decades.

The rise of BWL or Business Economics as it is translated, has strong roots in economic theory though with somewhat less mathematical bent than the French due to the influence of its main protagonist - Erich Gutenberg. BWL became a scientific discipline which did not aim to teach business or management techniques, but Wissenschaft (knowledge) or Denktechnik ("think technology") (Locke, 1989: 131). Locke suggests that this independent development reflects the lack of American influence as access to the new tools of the trade, computers and new technology, was largely not available to the defeated nation after the war. There was also little influence from the growth of

behavioural sciences in America with the result that business graduates from the German system traditionally have had little practical experience unless they have undertaken apprenticeships prior to their university study. German managers traditionally valued high academic achievement and the background of current German managers tends to reflect this. It should be born in mind, however, that BWL is still a relative newcomer to the scene with numbers growing dramatically in the 1960s (Gaugler, 1990: 57) and it takes time for this to be reflected in surveys of managers.

Lane also points out the differences in educational background of managers in the three countries, highlighting the lack of higher qualifications in the UK and the predominance of arts degrees, (Lane, 1989: 91). These institutional differences are also reflected in differences in management style.

Lane concludes that :

> Although the three economies and the business organisations which constitute them are, at present, being confronted with similar problems and opportunities management, labour and the state in each society continue to act in nationally distinctive ways to cope with these challenges. Cultural specificity, expressed in, and reinforced by, different institutional frameworks has withstood the strong pressures towards uniformity.. (Lane, 1989: 292).

Handy et al accept the existence of these differences but suggest that there is scope for one country learning from another.

> This variety of approaches only emphasises that management requires a wide range of knowledge and an even wider set of skills...different cultures have their preferences but...in an ideal world, all are necessary...We now believe that there are important lessons to be learnt from other countries but that no country in itself offers an ideal model for any other (Handy et al, 1989: 14-15).

Locke offers a useful framework for the understanding of 'outputs' in terms of the forms of knowledge that students acquire i.e. functional knowledge (marketing, accounting) and general knowledge (leadership qualities, decision-making abilities) (Locke, 1989: 212-250). This is developed by Handy et al where it is suggested that skills can be broken down into technical, human and conceptual skills which are achieved in different ways (Handy et al, 1989: 14).

Much of the variation in business education in the three countries can be seen in terms of the different values that they place on the acquisition of these forms of knowledge and whether they can and should be acquired in the workplace or in an educational institution.

2.4 SUMMARY

The literature cited in the review highlights the continued debate involved in international comparison. Any study which seeks to cross national boundaries has to take into account the historical and cultural variations, which, in many respects, are difficult to measure. The question as to whether these hinder valid comparison was the methodological problem which formed the background to this research.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted in a research project is inevitably based to some extent on the values of researchers and their expectations. Subjective preconceptions have influenced the choice of study area and to a large extent also influence the choice of variables and their operational definition. The following discussion breaks down some of the methodological issues which arise in this study and attempts to question some of the assumptions behind the structure of the project.

3.1 COMPARATIVE METHOD

Many researchers choose to look in depth at a particular subject in order to understand it and put forward an explanation. Studies of management in a particular organisation are an example of this, but recommendations for improvement and judgements on the best system of management require wider knowledge of organisations and management outcomes. In order to formulate generalisations, it is necessary to have looked for similar patterns in more than one organisation:

> Understanding of a given social phenomenon is greatly increased if we can analyse it, and observe variation, in different social contexts. (Lane, 1989: 19)

Comparative method looks at more than one organisation or subject in order to make generalisations about them, usually in terms of what is similar or different. Reference to comparison is in the title of the project so I have assumed from the outset that there is something that is comparable in the systems under study.

Comparative studies can focus on converging or diverging factors. Lane gives a useful overview of some examples of both of these approaches (Lane, 1989: 19-38) and the following is drawn from her work.

There has been a strong movement to make studies more measurable and testable and this presupposes that there are concepts and variables that are common across different areas and therefore can be compared. Research procedures are standardised so that empirical comparisons can be made. Generalisations can then be made, for example, across national or other boundaries. Marxist theory is a historical example of this, and a more recent example is the typology of educational systems by Hopper cited earlier.

The systems theoretical approach (e.g. CNAA/CHEPS/HIS, 1992; Warman, 1990,) is another example of this. This approach can be used at various levels, involving various 'actors'. The system can be studied through individual 'actors' such as professors or researchers, or through groups of 'actors' such as faculties or institutions. Each system is a dynamic process where the different elements interact.

The systems approach can also be used to provide a conceptual model for a more static description of a system and this is how it has been used in the CNAA/CHEPS/HIS project. They have used the idea of 'processes' - input, throughput (or process), output and environmental features as the framework for their research and the description of the higher education systems (CNAA et al, 1992: 21-22).

The other extreme is where researchers suggest that the uniqueness of different societies makes it impossible to find comparable variables. This makes trans-national comparisons impossible to test in a scientific way.

Lane herself starts from the assumption that the cultures of France, Germany and Britain are different enough to complicate empirical study and she sets out to look at the essential differences in management and labour in Europe.

My initial theoretical stand-point was essentially based on a value judgement - that France, Germany and Great Britain have a lot in common, though this does not ignore their diversities. The setting up of the European Community and its progress towards the Single Market is based on a similar assumption at a high political level, though it is a matter for continued debate!

This project therefore set out to use concepts and variables that are considered to be comparable, and in this it follows the empiricists in that it is based on the assumption that one can take an overall view of societies or situations and draw similarities and generalisations from them suggesting "the existence of a rationality, transcending national or cultural peculiarities" (Lane, 1989: 22). This is what the European Community assumes is possible if mobility of students and professionals is to be a viable proposition.

What is not forgotten, however, are the potential research problems likely to arise due to cultural and historical differences in the three countries as well as their different methods of national data collection. The first step of the project, therefore, was to understand some of the differences that arise as to the definition of the concepts and variables in each country. Before any valid research can be carried out, it must be ascertained that the methodology to be used is valid and in this respect the initial assumptions of the project have to be tested.

3.2 THE APPROACH

At the outset, the project aimed to make comparisons about business education in higher education systems, focussing on entrance, participation and graduation rates as a source of understanding the points at which selection takes place, and hence the survival rates. The first question which arose was how to put together a meaningful framework for comparison, bearing in mind the differences in meaning and structure of business education systems in the three countries.

These problems led eventually to the research project being considered as two stages, the first being an investigation and description of the general higher educational systems in each country, particularly as concerns business education, including reference to their historical and cultural context. This was a necessary start to the project as it assisted in the understanding and definition of the concepts and variables to be used in the second part of the project.

The second stage was to focus specifically on entrance, participation and graduation rates in Business Education. It concentrated on the idea that higher education output in terms of business education graduates is similar in the three countries under study, the main differences being in the points at which selection takes place.

3.2.1 The initial approach

I initially considered a straightforward case study approach, selecting Universities or Business Schools which were in some way representative of their respective systems and doing a detailed study of structures. I decided against this in the end at least in part because of problems of finding one institution which could be said to adequately represent other institutions in each country. An in-depth research project would also have been time consuming, potentially expensive because of the amount of time that would have to be spent in field study, and it could also have led to some resentment on the part of the institutions under study. I intended, however, to use individual institutions as examples to illustrate points, rather than as case studies.

I decided that the main part of the research could be based on the use of secondary sources of information as the systems of education are well documented and there are existing statistical surveys on participation rates. This was supplemented by interviews with key informants, staff and students, to back up and confirm understanding of the documentation and check on recent developments. I was aware that this could be restrictive but the time factor had to be taken into consideration.

3.2.2 The amended approach

In fact the two stages tended to advance at the same time as study of existing data tended not only to help in the understanding of the educational systems, but also to assist in defining the concepts and variables that could usefully be used in comparisons without totally reinventing the wheel.

The main breakthrough in deciding this was the publication in late 1992 of an international study by the OECD (OECD, 1992). They published entrance, participation, graduation and 'survival' rates in higher education for various countries including France, Germany and the UK. Their definitions of concepts and variables are already largely accepted on an international scale and presented me in some ways with a ready made conceptual structure that I could potentially use to look at Business Education.

Reading and understanding their methodology gave me a good insight into some of the problems of making generalisations and was a good grounding for some of the problems I later encountered in collection and analysis of data. I have also used some of their data as background to the descriptions of educational systems.

Collecting the data on Business Education that I needed was the next task and this generated more problems than I had expected. My choice of the institutions to look at had to some extent been based on the knowledge that data was available in an easily accessible form. The statistics published by the national statistical agencies cover defined areas and I had innocently assumed that I would be able to access similar information from them. In fact this proved notoriously difficult as both methods of collection of data and its presentation were very different. Without spending a lot of time abroad in the individual countries it was very difficult both to get access to material and to isolate the relevant data.

Initial research led me to the Universities Statistical Record Office in Cheltenham, the Statistisches Bundesamt in Wiesbaden in Germany and a series of government bookshops and academic reference points in France. Initial information gained from these places

was of varying degrees of usefulness and comparability, particularly concerning the French Grandes Ecoles. It was noticeable from the start that information was collected in different ways, if it was collected at all, and presented in different ways, and I have gone into detail about this in a later chapter.

The costliness of continued visits abroad was one of the problems that I was faced with as the information was often in the form of bulletins and notes as well as published data and this was sometimes only available at source.

The decision to use existing data to look at participation in Business Education in the three countries was the main factor that led to the change in focus of this report. The methodological problems proved a hurdle that had to be overcome prior to the main body of research. As a result, this report is concerned with the problems encountered rather than any detailed comparative analysis. Analysing these problems has proved as informative in understanding the different systems, as the prelimnary analysis of the data.

Apart from secondary sources, I have used an informal system of key informants consisting of students (French and German business students participating in exchange programmes), members of staff from Aston University, other UK universities, colleagues at French Business Schools and German Universities. Many of my original preconceptions about survival rates arose through discussion with these people and they have also been very helpful in guiding me to other sources of information and in questioning some of my assumptions and prejudices.

I have no systematic record of all the contact with key informants as it tends to occur naturally as an everyday part of my job.

Another problem has been language based - the need to understand complex concepts and statistical data in French and German as well as in English. The tendency, as a native English speaker, despite reasonable fluency in both French and German, is inevitably to approach the research from a particular linguistic and cultural stand-point and there is always the risk that this can lead to misunderstanding and false assumptions.

3.3 RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

The investigation of the systems in each country was in two stages: firstly a general description of the higher educational systems in each country followed by a more detailed description of the system as it relates more specifically to Business Studies.

Part of the research framework is similar to that followed by Hopper in that it looks at the timing, method and basis for selection. It goes further than this, however, and follows the lines of systems theory in that it borrows from some of the checklists of input, process and output features of higher education.

The descriptions relate to the following general framework:

i PROCESS: The educational structures (ISCED level 6 and 7), including participant numbers, programme lengths, flexibility and selection points.

ii INPUT: Qualification for entrance and selection procedures at the point of entry, entrant rates.

iii ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES: Tuition fees and grants.

iv OUTPUT: Survival rates and general characteristics of graduates.

Chapter IV deals with general features of higher education systems in the three countries leading into the more detailed desciption of business education systems in Chapter V. Due to the problems discovered, there is little detail here and it merely forms the background to a discussion of the original methodology for the project including the sampling techniques (6.1), the definition of concepts and variables (6.2), and the collection of data (6.3). The next section looks at the statistics available and uses them to illustrate the problems of comparison (6.4). This is followed in Chapter VII by an analysis of the problems involved.

CHAPTER IV

THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEMS IN THE UK, FRANCE AND GERMANY

This chapter aims to explain briefly the main structures of the different systems of higher education in the UK, France and Germany with particular reference for comparative purposes to the OECD 's International Standard Classification for Education (ISCED) (Appendix 1).

4.1 THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

4.1.1 Structure of higher education

The United Kingdom has an educational structure that is, in some ways, similar to Germany in that the four countries, England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, have certain variations in their educational systems and each have their own national education office. The main differences are in Scotland and Northern Ireland. In Scotland, for instance, students study for Scottish Certificates of Education ('Highers') as opposed to 'A' levels and can enter university at 17 rather than 18 as in England and Wales. Highers are a little like the baccalaureat/Abitur in that students take a wider range of subjects. The structure of undergraduate degrees is also different in Scotland, with opportunities to obtain an ordinary, honours or Masters (MA) degree at this level.

There are, however, many similarities between the systems and this information will refer to the UK in general except where stated.

Up until 1992 there were three main sectors of higher education - the universities and university colleges, the polytechnics, and various colleges and institutes of higher education, including specialist colleges of art, music etc..

All these offered first degree courses (ISCED level 6) and the main differences were in the methods of funding, delivery of courses and status.

In 1992, the polytechnics were given university status and their funding mechanism was revised along the lines of the older universities.

There are various ISCED level 5 courses that are offered in the former polytechnics and the colleges, for instance the Higher National Diploma (HND) and the Diploma in Higher Education (DipHE). These are offered in isolation from first degree courses but may be used as exemptions for the first and possibly the second years of a first degree programme.

With the exception of some specialist degrees such as medicine, the normal time span for a first degree (ISCED level 6) is three years, though some institutions are now offering an accelerated two year programme. Some programmes are four year programmes where they include a 'sandwich year' in industry or abroad. Students normally achieve a Bachelor of Science (BSc) or a Bachelor of Arts (BA) but there are also various specialist degrees such as Bachelor of Engineering (BEng) and Bachelor of Education (BEd).

Masters programmes (ISCED level 7) normally take one year full-time. These are not normally a prerequisite for doctoral study. Students obtain a Master of Science (MSc) or Master of Arts (MA) or one of the specialist Masters qualifications such as the Master of Business Administration (MBA) or Master of Engineering (MEng).

Study by research normally leads to a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and the normal time span is three years full-time. There are also one year research programmes to Masters level and two year programmes leading to the award of Master of Philosophy (MPhil).

The normal full-time first degree has an inflexible structure with annual exams, and students are required to complete within a given time. Where students have to retake a year or change courses, there is usually no grant awarded.

There are variations, however, particularly in the former polytechnic sector where there is more opportunity for part-time study to degree level sometimes involving credit accumulation as in the Open University, where the timespan for completion of the degree is very flexible. Part-time and distance learning students are, however, registered differently from full-time students for statistical purposes and fee structures are different.

The overall participation rate for levels 6 and 7, first degree and post-graduate level equivalents (see Appendix 1), according to the OECD survey (OECD, 1992) was 10% (FTEs) of the theoretical age group in 1988. It must be taken into account, however, that a low proportion of students tend to stay on to study for higher degrees in the UK after completing their first degree.

4.1.2 Qualification for higher education

The main qualifications for entry to first degree programmes in higher education (ISCED level 6) are General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) 'O' (ordinary) and 'A' (advanced) levels, though Business and Technician Education Council (BTEC) qualifications are also accepted at certain levels. The General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ) is currently being developed to incorporate both 'A' levels and BTEC qualifications. Both 'A' levels and BTEC National qualifications allow for entry to level 5 programmes.

The Open University is an exception to this ruling and has a very flexible admissions policy.

Apart from this, there is a selection process for admission to all programmes, however, and this depends on the number of 'A' levels and on the grades that students have attained in their 'A' levels or BTEC. Mature students may be admitted without standard qualifications and the decision rests with the admissions officer for the individual programme. No student has an automatic right of entry to a first degree programme if they achieve the minimum requirements.

For ISCED level 6 programmes (first degrees) there are General Requirements and Course Requirements. The General Requirements are agreed nationally but the Course Requirements are set by the individual institution where the decisions as to admission are made. The minimum General Requirement is two 'A' levels or 4 'AS' levels. The student is also normally required to have passed various subjects at GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education normally taken at 16). Course requirements tend to be more stringent and most degree programmes require 3 'A' levels or their equivalent. 'AS' levels are generally considered to be equivalent to half an 'A' level.

Actual course requirements vary from one institution to another depending on the popularity of the course, the standards set by the institution and professional requirements where particular subjects are required to have been studied at 'A' level, e.g. engineering requires Mathematics and Physics. For qualifications such as in medicine, or at some of the most highly respected universities, students have to achieve at a very high level in order to be accepted.

'A' level grades have a point system awarded to each grade (e.g. A = 10, B = 8 for 'A' levels; A = 5 for AS levels etc..). Thus an institution can set its average course requirement at 26 points or above which means they will be making offers to students if they achieve ABB or AAC in their exams. Other institutions with less popular courses will take people with lower point scores.

For entry to programmes at ISCED level 5, the point scores tend to be much lower and students may be accepted with only one 'A' level pass or its equivalent.

In the UK, in 1988, the qualification rate for all higher education was 35% (DES, 1991). This includes qualifications for level 5 as well as level 6. 15% of the theoretical age range (see definition of entry ratio in Appendix 2) entered programmes at ISCED level 6 (OECD, 1992).

4.1.3 Tuition fees and grants

Tuition fees are charged for all courses in the UK. For students who are UK citizens or fulfil residency requirements, the fees for undergraduate study are, in practice, paid for by the government through the Local Education Authorities. For UK and EC students fees for first degree programmes range from about £775.00 to £2770.00 depending on the subject. For overseas students fees are higher and start at about £6000.00. Maintenance grants are available for UK students but these are means tested, usually against parental income, depending on the status of the student.

Fees and grants for postgraduate students are treated differently and are not mandatory except in certain subjects such as teaching qualifications. Many students wishing to do Masters programmes or other forms of higher degree have to pay their own fees or apply for special bursaries and other awards.

4.1.4 Graduates

The estimated survival rate of students graduating in 1988 at ISCED level 6 was 93.8% (OECD, 1992).

In the UK it is common for students to complete their first degree and enter employment at this stage. A first degree will not normally qualify a graduate for a profession, except in the case of some job specific qualifications such as in the medical field or in teaching. Even here it is normal to gain practical experience before becoming fully qualified (e.g. probationary year in teaching).

In many cases students wishing to enter a profession are expected to undergo professional training over and above the first degree. Examples of this are in the legal profession, social work, accountancy. Professional organisations are strong in the UK and often take non-specialist graduates as well as graduates who have taken a degree in their particular field. In accountancy, for instance, firms take students from any degree background but

those who have taken approved degrees will get some exemptions from professional exams.

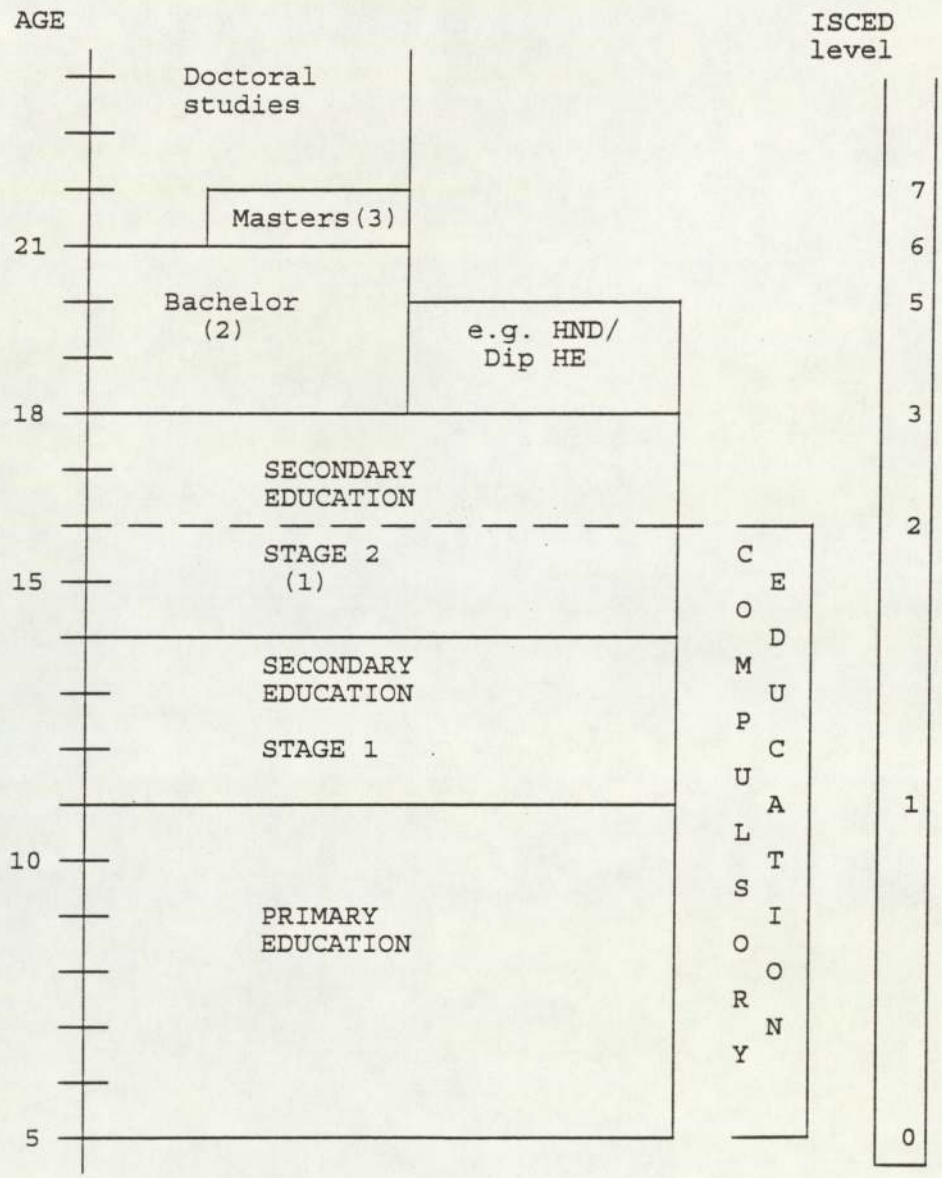
A Masters degree will often be a form of specialisation for students which may give them exemption from professional qualifications or may accelerate their progress within a certain profession. A business student may, for instance, do a Masters degree in Marketing but these degrees are often also open to non-specialists who wish to convert from another subject area.

In certain cases, in professions such as law or social work these further periods of study are compulsory and these are often not called Masters degrees but by their professional title (e.g. Certificate for Qualification in Social Work; Law Society Exams Part II).

A Masters degree is rarely a compulsory qualification for a profession.

FIGURE 1

THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN THE UK
(excluding Scotland and Northern Ireland)



1 Includes GCSE study (from 14-16) and study for higher education entrance (16-18).

2 Typically three years but may be two years 'accelerated' or four years 'sandwich'.

3 Does not necessarily precede doctoral study which can follow immediately after Bachelor degree.

4.2 THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IN FRANCE

4.2.1 Structure of higher education

The two main sections in higher education in France are the Universities (including the Catholic Universities), and the Grandes Ecoles. The Grandes Ecoles include a range of schools specialising in a particular professional area, for instance engineering (e.g. the Polytechnique, Ecole des Ponts et Chaussées), business and commerce (e.g. l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes Commerciales (HEC) and other Ecoles Supérieures de Commerce), political science (Instituts d'Etudes Politiques) and teaching (Ecoles Normales Supérieures).

Other institutions of higher education include various specialised institutes (e.g. in journalism, music, translation), and the classes supérieures at the lycées which offer level 5 qualifications (e.g. BTS) or post-baccalaureat study in preparation for the entrance examinations for the Grandes Ecoles -the classes préparatoires (CPGE).

There are two main types of course in the universities, those lasting two years (enseignement supérieure court) and those lasting three years or more (études longues).

With the exception of degrees in medical subjects, higher education is divided into three cycles, each of two years in length. The première cycle covers the first two years of study leading to qualifications such as the Diplôme d'Etudes Universitaires Générales (DEUG), the Diplôme d'Etudes Universitaires Scientifiques et Techniques (DEUST), the Brevet de Technicien Supérieure (BTS) or the Diplôme Universitaire de Technologie (DUT), equivalent to ISCED level 5. Students have to pass examinations at this level before proceeding to the deuxième cycle which includes the licence and the maitrise. The French university system is therefore a 2 + 1 + 1 structure (DEUG + licence + maitrise) with qualifying points at ISCED levels 5, 6 and 7. The troisième cycle includes postgraduate specialisations and doctoral study such as the Diplôme d'Etudes Supérieures Spécialisées (DESS) and the Diplôme d'Etudes Approfondies (DEA) leading to doctoral study.

The Grandes Ecoles system operates parallel to the university system in France. Traditionally higher education in the various professional fields has been the domain of these specialised schools outside the university sector. Many are private organisations and although the engineering schools are in fact mainly state-subsidised, the business schools tend to be largely self-funding or funded and governed by the Chambers of Commerce. Some also receive state funding if they are recognised by the state.

They offer a variety of diploma programmes, many of which are accredited by the state. The programmes are normally three or four years in length, though students may already have been required to spend one or two years in preparatory classes before undertaking the entrance examinations.

In both the universities and the Grandes Ecoles, the length of time a student spends in each programme is regulated through assessment and most students complete within the minimum time. Students can only retake a failed examination a limited number of times.

The participation rate in France for ISCED levels 6 and 7 in 1988 was 18.3% of the population for the theoretical age range (OECD, 1992).

4.2.2 Qualification for higher education

Young people in France can opt at the age of fifteen to follow either the more general baccalaureat or more vocational education such as the Brevet de Technician. The baccalaureat,, the secondary school qualification normally taken at 18, or its equivalent, is considered to be the only requirement for entrance to ISCED level 5/6 courses at university. This tends to be a broad examination in seven subjects but there are various specialisations, categorised A - H e.g. A is literature, B is Economics and Social Sciences, C is Mathematics and Physics. In theory, if a student passes the bac, they can enter a university programme but in practice there may be restrictions on numbers. Annual examinations act as a form of selection during the course of study. Entrance to specific programmes may also depend on the specialist track studied for the bac.

Entrance to the Grandes Ecoles, on the other hand, is highly selective and for the more recognised schools, most students study in classes préparatoires for one or two years after the baccalaureat to prepare for the competitive entrance examination (concours). The examination is very mathematical and many of the entrants have Bac C - the maths specialisation. There are possibilities for parallel entry, for instance it is possible to enter the system in the second year after taking a licence in the university sector or its equivalent, again through a concours. This is less common, however. The concours are often organised by associations of more than one school, for instance the Ecricome, a group of six schools who share a common entrance examination. The final selection decision rests with the school.

There is no intermediate qualification in the Grandes Ecoles system after the classes préparatoires and the courses tend to be referred to as Bac + 4, Bac + 5 and so forth. Students studying at the classes préparatoires may also register for the DEUG as a safety net in case they fail the entrance examination to the Grandes Ecoles system.

In 1988 the qualifying rate for higher education was 34% of the theoretical age range (DES, 1992). 23.1% of the age range entered programmes at level 6 which includes the Grandes Ecoles. The relationship between these rates is discussed more fully in section 4.4 and as part of the analysis of problems in Chapter VII.

4.2.3 Tuition fees and grants

Tuition fees at universities are minimal. The Grandes Ecoles are largely private institutions and charge fees, often 20,000 FF or more. Grants may be available to assist students but these are means-tested.

4.2.4 Graduates

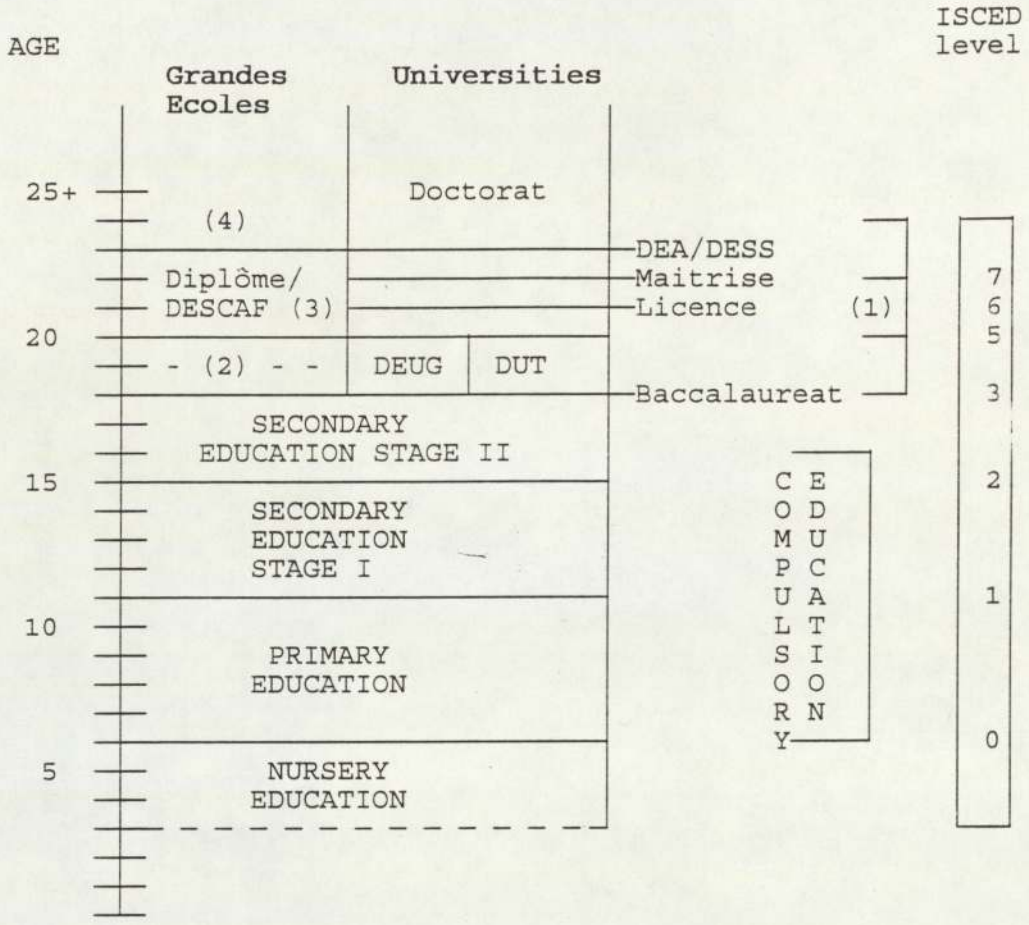
The estimated survival rate in France in 1988 was 55.3% at the licence level (ISCED level 6) (OECD, 1992). This may be because many people stop after the DEUG which provides a qualification at level 5.

Some professional qualifications are very much linked to the Grandes Ecoles and students wishing to follow certain careers will often enter the Grandes Ecoles sector in order to qualify. University qualifications will also provide access to these professions but it may take longer. Business studies is an example in that a student completing a recognised qualification at a Business School will achieve the status of cadre, a legal status which carries a certain salary level. This status can also be achieved through university and training in employment but over a longer period of time.

Thus graduates from some sectors of higher education are considered fully qualified to enter certain professional areas subject to company training.

FUGURE 2

THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN FRANCE



1 Première/ deuxième/ troisième cycles
2 Classes préparatoires - one or two years
3 Lengths of courses vary. Usually Bac + 4/5
4 Graduates from the Grandes Ecoles normally go into well paid jobs. The few who wish to convert to academic research would normally go on to take a DEA or DESS at university. There are also some advanced specialist programmes (Masteres) offered by the Business Schools, usually linked to a particular profession.

4.3 THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IN GERMANY

4.3.1 Structure of higher education

Due to the recent reunification of Germany. the former eastern states are undergoing considerable upheaval in their higher education system. For this reason, the following only refers to former West Germany.

Apart from specialised colleges of art and music, the two main institutional sectors in higher education in Germany are the Universities and the Fachhochschulen. In two states there are Gesamthochschulen which have amalgamated the Fachhochschulen and other pedagogical institutions.

Courses at the Fachhochschulen last for a minimum of three to three and a half years. The level of entry is lower than that to universities but the qualifications have been graded at ISCED level 6 for the purposes of international comparison.

Most university education is divided into two parts: the Grundstudium (basic studies) culminating in the intermediate examination (Vordiplom/ Zwischenprüfung), and the Hauptstudium (advanced studies) which includes a thesis (Diplomarbeit) and leads to the Diplomprüfung. Within these students usually have to take qualifying certificates (Scheine) which allow them to proceed to the examination stage. These may take various forms including written exams, projects or simply proof of attendance at lectures or seminars. Students must pass the intermediate examination before proceeding to advanced studies but there is no intermediate qualification. There is no set time each year when a student must undertake assessments and the period of time that a student takes to complete a qualification is flexible, though certain courses may have a maximum length of time built into their course regulations. The minimum period for study is normally four and a half years but the average completion time is usually considerably longer, often five and a half to six years (Statistisches Bundesamt, 1992). The Gesamthochschulen operate the same system but over a slightly shorter period.

Selection takes place during the course of study in that students have to take the intermediate exam before they proceed to advanced studies. There is no qualification at this point, however, and students who drop out at this stage have no formal qualification. Selection continues during the advanced studies when students take the qualifying Scheine. Popular subjects often have a high failure rate as professors maintain an informal limit on the number of students who participate in the subject.

Programmes at the universities and Fachhochschulen tend to end with a diploma (Diplom) and this will have a title such as Diplom Kaufmann or Diplom Ingenieur. It will also be classified by whether it is a university (U) or Fachhochschule (FH) diploma.

In some subjects, such as law, teaching qualifications, medicine, there is a state examination (Staatsexamen/ Staatsprüfung). In other subjects, particularly where students study more than one subject, students obtain a Magister. The minimum length of time that this takes varies according to the subject.

There is no real equivalent to the Bachelors degree in the UK or the licence in France as the first qualification in Germany extends over a longer period and is more the equivalent of a Masters qualification. In this respect it is difficult to classify a university diploma as ISCED level 6, and it is interesting to note that the FH diploma has been classified at this level. Postgraduate studies consist mainly of doctoral study though some institutions offer Magister or Lizentiat at this level. The diploma from the Fachhochschulen is not sufficient for entry to doctoral study.

There are also other higher education institutions related to vocational training, including the dual education system which operates post-Abitur as well as for students leaving full-time education at 15/16. These are mainly classified as ISCED level 5. They tend to offer students part-time study while they are working or block release over a period of three years or more and they include the Berufsakademie and Verwaltungsakademie which are training centres for Business Administration.

It is quite common for students not to enter higher education immediately after obtaining their Hochschulreife. Some will complete their military service first and others will undertake practical training through one of the apprenticeship systems.

In most first degree programmes in German institutions study is not as structured as in the UK and France in that students can choose at which point they take examinations. The year is divided into two semesters which include periods without lectures (vorlesungsfrei). Examinations can be taken during either semester. Few students complete within the minimum time and the average age for completion in Business Studies, for example, is approximately six years (twelve semesters).

The participation rate in Germany in 1988 was 19.1% of the theoretical age range though this includes ISCED levels 6 and 7 (OECD, 1992).

4.3.2 Qualification for higher education

There are two main levels of examinations for entry to higher education, one being the Fachhochschulreife, a qualification achieved after two years at secondary stage two, which allows for entry to the Fachhochschule. The other is the Allgemeine Hochschulreife (e.g. Abitur), taken after three years at secondary stage two which allows for entrance to universities. Students with an Allgemeine Hochschulreife can also go to a Fachhochschule but the Fachhochschulreife is not sufficient qualification for entry to a university. There are some variations in certain Länder (the states that make up the Federal Republic) and a more general Allgemeine Hochschulreife allowing entry to a wider selection of institutions including the Gesamthochschulen. This depends on the 'comprehensive' nature of their higher education. There are also Fachgebundene Hochschulreifen which are more subject specific and allow for entry to universities only in certain subject areas.

Students who achieve the appropriate qualification have the right of entry to higher education but in some subjects a numerus clausus operates and entry in any one year is restricted. Students can still reapply the following year, however and they will stand an

increased chance of being admitted. The universities have limited control over selection at the point of entry, but they control selection during the process of study through the examination structure.

In 1987, the qualifying rate for higher education at Abitur level was 28% of the theoretical age group (DES 1992). No data is currently available for the Fachhochschulreife. In 1988, 19.5% of the theoretical age group entered programmes at ISCED level 6, the equivalent to a first degree programme (OECD,1992).

4.3.3 Tuition fees and grants.

Higher education in Germany is free. There are currently no tuition fees charged. Means-tested maintenance grants are also available, though they are only awarded for a limited amount of time (9 semesters in the universities, 7 in the Fachhochschulen) and are dependent on students taking a certain amount of courses. Although tuition is free, students do, however, have to pay a small social fee to the Studentenwerk, the student organisation.

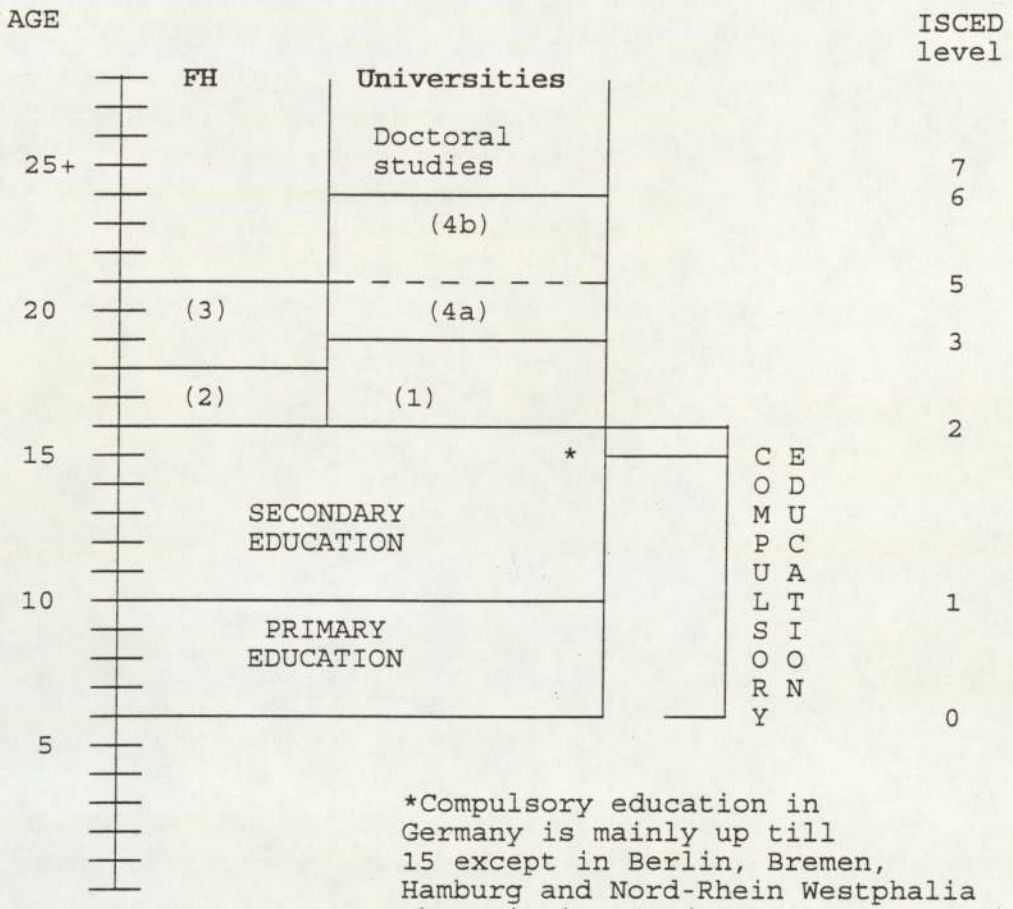
4.3.4. Graduates

The estimated survival rate in Germany in 1988 was 82.7% though this is for level 6 qualifications only (OECD, 1992).

In most cases students specialise in their studies to a degree where they will enter employment professionally qualified. Students at universities will often pursue their specialism to doctoral level before entering employment and a doctorate is not seen purely as a passport to an academic profession. The average age of students when they graduate from the university system in former West Germany is 27 - 28.

FIGURE 3

THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN GERMANY



*Compulsory education in Germany is mainly up till 15 except in Berlin, Bremen, Hamburg and Nord-Rhein Westphalia where it is 16. (CEDEFOP,1984: 163)

Note: This is a highly simplified version of the German education system. There are many complexities generated, for instance, by the federal system and the flexible nature of higher education study.

1 Abitur/Allgemeine Hochschulreife/Fachgebundene Hochschulreife.
2 Fachhochschulreife.
3 e.g. Diplom Finanzwirt, Diplom Ingenieur.
4a Grundstudium culminating in the intermediate examination (Vordiplom/ Zwischenprüfung)
4b Hauptstudium which leads to the Diplomprüfung/Staatsexamen/ Magister e.g. Diplom Kaufmann/frau.

4.4 BRIEF COMPARISON OF HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEMS

This is a brief summary of some of the structural differences in the higher education systems in the UK, France and Germany. A comparison of entrant, participant, graduate and survival rates, taken from the OECD survey (OECD, 1992), is portrayed in Figures 4-7.

4.4.1 Process features:

Length of programmes

First degree programmes vary considerably in length. The UK Bachelor programme is normally three years but the first degree programme in German universities is usually a minimum of four to four and a half years, thus equivalent to a UK Bachelors and Masters programme. In France, the licence is the same length as the Bachelor but first degree level programmes in the Grandes Ecoles normally take longer because of the classes préparatoires. Their final examination is often rated as Bac + 4 or 5 i.e. a qualification which takes four of five years after the baccalaureat.

Programme structure

In France there is little evidence of part-time study, though credit accumulation is common in the university sector. In the UK, however, this is becoming an increasing feature in some institutions, particularly in the former polytechnic sector. In Germany, the length of time that a student takes to complete their period of study is very flexible and many students do not complete their studies until they are 27/28 years of age.

Only in the UK is there a difference recognised at registration level for full-time and part-time study.

The way that the programmes are broken down into different parts varies in each country. In the UK it tends to be broken down into years with annual examinations at the end of each period. In some of the former Polytechnics and in the colleges of Higher Education, for example, it is possible to take a first degree in steps by first taking a BTEC Higher National Diploma (HND) or a Diploma in Higher Education (DipHE). These were accepted as equivalent to the first two years of a degree programme. This is not true in the older universities, however, where this ISCED level 5 qualification may only be accepted as being equivalent to the first year of a degree.

There are thus some opportunities for transfer from level 5 to level 6 qualifications in the UK, though these are not universal.

In France, the DEUG or equivalent ISCED level 5 qualification is the first stage of the licence or maitrise. After this initial two years, a student can either take a further one year qualification (licence) or a two year qualification (maitrise or equivalent). It is possible, in fact, to be registered on more than one programme at the same time. Students following the classes préparatoires can also register for the DEUG at a university.

The possibility of transfer from level 5 to level 6 qualifications is thus built into the structure of French higher education.

In Germany there is no intermediate qualification in either the universities or FH. The intermediate exam is merely a hurdle to be overcome and acts as a point of selection at which students may give up higher education studies without achieving anything.

It is also not possible for students to complete a qualification at a FH and then transfer to advanced studies in a university, though transfers of this kind are currently being debated in Germany as one means of cutting pressure of numbers in the universities.

It is possible, however, for students who have completed their basic studies (Grundstudium) in one university, to transfer to another university for their advanced studies (Hauptstudium), though this is not automatically possible and universities may not

accept each others' intermediate examination much in the same way as the HND and Dip HE in the UK.

Participation rates

Participation rates for all first degree programmes and postgraduate courses (ISCED levels 6 & 7) in the UK (10%) are low compared to figures for France and Germany (18.3% and 19.1%) in the universities, FH and Grandes Ecoles (See Figure 5). These rates are necessarily affected by selection procedures at the point of entry and the structure of study. The ability in Germany for students to extend the length of study time means that participant numbers are high compared to the UK where students usually complete their degree within the minimum time. The use by the OECD of levels 6 and 7 also has the possible effect of lowering the UK percentage because of the tendency of most graduates to go into employment after their first degree.

4.4.2 Input features:

Entry qualifications

Entry qualifications vary as does the selection system in each country. In France and Germany, passing the baccalaureat or Abitur (or their equivalent) gives students in theory an automatic right of entry to a first degree programme, even if their first choice is restricted in any one year by numerus clausus. In the UK, the achievement of two 'A' levels which is the stated minimum entry qualification for a first degree programme is not sufficient in itself and students have to have achieved a high points score to enter many degree programmes.

Age at start of programme

The age at which students begin higher education varies. Most students in the UK start at 18 but there are many mature students now taking up courses particularly where these are part-time and can be undertaken while working. This is true in the UK in the

postgraduate as well as the undergraduate sector. In Germany most students qualify for higher education at 19, as despite the same overall total of 13 years, as in the UK and France, for the first and second stages, their first stage of education starts a year later than in the UK. Many German students will, however, do an apprenticeship or military service before starting their studies. In France fewer students appear to delay starting higher education, particularly in the Grandes Ecoles where there is sometimes an age limit for new entrants.

Entrance rates

The entrance rates to ISCED level 6 are a reflection of the selection procedures in each country (See Figure 4) as portrayed by the OECD (OECD, 1992). Entrance rates between the UK and Germany are, however, closer than participation rates.

4.4.3 Environmental features:

Fees and financing of study

There are no tuition fees in Germany, and there is a system of means-tested grants making their system relatively easy to enter in terms of cost to the student and/or parent. In France, fees in the university sector are low, but the Grandes Ecoles charges can be high, depending on how much state support they receive. Grants are available but students (or parents) still have to contribute. In the UK, tuition fees exist but for EC students these are largely paid for by the government through the LEAs. Means-tested grants are also available though there is a move towards student loans.

The Grandes Ecoles stand out here because of the tuition fees charged which restrict equality of opportunity. This accentuates their elitist nature.

4.4.4 Output features:

Traditions of employment and training

In France and Germany, there are no professional organisations of the same influence as in the UK. In Germany, graduates who enter professions have normally specialised in that particular area at university and may well have gone through to doctoral level. Some professions require particular degree specialisations, for instance law and audit work. In France, graduates will likewise normally enter the profession directly on completion of specialist courses.

Age of graduates

Graduates in the UK are normally younger than their equivalents in the German universities and the French Grandes Ecoles because of the structure of study in these two countries.

Graduation and survival rates

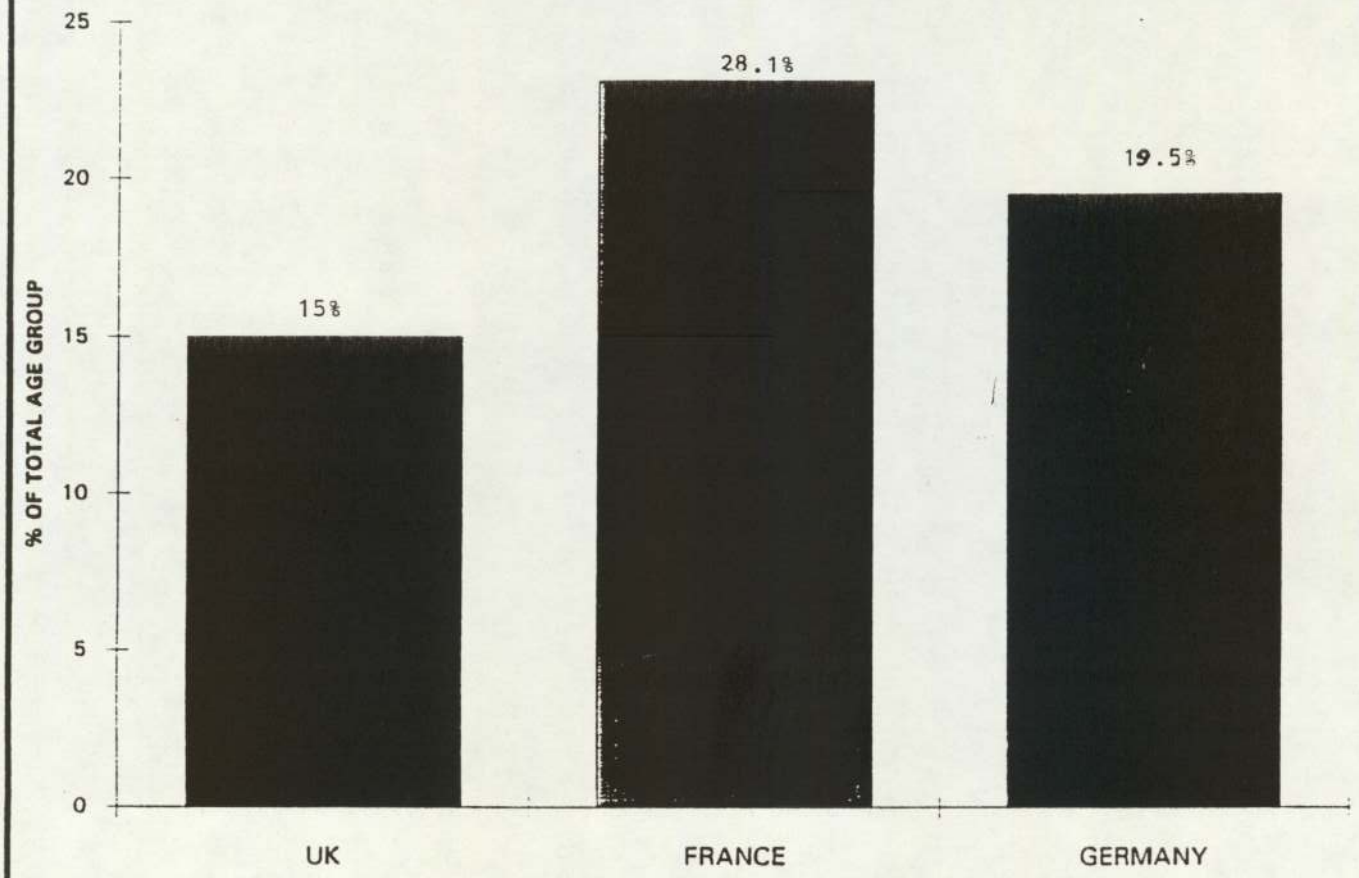
The graduation and survival rates portrayed by the OECD study (See Figures 6 and 7) are particularly interesting (OECD, 1992). Here the UK has the largest percentage of graduates in relation to the theoretical age range and the highest survival rate. Again, this may be due to the way that the ratios are assessed in relation to the theoretical age group. Because German students tend not to graduate in the minimum time, the graduate figures relating to the theoretical age group may be affected.

4.4.5 CONCLUSION

This brief comparison highlights some of the main variations in the higher education systems of the UK, France and Germany which have implications for the collection and presentation of data on entrants, participants and graduates. This is dealt with in detail in Chapter VII in the analysis of the problems involved.

FIGURE 4

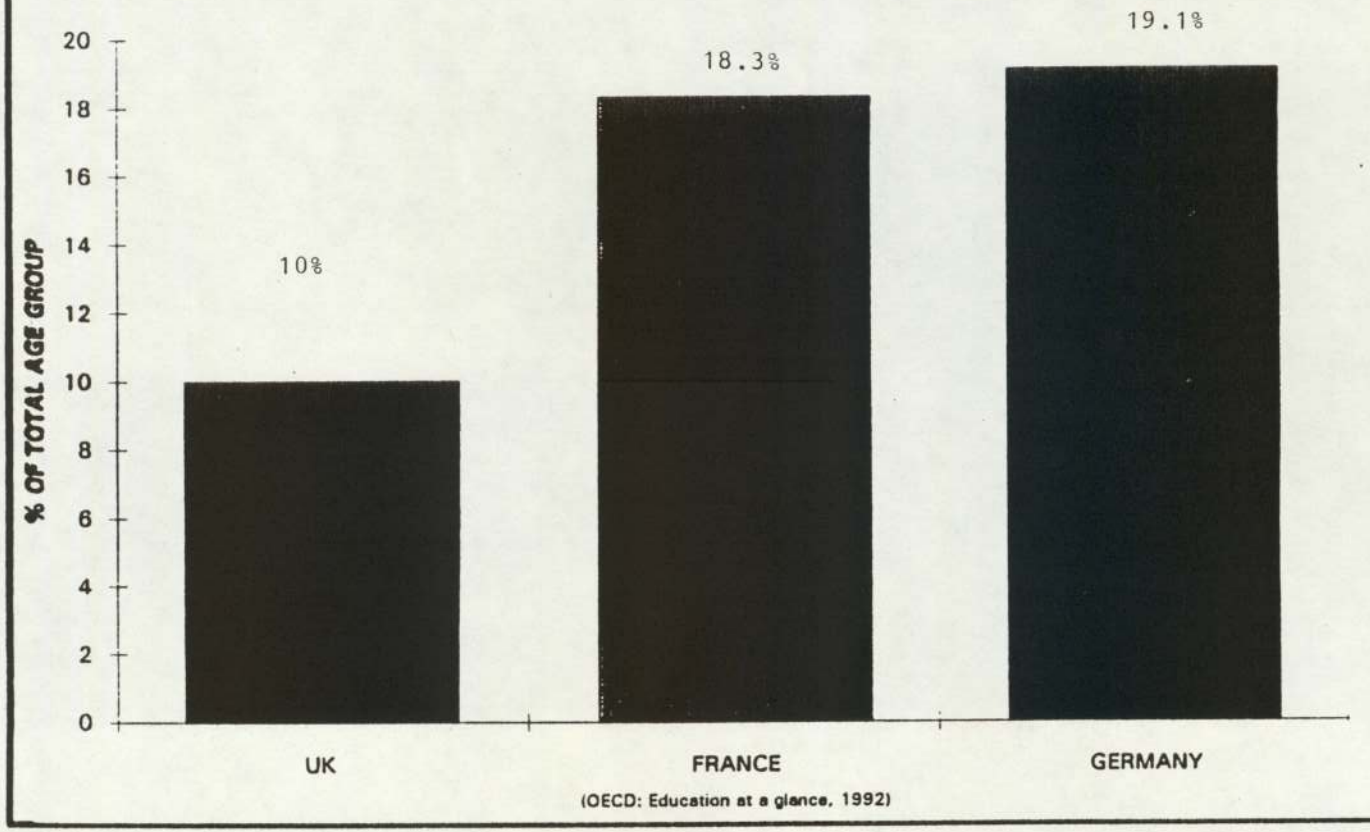
UNIVERSITY ENTRANTS 1988



(OECD: Education at a glance, 1992)

FIGURE 5

UNIVERSITY PARTICIPANTS 1988



(OECD: Education at a glance, 1992)

FIGURE 6

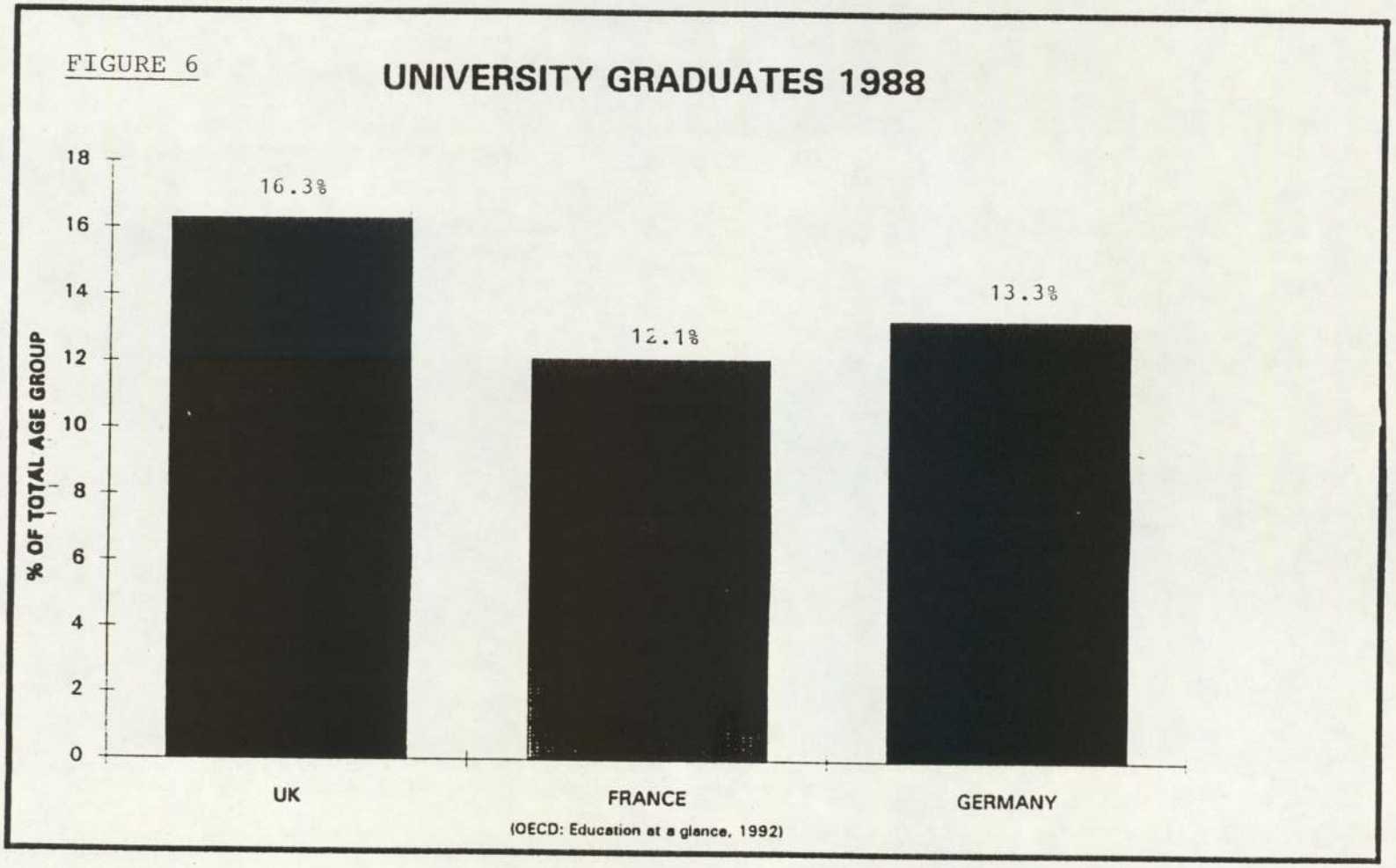
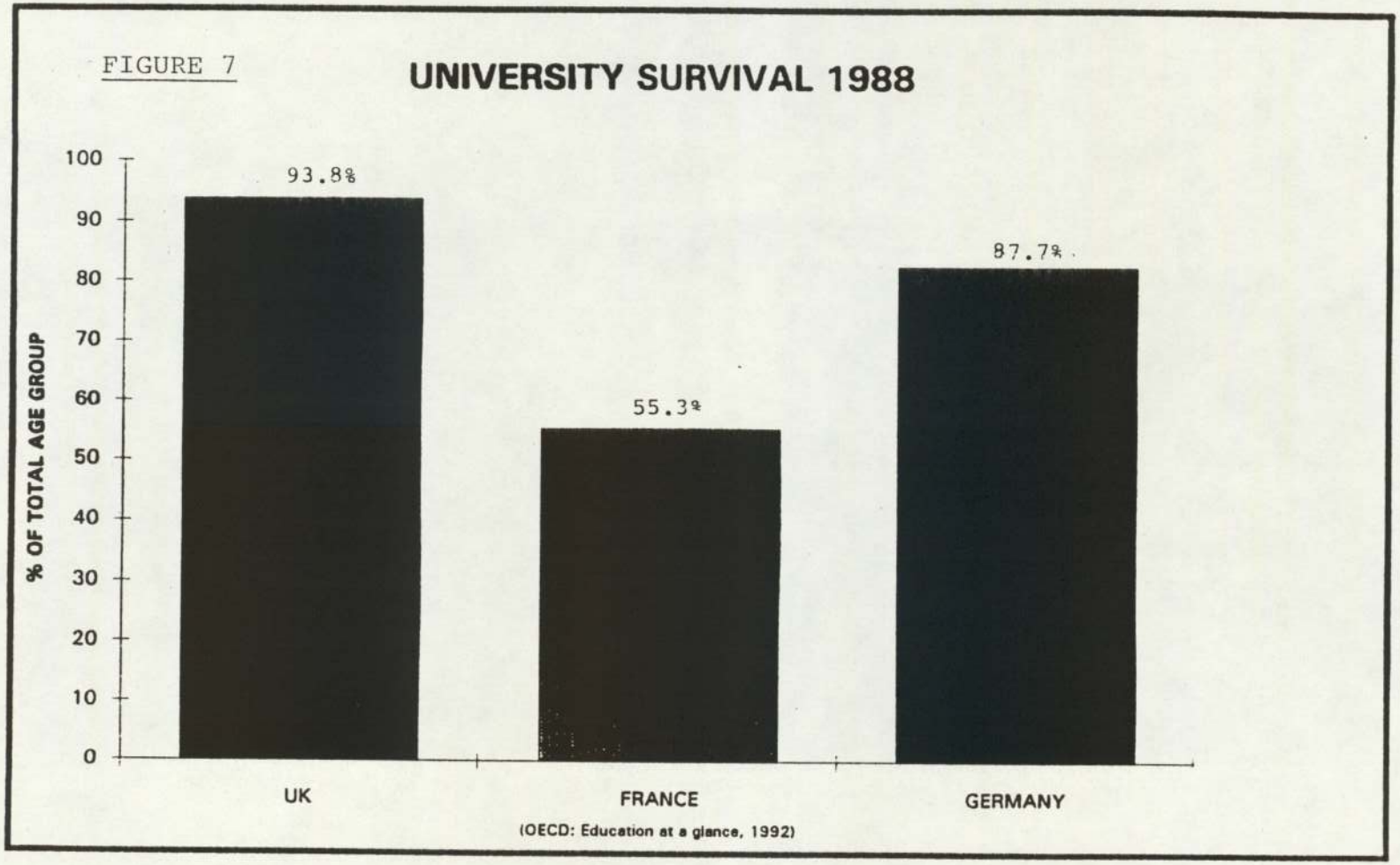

UNIVERSITY GRADUATES 1988
% OF TOTAL AGE GROUP
18
16
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
16.3%
12.1%
13.3%
UK
FRANCE
GERMANY
(OECD: Education at a glance, 1992)

FIGURE 7


UNIVERSITY SURVIVAL 1988
% OF TOTAL AGE GROUP
100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
93.8%
55.3%
87.7%
UK
FRANCE
GERMANY
(OECD: Education at a glance, 1992)

CHAPTER V

BUSINESS EDUCATION IN THE UK, FRANCE AND GERMANY

This chapter focuses on Business Education in higher education in the three countries and gives more detail on the particular structures and qualifications as background to the research. It concentrates on programmes classified at ISCED level 6 and above.

5.1 BUSINESS EDUCATION IN THE UK

5.1.1 Programme structure

Until the creation of the Polytechnics in the late 1960s and early 1970s, there was very little study of Business and Management to first degree level in the UK apart from in the Colleges of Advanced Technology (CATS) which later became the technological universities. Commerce was seen as too practical to warrant academic study in the university sector. The emergence of the technological universities, the polytechnics and the graduate schools of Business in London and Manchester took place in the aftermath of the Franks and Robbins reports. From then on, Business Studies slowly grew in popularity and today even Oxford and Cambridge Universities offer business courses.

Business studies at ISCED level 6 is offered in a variety of institutions including both the older and newer universities and the colleges of higher education. All are state funded except for Buckingham, the only university level institution in the private sector in the UK.

Heap (1992) mentions 93 institutions in the UK offering degree level courses in Business not including Accountancy. 131 institutions are mentioned in the University and College Entrance Official Guide 1994 (UCAS, 1993), again not including accountancy.

In 1990/91, these could be divided into three distinct groups:

Group 1 the Universities (37 out of 52 in the UK as a whole offered courses at ISCED level 6 in Business and Financial Studies, including Accountancy, a total of 14,601 students [USR, 1992: 46]).

Group 2 the Polytechnics (31 institutions)

Group 3 other colleges and institutes of higher education (58 institutions including grant aided institutions but not including LEA colleges). In 1990, there were 6,203 students enroled on first degree programmes in Business and Administrative in Groups 2 and 3 combined (DFE, 1991: 66).

Since the abolition of the binary divide in 1992 there are now two main groups with the polytechnics having university status.

The main difference between the older universities and other institutions was their tradition of research and their method of funding. Degree programmes at ISCED level 6 have a similar status in theory in every institution but there are various rankings of institutions, for example by their research reputation, by the point scores that they ask for at 'A' level and by their graduate employment record.

Course structure is similar across all institutions with the three year first degree being the norm (in England and Wales) except where there is an additional sandwich year spent in industry or abroad. There are annual examinations and full-time students normally complete within the minimum time.

It is, however, possible in some instances, to study part-time for a degree, which extends the length of time that students take to complete. In 1990/91 6,700 students were studying Business and Financial Studies part-time (DES, 1993: 56).

5.1.2 Entrance qualifications

The General Requirements to first degree courses, mentioned in chapter IV apply. Course Requirements vary with offers at some institutions as high as 26 points in the older university sector down to 8 points and below at some of the former polytechnics and other colleges (Heap, 1992: 126-131).

Particular subjects are not usually specified except where there is an integrated language element.

5.1.3 Fees

The same regulations apply as for all students (see Chapter IV).

5.2 BUSINESS EDUCATION IN FRANCE

5.2.1 Programme structure

In France, the study of business and management at ISCED level 6 and 7 has traditionally been carried out in the Grandes Ecoles. Reforms during Napoleonic times led to the French university sector being geared mainly to producing public servants, with the result that industry looked elsewhere to train its future managers.

The Grandes Ecoles were created to meet the need for professional training in various spheres. It was mainly in the field of engineering that the Grandes Ecoles were most known up until the 1950s, but since this time schools specialising in Business and Management Studies have proliferated and now form the second largest sector.

The Business Schools are almost all privately owned, many closely linked to the Chambers of Commerce. The most reputable schools were originally in Paris, notably the Hautes Etudes Commerciales (HEC) but various schools have now become established in

the more provincial centres in cities such as Bordeaux, Marseille and Lille. In 1960 - 61, there were only 5,286 students in Ecoles de Commerce as opposed to 20,770 in Ecoles d'Ingénieurs, but by 1982 - 83 this had increased to 23,317 in comparison with 39,000 engineering students (Lewis, 1985: 106). In 1990 - 91 there were 46,006 students in 193 institutions (Ministère de l'Education Nationale de la Jeunesse et des Sports (MEN), 1991: 140).

The university sector now offers some degrees in Business but the Grandes Ecoles still tend to dominate in this sphere because achievement of a diploma from a recognised programme gives a graduate the legal status of a cadre which entitles them to a higher salary than other young graduates. Employers still value graduates from these institutions as can be seen from job advertisements where firms often advertise the numbers of students that they take from particular schools.

The methods of teaching tend to be more practical than in the university sector with strong links with industry. There is no tradition, in fact, of research in the Grandes Ecoles and this has remained the responsibility of the university sector, though some Business Schools are now encouraging research among members of staff and a handful are now able to offer doctorates though cooperative ventures with universities.

There are three main groups of Business Schools classified by the Ministry of Education in France (MEN, ibid):

Group 1 the school is recognised by the state and the diploma they offer is accredited by the MEN (39 institutions: 19,472 students in 1990/91). This includes the Ecoles Supérieures de Commerce (ESC), the highly selective provincial schools.

Group 2 the school is recognised by the state but the diploma is not formally accredited by the MEN (31 institutions: 8,300 students in 1990/91).

Group 3 neither the school nor the diploma are officially recognised (108 institutions: 15,586 students in 1990/91).

These do not include accountancy schools (7 institutions: 2,260 students in 1989/90).

Within Group 1 there are two sorts of institution, firstly the schools that recruit after classes préparatoires (CPGE) of one or two years before the competitive examination (concours), and secondly schools that take students straight after the baccalaureat but after a competitive entrance examination.

Schools which take students after the CPGE normally offer a three year programme, so that students qualify four or five years after their baccalaureat (bac). Schools which have an intake straight after the bac usually offer a four year programme. Other institutions vary considerably in the length of programme offered.

Students have to pass annual exams in order to proceed to the next stage and most students complete their course in the minimum time.

The programmes are considered to be at least equivalent to level 6 and many of the institutions which only recruit after the CPGE claim that their diplomas are equivalent to ISCED level 7.

5.2.2 Entrance qualifications

All the Grandes Ecoles are selective, with Group 1 being the most selective as they have the reputation of being recognised by the MEN.

All have entrance examinations that are taken after the baccalaureat and some institutions require students to have studied for a further two years in the CPGE or to have gained an equivalent qualification such as a DEUG or BTS, both two year qualifications available in the university sector.

In 1990/91, of 7,939 students entering Group 1 Grandes Ecoles institutions, 3,102 came through the CPGE, 2,207 came straight after the bac, and the remaining 2,630 came with other qualifications. In the ESC sector, however, where the CPGE is compulsory, no students came straight from the bac, 2,230 came through the CPGE and only 919 came with other qualifications.

The CPGE tend to be very mathematical as do the entrance examinations, not so much because the schools see mathematics as being central to business study but more as a means of selection. Many students who wish to take up a place at one of these schools have studied the Bac C (Mathematics and Physics) (Lewis, 1985: 83).

5.2.3 Fees

As the business schools are largely private, they charge fees often amounting to 20,000 FF or more. Students can get grant aid through means testing for recognised programmes.

5.3 BUSINESS EDUCATION IN GERMANY

5.3.1 Programme structure

Full-time business study in Germany is carried out mainly in the universities and the Fachhochschulen (more or less equivalent to the former polytechnic sector in the UK), and the qualifications from both these institutions are classified at ISCED level 6 by the German authorities.

The study of Business Administration in Germany was first established in Handelshochschulen in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in Germany. As in the UK it was initially kept outside the university sector as it was not deemed to be of academic stature. By the end of the Second World War, the Handelshochschulen in the Western part of Germany had merged with or become universities and since this time there has been a rapid expansion in students in this discipline.

The Fachhochschulen grew from the earlier Höhere Wirtschaftsfachschulen (economic high schools) and the Ingenieurschulen (engineering schools) (Grochla, 1990: 68). They tend to be more practical with the emphasis on teaching rather than applied research somewhat similar to the Higher National Diplomas (HNDs) in the former polytechnics in the UK. The programme includes periods of practical work experience.

In 1951/52 there were 7,066 students at Universities and Institutes of Higher Education in the Federal Republic studying Betriebswirtschaftslehre (BWL) (Grochla, 1990: 56). In 1990 there were 448,597 German students studying Law, Business Studies and Social Sciences all together of whom 105,070 were studying BWL which represents 7.8% of the student population and the most popular subject in higher education (SB, 1991: 15).

Including foreign students in 1990, there were a total of 110,620 students studying BWL of whom 72,442 were in the universities, 2,854 in the Gesamthochschulen and 35,324 in the Fachhochschulen (SB, 1991).

The programmes offered by the two sectors are different in their structure and entrance qualifications.

The main qualifications that business study leads to in the university sector are the Diplom Kaufmann/frau after studying BWL or the Diplom Ökonom or Diplom Volkswirt which are more linked to Business Economics (Volkswirtschaftslehre - VWL).

These programmes take a minimum of four to four and a half years of study but the average time is nearer six years. The programme is in two parts, the first part being the Grundstudium (basic studies) where students are generally required to take examinations in a range of subjects including statistics and economics, and the second part the Hauptstudium (advanced studies) where they may specialise as well as completing more general requirements. From key informants at both staff and student level, it is said that there is a high failure rate at intermediate level. Whether this is a norm referenced selection procedure due to the high numbers of students studying BWL is possible but would need to be researched further.

The Fachhochschulen offer a programme that lasts a minimum of about three and a half years leading to the qualification Betriebswirt (graduiert).

The Gesamthochschulen, which are the combined institutions peculiar to Hessen and Nordrhein-Westfalen, offer a qualification of similar length to the Fachhochschulen.

Apart from the differences in entry qualifications, curricula, length of course and teaching method, the main difference between study at the universities and the Fachhochschulen (FH) is that the qualification obtained at the FH does not make a student eligible for doctoral study.

5.3.2 Entrance qualifications

Although students have a right to entry to university if they obtain the appropriate qualification at the end of secondary stage two, there is numerus clausus on numbers applying for Business Studies at the universities. This means that some students do not get into their first choice of university and either have to wait and reapply or transfer later from another institution.

Entrance requirements for business study are not specific and follow the general regulations for application to universities and FH.

5.3.3 Fees

The same regulations apply as for all students (see chapter IV).

5.4 SUMMARY

The next chapter deals with some of these differences in more detail and the problems encountered serve as an illustration of the cultural and administrative variations.

CHAPTER VI

PARTICIPATION IN BUSINESS EDUCATION IN BRITAIN, FRANCE AND GERMANY: THE PROJECT AND THE PROBLEMS

This chapter explains in more detail the methodology of my original project and the problems that arose as a result of it when it came to the collection of data and its analysis. The data is presented as an illustration of the problems that I found rather than as data from which any valid generalisations can be made. This is followed by the final section which is a summary of the problems involved.

The following information relates to Business Education in the UK, France and Germany.

6.1 THE SAMPLE

6.1.1. Geographical limits

In the UK, because of the differences in the educational systems in Scotland and Northern Ireland I intended originally to take figures for England only. In the older university sector, however, it is difficult in some cases to isolate this data and where stated the data applies to the UK as a whole (England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland) or to Great Britain (England, Wales and Scotland).

In Germany I have taken data only for the former Federal Republic of Germany as data for the time period I am looking at is not always available for the eastern states.

There are no problems of this nature in France and I have dealt with France as a whole.

6.1.2 Higher education institutions

In the UK I aimed to include data for all first degree programmes as they are considered to be equal in value whether taken at a university or other higher education institution. This is complicated by the fact that in 1990, data for the universities tended to be more detailed than data from the polytechnics and other institutes of higher education, particularly as regards output. Some of the figures, as a result of this relate only to the older universities.

In Germany I have only looked at the university sector as, despite the FH being classified as ISCED level 6, the entrance qualifications are lower than for university study and it does not have the same status as the university diploma.

In France I have looked only at the commercial Grandes Ecoles, despite there being opportunities for study at the universities. I have done this because this is considered to be the most accepted and sought after study route for business students in France.

By looking mainly at the university sectors in the UK and Germany and the Grandes Ecoles in France, I am concentrating on the institutions with the highest reputation in the business sphere.

In some respects this sample may limit the comparability of the survey. It has also been restricted, however, by the data available and access to other sources.

6.1.3 Reference year

The data relates wherever possible to the year 1990/91. Entrant rates and participation rates are for this year except in the case of Germany where data for these has been taken from the summer semester (May-July) 1990, as statistics after this time are complicated by the inclusion of the new Länder (federal states). Graduation and survival rates are based on students graduating in 1990.

6.2 CONCEPTS AND VARIABLES

6.2.1 Level of study programme

The initial definition followed the EC line recommended in the 1988 Directive by limiting the range of programmes to those which normally take a minimum of three years of fulltime study (or their part-time equivalent). This three year full-time base line excludes other qualifications such as the HND in the UK, the DUT and BTS in France and the VWA (dual qualification) in Germany.

The following programmes remained:

i The first degree in England and Wales, the Bachelor degree, which normally takes a minimum of three years, and can be taken in a university, a former polytechnic or various other institutions of higher education.

ii In France there are two possible options: the three year licence available at the universities or the diploma awarded by the Grandes Ecoles which usually takes four or five years including in some cases one or two years of classes préparatoires. For reasons explained above I will only be looking at the Grandes Ecoles sector. There has been a rapid growth of business schools in France but I will, where possible, limit my research to those whose diploma is recognised by the state (Group 1 - see chapter V) as these are the more official qualifications as opposed to the 'unofficial' ones.

iii In Germany I shall be focussing on the Diplom Kaufmann/frau, the Diplom Ökonom or their equivalent which normally takes a minimum of about four and a half years. In the Gesamthochschulen (combined highschools) the minimum time span may be shorter but their data are included in the statistics for the Universities.

The OECD, I later discovered, has an international scale that it uses for its research in higher education. The International Standard Classification for Education (ISCED) is a scale that defines levels of education in order to make statistical comparisons possible across national boundaries. Level 6, defined as "education at the third level, first stage, of the type that leads to a first university degree or equivalent" (OECD, 1992: 140)

It is similar to the EC definition and distinguishes first degrees from lower level qualifications which it defines under Level 5 as being at the same stage and level but leading to a qualification NOT equivalent to a first degree (OECD, ibid).

It should be borne in mind, however, that, whereas the UK degree fits fairly neatly into the Level 6 classification, the German Diplom Kaufmann/frau and the diplomas from the French Grandes Ecoles can be seen as overlapping into level 7, the equivalent to a postgraduate qualification. In Germany there are no Masters level programmes as such, equal to those in the UK. In France, in the Grandes Ecoles, the recognised diplomas are considered to be Bac + 4 or Bac + 5 i.e. four or five years of study after the baccalaureat, fulfilling the four years of the second cycle of education in France equivalent to the maitrise in the university sector.

For this reason, I have occasionally cited postgraduate qualifications in the data on the UK but I have tried to keep them separate from undergraduate qualifications as the majority of students go into employment after the first degree.

6.2.2 Business/management education

In England in the university sector, I am taking the broad definition offered by the Universities Statistical Record Office post 1985 which classifies various business and management courses under the heading of Business and Financial Studies (See Appendix 3). In the former polytechnic sector courses are broadly defined as Business and Administrative Studies.

In France I am taking the equivalent range of Etudes Supérieures de Commerce (Higher Commercial Studies) as those offered in the Grandes Ecoles (Group 1) and recognised by the French Ministry of Education.

In Germany, I have looked at the group entitled Wirtschaftswissenschaften (Business Economics - see Appendix 3) which includes Betriebswirtschaftslehre (Business Administration) known as BWL, but also other subjects such as Volkswirtschaftslehre (Economics) often offered either as an alternative to BWL or alongside it, but based on the same basic studies (Grundstudium). The programmes offered and their titles differ from one university to the next in the same way as in the UK.

6.2.3 Participation rates in higher education

Participation rates are the numbers of students taking part in higher education. They can be broken down into entrant rates and total participants.

The distinction must be made in the UK between full-time and part-time students. Part-time qualifications are becoming more common, particularly in the former polytechnic sector. Part-time numbers in university statistics are calculated as full-time equivalents (FTEs) where two part-time students are equivalent to one full-time.

In terms of participants, I have mainly concentrated on full-time statistics, as part-time study in the Grandes Ecoles in France and in the German university system does not exist in the same way as in the UK. It is also more unusual in the UK system in the older university sector. Inclusion of part-time figures makes graduation data and survival rates a problem in that it is often an estimated date of graduation, bearing in mind that part-time courses can be spread out over varying lengths of time.

Entrant rates are complicated by the inclusion of students who may be registered for more than one course, as is the case in France, where students following the classes préparatoires may also register for a DEUG at a university as a form of safety net in case they fail the entrance examination to the Business Schools later on. In Germany it is also

complicated by the fact that a student may change the course that he is studying on. The inclusion of course changers or double registrations into entrant rates can create inaccuracies in the figures. There should be a distinction therefore between **new** entrants and **course** entrants.

There are two ways in which these figures can be presented: one is in comparison with the total population as a ratio, and the other is as a raw number. Although originally I intended to do both where possible as the two formats are both informative, the problems involved meant that the presentation of data never really reached this stage.

There are, in any case, problems inevitably with the ratio figures as participant and entrant rates include students from a range of ages and if these are being used against a narrowly defined age group, they can be inaccurate and misleading.

6.2.4 Graduation rates

These are the numbers of students graduating in any one year. These can be seen as a raw number or as a proportion of an age group in the same way as entrant and participation rates.

6.2.5 Survival rates

These are based on estimating the year in which the graduates would have begun their study and using the entrant numbers as the reference group against which to match the number of students who graduate in a particular year.

The survival numbers can be calculated on the basis of the **minimum** time that a student takes to complete, as is the case in the OECD survey (See Appendix 2), and this is what I have used in the case of the UK and France where students tend to complete in the minimum time. In the case of Germany, however, I have taken the **average** time that a student takes to complete to define the year of entry as this data is available from the

Statistisches Bundesamt and gives a more accurate picture because of their flexible structure.

6.3 TECHNIQUES AND SOURCES OF DATA COLLECTION

	DATA	TECHNIQUES	SOURCES
1	Structures of higher education systems including Business Education	Documentary analysis	Published sources and key informants
2	Entrants, participants graduates and survivors	Documentary analysis	Published statistical data

6.3.1 Sources of data on educational systems

There are various publications documenting educational systems (Wijnaendts van Resandt, 1991: Lewis, 1985: Grochla, 1990: Sharp & Dunford, 1990: DES, 1985). The educational arena is, however, not a static one and publications such as the above cannot hope to reflect the most recent changes.

Documentary sources have, therefore, had to include other publications available to students to assist them on their choices (e.g. University Entrance Handbook, 1992: Heap, 1992: L'Etudiant, 1992: ONISEP, 1991).

Both have been supplemented by information from key informants including university staff and students who I talk to as a regular part of my job and who have been particularly useful in up-dating information.

6.3.2 Sources of statistical data

Each country has a department responsible for the collection and collation of statistical information on education. Data on student numbers is published by the following authorities:

United Kingdom

The Universities Statistical Record Office publishes annual figures on student numbers in the older university sector.

The four countries within the UK (England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland) each have an Education Office which publishes annual data. For example, the Department of Education and Science (DES) produces detailed student numbers in former polytechnics and other HE institutions in England, including various Statistical Bulletins (e.g. DES, 1992, 1993, DFE, 1992). It also publishes educational statistics for the UK on an annual basis relating to all sectors and countries.

France

The French Ministry of Education (Ministère de l'Education Nationale de la Jeunesse et des Sports) produces annual publications and also various statistical tables and bulletins (e.g. MEN, 1989 - 1992).

Germany

The German Federal Statistics Office (Statistisches Bundesamt) produces annual publications, which includes all data on Higher Education (e.g. SB 1991, 1992).

Key informants from the same group as mentioned above have been particularly useful in raising doubts as to some of the statistics published by international organisations and questioning their meaning. A good example of this is the high survival rate of German students in the OECD survey (1992). Both German staff members and students have commented on the high failure rate of students in the first two years in the universities in Germany, often up to 40% of an exam cohort.

6.3.3 Problems

As the collection and analysis of the data progressed it became obvious that there were gaps in some of the information that had been collected and it would have been necessary to make additional trips to the appropriate agencies to access the original information.

By this point it had also become clear that there were so many problems in comparing the data that much of the analysis would be concerned with methodological problems anyway and the cost in terms of time and money in collecting further data would not have been justifiable.

6.4 PRESENTATION OF DATA

Because of the problems described, the data collected is not presentable in a strictly comparable form and in many cases is incomplete due either to lack of time or absence of the data. The following section should therefore be seen merely as an illustration of the points made later under the section dealing with the analysis of problems (Chapter IV). The particular problems for each country are mentioned in context but are developed further in this section.

6.4.1 Entrant, participation, graduation and survival rates in business education in the UK (data on universities and other higher education institutions)

The first section of data (Tables 1 - 6) concerns information on the older university sector, taken from material published by the Universities Statistical Record Office (USR 1988 - 92). The second section (Tables 7 - 8) is an illustration of some of the problems concerning data from the non-university higher education sector. This data is taken from DES publications (e.g. DES, 1991).

TABLE 1 BUSINESS STUDIES ENTRANTS IN THE UNIVERSITIES IN 1990/91 (Source: UFC, 1992).

BUSINESS STUDIES 1990/91	ENTRANTS	
	first degree	all UG prog.(a)
GB f/t	3,949	4,178
GB p/t	(b)	(b)
England f/t	(b)	2,727
England p/t	(b)	(b)
UK f/t	(b)	4,920
UK p/t	(b)	(b)
GB f/t (c) including Economics	6,658	7,067

a) these include some lower level diplomas (ISCED level 5)

b) no data available in the published sources

c) data only available for GB in published sources

TABLE 2 **BUSINESS STUDIES PARTICIPANTS IN THE UNIVERSITIES IN 1990/91** (Source: UFC, 1992).

BUSINESS STUDIES 1990/91	PARTICIPANTS			
	first degree	all UG prog. (a)	all PG prog. (b)	all BS FTEs (c)
GB F/T	(d)	12,520	5,263	17,783
UK F/T	(d)	14,601	5,474	20,075
England F/T	(d)	8,013	3,917	11,930
GB F/T incl. Economics	(d)	20,837	7,270	28,107
GB P/T	19	104	7,134	3,619
UK P/T	(d)	1,460	7,888	4,674
England P/T	(d)	72	5,130	2,601

a) includes diplomas at ISCED level 5

b) refers to all higher degrees, both Masters level and others including post-experience

c) two part-time students = one full-time student

d) no data available for first degrees in isolation from other undergraduate qualifications

TABLE 3 **BUSINESS STUDIES GRADUATES IN THE UNIVERSITIES IN 1990** (Source: UFC, 1992).

BUSINESS STUDIES 1990	GRADUATES		
	first degree	all UG programmes	PG (higher deg. (a)
GB (b)	3,379	3,608	4,205
UK (b)	3,849	-	4,318
England (b)	2,184	-	3,081
GB incl. (b) Economics	5,832	6,199	5,208

a) no separate information for Masters level degrees

b) not specified as to whether full-time or part-time

TABLE 4 **BUSINESS STUDIES ENTRANTS, PARTICIPANTS AND GRADUATES IN THE UNIVERSITIES IN 1990/91 - AN OVERVIEW OF UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES** (Source: UFC, 1992).

BUSINESS STUDIES 1990/91	ENTRANTS		PARTICIPANTS	GRADUATES (1990)
	first degree	all UG progr.	all UG (a) programmes	first deg.
GB f/t	3,949	4,178	12,520	(b)
GB p/t	(c)	(c)	104	(b)
GB unsp.	-	-	-	3,379
Engl. f/t	(c)	2,727	8,013	(b)
Engl. p/t	(c)	(c)	72	(b)
Engl. unsp.	-	-	-	2,184
UK f/t	(c)	4,920	14,601	(b)
UK p/t	(c)_	(c)	1,460	(b)
UK unsp.	-	-	-	3,849
GB f/t including economics	6,658	7,067	20,837	5,832 (f/t & p/t)

a) no separate data available in published documentation for first degree programmes only

b) data not available in published documentation for separate full-time and part-time numbers

c) data not available in published documentation

TABLE 5 **BUSINESS STUDIES SURVIVORS IN THE UNIVERSITIES IN 1990 (FIRST DEGREE PROGRAMMES IN GB ONLY)** (Source: UFC, 1987 - 92).

Entry year (a)	Entrant numbers (b)	Course Duration	Year of graduation	Graduate numbers (c)	Survival rate (d)
1986	1,108	4 years	1990	3,379	101%
1987	2,238	3 years			
Total = 3,346					

a) depending on course duration (three year or sandwich)
b) full-time only first degree entrants
c) assumes full-time study but this is not necessarily so
d) based on c) as a percentage of total b)

TABLE 6 **BUSINESS STUDIES + ECONOMICS SURVIVORS IN THE UNIVERSITIES IN 1990 (FIRST DEGREE PROGRAMMES IN GB ONLY)** (Source: UFC, 1987 - 1992).

Entry year (a)	Entrant numbers (b)	Course Duration	Year of graduation	Graduate numbers (c)	Survival rate (d)
1986	1,421	4 years	1990	5,832	99%
1987	4,459	3 years			
Total = 5,880					

a) depending on course duration (three year or sandwich)
b) full-time only first degree entrants
c) assumes full-time study but this is not necessarily so
d) based on c) as a percentage of total b)

TABLE 7 **BUSINESS STUDIES ENTRANTS IN THE POLYTECHNICS AND OTHER HE COLLEGES IN 1990/91** (Sources: DES, 1992; DFE, 1991).

BUSINESS STUDIES	first degree	all UG degrees (levels 5 & 6)
England only	13,107 (a)	84,040 (b)

a) no distinction between part-time and full time entrants

b) includes range of sub-degree programmes

TABLE 8 **BUSINESS STUDIES PARTICIPANTS IN THE POLYTECHNICS AND OTHER HE COLLEGES IN 1990/91** (Sources: DES, 1992; DFE, 1991).

BUSINESS STUDIES	first degree	all UG prog. (a)	all PG prog.	All Business Studies (b)	
England only	36,837 (c)	137,521 (c)	14,967 (c)	152,488 (c)	
				f/t(d)	p/t(e)
				57,796	94,692
				PCFC	Other
				102,777	49,711

a) all sub-degree qualifications

b) not based on FTEs, simply numbers

c) no breakdown into part-time and full-time available

d) includes full-time and sandwich attendance

e) includes all other types of attendance (e.g. block release, part-time, open learning)

It has proved difficult to isolate graduate numbers for Business Studies first degrees in the non-university sector thus making an assessment of survival rates by this method unviable.

In an article by the DES (DES, 1992), first year leaving rates are given for Business Studies. 15.4% of first year students terminated their course of study but only 5.4% because of failure. 7.2% were full terminations, others were mainly internal transfers or interruptions.

Problems

i) Data in a comparable form is not available for the former Polytechnic sector in all aspects, particularly graduate numbers.

ii) The high part-time numbers in the former polytechnic sector would make an estimation of survival rates problematical.

iii) Data for Business Studies is not always available except for the whole of Great Britain in the case of the USR information. DES publications deal separately with England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

iv) It is not easy to isolate students studying for a first degree from other undergraduate students.

v) Data does not include joint or combined degrees.

vi) Part-time figures for Business Studies are not always available from USR data.

vii) Polytechnic and other colleges deal with Business Studies altogether which includes programmes at ISCED level 5 - little separate data on first degrees and this is not broken down into full and part-time students so it is impossible to work out the FTEs.

viii) There are different definitions of Business Studies in universities and polytechnics.

ix) Numbers in universities are low and even with economics, do they really give a valid picture of Business Studies in the UK, bearing in mind that this is one of the specialist areas in the former polytechnics. Lack of valid data on polytechnic numbers makes this difficult to substantiate.

x) Not easy to identify Masters level programmes as distinct from other postgraduate programmes.

xi) Data on entrants does not always distinguish between new entrants to HE and course changers, particularly in the non-university sector.

6.4.2 Entrant, participation, graduation and survival rates in France (Data on the French Business Schools)

This data concerns the French Business Schools and is taken from the official publications (e.g. MEN, 1992).

TABLE 9 ENTRANTS, PARTICIPANTS AND GRADUATES IN THE FRENCH BUSINESS SCHOOLS IN 1990/91 (Source: MEN, 1992).

1990/91	Entrants	Participants	Graduates (a)
All commercial schools (b)	18,473	46,006	12,243
Group 1 (c)	7,939	19,472	5,607
Group 2	3,342	8,300	2,846
Group 3	7,192	15,586	4,150

a) 1990
b) Total participants include those on non-recognised courses.
c) Mainly three year programmes after classes préparatoires but also includes some four year programmes.

TABLE 10 SURVIVORS IN THE FRENCH BUSINESS SCHOOLS (Group 1) IN 1990 (Source: MEN, 1992).

Entry year (a)	Entrant numbers (b)	Course Duration (a)	Year of graduation (a)	Graduate numbers	Survival rate (c)
1987	No info 5,485 estim.	3 years	1990	5,607	102%

a) This assumes a three year course which is only true for some of the schools (e.g. the ESCAE). No separate information available.

b) No information available for this year as records only began to be collected formally for the Grandes Ecoles since this time. The estimated figures are taken from a table showing participants and graduates each year and are only a very rough estimate for the year. This number is reached by taking the number of participants (effectifs) in 1987/88 (15,568) and deducting the graduates in 1988 and 1989 (4,900 and 5,183) assuming the full three year course. This leaves a balance of 5,485 but this assumes that there were no second year entries and the three year course duration.

c) Graduate numbers in 1990 as a percentage of estimated entrant numbers.

Problems

i) Very little data is available in published form and there is little detail.

ii) Data for the commercial Grandes Ecoles has only been collected by the MEN since 1989 so it is difficult to estimate survival.

iii) Selection takes place at the stage of the concours. Details of numbers of students applying and pass/fail rates would give more of an idea of selection at this point.

iv) Numbers in Group 1 are small but total numbers would include a range of unrecognised courses.

v) These figures do not take into account entry into the second year and there is no information on this.

vi) Length of course varies and no details are given.

6.4.3 Entrant, participation, graduation and survival rates in business education in Germany (data for university sector only)

The data is taken from the official publications of the Statistisches Bundesamt (SB, 1986 - 1992). It relates to the winter semester in 1990 for entrant and participation rates and to the summer semester 1990 for graduation rates. The graduation rates are complicated by the fact that information on former East Germany is included. The lack of a strong Business Studies tradition in former Eastern Germany may mean, however, that the numbers are still fairly representative. This has not been fully ascertained, however, and is merely an assumption.

TABLE 11 **ENTRANTS AND PARTICIPANTS IN THE UNIVERSITIES IN THE WINTER SEMESTER 1990** (Source: SB, 1992)

SUBJECT All levels (a)	ENTRANTS (b)	PARTICIPANTS
Rechts-, Wirtschafts- und Sozialwissenschaften	37,767	267,817
Wirtschaftswissenschaften	19,513	129,803

a) does not include Gesamthochschulen or other university level institutions

b) students in their first university semester rather than their first subject semester (includes foreign students)

TABLE 12 **GRADUATION RATES IN THE UNIVERSITIES IN 1990** (Source: SB, 1992).

GRADUATES (Univ. diploma)	overall (a)	univs. only
Rechts-, Wirtschafts- und Sozialwissenschaften	22,891	11,978
Wirtschaftswissenschaften	11,120	9,392

a) overall figures include data for Gesamthochschulen and other university level institutions

TABLE 13 **SURVIVAL RATES IN THE UNIVERSITIES IN 1990** (Source: SB, 1991 - 92).

NB Insufficient data makes an estimate of the survival rates potentially very inaccurate.

Entry year	Study duration	Entrant numbers	Graduate numbers	Subject (a)
1985 (b)	5.8 years (c)	47,305 (d)	22,891 (d)	Rechts-, Wirtschafts- und Sozialwissen-schaften

a) No information available on Wirtschaftswissenschaften without further research.

b) 1985 taken as entrant year as limited information available without further research.

c) Estimated average length of study from first subject semester is 5.8 years which does not match exactly with the entrant year taken.

d) Data includes Gesamthochschulen and other university level institutions.

Problems

i) Mass of data but difficult to isolate particular numbers for one subject area.

ii) Data for graduation rates for 1990 are for the whole of Germany which makes assessment of survival rate difficult as the data is not available for the former Eastern states in the same format for earlier entrants.

iii) Flexible study system makes it difficult to assess survivors based on the year of entry.

iv) Not enough data on earlier entrant numbers to make valid assessment of survival rate. Detailed information only available at the statistics office in Germany.

v) Some figures refer to universities only, others refer to the universities, the Gesamthochschulen (combined highschools) and other institutions.

6.5 A COMPARISON OF PATTERNS OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN BUSINESS STUDIES

6.5.1 The sample

The following is a brief comparison of patterns of participation in Business Studies in France, Germany and Britain. Methodological problems and lack of data mean that more research is needed before this comparison can be validated. It does, however, offer some channels for further research and is useful to illustrate the methodological problems involved.

Comparison is centred on the numbers of entrants, participants and graduates. Not enough information was available for a real estimate of survival rates though some impressions have been given. The comparisons are illustrated in Figures 8 - 13 and are in two sections: firstly a straightforward comparison of Business Studies entrants,

participants and graduates (Figs. 8 - 10) and secondly a comparison including Economics students in Britain (Figs. 11 - 13).

This is only a comparison of numbers and so cannot be directly compared to the OECD study which is based on rates in relation to a theoretical age group. The sample taken for comparison in Britain was quite narrow in that data was only clearly available for Business Studies in the older university sector. Because of variants in the education systems in England, Wales, Germany and Northern Ireland, the sample was also restricted to England only. These limitations meant that numbers of students in the sample were low and not really representative of the range of programmes in Britain as a whole, particularly in the former polytechnic sector where there are larger numbers of students involved in Business Studies. The second sample included Economics in the university sector as this is also included in the German sample. Data was only available, however, for Britain as a whole for this.

Data for the French Business Schools is only for Group 1, the recognised schools, whereas data for Germany is for the whole university sector in the former West Germany. There are therefore obvious limitations due to the sample. However, from the point of view of status of the institutions before the end of the binary divide in the UK, the levels could be seen as fairly similar.

6.5.2 Entrants to Business Studies

In Figure 8 there is a clear difference between the numbers of entrants to Business Studies in the three countries with England well behind, but in Figure 11 where Economics in Britain as a whole is included, the difference between France and Britain is not so great. The German figures are way ahead of both France and Britain due to selection procedures. What is not shown, however, are the patterns of application to the Grandes Ecoles and the failure rates and this is an area which needs further research.

6.5.3 Participation in Business Studies

In Figure 9, the rates of participation in Germany are a great deal higher than in either France or England. This is due at least in part to the pattern of flexible study in Germany which means that students have no absolute limit on the number of years that it takes to graduate. The average number of semesters that Business Studies students take to finish their Diplom is illustrated in Figure 14. Again, where Economics is included in Britain, the numbers are similar to the French sample (Figure 12).

6.5.4 Graduates in Business Studies

In Figure 10, the difference in the numbers of graduates in Germany compared to France is not proportionately as great as the differences between entrants and participants in the two countries. In Figure 13, numbers for Britain which include Economics are also closer to those in France and Germany. Graduation rates in Germany in Business Studies are still higher than in both the other countries.

6.5.5 Survival rates in Business Studies

These are only rough estimates as sufficient data was not available. Survival rates in the British and French systems appear high based on available data. This is different from the overall higher education survival rate in France where drop-out rates are high. This is only based on entrants to the Grandes Ecoles however, not students entering CPGE or taking the competitive examinations so the main selection has already taken place, reducing the possibility of further drop-out.

It was not possible to estimate survival rates in Germany partly due to lack of data and partly to the methodological problems posed by the flexible study time. It is interesting however, to compare the number of graduates in 1990 in Rechts-, Wirtschafts-, und Sozialwissenschaften with the number of entrants in 1985. The graduate figure is only just above half the entrant figure for four years previously, and even allowing for an increase in entrants this rate of drop-out is higher than in France and Britain and does not reflect the overall pattern in the OECD study. This rough estimate is in line with

information from key informants who have said that drop-out in the first few years of Business programmes in Germany is about 40%. The difference between this drop out rate and the national figure given in the OECD study for drop-out in all disciplines may be due to the popularity of Business Studies in Germany and the failure of the system to cope with the numbers of students. Numerus clausus was introduced only recently as a means of limiting numbers to the subject.

6.6 SUMMARY

This section has highlighted the problems involved in the methodology of the research project as it relates to Britain, France and Germany and given a rough comparison of findings so far. In the next chapter the problems are analysed in the context of other international studies.

FIGURE 8

(Sources: SB, 1992; MEN, 1992; UFC, 1992)

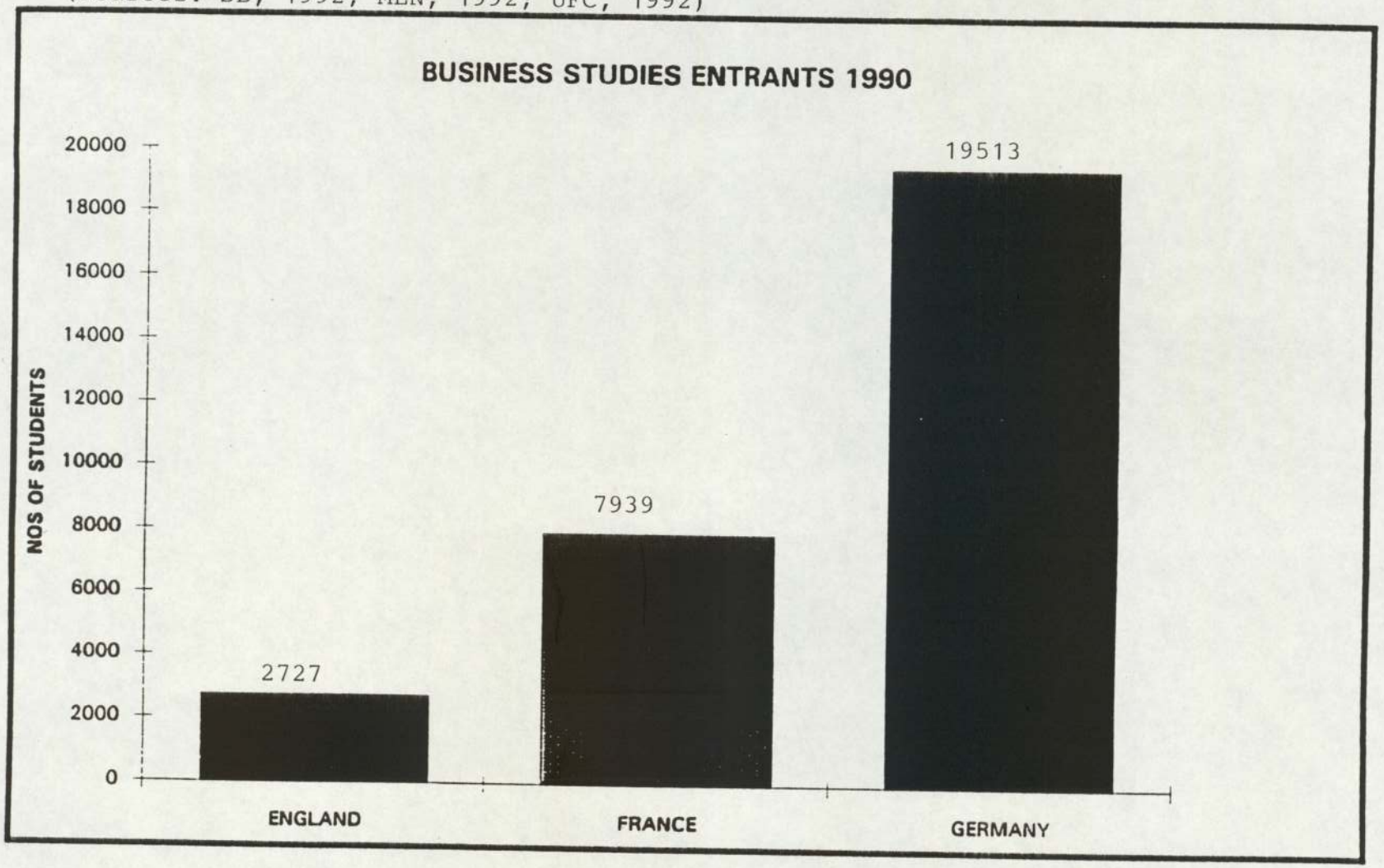


FIGURE 9

(Sources: SB, 1992; MEN, 1992; UFC, 1992)

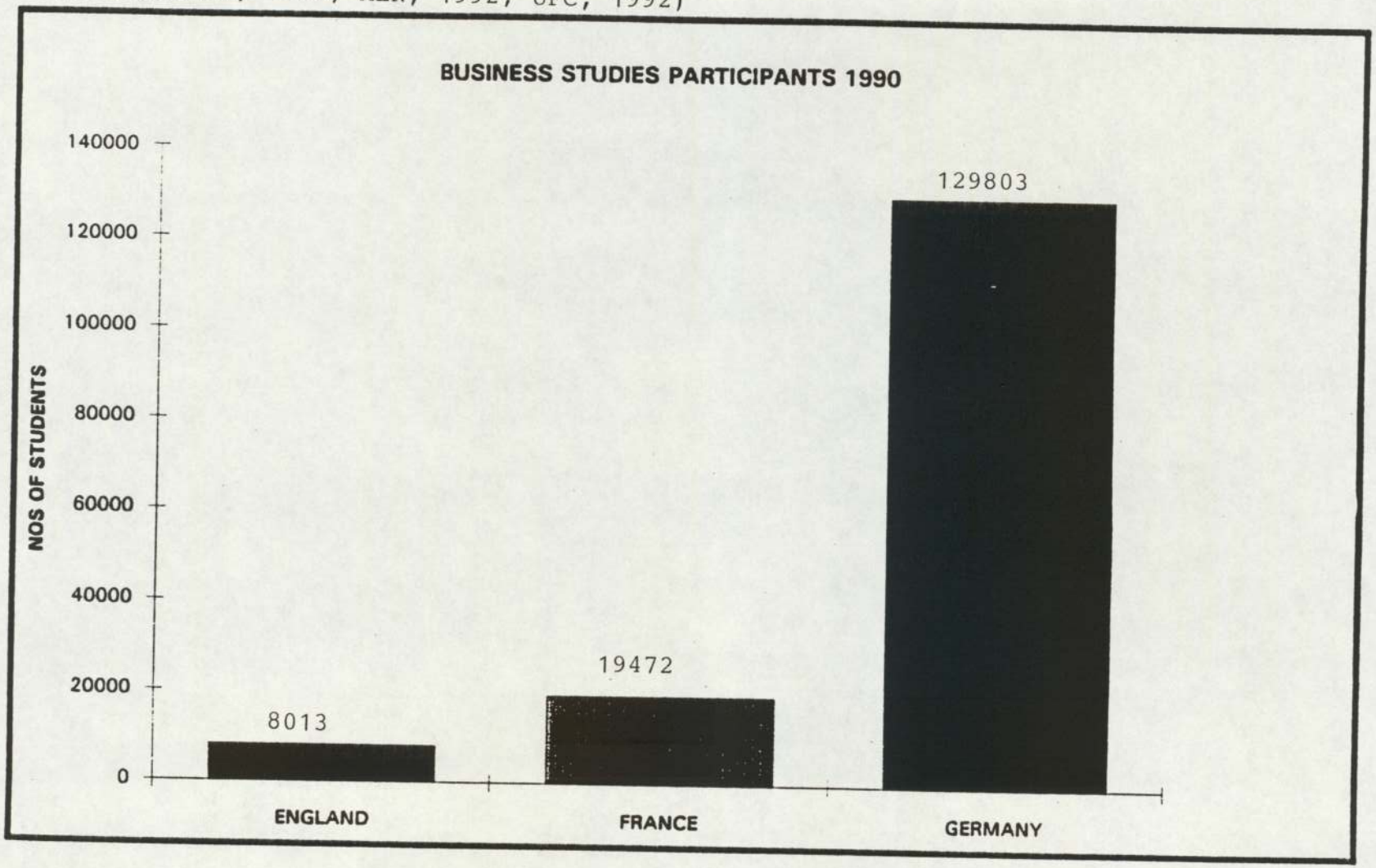


FIGURE 10

(Sources: SB, 1992; MEN, 1992; UFC, 1992)

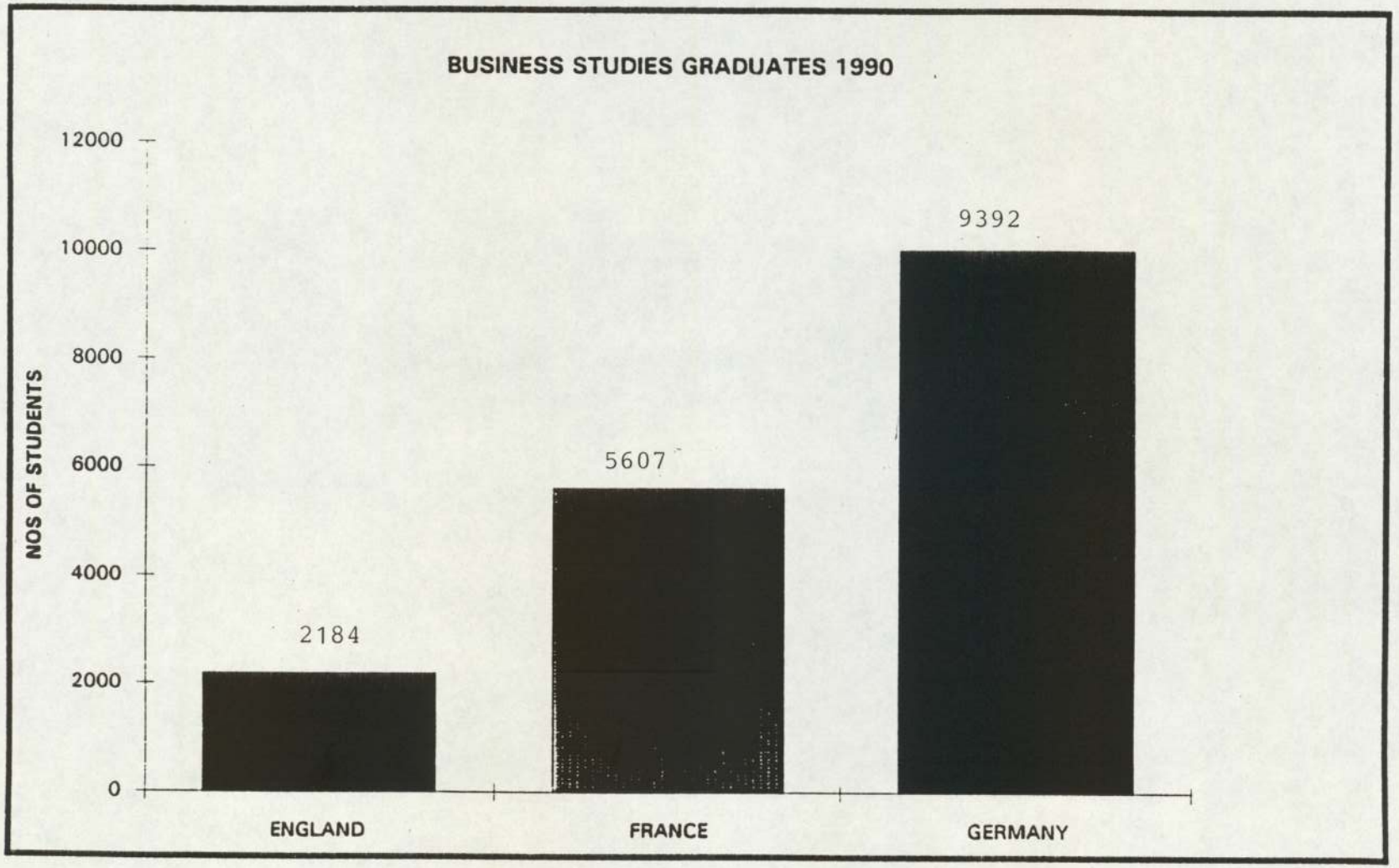


FIGURE 11 (Sources: UFC, 1992; SB, 1992; MEN, 1992)

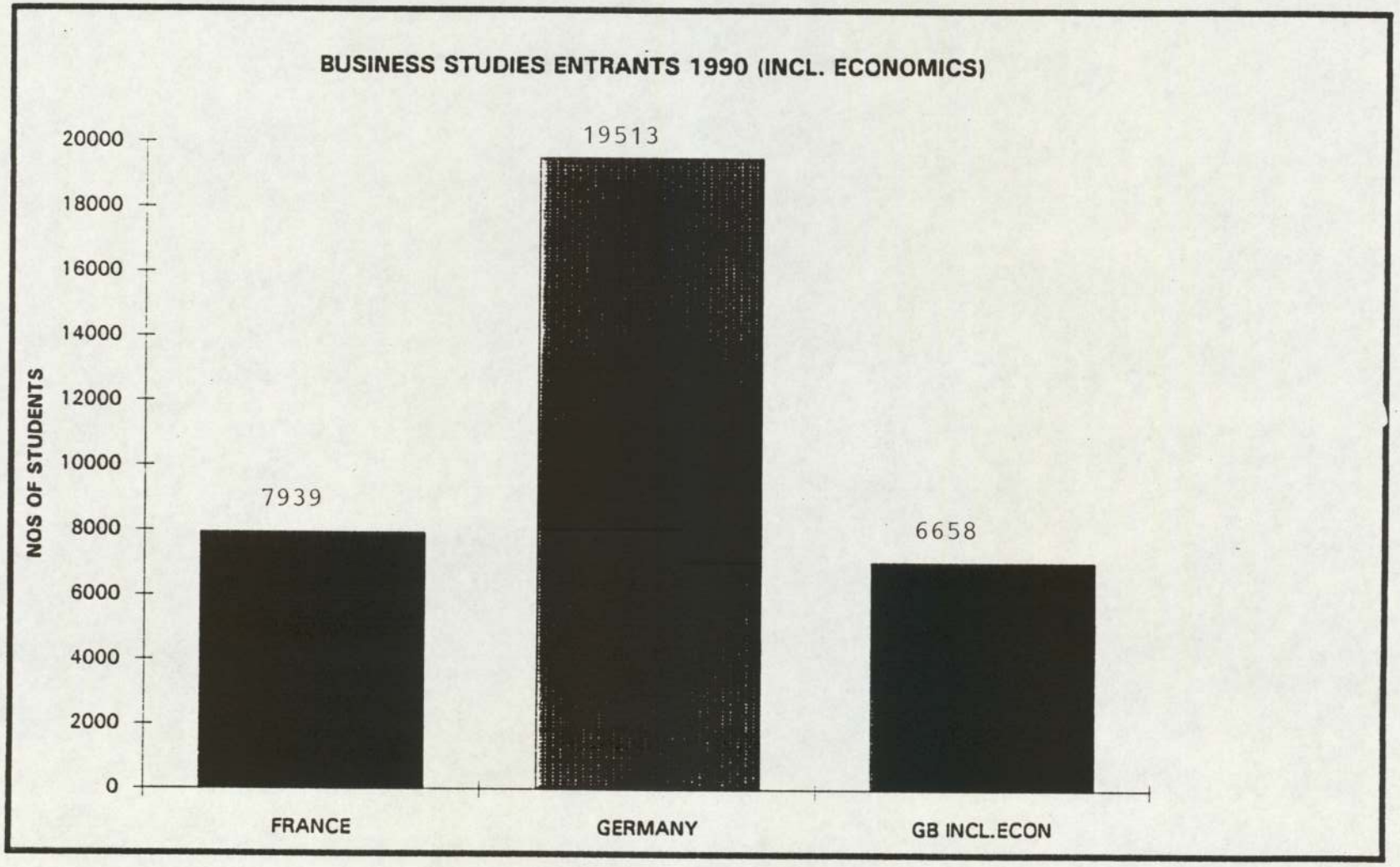


FIGURE 12 (Sources: UFC, 1992; SB, 1992; MEN, 1992)

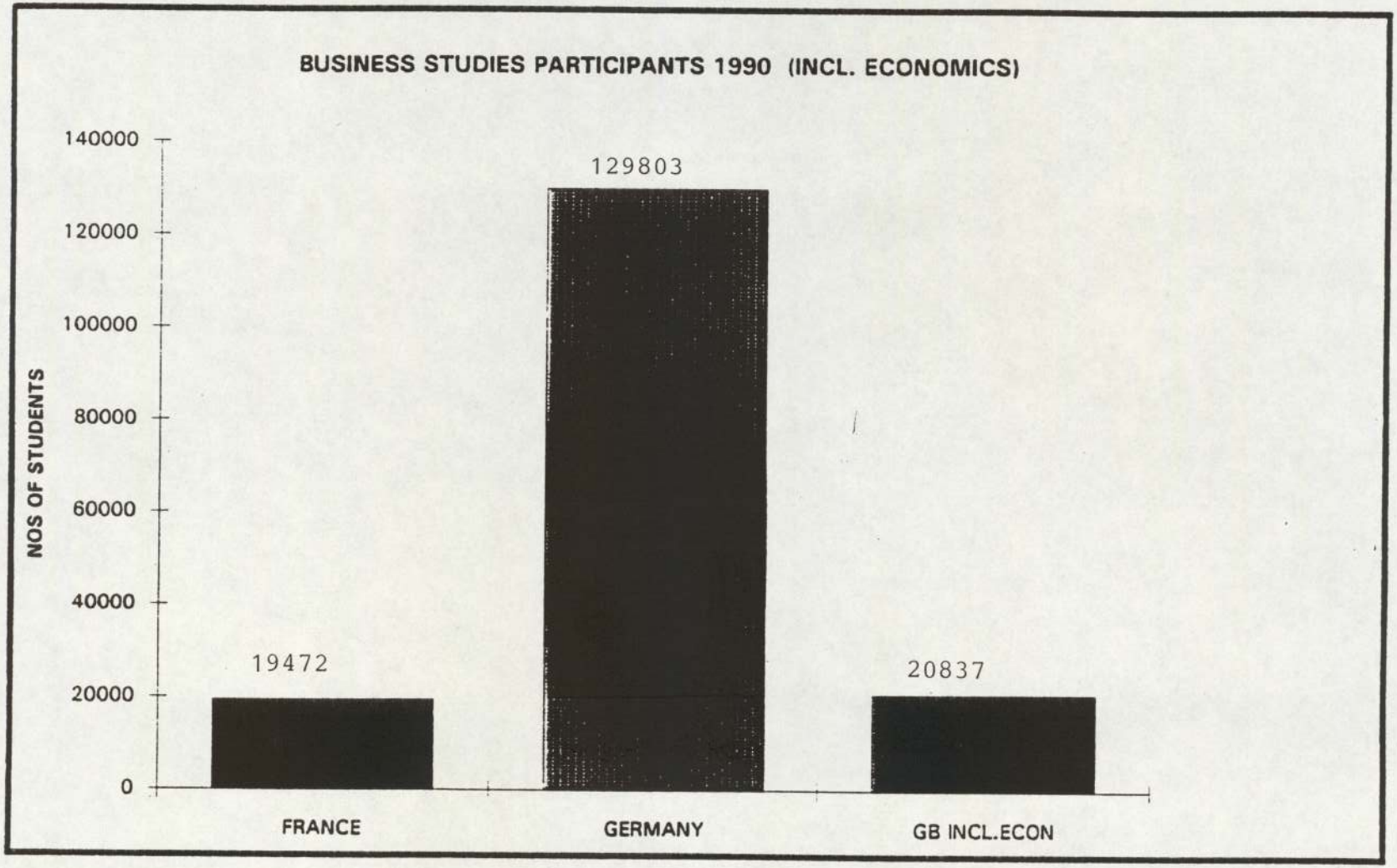


FIGURE 13 (Sources: UFC, 1992; SB, 1992, MEN, 1992)

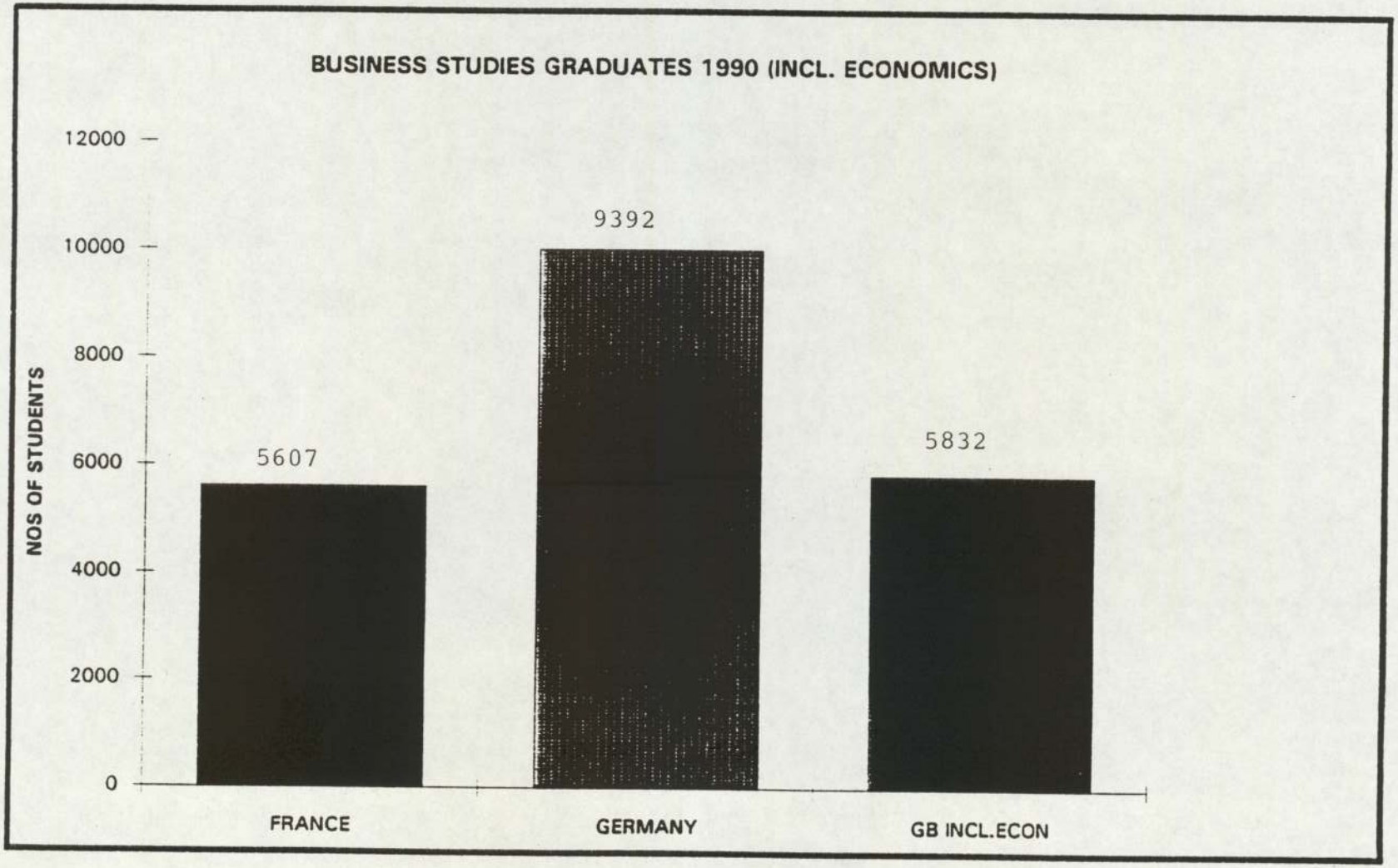
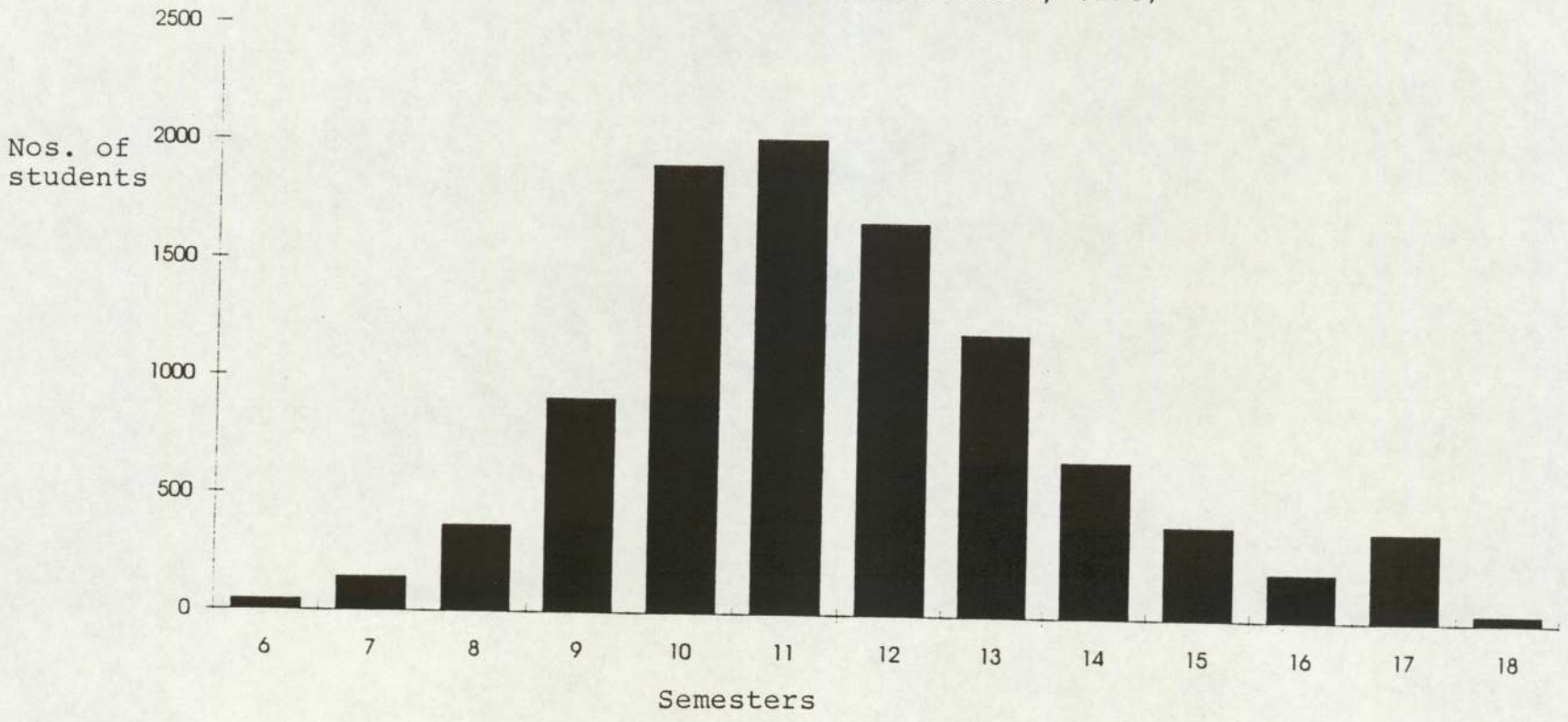


FIGURE 14

NO OF SEMESTERS FOR COMPLETION OF GERMAN BUSINESS DIPLOMA

(Source: Statistisches Bundesamt, 1990)



CHAPTER VII

AN ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEMS IN COMPARING BUSINESS EDUCATION SYSTEMS

This chapter summarises and analyses the problems involved in the comparison of the business education systems in the three countries.

There are two levels on which the problems related to international surveys can be observed: firstly the wider national level as in the OECD study (OECD, 1992) or the DES studies (DES 1991, 1992), and secondly the more narrow field of a particular subject area as, for example, in the CNAA/CHEPS/HIS project (CNAA et al, 1992).

The first section of this chapter deals with two of these publications as an illustration of the problems involved and as background to a more detailed analysis of the problems involved in this research project.

7.1 CRITIQUE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

The OECD study (OECD 1992) shows many of the problems involved in international comparison, as do the other studies mentioned in Chapter II (DES 1991; DFE 1992; CNAA et al, 1992).

7.1.1 The OECD study

Of all their education indicators put forward by the OECD (OECD, 1992), there were four that are of particular interest:

i Entry ratio to programmes leading to a qualification at tertiary level
ii Participation in higher education (university)
iii Higher education (university) graduation rate
iv Higher education survival (university)

i) **Entry ratio to programmes leading to a qualification at tertiary level**

The OECD define this as "the ratio of the first-entrants to the number in the population at the theoretical entry age." (OECD, ibid; 76). They break it down into university and non-university tertiary education.

They point out in their notes on this table that in some countries they have not been able to separate first-time entrants from course changers. They also acknowledge that the ratio may be an over-estimate because of numbers of students who are either older or younger than the theoretical entry age. There are also differences in the way that countries define university and non-university programmes (ISCED Level 5 and Level 6/7).

ii) **Participation in higher education (university)**

The OECD define this as "the ratio of the number of students of any age enroled in university education to the number in the population in the normal age range for such programmes" (OECD, ibid; 80). This is broken down into the full-time-equivalents (FTEs) and also full-time and part-time students separately.

Problems here include the way that FTEs are assessed for part-time students, the validity of the theoretical entry age (as before), and differences in classification (as before).

A particular problem is the bias created by the inclusion in these figures of both undergraduate and postgraduate figures. In Germany, for example, where the normal length of the first degree is here considered to be equivalent to levels 6 and 7, the numbers of participants are high. The UK figure, by comparison is low because only a relatively small proportion of students will undertake study at level 7. The tradition of separating undergraduate and postgraduate studies, and the tendency for students to continue their professional development in employment

in the UK therefore gives these figures a bias that is essentially a result of different education and training systems rather than of 'opportunity'.

iii) Higher education (university) graduation rate

This is defined as the ratio of the number of graduates of any age to the number in the population at the theoretical completion age (OECD, ibid; 98).

There are various complications here which the OECD point out in their notes. These include the problems already cited in connection with the theoretical completion age, double counting of students who have achieved more than one qualification and the fact that the figures do not exclude all students who started their tertiary education in the non-university sector, thus making the data not really comparable with the university entrant data.

Another point of interest is that the theoretical age of graduation does not tally with the theoretical starting age and duration used in the assessment of participation rates. Thus, in Germany, the participation rates relate to levels 6 and 7, but the graduation rates only relate to level 6, thus making comparisons misleading. .

iv) Higher education survival (university)

This indicator is considered a provisional one as agreement has not yet been reached on its validity and applicability:

> Least satisfactory are the indicators in areas in which national data is often lacking. Statistics on...the outcomes of schooling are among the principal examples. Indicators of educational processes and outcomes are approximate in nature; they cannot be taken as precise measures of complex phenomena (OECD, 1992: 15).

This indicator is "expressed as the ratio of the number of students who are awarded an initial university degree to the number who were enroled in the programme for the first time n years before, with **n** determined by the number of years of full-time study required to complete the degree" (OECD, ibid; 100).

Again here only ISCED level 6 is taken into account thereby excluding many qualifications. It is interesting to note, as well that the ratio in one case (Sweden) is actually 109% due to the inclusion of non-university entrants who can progress to level 6.

7.1.2 DES studies

Another publication of interest is a Working Report on international comparisons of education systems published in the UK (DES, 1991) which was the basis for the section on international comparisons in a later DES publication (DES et al, 1992).

Much of the information here is taken from OECD data for the year previous to the OECD publication and some of the variables are the same, for instance the ISCED scale for levels of education. Variables defined in different ways have, however, produced slightly different results which shows how precarious making generalisations from statistics can be.

For example, the theoretical entry age is replaced by a complicated calculation involving the range of years of age from which 70% of new entrants originate. This varies from one country to another.

Information on qualification rates to HE is misleading in that in the case of Germany it does not include the Fachoberreife, the qualification for the Fachhochschulen which have been defined as university level for the purpose of these statistics. The only qualification mentioned is the Abitur, our equivalent to 'A' level, though in the case of the UK we have also included BTEC National qualifications and minimum entry qualifications to level 5. This has given the UK a qualification rate of 35% as opposed to Germany's 28%. OECD

figures for upper secondary graduation are totally different, with Germany's figures, for example being 112%, another example of the inherent problems.

German data for first degrees includes level 6 and level 7 but the actual qualifications are not defined so it is difficult to establish exactly what these figures refer to.

In the table concerning higher education qualifiers per 100 new entrants (DES, 1991: Table 7), there have been similar problems to the OECD publication with the percentage in Belgium being 115%. Other percentages also seem high compared to the OECD data for the following year e.g. Spain 92%. Germany in this case has a higher survival rate than the UK rather than vice versa as found in the OECD survey. In the case of France, unfortunately, they had no data for or it was possibly too complicated by the systems of double registration.

The DES are, however, aware of the inherent problems and admit that "because of differing educational systems, traditions and terminology, international comparisons always present difficulty" (DES, 1991; xix).

7.1.3 THE CNAA/CHEPS/HIS STUDY

This project sought to find a methodology that could be used for comparing programmes across international boundaries (CNAA et al, 1992). The central research question was "Which instruments, procedures, and additional means exist to make valid comparisons of the quality of higher education in different countries?" (CNAA et al, 1992: 37).

A checklist was developed involving 'system features' at various levels. The three levels were the national system, the discipline and the programme and the systems features were based on input, output, process and environmental features.

The lists were then used for a peer review of programmes in the UK, Germany and the Netherlands. The review was based on case studies from selected institutions in the field

of economics. The peer group consisted of representatives from these institutions and an external group made up of academics and other professionals connected to the subject.

The use of a peer review has advantages and drawbacks as the project found. The use of experts in the field has the obvious advantage of giving the review credibility but the researchers found that, as with peer reviews generally, there are inherent weaknesses due to the fact that there is in-built subjectivity:

> The inherent subjectivity of the method necessarily means that the outcome of any particular peer review is influenced by the specific individuals involved and by the interactions among them. (CNAA et al, 1992: 41).

The use of case studies meant that a lot of data could be collected which related to particular institutions but the problem then arises as to whether generalisations can be made nationally. An interesting comment was that "if one thing transpired from this peer review, it was that the within-country differences were so large as to make it difficult to assume the national level to be homogenous enough to use it as the level of comparison" (CNAA et al, 1992: 41).

7.2 AN ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEMS RELATING TO COMPARISON OF EDUCATION SYSTEMS WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO BUSINESS STUDIES

With respect to the study of Business Education in particular, many of the above problems also occur. What follows relates to a large extent to comparisons of the broader educational systems but some are more specific to Business Education. In the previous chapter (6.4) some of the problems have been noted for each section of figures and these serve as illustrations for the following points.

There are three main problem areas: firstly the differences in the educational systems and traditions of each country; secondly the way that data on student numbers is collected; and thirdly the way that it is collated and presented.

7.2.1 Different educational systems and traditions

These have been discussed in chapter IV, section 4. To summarise briefly, the main areas of difference were:

i) entry qualifications
ii) age at start of programme
iii) programme lengths
iv) programme structure
v) traditions of employment and training

i) Entry qualifications

Entry qualifications vary with the result that entry and participation rates will necessarily vary. In the university system in France and Germany, passing the baccalaureat or Abitur (or their equivalent) gives students in theory an automatic right of entry to a first degree programme, even if their first choice is restricted in any one year by numerus clausus. In the UK, the achievement of two 'A' levels which is the stated minimum entry qualification for a first degree programme is not sufficient in itself and students have to have achieved a high points score to enter many degree programmes.

Entry rates to higher education in general are necessarily affected by these differences in selectivity as the data in the OECD survey shows (ibid: 76-77). The UK entry ratio to university level courses (ISCED levels 6 and 7) is lower at 15% than the French and German rates (23.1% and 19.5% respectively) as it reflects the more selective system in Britain.

The same is true for participation rates as more students will start degree programmes in France and Germany and rates will consequently be higher. The differences in graduation rates reflect the selection systems and the points at which selection takes place. In the UK it takes place largely prior to entry to higher

education, whereas in France and Germany it tends to take place during the course of tertiary level study.

Differences in the qualification rate and the level of achievement at the end of secondary stage 2 will affect entry rates. Thus if France achieves its aim of 80% of young people passing the baccalaureat. the statistics will look good but they will hide an imbalance in the quality of the qualifying exam compared to other countries and the real level of the 'zero point' for entrance to higher education.

Business education, in theory, shows different patterns of participation in France and Germany due to the selective nature of the French system of Grandes Ecoles and the popularity of BWL in Germany. Entry is more restricted than in other subjects in France because of the selective entry system to the Grandes Ecoles. In Germany, because of the growth of interest in BWL, entry to this subject is restricted in any one year by numerus clausus. Drop out rates in the first few years are also high according to students and staff though there is no solid evidence to support this.

ii) Age at start of programme

Any assessment of percentages in relation to a particular age group is also open to error because of the variation in age at which people start their degree. This tends not to take into account mature entrants for example who are outside the theoretical age group. This is a problem in Germany where many students will do an apprenticeship or military service before starting their studies. In the French Business Schools, students usually start formal training later than 18 due to the CPGE. In the UK part-time programmes also tend to attract more mature students. These ratios have to assume that most students start at a particular age and their accuracy depends on the extent to which this assumption is correct.

iii) Length of programmes

The length of the programme creates problems in comparison of participation rates as is illustrated by the OECD survey. The participation rate (OECD, 1992: 80-81) has been assessed using both ISCED levels 6 and 7. The UK percentage of 10% looks low compared with the German figure (19.1%) and the French figure (18.3%).

In Germany these figures are, at least partially, the result of the length of the programmes of study in that more students participate in higher education at any one point in time as the minimum completion time is longer than the UK Bachelors degree (four to four and a half years in the German university system).

In the French system, particularly in the Grandes Ecoles, the problem is similar as students will often be studying for up to four or five years after the baccalaureat before they achieve their first qualification.

Participation rates are therefore bound to be higher than in the UK as the tradition here is for most students to go into employment on completion of their first degree after a normal span of three/four years. Only a relatively small proportion stay on for postgraduate study. High postgraduate numbers in Business Studies often include post-experience degrees which further complicate any assessment of ratios relating to a theoretical age group.

iv) Programme structure

In France there is little evidence of part-time study, particularly in the Grandes Ecoles, though credit accumulation is common in the university sector. In the UK, however, this is becoming an increasing feature in some institutions, particularly in the former polytechnic sector. In Germany, the length of time that a student takes to complete their period of study is very flexible. The graduation ratio and survival rate (ibid: 100-101) have been based on a fixed time period within which

the majority of students would be expected to graduate - the theoretical age of graduation. Again these have only been assessed in the OECD survey in respect of a three year period which makes the figures for Germany possibly unrepresentative anyway as there are virtually no programmes that only last this long.

Only in the UK is there a difference recognised at registration level for full-time and part-time study with the potential result that students who take longer to complete their degree are at least recognised.

Based on straightforward graduation numbers it is very difficult in the German situation to make a realistic assessment of the graduation ratio in terms of the age group because of their flexible programme structure. The minimum completion time may be four and a half years, but if the actual average completion time is six years, the ratio has a built-in potential inaccuracy. This is also true of UK part-time degrees where completion time is flexible. Survival rates are thus very difficult to assess and an example of the potential scope for error is evident in the OECD data where Sweden has a 109.3% survival rate (OECD, 1991: 100).

The French structure poses problems in that it is possible to be registered on more than one programme at the same time. Students following the classes préparatoires can also register for the DEUG at a university. Students registered for the DEUG may also, in theory, be registered for the licence as many will continue to this level. This can therefore lead to an overestimation of entrant numbers and will also affect the graduation and survival rates. In France, because of the CPGE and opportunities for parallel entry to the Grandes Ecoles, statistics are difficult to simplify.

v) Traditions of employment and training

Participation rates should be seen in the context of the national traditions for employment and training. In the UK, the failure of many students to opt for

continuing their studies after the first degree is a sign of traditional expectations among employers and students. Most students will enter employment at about 21 and train within a company, possibly for professional examinations. This is less true in either France or Germany where graduates will enter their field of specialism directly and may receive only limited further professional training. They tend to study for longer while UK students tend to complete their training in the work place, particularly in the area of Business Administration.

7.2.2 Data collection

i) Different values

Countries have different values regarding the statistics they produce. The UK is very concerned, for example, with performance indicators, at output as well as input points. France and Germany, however, tend to be more concerned with entrant and participation rates. Graduation and survival rates do not appear to receive the same kind of attention.

This obviously affects the way that data is collected as the surveys have a different purpose. They may not see it as important, for example, to collect data on failure rates in intermediate exams such as the Vordiplom in Germany or the classes preparatoires in France, even though these can be interpreted as points of selection.

ii) Different terminology

There has already been some discussion in the literature review concerning the different cultural interpretation of terminology. The field of Business Education is a good example of this.

For example, the USR information in the UK ranks Business and Financial Studies in a class of its own (See Appendix 3). Economics and Law come under

Social Sciences along with Anthropology and Applied Social Work to mention but a few.

In France, Economic Sciences are separate from Law in the universities. Business and Management Studies tends to be the domain of the Grandes Ecoles though there are advanced courses in accounting and business administration in some universities. The distinction between the practical business side and the management side, with the legal status of the 'cadres' is an important factor in French business education.

In Germany, Law, Social Sciences and Business Studies come under the same general subject grouping. Business Studies (Wirtschaftswissenschaften) includes Business Economics (Betriebswirtschaftslehre - BWL) as distinct from General Economics (Volkswirtschaftslehre - VWL). The Economics side is present in both areas, however, while it is seen as a separate entity in the UK system.

There are other differences in terminology which are difficult to translate from one culture to another. The idea of 'management' is an example of this as discussed in Chapter II. Undergraduate and graduate studies are another example. In France the Grandes Ecoles like to call themselves graduate schools even though students have no first degree equivalent qualification. In Germany there is sometimes confusion as to whether advanced studies (Hauptstudium) should be considered in the same way.

iii) Effects of different educational structures

There may also be variations within one country where different institutions offering programmes at the same ISCED level collect and assimilate data in different ways. The UK is an example of this where the older universities have been producing quite detailed information through the Universities Statistical Record Office for some time. Information concerning the former polytechnics has, in the past, however, been collected by the various education offices in

England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, and this has tended not to be as detailed as the USR data and has been collected in a different way. This makes comparison of all first degree programmes difficult within the UK.

Collection of data in France is not quite as detailed as that produced by the USR in the UK, particularly as regards the private sector - the Grandes Ecoles. Only in the last few years has data on the commercial schools been collected by the government for national publication and this still does not appear to be very detailed. Much of the information on the private sector has previously been published privately in journals and magazines such as l'Etudiant based on private surveys.

France has a particular problem because of the possibilities for double counting both at registration point and graduation point. Students may be counted twice if they register for a class préparatoire and the DEUG. Likewise when they graduate they can be counted both at ISCED level 5 and level 6 and 7 if they progress up the ladder of qualifications. Thus they can achieve a level 5 qualification - the Diplome des Etudes Universitaires Générales (DEUG) in two years and then go on to complete the licence in one additional year and /or the maitrise after a further year. German students, in comparison, can only be counted once as they only achieve one qualification.

In Germany, the Länder (federal states) have a certain amount of independence in the organisation of their educational system with the result that there are differences between regions, for instance in the minimum school leaving age, the existence of Gesamthochschulen and the existence of particular degree subjects.

In all three countries the structure of education is diverse and systems for collection of data are not always at a national level. This diversity can make comparison complicated.

iv) Definition and interpretation of concepts and variables

There is room for variation in the definition and interpretation of the basic framework for data collection.

Even within the UK the data on first degrees is collected in different ways in the university and former polytechnic/ college sectors. Performance indicators and variables in general are defined differently and this is also true, of course, between the countries.

There are, for example, various ways of defining entrants according to whether one differentiates between students entering higher education for the first time or those enrolling on to a particular course for the first time. The German system has a dual definition depending on whether the student is in their first semester of university study or in the first semester of study in a particular subject area. This is not true of the data collected in the former polytechnic sector in the UK where they only assess enrolments in the first year of a course. Entrant data can thus not always distinguish between first-time entrants and course changers.

There is not always the distinction between whether the numbers include both home and overseas students. Where the distinction is made, overseas students may or may not include EC students.

In the definition of participants, the UK's use of full-time equivalents (FTEs), where a part-time student is defined as 0.5 of a full-time student, is not necessarily the same in another country or even in the former polytechnic sector in the UK.

Part-time study is simply not recognised as a different mode of study in some countries in the same way as it is in the UK, despite the opportunity for students to extend the period of time they spend studying and work part-time as happens in Spain and to some extent in other countries such as Germany, where study time is flexible.

There is no agreement on how the survival rate should be calculated and there are various definitions. The OECD, for example, have used a provisional indicator where the survival rate is defined as:

> the ratio of the number of students who are awarded an initial university degree to the number who were enroled in the programme for the first time 'n' years before, with 'n' determined by the number of years of full-time study required to complete the degree (OECD, 1992: 100).

There are alternative ways of defining and assessing this concept, however. Brennan et al (CNAA et al, 1992) quote numbers of students leaving German higher education with and without diplomas. In 1987 72% left with a diploma, which is a different way of assessing a survival rate. This could however, be misleading in that students in Germany can change universities half way through their course, picking up their study at another university. Some also take a break from study for one or more semesters. It is not clear whether these factors are taken into account when compiling statistics.

Another way of defining the concept could be by the failure rate in examinations. Statistics for examinations for 1990 in Germany show that out of 173,191 students who took examinations in the whole higher education sector, 95% passed (164,357) and 5% (8834) failed (SB, 1992: 130). These figures do not, however, show drop-out rates at the intermediate examination level or at other points during the programme.

All the above are different ways of assessing survival rates and depend on different definitions of 'survival'.

The ISCED scale is another example of different interpretations of a variable or indicator. It was left to individual countries to determine how they measured individual programmes against the scale. Some countries have no programmes at

level 5 (e.g. Spain), others have classified very different programmes under the same level (e.g. Germany).

Some professional training courses, such as nursing, are included in figures in some countries and not in others.

In any survey where data has been taken from existing national sources, or where there is a certain amount of national independence in deciding how to interpret variables, differences can make valid comparison difficult as there are so many underlying variations.

7.2.3. Collation and presentation of data

i) Organisations responsible

In the UK the data on the former university sector is presented in a series of annual publications. Only certain data is published, however, usually overall figures of particular interest. More detailed data is collected on a database at the Universities Statistical Record office (USR) but this is not necessarily open to public use.

Details on the former polytechnics and colleges of education have traditionally been published by the four separate national offices, not necessarily working on the same bases.

The Ministry of Education in France publishes limited figures and these are not detailed for the Grandes Ecoles. Much of the information on the Grandes Ecoles is published in magazines and journals where the research frameworks vary.

In Germany statistics are collected initially at regional level and then coordinated by the Statistisches Bundesamt. Their publications tend to give detailed statistical

material but not in a selective way with reports as in the USR documentation. A separate organisation tends to produce reports on statistical trends - the Hochschul-Information-System but these are not annual and the idea of performance indicators is not yet seen as a priority.

ii) Presentation

It is unusual to give detailed breakdowns of figures for one particular subject area and this posed a major problem in all three countries, as it was often difficult to isolate enough similar material. This information tends to be collected but stored on databases rather than published. For example, details on German Business Studies leaving rates may be available at regional level but not at national level.

In the UK, the information on the former non-university sector is not published in detail altogether, though all higher education figures are eventually brought together in less detailed form in the annual HMSO publication (e.g. DES, 1992).

There are various ways that statistics can be presented. Numbers of entrants, for example, can simply be the raw numbers without an overall group, such as an overall age group, to relate them to, they can be put in the context of the number of students achieving the minimum qualifying rate, or they can be put in the context of the age group as a whole.

Each method of assessment has its drawbacks. Raw numbers mean little unless there is some control group but how accurate can that control group be. For instance the new entrants in a particular year will not necessarily all come from the qualifying group in the same year. Likewise the 'theoretical age group' can only be theoretical for the same reason. Some OECD surveys concerning new entrants take the denominator as "the age group of the population including 70 per cent of new entrants, divided by the number of years involved" (DES, 1991: Table 2). The more recent survey (OECD, 1992) set up the theoretical age groups based on the expected duration of studies at each ISCED level.

Particular problems occur where a calculation based on the statistics is made. For instance, any calculation relating to the theoretical age range of a group of students contains some inaccuracies because of the range of ages often involved, particularly mature students, as in the UK, or where there is flexibility of length of study as in Germany.

Any assessment of survival rates rests on certain assumptions that students complete the qualification within a certain number of years. This is so uncommon in countries such as Germany that any assessment must contain inaccuracies.

7.3 SUMMARY

Any statistics that aim to compare international systems cannot be used as simple performance indicators without being put in the context of the educational structures and traditions in each country. Surveys which rely on existing data rather than original data are particularly open to inaccuracy because of the risk of not comparing like with like.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSIONS

This research project set out to investigate and compare student numbers in Business Education in Britain, France and Germany. It focused on entrant, participation and graduation rates with a view to making an initial estimation of survival rates in this subject in the three countries. During the course of the research it became obvious that there were considerable methodological problems associated with an international project of this nature and these needed to be fully investigated before detailed research could be carried out. The focus of this preliminary report has therefore become a description and analysis of the problems involved.

8.1 BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

There were three main trends that formed the background to the project: firstly the moves towards closer integration of the European Community, particularly in the field of education where student mobility between countries is being encouraged; secondly the general democratisation of higher education and the moves towards increasing numbers of students in higher education; and thirdly, the growth of business and management studies.

The pressures for the closer integration of structures within EC countries in the field of higher education have led to increasing links between institutions including movement of students and graduates between member states. Institutions involved in student exchange have had to learn about different education systems in order to make decisions as to the level at which visiting students should join study programmes.

Much recent research has been carried out under the auspices of EC organisations, into the experiences and problems of students moving across national barriers. Understanding the differences in educational background has, however, been an ongoing problem and more information is still needed to enable them to make realistic comparisons between undergraduates and graduates moving across national barriers. Various descriptive and comparative research has been done on international educational systems though little of it is subject specific.

Increased participation in higher education was one of the main proposals in a recent EC publication, the Memorandum on Higher Education (CEC, 1991), and this has led to the need for member states to be able to demonstrate their ability to implement successfully the proposals.

The collection of statistics in education is not new at national level, but the development of a methodology for international comparison is still not complete. Organisations such as the OECD are particularly well-known for their surveys and reports. The OECD recently published a study using performance indicators that it suggested could be used for these sorts of comparison. A considerable amount of work was carried out to try to agree a methodological framework that would be internationally acceptable but its publication has also highlighted some of the drawbacks involved in this type of survey.

Research into the effects of this 'massification' on higher education are limited as it is still relatively new but theorists such as Hopper (1971), Trow (1981) and Teichler (1980) have put forward potential frameworks for understanding its effects. Teichler, in particular, suggests that as participation grows, society will find other ways of maintaining a hierarchy in the status of institutions.

The growth of Business and Management Studies throughout Europe has also spawned much comparative research into the different characteristics of management in each country but little has been done in terms of in-depth comparison of the systems of training and education in this subject, except by Lawrence (e.g. 1980, 1990, 1992) who has

studied the particular characteristics of French and German managers in depth, Locke (1989) who has looked at the development of Business Education from a historical viewpoint, Lane (1989) who included some comparison of business education in a wider study of management and Handy et al (1989) who tended to look more generally at educational backgrounds and cultures.

The CNAA/HIS/CHEPS project (CNAA et al, 1992) is one of the few publications that set out to compare programme content on an international basis against a detailed background of the educational systems. The project focused on Economics and was largely based on case studies. Its main aim, however, was to set out a methodology that could be used at the level of a discipline or specific subject.

My original research aim was to contribute to the gap in this field, to facilitate understanding of business education systems and hence the movement of students. It focused on student participation as a means of investigating some of the similarities and differences.

8.2 SYSTEMS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The starting point of the research was to describe the general systems of education and the structures of Business Education in particular, as a backcloth to the study of student numbers. Understanding the systems was a pre-requisite for formulating much of the methodology.

There were considerable differences both in input, process and environmental features with the result that graduates are dissimilar in all three countries, notably in the length of time they have studied, the processes of selection that they undergo, and nature of the establishment that they attend.

The patterns of entrance, participation and graduation rates as shown by the OECD survey results, were particularly interesting. Britain, for example, has the lowest entrance and participation rates but the highest graduate and survival rates. France has high entrance

rates but low graduation rates and survival rates. The facts behind these figures are important if the EC is going to be looking to them as some form of performance indicator.

Britain still has a relatively elitist system where selection is stronger prior to entry to higher education. The end of the binary divide has lessened the apparent hierarchy of institutions in the UK but the new research and teaching ranking systems are already serving to maintain a status distribution amongst the university sector.

The French university system is an example of the 'massification' of higher education and entrance rates are higher than in the UK or Germany. The Grandes Ecoles system in France, however, shows how a ranking system has survived in parallel with the more open entry system, thus supporting Teichler's theory that societies find ways of maintaining their elitist tendencies.

In Germany the elitist tendency is less apparent and although entrance rates are not as high as in France, participation rates are high, though this reflects the flexibility of study time in Germany. The graduation and survival rates noted in the OECD survey, show, however, that the high entrance and participation rates are not matched by high numbers of graduates.

The massive expansion of student numbers over recent decades has left universities unable to cope with the demands of increasing numbers, and failure rates during the process of study are quite high. There is little published evidence of this, however, as Germany does not appear to value output figures as a performance indicator.

The ranking systems which exist in the Grandes Ecoles sector in France and which are growing in the UK and Germany are interesting developments. They could be seen as examples of the tendency suggested by Teichler that as participation increases, societies will find other ways of maintaining a status distribution.

The existing international surveys were useful in the preparation of a methodology for the focused research into Business Education. The intention was to look at participation and

survival rates in Business Education in a similar way to more general national statistics to see if there was any significant variation in the one subject area.

The study of Business Education systems in general both from published sources and from key informants gave a partial view of differences that needed to be supported by statistical evidence.

In the UK, for instance, Business Studies has not traditionally been an area with high participation rates as the study of business is not a necessity for a professional career in the field. Professional training, for instance in accountancy, takes place mainly in employment, and a degree is only the starting point for this career. This is not the same in France or Germany where students studying Business can enter the profession directly and are often more specialised than their British counterparts.

Selection in Britain takes place post A-level through the system of general and course requirements for students entering higher education. In France, the tough entrance system to the Grandes Ecoles and the fee structure limit numbers. In Germany, the intermediate examination (Vordiplom) acts as a point of selection, as do the qualifying Scheine that students have to take in individual specialisms.

National figures do not show survival rates for students in subject specific areas. Business Education is of particular interest from this point of view because of the different traditions of training students in the three countries.

8.3 DATA ON PARTICIPATION

The second step was to look at existing data from official sources and the intention was to use these figures to compare student participation in Business Education.

As the research progressed, it became clear that there were considerable methodological problems involved in the use of the secondary sources. The experience of other

organisations involved in similar surveys (OECD, 1992; DES, 1991; CNAA et al, 1992) served as a useful pointer to potential hazards in making comparisons but the problems were exacerbated at the more specialised level.

The problems had three main sources: firstly the differing structures of education, secondly the different traditions of collecting data in each country and thirdly, its evaluation and presentation.

Political changes in Germany, the end of the binary divide in Britain, the strength of the private sector in Business Education in France are examples of some of the initial structural problems. The different lengths of qualifications, and the flexibility in terms of study time made valid assessments based on calculations over a period of time complex and potentially inaccurate.

The way that data is collected, evaluated and presented varies not only between countries but often within a country. This is true in Britain where data on universities has been collected in a different way from that of the former polytechnics, and also in France, where little data on the Grandes Ecoles has been collected at a national level.

Each country has different values concerning the importance of the data, the terminology and definition of concepts varies due to cultural and historical differences and all these factors pose problems for the methodology of an international survey.

The methodological problems were not ignored in studies such as those done by the OECD (1992) and other national and international bodies. The tendency is, however, for the information to be used by the media and national organisations as a form of criticism of themselves or their competitors, and, in some cases, where national bodies might wish to avoid this, they are in a position to adjust the way that statistics are collected. A simple redefinition of 'universities' or 'higher education' is one way of doing this. A change in the way that a particular course is classified on the ISCED scale is another.

The methodological problems thus tended to overshadow the original topic of the research and became more central as a preliminary hurdle to be overcome before further research could be undertaken.

It was, however, interesting to study the figures that were available as they showed certain trends and some initial observations are possible. Germany has by far the highest number of students participating in Business Studies and it is the most popular subject among students according to the data used. Participation rates are high, though this is understandable in terms of the flexibility of study, but graduation numbers are not as high as might be expected. Survival rates are difficult to assess but appear to be less than the national average quoted in the press recently where drop-out rates were said to be 27% (Gardner, 1993).

The French Business School system also does not follow the national pattern for higher education, with good survival rates similar to those in Britain.

There is, unfortunately, little conclusive evidence at this stage, however, and this thesis has therefore concentrated on analysing these problems as a prelude to further research on student participation.

8.4 IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In order to facilitate the movement of people and professions, both employers and educational institutions need to be flexible and open to new experiences. They need to develop closer links in order to learn more about each others' different traditions and practices, particularly if they are to develop common standards for recognition in the professions.

The use of statistics as a form of competitive measurement of performance in higher education will not assist in the progress towards mutual recognition if it is not based on a clear understanding of the differences in the educational traditions and practices

underlying the figures. The 'rich diversity' should be **understood** not merely accepted as a fact.

There are two ways forward towards understanding this diversity, the first being for EC member states to continue to work towards producing statistics which are comparable, through organisations such as the EC statistics office in Luxembourg and the OECD.

The pressure to demonstrate an increase in student participation in higher education and meet other performance targets means that systems are having to be set up to provide statistical evidence of student numbers. The OECD study (OECD, 1992) was a step towards providing not only participant numbers but also survival rates, but it has also served to highlight some of the many methodological problems involved where agreement about concepts and variables has to be conducted across international boundaries.

Any cross-national generalisations about student numbers have to be understood in context. Statistics on their own can be open to misinterpretation especially if there is no standard way of collecting and collating the required information at national level. The development of the responsibilities of the Statistical Office in Luxembourg would seem to be a necessary move towards this form of standardisation. Alternatively, national statistical offices will have to be ready to adjust their systems to allow comparability. Problems will probably arise where the responsibility for collection of data is not centralised, as up till now in the UK, or where the private sector is strong, as in France.

Published information on student numbers in specific subject areas is not very detailed and further research needs to be done in this area, both through national statistical agencies and possibly through case studies.

The diversity of forms of Business Education in the three countries, particularly in terms of the cultural and historical heritage also calls for further research, for instance into the content of courses, different student attitudes and experiences, and funding of provision.

The second way of progressing research is that suggested by the participants in the CNAA/HIS/CHEPS project which is by the encouragement of international student exchange and other cooperation, for instance through the ERASMUS programme. These forms of cooperation will lead to a deeper understanding of educational systems and programmes on the level of both the individual participant and the institution, and will eventually facilitate wider national recognition. The use of subject specific peer group reviews could also be used, particularly where there are already strong links between institutions and related professionals.

8.5 SUMMARY

Statistics in the form of performance indicators are becoming a popular way for institutions and countries to judge each other. As the EC sets certain targets for its member states they are at pains to show that they are meeting these targets and to defend their own cultural and educational heritage.

What this research has highlighted is the danger of taking statistical comparisons at face value. Figures cannot be understood in isolation from their background and this includes the educational culture and traditions of each country as well as the values and concepts behind the statistical data.

This MSc research project has served as a starting point in that it has analysed some of the methodological pitfalls of this type of study and in this way may contribute towards more detailed research into student participation and survival in Business Education in the European Community.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Allen, M, (1988), The Goals of Universities, SHRE & Open University Press, Milton Keynes.

Barnett, R. (1990), The Idea of Higher Education, Open University Press, Buckingham.

Baron, B. & Smith, A. (eds), (1987), Higher Education in the European Community. Study Abroad in the European Community, Office for Official Publications of the European Community, Luxembourg.

Barsoux, J-L, & Lawrence, P., (1990), The Challenge of British Management, Macmillan Education, Hampshire.

Barsoux, J-L. & Lawrence, P., (1990), Management in France, Cassell, London.

Barsoux, J-L. & Lawrence, P., (1991), "The Making of a French Manager" in Harvard Business Review No. 91401.

Baumgratz-Gangl, G. & Deyson, N., (1990), Mobility of Students in Europe. Linguistic and Socio-Cultural Conditions, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.

Burn, B, (1970), Higher Education in Nine Countries, McGraw-Hill, New York.

Byrt, W. (ed.), (1989), Management Education: An International Survey, Routledge, London.

CEDEFOP (1984), Vocational Training Systems in the Member States of the European Community. A Comparative Study, Luxembourg.

Commission of the European Communities (CEC) (1989) ERASMUS Programme: Report on the Experience Acquired in the Application of the ERASMUS Programme 1987-1989, CEC, Brussels.

CEC, Task Force Human Resources, Education, Training and Youth (1990) Conference on Higher Education and 1992: Planning for the year 2000, CEC, Brussels.

CEC, Task Force Human Resources, Education, Training and Youth (1991) Memorandum on Higher Education in the European Community, CEC, Brussels.

CEC, (1991), Annual Report - ERASMUS Programme 1990/91, CEC, Brussels.

Committee of Directors of Polytechnics, (1992), Response to the European Commission's Memorandum on Higher Education in the European Community, CDP, London.

Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (1987), Performance Indicators in Universities, CVCP/UGC Working Group.

Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals and Universities Funding Council, (1988-91), University Management Statistics and Performance Indicators in the UK, Universities Statistical Record Office, Cheltenham.

Council of the European Communities, (1988), Council Directive of 21 December 1988, Brussels.

Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) (1991), Initiating managers: A new programme for developing managers in the 1990s, CNAA Project Report 28, London.

CNAA Development Services (1989), Towards a New Certificate in Management, HMSO, Sheffield.

CNAA/ CHEPS/ HIS (1992), Towards a methodology for comparative quality assessment in European higher education, CNAA, CHEPS, Hochschul-Information-System (HIS), London.

CNAA/ CHEPS/ HIS (1992), European higher education systems: Germany, the Netherlands and the UK, CNAA, CHEPS, HIS, London.

Daalder, Hans and Shils, Edward (eds), (1982), Universities, Politicians and Bureaucrats: Europe and the United States, Cambridge University Press, London.

Dalichow, F., (1991), "Coping with different marking systems", a paper presented to the European Association of International Education (EAIE), Montpellier.

Davies, G, (1992), "Higher Education - What does the future hold", a paper presented at the Conference of University Administrators (CUA), Manchester.

Department of Education & Science (DES), (1985), Selected National Education Systems, HMSO, London.

DES (1990), International statistical comparisons of higher education output in engineering, Statistical Bulletin 12/90, Government Statistical Service, Darlington.

DES (1991), International Statistical Comparisons in Higher Education, Working Report, Government Statistical Service, Darlington.

DES (1992,1993), Educational Statistics for the UK, HMSO, London.

DES (1992), Leaving rates amongst first year degree students in English polytechnics and colleges, Statistical Bulletin 9/92, Government Statistical Service, Darlington.

DES (1992), Students in higher education - England 1990, Statistical Bulletin, Oct. 1992, Governmental Statistical Service, Darlington.

Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), (1989), The Single Market: The Facts, HMSO, UK.

Dufay, F et al, (1991), "Menaces sur les grandes ecoles" , Le Point 1009, p 30 -39.

Edwards, A., (1990) Practitioner Research, St. Martin's College, Lancaster.

ERASMUS Bureau, (1987 - 1992), Guidelines for Applicants, ERASMUS Bureau, Brussels.

ERASMUS Bureau, (1990), ECTS: Presentation of the ECTS Pilot Scheme, ERASMUS Bureau, Brussels.

L'Etudiant (1992), Le Guide des Etudes Superieures 1992, L'Etudiant, Paris.

Forrester, P. (1986), The British MBA: an assessment of postgraduate management education in UK universities, Cranfield Press, Cranfield.

Franks, Lord (1963), British Business Schools, HMSO, London.

Fulton, O. (ed), (1981), Access to Higher Education, SRHE, Guildford.

Fulton, O & Ellwood, S, (1989), Admissions to Higher Education. Policy and Practice, Training Agency, Sheffield.

Gardner, M. (1993), "German reform aimed at earlier graduation, in The Higher, 26.11.93: 11.

Gaugler, E. (1990), "The Structure of/and Institutions for Business Administration in German-Speaking Countries", in Gaugler, E. and Grochla, E. (eds), Handbook of German Business Management, Springer-Verlag, Heidelberg.

Handy, C; Gordon, C; Gow, I; Randlesome C. (1989) Making Managers, Pitman, London.

Heap, B. (1992), Degree Course Offers, Trotman & Co. Ltd., Surrey.

Henderson, E. (1990), "French elite schools told to widen access", in The Higher, 15.6.90: 11.

Henderson, E. (1992), "French doors open wider", in The Higher, 8.5.92: 11.

Heywood, J. (1989), Assessment in Higher Education, Anchor Press, Essex.

Holme, C. (1985), Commission of the European Communities: Grants in Higher Education: A report on a Short Study Visit, unpubl., Universities Statistical Record.

Hopper, E. & Osborne, M., (1975), Adult Students. Education, Selection and Social Control, Frances Pinter, London.

Hopper, E. (ed) (1971), Readings in the Theory of Educational Systems, Hutchinson & Co, London.

Industrial Research and Development Advisory Committee of the Commission of the European Communities (IDRAC), (1991), Skills Shortages in Europe, CEC, Brussels.

Joffrin, L. et al, (1992), "Les diplomes ne suffisent plus" in Le Nouvel Observateur, no. 1437, 12-43.

Joyce, R. (1991), "La Creme des MBA Europeens". in L'Expansion, (19.9.91) p 159 - 165.

Keen, C, (1989), "The Scope for Stimulation of Demand for Higher Education" in Higher Education Quarterly Vol 43.4.

Kelly, T., (1990), Developing Wider Access to Universities, joint development project by Bradford and Leeds Universities, DES.

Lamoure, J. (1993), "Palmares: Les écoles de commerce et de gestion" in Le Monde de l'Education, Nov 93, 71 - 92.

Lane, C (1989), Management and Labour in Europe: the industrial enterprise in Germany, Britain and France, Gower, Aldershot, UK.

Lawrence, P., (1980), Managers and Management in West Germany, Croom Helm Ltd., London.

Lawrence, P., "Management Education in West Germany" in Byrt, W. (ed.), (1989), Management Education: An International Survey, Routledge, London.

Lawrence, P., (1992) "Engineering and Management in West Germany: A Study in Consistency?" in Lee, G. & Smith, C., Engineers and Management: International Comparisons, Routledge, London.

Lee, G., (1988), The Making of Managers Debate in Britain, Centre for the Study of the Professions, Aston Business School, Birmingham.

Lee, G., (1990), "Competence Based Management Education and Development: A Challenge for the 1990's". Paper submitted for the Western Academy of Management First International Conference, Management Education Section, Shizuoka, Japan.

Lewis, H.D. (1985), The French Education System, Crook Helm, New South Wales.

Locke, R. (1989), Management and Higher Education since 1940. The influence of America and Japan on West Germany, Great Britain and France, Cambridge University Press.

MacGregor, K. & Henderson, E. (1992) "Strikingly similar with huge differences" in The Higher, 25.9.92, 10 - 11.

Maheux, A, (1989), "Evaluation of the Quality of the Putouts in a University", paper presented at the EAIR conference, 'Towards Excellence in European Higher Education in the 90's', Trier.

Malherbe, J., "Quand HEC prépare l'an 2000" in HERMES, December 1991, Groupe IECS, Strasbourg.

Manpower Services Commission (MSC); National Economic Development Council (NEDC); British Institute of Management (BIM), (1987), The Making of Managers, NEDC, London.

Ministere de l'Education Nationale, de la Jeunesse et des Sports, (1989), L'Enseignement Superieure en France, Paris, DESUP.

Ministère de l'Education Nationale de la Jeunesse et des Sports (1985 - 1992), Repères et Références Statistiques sur les Enseignements et la Formation, Direction de l'Evaluation et de la Prospective, Vanves.

Ministère de l'Education Nationale de la Jeunesse et des Sports, "Statistiques des élèves d'établissements privés d'enseignement supérieure de commerce et gestion et de comptabilité, 1990-1991, Tableaux Statistiques, no. 6055, January 1992.

Neave, G. (1984), The EEC and Education, Trentham Books.

Neville-Rolfe, M. (1989), "Freedom of movement: a UK perspective", from conference transcript Europe Open for the Professions, DTI, London.

Nouschi, M. (1988), HEC: Histoire et Pouvoir d'une Grande Ecole, Robert-Laffont, Paris.

ONISEP (1991), Gestion - Commerce: Les Grandes Ecoles, ONISEP, Paris.

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (1992) Education at a Glance, OECD, Paris.

Perissich, R. (1989), "Freedom of movement and the single market", from conference transcript Europe Open for the Professions, DTI, London.

Redpath, B & Harvey, B., (1987), Young Peoples' Intentions to enter Higher Education, commissioned by the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys (Social Survey Division), HMSO, London.

Richards, H.. (1992), "Graduate students mean business" in The Higher, 14.8.92: 1.

Robbins, L.R. Baron, (1963), Higher Education: a report of the Committee appointed by the Prime Minister under the Chairmanship of Lord Robbins 1961-63, HMSO, London.

Sanders, C. (1992), "France shows way ahead on access road" in The Higher, 31.7.92; 11.

Scotford-Archer, M., (1979), Social Origins of Educational Systems, SAGE Publications, California.

Scott, P., (1991), "Mass Higher Education in Europe", keynote address at the Conference of the European Association for International Education (EAIE), Montpellier, December 1991.

Sharp, P. & Dunford, J., (1990), The Education System in England and Wales, Longman, Harlow.

Spiegel-Spezial, "Welche Uni ist die Beste?", Spiegel, 1/1990.

Statistisches Bundesamt (SB), (1991), Bildung und Kultur, Fachserie 11: Reihe 4.1: Studenten am Hochschulen, Sommersemester 1990 - Sommersemester 1991, Metzler Poeschel, Kusterdingen.

SB, (1992) Bildung und Kultur, Fachserie 11: Reihe 4.2: Prufungen an Hochschulen, Metzler Poeschel, Kusterdingen.

SB, (1993), Bildung und Kultur, Fachserie 11: Reihe 4.3: Hochschulstatistische Kennzahlen 1980 - 1990, Metzler Poeschel, Kusterdingen.

Stewart, W.A.C., (1989), Higher Education in Postwar Britain, MacMillan Press, London.

Swinson, C. (1989), "An accountant's perspective", from conference transcript Europe Open for the Professions, DTI, London.

Teichler, U., (1991), Experiences of ERASMUS students. Select findings of the 1988/89 Survey, Wissenschaftliches Zentrum fur Berufs- und Hochschulforschung der Gesamthochschule Kassel-Universitat, Kassel.

Teichler, U., Hartung, D., and Nuthmann, R. (1980), Higher Education and the Needs of Society, NFER, Berkshire.

Teichler, U & Sanyal, B., (1982), Higher Education and the Labour Market in the Federal Republic of Germany, UNESCO Press, Paris.

Thurley, K. & Wirdenius, H., (1989) Towards European Management, Pitman, London.

Toulmin, J. (1989), "A lawyer's perspective", from conference transcipt Europe Open for the Professions, DTI, London.

Trow, M., (1981), "Comparative Perspectives on Access" in Fulton, O. (ed), Access to Higher Education, SRHE, Guildford.

Universities Funding Council, (1988-92), University Statistics, Universities Statistical Record Office, Cheltenham.

Walford, G. (ed), (1987), Doing Sociology of Education, Falmer Press, London.

Warman, M., (1990), "International Recognition of Diplomas and Degrees". Paper presented at the NUFFIC Seminar at the Conferance of the European Association for International Education (EAIE), Amsterdam, December 1990.

Waterhouse, R., (1991), "Credit Transfer - The Way towards a European Syetem of Higher Education." Paper presented at the European Association for International Education (EAIE), Monpellier, December 1991.

Wijnaendts van Resandt, A. (ed), (1991), A Guide to Higher Education Systems and Qualifications in the European Community, Kogan Page, London.

Wyatt, J., (1990), Commitment to Higher Education, Open University Press, Milton Keynes.

APPENDIX 1

INTERNATIONAL STANDARD CLASSIFICATION FOR EDUCATION
(ISCED)

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
0	Education preceding the first level (pre-primary)
1	Education at the first level (primary)
2	Education at the second level, first stage
3	Education at the second level, second stage
5	Education at the third level, first stage (not to first degree level)
6	Education at the third level, first stage (to first degree level or equivalent)
7	Education at the third level, second stage (to postgraduate level)
9	Education not definable by level

APPENDIX 2

DEFINITIONS FROM OECD: EDUCATION AT A GLANCE

1 ENTRY RATIO TO HIGHER EDUCATION

"The entry ratio for higher education (university) is the ratio of the first-entrants to the number in the population at the theoretical entry age." (OECD,1992: 76)

2 PARTICIPATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

"University tertiary education participation is the ratio of the number of students of any age enrolled in university education to the number in the population in the normal age range for such programmes." (ibid: 80)

3 HIGHER EDUCATION (UNIVERSITY) GRADUATION RATE

"The higher education graduation level is the ratio of the number of graduates of any age to the number in the population at the theoretical completion age." (ibid: 98)

4 HIGHER EDUCATION SURVIVAL (UNIVERSITY)

"Higher education survival is expressed as the ratio of the number of students who are awarded an initial university degree to the number who were enrolled in the programme for the first time 'n' years before, with 'n' determined by the number of years of full-time study required to complete the degree." (ibid: 100)

UK

BUSINESS & FINANCIAL STUDIES

- **Business and management studies**
- **Financial management**
- **Accountancy**
- **Institutional management**
- **Land & property management**
- **Other and combined business and financial studies**

Source: USR, University Statistics 1990-91

GERMANY

WIRTSCHAFTSWISSENSCHAFTEN

- **Wirtschaftswissenschaften**
- **Arbeitslehre/Wirtschaftslehre**
- **Betriebswirtschaftslehre**
- **Touristik**
- **Volkswirtschaftslehre**
- **Wirtschaftspaedagogik**

Source: Statistisches Bundesamt, Bildung und Kultur, 1991