The intellectual, emotional and sociocultural experience of Indian students in the U.K.

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<u>Abstract</u>

This research examines the intellectual, emotional and socio-cultural experiences of Indian students in higher education in the UK. It has three research questions. First, what are the reasons driving Indian students to study in the UK? Second, what are the economic, political and cultural factors that enable or constrain their application processes to study in the UK? Finally, how do Indian students experience and negotiate their student lives in higher education in the UK?

The present research develops and extends existing literature on student migration, by emphasizing that the process of student migration is a complex journey, like any other kind of migration. To view this process, the research adopts structuration theory as a conceptual framework, while paying attention to the macro-, mezzo- and micro-level factors that influence the process and experience of student migration.

The dissertation draws from original data collected through interviews with Indian students studying in the UK. The findings highlight that the societal differences like gender, caste, funding status, place of origin and level of study all influence their journeys, reconfirming that student experiences cannot be homogenized. It also highlights the roles that the symbolic homelands and transnational connections they maintain play in shaping their experiences.

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Moving Across Borders: The Journey of Indian Students to the UK.

An Introduction

This introductory chapter is arranged in the following manner, I begin by narrating my personal experiences and motivations to conduct this research, followed by inspiration drawn by fictional writings on migratory experiences. Thirdly, I discuss the research questions directing the thesis. Fourth, I explain the research design and theoretical framework on which the present study is positioned. Finally, I briefly outline the structure and contents of each of the chapters that follow.

1.1 Personal Experience

The inspiration to conduct this research was based on my own experiences when I first came to the UK in 2009, to pursue my MSc in Sociology and Social Research, at the University of Southampton. I travelled from India to London alone. This was my first time travelling to a foreign country. The entire experience was bittersweet. I remember being excited to study and live in a new country, a place that I had only seen on the television screen. But, at the same time I was feeling melancholic because I had to be away from my home, my family and friends. However, when I look back now at that moment and how I felt then, little did I know that I was opening a door to an ocean of new experiences. During my stay in the UK, I discovered many things about myself and I was able to challenge and realize my intellectual potential. I learnt to handle myself in various professional, as well as social situations, and in the process understand and familiarize myself with the ways of life in the UK.

1.2 Fictional Writings

I believe that it would be an oversight if I don't mention the inspiration I drew to pursue this research from the fictional narratives of migration. I gathered my imagination and motivation from many literary works like *The Good Immigrant* (2016) this is a collection of essays by 21 writers, poets, journalists and scholars who explore what it means to be a Black, Asian or ethnic minority in Britain today. There was also *In an Antique Land* (2009) by Amitav Ghosh, depicting a narration of ties between India and Egypt, and *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006) by Kiran Desai talking about familiarity and vision around the emerging contemporary international issues, to name a few. However, my prime source was from Jhumpa Lahiri's writings an American writer who is of Indian origin. Her work unlocked a world of fascination and resourcefulness in a way that made me analyze and observe the foreign land I was visiting from a different perspective. I was first introduced to her book *The Interpreter of Maladies* (1999) in 2007 this collection of short stories was a part of my text for one of the modules during my MA Sociology degree. Her overall literary focus is mainly on immigrants living in the US, and their journey of making sense of their Indian traditions that they bring with them and their assimilation into the cultures of the new country.

Lahiri's fictional work is autobiographical, which is inspired by her own experiences, along with her parents, friends, relatives and associates from the Bengali communities residing in the US. All her work whilst written under the umbrella theme of immigrants settling in a new country, however, scoops out a range of emotions, struggles and efforts and revolves around coming to terms with the idea of making a brand new place their home. This is vividly reflected in her books *The Namesake* (2003) and *The Unaccustomed Earth* (2008). In her recent book, *In Other Words*

(2016), an autobiographical book she wrote in Italian, which was later translated into English, she mentions the idea of "linguistic exile" while she was in Italy learning Italian. Lahiri expresses how desperately she wanted to be fluent in Italian and saw learning Italian as a way of being accepted in the local community. Such narrations contributed towards a set of fresh vantage points in observing the lives of migrants that I would come across.

My personal story and the migratory process I went through led me to my inquisition and query that if other students travelling from India to the UK for higher education also felt the same (or different) way, what were their stories? I was interested in finding out how the different combinations of gender, caste, class, level of study and the towns and cities the students belonged to shaped the students' journeys and their overall experience. With the blend of my personal experience and the inspiration drawn from migration as a lived experience in fictional work, I embarked on my ethnographic journey and in the process attempted to unravel the tapestry of the migratory pathway in the lives of the Indian students travelling to the UK for higher education.

1.3 Research Questions

When students decide to go abroad for their higher education, there are certain factors that they need to consider. Firstly, their motivations for leaving the home country, secondly, how they will fulfill all the requirements for their applications and the visa process, and finally, their experience during their stay in the UK. This research will explore these questions in the case of Indian migrant students. However, I propose that to fully understand the experience of international higher education and to completely comprehend the journey of the migrant students, their attitudes towards

the "home" culture[1], their adaptation to the host country's culture should also be examined. Whilst the rules and regulations governing the Tier 4 visa (student visa) and support from educational agencies remain important in setting the contexts and expectations of these students, so are the experiences, social networks and transnational connections that the student migrants have with their homeland. Thus, with this outlook, I have divided the journey of such students into two parts *processes* and *experience*, and framed the research questions accordingly.

Process:

1) What were the students' motivations to study abroad? What were their reasons behind choosing the UK for their higher education?

2) What are the students' attitudes towards the changing Tier 4 (student) visa policy and other border entry requirements? Do such changes have an impact on the perception of the students during their stay in the UK or their future orientations?

3) Have any of these students come to the UK with the help of educational agencies? What are their roles? And do such agencies contribute to perpetuating student migration, and if so how?

Experience:

1) What are the different kinds of transnational connections the Indian students maintain with their homeland (both felt and practiced)?

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[1]This research is aware of the diverse areas in cultural studies and that they can be discussed from different ideologies and perceptions; however, this study will limit the understanding of culture to transmitted behavior patterns of religious beliefs, political viewpoints, cuisines, festival celebrations, access to news (paper/virtual) and popular arts (television/movies/music).

2) Do the Indian students adapt to the host country's culture, and if so how?

The potential link between these dimensions have been explored as parts of the interviews and analyzed in three different empirical chapters 4, 5 and 6. This thesis will trace the student trajectories of migration through the following sequence: first, their motivations to study abroad and the reasons they chose the UK; second, the process of coming to the UK, the role of educational agencies and the Tier 4 visa policies; and finally, the transnational ties with their homeland and acclimatizing to the British culture. The present research highlights that such adjustments and the transnational connections with home affect the overall experience of the students. The research will further explore how these areas are linked; more precisely, it will attempt to show how this series of events unfolds in the life of the Indian student studying in the UK. Next, I discuss the overall theoretical framework guiding the present research.

1.4 Research Design and Theoretical Framework

This research is exploratory in nature. I chose to conduct an exploratory study because "in such kinds of research, the assumption is that the researcher has little or no knowledge about the problem or situation under study or they are unfamiliar with the structure of the group they are studying" (Ahuja, 2001;p.35). Following this logic, I aspire to gain a better understanding in the field of education-related migration. With the help of the specifically designed research questions, I streamlined my research focus only on the Indian students. Although there are a number of notable works on education-related migration, for example *Transnational Student Migrants and the State: The Education-migration Nexus* by Shanthi Robertson, *Cross Customs: International Students Write on US College Life and Culture* by Jay Davis, I was

unable to come across a framework that included all the aspects of the student migration starting from their motivation, their viewpoints on student visas, the role of education agencies, transnational connections and adaptation into the host country's culture. In my way, to gain theoretical clarity I first begin by examining student migration as a product of internationalization of education, which is a result of globalization.

Then, I propose that the experiences of the students travelling abroad for higher education cannot be homogenized; in fact, each story differs from one another because of their sociological, economic and cultural backgrounds. In the pursuit of situating the present research in a theoretical framework that can address both the individual and societal factors required to understand international migration (Wolfel, 2002), I adopt the rationality of the structuration model. Although much of this model is utilized in the field of immigration studies, due to the lack of a coherent theoretical framework to analyze student migration, I use this model in order to bring together the macro-, mezzo- and micro-factors that influence, or in fact result in, the Indian students' decisions to travel to the UK and then maintain ties with their homes (see chapters 4 and 5).

Structuration theory is a general model, which I apply to analyses the migration flow. Morawska (2012), while discussing the historical-structural models of international migration, states that the world-system theory's most suitable feature is that is it compatible with the micro-level explanations of international migration that are thoughtful towards human agency. Similar to Morawska's understanding of Glocalization (Robertson 1992; Waters 2001; Berger and Huntington 2002) I also adopt this concept to identify the cross-border flow and address the issue of immigrants' experience, which I use to discuss the migration of Indian students to the

UK for higher education. To answer the crucial question why have I chosen the structuration model for the research in question is because "the interplay between social structures and human agency posited by the structuration model is an on-going process of becoming. It is, therefore, possible to view the two sides of this evolving relationship as mutually (re) constituting each other over a long period of time, and at the same time to analytically allow for the "pre-existence" of structural conditions human actors negotiate as they pursue everyday lives" (Morawska, 2011; p.3).

According to Morawska (2012), structures are understood as patterns of social relations, material technology, socioeconomic, political and cultural that create opportunities or limits within which Human Agency conduct their activities and how these actors' negotiate their societal environment. Human agency, on the other hand, is "a temporally embedded engagement by actors of different structural environment that, through the interplay of habit, imagination and judgments, both reproduces and transforms those structures in interactive response to the problems posed by changing situations" (Emirbayer and Mische, 1998; p. 970). Furthermore, human agency comprises of three analytically distinguishable components (for more see Emirbayer and Mische, 1998; p. 971-972). In the context of the present research, the social structures are the combination of macro, mezzo and micro factors that influence the individuals to travel to the UK for higher education and the human agency is comprised of the migrant students.

1.5 Summaries and Contents of the Chapters

This thesis consists of a total of seven chapters, which are made up of the introduction, review of literature, and methods chapters, followed by three empirical chapters and a conclusion.

Chapter 1: Moving Across Borders: The Journey of Indian students to the UK: An Introduction. This chapter provides an overview of the entire thesis. I share the reasons behind pursuing this research and the elements I drew inspiration from. In addition to this, I also announce the research questions steering the present study followed by the theoretical framework within which the research is organized.

Chapter 2: Understanding Student Migration: Review of Literature. This chapter discusses the rich variety of theoretical and conceptual contexts upon which the phenomenon of student migration is discussed. The review is arranged in four sections. First, concepts of education-related migration; second, the overview of the structuration theory, followed by the section dedicated to reviewing the mechanisms of international migration as macro, mezzo and micro-level forces that initiate and trigger the flow of education-related movement across international borders; fourth, the focus is shifted to the transnational involvement of migrants while concentrating on transnational connections that international students maintain with their homeland; and lastly, the theories of acculturation and assimilation are discussed with reference to immigrants' adjustment into a new country, with a special emphasis on why this theory is employed on issues related to the experience of education-related migration.

Chapter 3: Conversing with the Indian students in the UK: Method and Process. This chapter begins by discussing the epistemological and ontological implications of the research methodology. Next, the focus is shifted to the research design applied in the thesis, followed by the sampling method and recruitment of participants, then the discussion on data collection and fieldwork. I also give a brief account of designing interview questions and the interview schedule. Lastly, I conclude the chapter by shedding some light on data analysis and the crucial ethical considerations.

The next three chapters that follow are the three main empirical chapters. The data accumulated after conducting interviews and fieldwork have been analyzed and discussed in these chapters in the following manner:

Chapter 4: Mechanisms Triggering Indian Students' Educational Migration to the UK. Based on the logic of structuration theory, the chapter reviews a range of circumstances like macro-globalization, growing technology, advancement of transport and communication, and internationalization of education, followed by mezzo-societal conditions like the bilateral political agreements, institutional information and networks. Lastly, the micro-individual characteristics of human agency that govern the Indian students' decisions to travel abroad (specifically the UK) for higher education are discussed.

Chapter 5: Transnational Connections and the Indian Overseas Students in the UK. This chapter addresses the various kinds of transnational connections that Indian students uphold with their homeland, both felt and practiced. These are discussed broadly under the headings nostalgia for homeland, the impact on students' transnational connections facilitated due to the advancement in transportation and communication technologies, the impact on students' transnational connections due to globalization of the economy, students' transnational political ties and the role of social media. Incited by all these factors is the last section, living India in the UK, which is devoted to reporting on the food habits, language, feelings and activities that the Indian students partake in while they stay in the UK.

Chapter 6: Not Completely from There Not Completely from Here: Indian Overseas Students and their Adaptation to the Host Country's Society. Focusing on the role of symbolic homeland, this chapter explores if and how the Indian students adapt to the

UK's culture. First, the chapter discusses the concept of "culture" in the context of student migration. Then borrowing from the two concepts acculturation and assimilation, which are mainly used in immigrant's adaption to the host country, I identify the various acculturation strategies that the migrant students may assume during their stay in the UK.

Chapter 7: You Don't Have to Go Home, but You Can't Stay Here Either: The Conclusion. In this final chapter, I explain the basic findings and contributions to the field of study and highlight the direction for future research.

Chapter 2

<u>Understanding Student Migration: Review of Literature</u>

The present chapter is dedicated to reviewing the literature on migration, based on the conceptual understanding of structuration theory with a particular focus on education-related migration. The chapter discusses the various theories with the data collected. I present this review in the following manner; first, I discuss the concepts of education-related or student migration as they appear in the literature. Next, I give an overview of the structuration theory and justify why this is the most suitable model for this research. Third, I discuss the theories based on the macro, mezzo and micro-level factors that shape the decisions of the Indian students to move to the U.K. Subsequently, in the section that follows, I review studies on migrants' transnational engagements, including their main types and contributing mechanisms, paying special attention to the factors that sustain migrant students' transnational involvement. In the last part, I review the concepts of acculturation and assimilation as I loosely draw on these ideas to analyze the Indian migrant students' adjustment to the host society. Finally, I have a section dedicated to the gender and migration process in the Indian context, as gender is one of the most important and recurring themes that has emerged during the data analysis.

2.1 Education-related or student migration

As a social researcher with a keen interest in student migration, I ask where does education-related migration or student migration fits in the well-established discipline of migration? Or are they even considered migrants' in some cases? (Bilecen, 2009) I

begin my inquiry by first identifying the different types of migration in the literature with the inclusion of education-related or student migration in the discussion. Then, I shift the focus on the definitions, debates and affiliated concepts in the literature for education-related migration. Finally, I propose that "student-migrant" should be included in the field of education-related migration research and conclude by recommending and justifying the need to conceive of the experience of student migrants as inherently diverse in nature rather than homogenous.

Migration is generally understood as the relocation of individuals to some distant place, at least beyond one's city or town (Kivisto, 2010). In these basic terms, this is primarily a geographic phenomenon; migration is a universal feature of human history reaching back many thousands of years. This signifies that studies related to Sociology of Migration deal with connecting a wide range of life domains like politics, economics, culture, identity and so on. People move across borders for a variety of reasons, and in many instances, migrations involve a bundle of motives. Such motives are key to understanding this phenomenon. It normally implies the reason behind people's migration such as immigrants, refugees, and expatriates (Terra Gargano, 2009; Bartham, Poros & Monforte, 2014; Meer, 2014)

In the case of immigrants, motives include a conscious decision to seek out economic opportunities, better job profile and improve their standard of living and so on. On the other hand, refugees are often forced to leave or exiled, by the will and resources of dominant and powerful groups (e.g: Jewish experience of forced exile). Finally, expatriates travel or live abroad as representatives of corporations engaged in the global marketplaces, or as representatives of nations engaging in public diplomacy. Other areas of research have included family migration and reunification, and undocumented migration (Meer, 2014), all represent the motilities of humans across

international borders for socio-economic purposes or emotional reasons.

Thus, every motive and rationale of crossing international borders brings with it different expectations and social realities. For example, for some of them, it could be an enduring and permanent change, whilst for others, this experience can be temporary and such migrants may relish the fact that they can return home. However, most of the discussions surrounding migration involve the (more or less) permanent movement of individuals or groups across symbolic or political boundaries into new residential areas and communities, and the studies on migration have mostly presented stories only around high-skilled worker (Cheng & Yang, 1998; Docquire & Marfouk, 2004; Tremblay, 2005) or deskilled labour (Raghuram, 2004).

Nevertheless, another social reality that exists today is the increasing number of students travelling abroad to pursue higher education from institutions around the globe. Even though educational border crossing is not a new phenomenon, there is, in fact, a need for the development of innovative theoretical constructs to examine the flow of students across international borders (Gargano, 2009). In my contribution to do so, first and foremost I address the ambiguity of conceptualizing international students as a form of mobility or migration. Although student migration and mobility are sometimes used synonymously, the term mobility is often used in the European context (Bilecen; 2009, Findlay; 2006). In research done on U.K students studying and working abroad, Findlay, King, Stam, and Ruiz-Gelices (2006) state that there is a preference for the term "mobility" over "migration" especially at an intra-European movement. The researchers argue that, even though the movement of these students fit the basic definition of migration, however, they still prefer the term mobility because the students are typically in another country for a period of 3-12 months and would eventually return to their home institution and secondly none of the students

considered themselves migrants, they thought themselves only as visiting students.

Even though I recognize why the term mobility is preferred compared to migration in a European context, in my research I refer to the student movements as migration because it is evident that education-related migration is more than merely the movement of students' to another country it also raises questions of national identities and socio-cultural membership that is experienced by all kinds of migrants. Moreover, the early literature on students' international move tend to view it as a form of migration, particularly when they were for a long period, this understanding was the key element while discussing the concept of "brain-drain" (Skeldon, 1997: 108-12).

In the 1960s and 1970s the term "brain drain" was used to describe the emigration of highly educated and skilled people mainly from "developing" countries to a "developed" country. These movements of people primarily included students and highly educated or skilled workers. They utilized their skills and knowledge to expand industries in science, engineering and health care (Bartham, Poros & Monforte; 2014). Brain drain often begins with students' who pursue advanced degrees in developed countries and stay there, rather than returning home as they had originally intended. For example, in the 1970s and 1980s 20 per cent Taiwanese students emigrated to study higher degrees (O' Neil; 2003) similarly, in the 1960s and 1970s India experienced a large scale brain drain of students and qualified scientists, engineers, and physicians (Saxenian, 2005).

Subsequently, in the education sector, the education system in many developed countries like U.S, U.K and Australia have undergone internationalization of education and attracted students from all around the globe (similar to 'Europeanization' of higher education as implied by the Bologna Process see: Nuthall,

2004; Teichler and Gordon, 2001). According to Sriskandarajah (2005), nearly one in ten people with university or tertiary education originating from developing countries live in a developed country. According to UNESCO (2015), the typical feature of international students is that they hold a non-resident visa; these individuals are also known as "degree-mobile students" because they are in the country of destination to gain a foreign degree and are different from study abroad or exchange students.

"An internationally mobile student is an individual who has physically crossed an international border between two countries to participate in educational activities in a destination country, where the destination country is different from his or her country of origin" (UNESCO, 2015). Traditionally, the phenomenon of education-related migration had existed for thousands of years, the use of international language facilitated academic mobility in the ancient world. (Brickman, 1961). In Europe, since the late middle ages, the members of the elite class have been sending their sons (occasionally also daughters) to different countries to acquire wisdom and experience (Dolan, 2001). Although the history of educational travel has a long past it has assumed global characteristics and with the internationalization of education it has turned into a mass phenomenon. Student migration is seen as a result of the internationalization of education (Gargano; 2009, Bilecen; 2009) because higher education sectors restructure their institutions internationally to re-define education standards (Findlay; 2006). The mechanisms of education-related migration- such as the internationalization of higher education and bilateral agreements between countries reinforce this type of travel, which is discussed in detail later in the chapter.

According to Montgomery (2010), international students are a part of the "reshaping" process and universities depend on the income that international students bring, in the form of tuition fees. Therefore, Universities develop market strategies to recruit

students in developed countries like U.K, U.S, Australia, Canada to name a few. The competition to attract international students has become fierce between different host countries (Binsardi & Ekwulugo 2003; British Council, 2011; OECD, 2004; Zammuto, 2008). Institutions have developed a keen interest in retaining international students and have therefore introduced significant student support systems within Universities. Yet, there is a need to examine the process of student migration and reveal the understanding of students' in international education beyond globalization, internationalization of education and the statistical representation of student flows across the globe.

Shedding some light on this idea, Terra Gargano (2009), emphasizes that the exclusive focus on the debate about cross-broader educational migration is one the issues of internationalization of education, he proposes to conceptualize education-related migration not only from the lenses of national trends and statistics but from student experiences and the impact of cultural flows during their educational journey. I agree with Gargano's idea and include individual student experiences in the study of educational migration rather than generalizing them.

To further explore the concept of international student migration, I propose that the students' perceptions and experiences should be placed at the center while discussing international student migration. I propose to do this by firstly "diversifying" student experience. I use the word "diversifying" here because; there is a need to refute the generalization that international students are homogenous groups who have similar experiences during their educational journey (Gargano, 2009). The understanding of student migration should not solely depend on the robust concepts that characterize all international students' experiences and construct their identities homogenously. There is a requisite for a perspective that is not entirely grounded on globalization or

internationalization of education. This research has identified this gap and recommends that there is a need to include and analyze the role of societal dividers (for example, gender, social capital, level of study, religion, etc) since they directly or indirectly contributed towards the students' decision to travel for higher education.

Now, I discuss the concept of "student-migrants" to set a contextual understanding of education-related migration. Conceptualizing "student migrants" would mean providing a detailed picture of the lives, decisions, and practices of individuals engaged in this kind of migration pathway. According to Roberston (2013), ones' status as a permanent settler is fixed on entering into another nation-state and although connections remain with one's roots, a new home can replace an old. Based on this idea, I attempt to explore how far the idea of home in India (both ideologically and geographically) might co-exist with the student's new residential experience (see chapter 6), especially given that the migration status of these students is not permanent (at least at the beginning). In the next section, I present the overview of the structuration theory followed by the outline of the mechanisms of international migration, through the macro, mezzo and micro levels factors that influence the students' decisions to travel for education-related migration.

2.2 Overview of the Structuration Theory

Structuration theory is defined as "an approach to social theory concerned with the intersection between knowledgeable and capable social agents and the wider social systems and structures in which they are implicated" (Gregory, 1994, p. 600). Originally conceived by Pierre Bourdieu (1977) and Anthony Giddens (1976, 1984), the principal basis of the structuration model is that the societal structures in the society and human agency reconstitute each other over time (Morawska, 2011).

Although the complex relationships between structure and agency have been included in the area of migration studies, it is not free from criticisms. It has been pointed out that as a result of theoretical weaknesses, it lacks offering any advancement in migration theory (Bakewell, 2010). Furthermore, both Bourdieu and Giddens's contributions in elaborating the idea of social structure and human agency as an analytical unit have been declared inadequate (Elder-Vass, 2007; O'Donnell, 2010). Nevertheless, as a reaction to the criticism, the main ideas and arguments of the structuration model have been made clear and amended (for more on this, see Sewell, 1992; Emirbayer and Mische, 1998; Domingues, 2000; Stones, 2001, 2005). I draw from this revised version of the structuration theory and situate the theoretical framework of my research.

The underlying premises of my research are based on the notion that both the societal structures and human actors are conceived not as fixed units, but instead as time- and place-dependent processes of "becoming" and is therefore flexible and underdetermined (Sewell, 1992; Emirbayer and Mische, 1998; Domingues, 2000; Stones, 2001; Morawska, 2013). Similar to Morawska's (2001, 2011) comparative historical study of international migration, in my investigation regarding the Indian students in the U.K, I found it useful to begin my exploration by first identifying the structural opportunities that enabled or constrained (in some cases) the migratory process of educational migrants. Such structural opportunities that I recognized regarding this research are globalization, internationalization of education, global economy, bilateral political agreements and advancement in transportation and communication (this has been discussed in detail in the empirical chapters that follow). Therefore, based on structural opportunities that the students are exposed to, I present in the section below the various macro, mezzo, and micro-level theories

relevant to educational migration.

2.3 Educational Migration

Based on the logic of the structuration model, I now review a group of mutually enforcing circumstances from macro- through mezzo-level societal conditions to micro- individual characteristics of human actors, which shape Indian students' decisions to travel for educational purposes.

2.3.1 Macro level

In terms of macro-level circumstances, I consider the internationalization of education. The concept of internationalization of higher education as defined by academician Knight (2004, 2008) is the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education. Furthermore, Knight (2011) elaborates the manifestation of internationalization of education in three series, first, the physical mobility of students and scholars across countries, second the twining and franchise programs branch campuses and virtual universities that appear across the globe and lastly education hubs as a form of a cross broader education.

However, diverging from Knight's classification, scholar Yeravdekar (2012) has analyzed not three but four levels that denote the distinctive feature of cross-border education. The first level is the student's relocation; the scholar refers to this as the earliest form of the cross broader education. She further emphasizes that this occurs due to various factors, which are (i) the strength and status of education system in the home country- they may not be able to accommodate the growing student population (ii) the quality of the educational institutions might be of question and (iii) the students

might be guided by their aspirations to add foreign education degree to their profile for better career opportunities. The second level is the program available like twining programs, semester abroad, joint research programs and summer schools. The third level is characterized by the franchise of Universities in various locations and lastly the inception of education hubs. Such factors serve as a macro-level factor that influences the students' decision to travel abroad for higher education.

2.3.2 Mezzo level

For the mezzo level, firstly, I consider bilateral political agreements between sending and receiving countries the migrants' rights of entry and social entitlements and lastly a section on colonialism. Secondly, the institutional reforms and support networks. These two themes will be further discussed under that the conceptual framework of the Institutional theory and the Network Theory to examine the enabling and perpetuating factors of migration respectively.

Institutional Theory

This research focuses on the enabling factor because the students need to fulfill certain conditions before coming to the UK i.e. producing evidence for financial support, acquiring Tier 4 student visa and meeting the broader entry requirements. Even though social relations, social capital in households, neighbors and more formal communities (Hagen-Zanker, 2008) can be identified as mezzo level influence in migration, this research identifies the tier 4 visa and broader entry requirements as a more appropriate mezzo level factor.

This research considers that institutions and migration policies influence the migration process and flow. According to Giddens (1984) there are four types of societal

institution, each of them is influenced by signification, domination, and legitimation (Giddens, 1984: p, 107) these institutions are (1) Symbolic orders/modes of discourse (2) Political institutions (3) Economic institutions and (4) Law/Mode Sanction. Furthermore, scholars Amenta and Ramsey (2010) add that the institutional theories that claim to identify something at a higher level are usually used to explain a process and outcomes at a lower level. (Clemens & Cook 1999; Amenta 2005). Based on this understanding the current study places the U.K immigration rules at the higher level, and the lawful entry of migrant students into the U.K on the lower level, which represents the second stage in their migration process.

The institutional theories are further divided into three kinds; sociological institutionalism, historical institutionalism, and political institutionalism. The present research will adopt the elements of the political institutionalism, simply because it focuses on the actors (migrant students in this case) at an inter-organizational or mezzo level and these actors work within the institutional framework. In the case of this research it will be the migration policies surrounding the Indian students in the U.K. The expansion of student mobility within the EU led to an increase in the number of EU students in the U.K. Correspondingly, the U.K developed strategies for attracting non-E U students, since they paid higher tuition fees. However, migration policies governing the EU and other international students vary drastically. Since immigration policies and the right to cross a broader legally has a direct influence on the number of international students that come to the U.K. This factor serves as a mezzo level factor that enables (and in some cases impedes) the student to move to the country of destination.

I now discuss the immigration policies, regarding the points-based tier system in the UK. According to Hansen (2000), the British had two types of migrants from the

period of 1905 until 1948 *(a)* British subjects- who could enter the United Kingdom freely and *(b)* Aliens- who could not. It was in 1905, that the first class-based controls on movement were levied. It was in 1948, that the UK introduced an "umbrella citizenship- citizenship of the United Kingdom and Colonies (CUKU) for Britain and the British Colonial subjects. Until 1962, citizens of the United Kingdom and Colonies had full rights to move to and reside in the United Kingdom." (Hasen, 2000; p, 201) This, however, did not mean that the British Government encouraged Commonwealth immigration, they were very much discouraged it (Hasen, 2000).

Hasen (2014) further adds that it was between 1962-1971, that the British government offered the Commonwealth citizens access to a work permit. From 1971, they were under the same legal framework as the aliens, with few exceptions for migration purposes. The immigration Act of 1971 laid the foundation for migration for the next three decades. Under this framework, individuals who wished to migrate to the UK could only do so, as a family member or if they had a work permit. The work permit allowed them to work in a position for four years; they could then apply for a permanent residency. In the year 1981, CUKC was replaced by British citizenship.

During the period 1970s to 1990s, the primary immigration to the UK was very few. It was only after the new Labor party came into power in 1997, they introduced measures that lead to an increase in immigration (Wright, 2010: p 156). One of the major changes, that the ruling party bought were the points-based system, this allowed people with the right to educational, linguistic and professional skills to migrate to the UK. In addition to this, higher education also became an attractive business model.

There were specific tier visas that the people could apply for based on their purpose to come to the UK. This was tentatively introduced in 2002 and later fully in 2006. "The

points-based system is based on the five-tiered system, the first tier is for high skilled migrant (the only group who do not need a job offer to qualify), the second tier covered skilled workers with job offers, as well as workers in occupations on the shortage occupation lists, the third tier covered low-skilled worker (applicants that require employers sponsors); the fourth tier was for students and the fifth tier covers working holidays makers and professional athletes and creative temporary works" (Hasen, 2014, p 202-203).

After the introduction of the points-based system, the students entering the UK under tier 4 visas had to provide their proof of English proficiency and sometimes an interview with a UK Broader Agency official (de Lotbiniere, 2011). The government also allowed the students who graduated from UG, Masters and PhD degree a work permit after completing their studies; they could apply for the tier 1 post-study work visa. However, in April 2012, the UK's coalition government terminated the tier 1 post-study work visa, that resulted in the decline of international students coming to the U.K. Next, in the section below, I discuss the influence of colonization in the Indian education system and its effect on the Indian migrant students studying in the U.K

Colonization and Education in India

It is said that the British came to India with a noble intention to "civilize" the native people. As Charles Grant (1729) stated "what is offered is no more than a proposal for the further civilization of a people" (Grant, 1729, as cited in Mann, 2004, p. 3). The reason for colonizing India was to start the improvement of the South Asian nations, which ultimately led to the betterment and material progress which was later included under the phrase- civilizing mission (Mann, 2004). According to the British, the

people in India practiced and believed in superstitions and barbaric religious beliefs, therefore the British introduced the education system so that they could groom the Indians and eliminate such practices.

Furthermore, the British found the minds of Indians "dull" and "inferior" (Visnawathan, 2003) thus, before initiating any literary education the British considered it was vital to raise the intellectual level of the Indians. Hence, suggesting that English should be the medium of instruction while teaching. This is believed to be the greatest symbol of British colonial power (Visnawathan, 2003), which is practiced even today. English than not only became a linguistic instrument to teach but it was also adopted as an official language in offices and other legal institutions. Hence, speaking and understanding English was associated with elitism and prestige (Honenthal, 2003).

The British government made changes and included various policies to encourage a modern education system. For example, according to the Charter Act of 1813, the British spend 1,00,000 rupees every year to choose the well-educated Indians and promote the knowledge of modern sciences (Sharma, 2005). Further, English educated Indians were given opportunities to hold government positions; this was one of the most successful moves by the British government and resulted in opening various schools and colleges in some of the important cities in India.

Yet, the gift of English to India and how it ultimately shaped the education system has been heavily criticized by numerous Indian thinkers and authors, for instance, Shashi Tharoor (2017) in the Guardian article titled *'But what about railway? The myth of Britain's gifts to India's* state that the English language was not a gift to all the Indians, but only to small minorities of Indians. The British aimed at forming a class of English

speaking Indians by teaching only a small section and employ them as an interpreter between them and the rest of the million Indians in the country. They did not have any intention to educate the entire masses nor did they want to incur any expense in the process of doing so.

However, even such revelations did not stop the Indians to travel to the UK for higher education. Siobhan Lambert (2016) in her article *'Indian students at British Universities is a tradition we should cherish and protect'* writes about the historical ties Indian students had with Britain and that prestigious associations and degrees awarded by Britain attracted the students the most. This effect has been vividly expressed by the participants of this research and discussed in the empirical chapters that follow. Next, I discuss the perpetuating factor based on the theoretical framework of the Network Theory.

Network Theory

Migration theories are important and significant as they both shape and challenge the world we live in. One such theory is the New Economies of Migration by the economist Oded Strak (1991). His approach was not to reject the neoclassical theory but to amend it, mainly by using a grounded theoretical framework. The new economies of migration challenged the assumption that migration is a phenomenon that is pursued only by individuals, as the neoclassical perspective. Strak (1991) placed the concentration on the role of families. Building on this concept Massey (1994) merged the new economies of migration to the field of sociology by introducing the Network Theory. Massey adapted from Simmel's loosely conceived idea of webs, which he and his colleagues express in the following way:

"Migrant networks are sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants

and non-migrants in origin and destination areas through ties of kinship, friendship, and shared community origin. The existence of these ties is hypothesized to increase the likelihood of emigration by lowering the costs, raising the benefits, and mitigating the risks of the international movement. Network connections constitute a valuable form of social capital that people draw upon to gain access to foreign employment and high wages" (Massey, 1994, p. 728).

At the initial stage of migration, while travelling and settling down in a new destination, lack of social ties can turn out to be expensive and risky, however, the potential expense and risk will be lowered if the migrants' have social ties in the destination country. The nature of the kinship and friendship is such that each new migrant creates a set of social ties in the country of destination. According to Massey (1993), such a network reduces the cost and risk incurred during the movement, this results in the probability of migration to strengthen, which will lead to the further movement and expansion of the network.

Ultimately, once these network connections at an origin area reach a critical threshold migration then becomes self-perpetuating; every new migrant creates this web of network that subsequently reduces the cost and risk of migration for a prospective migrant. Thus, each incident of migrations creates in itself the social structure that is required to sustain it. This dynamic theory supports the point of view that international migration is an individual or household decision process but also argues that the reason behind one act of migration in time will systematically change the context within which the future migration decision is made, thus increasing the likelihood that more people will choose to migrate.

2.3.3 Micro-level

Lastly, for the micro-level factor, I consider the migrant students' assessment of their aspirations and decisions that guided them to travel abroad for higher education. Based on the logic of the structuration theory, I discuss the micro-level influence in the migration decision-making process. Scholar Johnson (2008) states that the individual's action provides the foundation for the micro-level institutional structure; the present research supports this idea and includes people's actions such as face-to-face encounters and relationships maintained as a micro-level influence. Before exploring further, it is essential to lay an appropriate understanding of micro-level factors with this study. Everett S Lee, while revising Ravenstein's (1885) Laws of Migration, draws the attention on the lack of connection between the macro and micro theories, this was considered an important contribution towards the understanding of the migration theory as a whole.

According to Lee (1966), several factors initiates the migration process, he summarized this under four headings:

- Factors associated with the areas of origin

- Factors associated with the area of destination

- Intervening obstacles

- Personal factors

Being one of the first scholars to formulate migration push and pull concept on an individual level, Lee's idea was that the positive and negative factors at the origin and destination countries act as a push and pull factor, he further explains that these factors affect most people in almost the same way (Lee, 1966). He stresses that the personal evaluation at the place of origin and their condition at the place of destination depend on the personal contact and information available to them. The scholar further states that "the decision to migrate therefore is never completely rational and for the same person the rational component is much less than the irrational. We must expect, therefore, to find many exceptions to our generalizations since transient emotions, mental disorder, and accidental occurrences account for a considerable proportion of the total migration" (1966; p, 51).

Even though, many scholars criticized Lee, the micro-level factor has a vital part in the migration decision -making the process (Wolfel, 2002). The present research borrows this idea to support the claim that the decision to migrate is rooted at the micro-level factors based on individual values, desires, and expectations. However, at the same time, it rejects the homogenization found in the push-pull analysis. By doing this, it enables the present research to include the social factors and role of individuals in understanding the migration decision-making process.

In this research, certain individual factors drive the students to migrate. These factors are examined by using the conceptual framework Value-expectancy of the Behavior model. According to Crawford (1973) "value expectancy model is a cognitive model in which migrants make a conscious decision to migrate based on more than economic considerations. The potential migrant's strength of migration intentions depends on the multiplication of the values of migration outcomes and expectations that migration will lead to these outcomes." Although the behavioral approach considers

noneconomic factors and societal influences, this theory has been criticized based on the assumption that the idea of rational decision-making is by and large vague (Hanger-Zanker, 2008). But the migration choices or decisions are subjectively made hence; the value expectancy model is utilized to explain the macro-level influence in decision-making amongst the students.

Furthermore, scholar Hagen-Zanker (2008) states that values and expectations related to migration depend on personal and household characteristics and societal norms. It is not important for the values to be economic, for instance, security or self-fulfillment could also be the reason people migrate. Hence, the interpretation of Indian students' migrating to the U.K is best understood within the structuration framework because it integrates the macro-mezzo-micro structural factors and the agents (migrant students).

Next in the third section, I review studies on migrants' transnational engagements, including their main types and contributing mechanisms, paying special attention to the factors that sustain migrant students' transnational involvement.

2.4 Transnational connections

Transnationalism entered the terminology of immigration studies in the early 1990s (Kivisto & Faist, 2010). After the inception of this concept, the earlier notion of immigrants and migrants was no longer sufficient (Schiller, Bash & Blanc-Szanton, 1992). This is because a new type of migrating population had emerged; their lives crossed the national and international boundaries and brought the two different geographical locations into one social field (Gargano, 2009). The immigrants' composed networks, activities and arrangements of life that embraced both their homeland and the host country. According to Morawska (2011) "transnationalism refers to some combination of plural civic-political memberships, economic

involvements, social networks and cultural identities reaching across and linking people and institutions in two or more nation-states in the diverse, multi-layered pattern." (2011; p. 155). Since there is limited information on student migration and transnational ties they maintain with their country of origin, I depend on the existing literature on immigrants' transnational activities and adopt this as a conceptual framework to support my findings.

I now review the studies on immigrants' transnational activities, whilst focusing on their gender relations and roles. I begin with the paradox of nostalgia amongst the immigrants, followed by the literature on various transnational activities facilitated by the rapid advancement of transport and communication. Following this, I emphasize the receipt of financial support in the form of remittances, enabled by the globalization of the economy. Then, I shift my discussion to the maintenance of political and cultural ties and usage of social media while doing so. Although, it can be argued that globalization, globalization of economy and maintenance of transnational ties have a wider context and should be mentioned before nostalgia for the homeland. However, I begin my discussion with nostalgia, because I suggest that such feelings prompted the students to maintain connections with their homeland.

2.4.1 Immigrants and Nostalgia

Nostalgia is derived from the Greek words *nos* (returning home) and *algia* (pain), which refers to the longing for the loss of the familiar (Kalpan, 1987). However, with the rapid increase in modern societies and due to the advancement of transport and communication nostalgia is a typical experience felt by many, especially for immigrants' who live away from their homeland (Miyazawa, 2012). In the previous studies on immigrants, nostalgia was viewed as more of a painful and romantic

sentiment surrounding the idea of home. How the immigrants enact nostalgias is indicative that nostalgia is more about the present and future, rather than the past (Peterson, Olsson & Popkewitz, 2007).

In terms of emotions, nostalgia is an essential experience for immigrants. According to scholar Miyazawa (2012), past studies on immigration have not included nostalgia as a conceptual tool to understand immigrants' experience in the host country. As the present research analyses the experiences of migrants' students in the U.K, I share Miyazawa's claim that in understanding the new immigrants' experience in the host country, nostalgia should also be taken into account. In the case of this research, the feelings of nostalgia among the migrant students' have triggered them to engage in transnational ties with their homeland.

Furthermore, immigrants while residing in the country of destination have used this feeling of nostalgia as a coping mechanism. This is done in one of the following ways, the communities established by the immigrants in the host country, recreating memories of their homeland, celebrating festivals, speaking in their native languages and maintaining marriage practices from their homeland. In some cases, they also invest in collective space to organize such events. According to Boym (2001), this type of nostalgia is known as *Restorative Nostalgia*, this kind of nostalgia is a common strategy used by people to cope with the loss of familiar. It starts with the construction of the memories of the homeland and the creation of rituals and narratives, including symbols that emphasize the ethnic group's origin or nationality (Abderson, 1983; Domosh & Seeger, 2001; Hall, 1992).

It can also happen by recurring representations of stories and engagement in activities from the homeland such as celebrating festivals, events that have either ethnic or

national motif. For example, national anthems or flags in their lives provide the members of the group a sense of unity and belongingness (Barker, 2003; Hall, 1992). When each of the individuals participates in the practice of restorative nostalgia, they tend to share one unified collective memory of their homeland and develop one common national or ethnic identity. According to Boym (2001), there are two types of restorative nostalgia; the immigrant community's restorative nostalgia and American nostalgia (for more see Miyazawa, 2012; Duktova-Cope, 2003; Maira, 2002).

It is often found that while tracing the life stories of the immigrants 'they reconstruct the idea of the homeland by engaging in a set of rituals, practices that they bring with them like celebrating national and ethnic holidays, maintaining traditional family-style (Duktova-Cope, 2003). As a matter of fact, in the lives of the immigrants' the "Ethnic cultures" are a manifestation of their restorative nostalgia (Miyazawa, 2012). Such ethnic cultures and reconstruction of activities are vital to understanding the perception of gender roles and responsibilities amongst the immigrants'. The literature on restorative nostalgia focuses on the patriarchal heterosexual power, within which women are expected to be the gatekeepers of the culture from their homeland (Maria, 2002; McDowell, 1999; Sharp, 1996). Inevitably women are placed within the domestic space, which is associated with "pure ethnic space" (Maria, 2002) and are expected to take part in domestic work like cooking, taking care of older and younger members of the family (Gibson, 1998; Kasirye, 2008; Valenzuela, 1999). There is always pressure, especially on younger women to remain within the realm of "ethnic". The maintenance of traditional female gender roles and social relationships within the home and the ethnic community contributes to the re-creation of immigrants' home in a new country. This feature of restorative nostalgia is further sustained by the existence and domination of patriarchal power and excludes the women's memory of

their homeland. How does this affect women's sense of belonging in a new country of destination? This is perhaps a different and vital topic for another research. I, however, move on to discuss another kind of nostalgia that focuses on individual rather than collective experiences and memories in the conception of home.

At times immigrants also tend to embrace their memories of the homeland they tend to have their memory of the homeland, this kind of nostalgia is known as *Reflective Nostalgia* (Boym, 2001). Although absent from the past studies of immigrants' assimilation stories, reflective nostalgia is depicted as themes in art and literature in the life stories of many immigrants (Boym, 2001). In such artistic and literary works of nostalgia, home and the memories of home are often represented in a romanticized manner highlighting moments that contain close and personal moments with friends and family (Boym, 2001). For example, an old song on the radio could trigger memories and bring back past feelings. At times, the same music might expose a different kind of feelings of nostalgia for different immigrants. Different stories may open possibilities of discussing narratives from different individuals, whilst creating a new relationship based on their homeland memories (Boym, 2001). Unlike restorative nostalgia, which homogenizes individuals' memories into a collective feeling within a nation or an ethnic group, reflective nostalgia is more individualistic in nature.

The reason I like to emphasize on reflective nostalgia is because while holding a romanticized perception of home, reflective nostalgia also has a realistic element. Thus, I depend on this factor not only to discuss the present research but also to suggest that this concept can also be used to discuss the immigrant's experience as a whole. When individuals experience feelings of nostalgia towards their homeland, they also tend to insert critical analysis in remembering and imagining home (Miyazawa, 2012). According to author Boym (2001), individuals engaging in

reflective nostalgia, involved in acts that are contradictory with one another, they tend to critically examine their past whilst sentimentalizing the idea of home.

This tension between romanticizing the concept of home and the critical evaluation of one's past allows the individuals to construct a new perception of their homeland. To further elaborate this idea, I borrow from Kaoru Miyazawa (2012) as she states, "in their (immigrants) vision, their homeland is not exact replications of their memories. Rather, the memories are modifying through a critical examination of the memories. The modified memories of the homeland, then are projected to the future, and the imagine homeland becomes a place they want to "return" to in the future" (2012, p; 62). Therefore, based on the individual's memory of home combined with the critical analysis of the memories the immigrants' resurrect a modified conception and version of home.

Stressing on the point why reflective nostalgia is an essential feature in every Immigrant's story is because reflective nostalgia problematizes the simple view of nostalgia (Miyazawa, 2012). Firstly, the memories embedded in restorative and reflective nostalgia addresses the importance of how individuals negotiate the gaps while experiencing either one of these nostalgias and how such negotiations influence the immigrants' future conception of home. In addition to this, the critical analysis of memories in reflective nostalgia, point out the limitations of viewing immigrants' future aspirations as a simple prognosis of the immigrants' memories of the homeland. Thus, the concept of reflective nostalgia further suggests that there is a need to pay attention to how immigrants' critical examination of their homeland memories shape their future aspirations and their experience in the country of destination. In the next section, I discuss globalization and the advancement of transport and communication that facilitates the maintenance of transnational ties amongst immigrants'.

2.4.2 Globalization, transport, communication, and transnational ties

The concept of globalization emerged in the late 1980s, in response to a new form of capitalist hegemony (Robertson, 1992). With the collapse of most state socialist regime paired with the weakening of the labour movements and socialist politics within many capitalist nations removed the main political alternative to free-market capitalism (Bauman, 1989). In such circumstances emerged the economic restructuring, state deregulation, the power of large transnational co-operation and the creation of new technologies facilitating the mobility of goods, capital and people this led to a new sense of global connectivity (Savage, Bagnall & Longhurst, 2005). The close connection between globalization and transnationalism is further elaborated by Forner's (2005) point of view "clearly, transnationalism was alive and well a hundred years ago. But if there were parallels with the past, there is also much that is new at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Advances in transport and communication technologies have made it possible for immigrants to maintain more frequent, immediate and closer contact with their home societies, and in a real sense, have changed the very nature of transnational connections" (2005; p, 69-70).

According to scholar duo Kivisto and Faist (2010) one prominently recurring idea present throughout the work of transnationalism, is the role played by the advancement of transport and communication technologies. The different modes of transportation that make the cross-border easier compared to that in the past, for instance, air travel is more convenient and faster compared to travelling via ship. In the same manner telephones, mobile phones, text messages and emails suggest the ability to engage in on-going communication with people residing in the home country. Furthermore, the duo compares the contemporary mode of communication with the previous era of writing letters, which was a slow process and was particularly

ineffective for illiterate immigrants, they had to depend on professional letter writers to communicate with their friends and family back home.

There is no doubt that advancements in the transport and communication sectors have made commuting easier today and the existence of such new technologies inevitably has produced transnational social relations (Kivisto, 2003; Waldinger & Fitzgerald, 2004). However, the point to bear in mind at this stage of discussion is that the maintenance of transnational ties depends on other factors as well, besides development in transport and communication. To further illustrate this point, I borrow from Claude Fischer's (1992) social history of the telephone. This is a reminder that communication technologies do not determine if they will be used, how they will be used and how frequently will they be used. The usage of technologies is socially determined and will be shaped by the social class and locations of the individuals. In the same manner, if a person is leaving his/her less developed place of origin (with no cellular tower to receive mobile phone calls or access to internet) to a more developed country of destination which has all the modern amenities in order to keep in touch, in such case transnational ties will be difficult to maintain.

Thus, in recent times, scholars have started to explore the extent to which immigrants' have access and use the new communications technologies. In the same light Steven Vertovec (2004) has written about cheap international phone calls as the *"social glue of migrant transnationalism"*. According to Vertovec, international phone calls between nations depict a certain kind of pattern, for example, the increase calls between Germany and Turkey, India and the United Kingdom and between Mexico and the United States are reflections of a specific kind of migratory flow. In addition to this, some phone companies design their calling plans based on one ethnic group (discussed in the empirical chapter).

Therefore, agreeing with the scholars Kivisto and Faist's (2010) point of view, I also recommend that the mere existence of new technologies is insufficient to account for their contribution to maintaining social ties and transnational relations. Other social factors must also be part of the equation; in the case of this research the most prominent one is gender, this has been addressed as a separate topic towards the end of this chapter. Moving on, in the next section I discuss another important transnational activity that immigrants engage in which is mainly in the form of remittance.

2.4.3 Globalization of economy and remittance

The dynamics of globalization and the new opportunities that surfaced were in the form of economic and social activities in the country of origin. Such activities are related to spending or investment practices amongst the migrants: various forms of capital transfers (such as remittances), services such as telecommunications, consumer goods or travel, capital investments and charitable donations to philanthropic organizations raising funds for the migrant's home community (Orozco, 2013). To further categorize these practices I refer to Orozco's (2005) 5 Ts of transnationalism:

Transfers of money and capital- remittances, community, donations, investments

- Transportation- migrants travelling home

- Tourism- migrants spending at home as tourists

- Telecommunication- migrants spending money for phone calls

- Trade- migrants consuming nostalgic commodities, such as local beer, tortillas, ethnic food and so on.

In this section, I focus on Orozco's first T or the economic transnational ties that immigrants maintain with their home country in the form of remittances. Remittance is defined as flows of money including "social remittance" (this concept is explained further later in this section) from migrants to relatives and others in the country of origin. The term remittance refers to the financial support migrants send back to their families and in some cases community members (Bartman, Poros & Monforte, 2014). Remittance is considered to be the most widespread and important economic activity because the remittance that the migrants send to their families is utilized to cover the regular maintenance of their households at the country of origin. However, the transfer of sums of money or remittance to the migrants' home country depends on the situation of the economic marketplace and the rules and policies shaping the process of sending the money and the underlying forces in the home country that result from the transfers and related transnationalism (Orozco, 2013).

Some migrants use informal channels while sending money back to their homeland to avoid high service charges levied by the monopolistic markets (Solimano, 2010), due to this the total volume of flow of remittance is higher than it is reported. Remittances are the key component in most of the migrants' lives nevertheless the percentage of migrants who remit varies by region, as scholar Orozco (2013) states, that the migrant's income and family needs govern how much money the migrants need to send to their home country and the figures vary greatly. Similarly, when migrants have low income and are financially marginalized with very little access to banking facilities, such conditions hinder their ability to improve their financial circumstances (for more see Migrant Remittances and Development in the Global Economy Orozco, 2013).

In the same order of things, I would like to mention that the gender factor and the role

it plays in sending remittance back home. According to Orozco (2013) even though the concept of gender is associated with socially defined ways, there is interplay between power, authority, and sex. Until the 1970s most kind of migrants comprised of male members, gradually with globalization that led to labor-intensive activities and paved way for feminization of labor which opened opportunities for female migration especially for jobs in domestic, hospitality and services sectors (Ehrenreich & Hochschild, 2002). Such offers gave women the ability to send money to their families in their homeland, especially in Southeast Asia (Orozco & Fedewa, 2005).

But if we focus on the gender differences while remitting or include gender in investigating the flow of remittance, the basic question to be answered is whether men and women behave differently in terms of their motives or in the amount they remit? According to Orozco (2013), previous research shows that women are less likely to remit or tend to remit less than men. However, there is no concrete evidence to support this conclusion as some of the counter-argument find that women remit more overall and as a percentage of income. The fact that women have a stronger network with home (as already explained in the previous sections) is often associated with greater remitting patterns.

Moving on from the gender issue, now I focus on what receiving remittance means to the country of origin. As already established that the migrants are not just abstract individuals, they all are a part of families or communities. But the topic of remittance extends beyond the money itself, by affecting the migrant-sending countries in a broad sense, in a way that it affects more than the individuals who are the direct recipients (Bartman, Poros & Monforte, 2014). For instance, remittances contribute a very significant portion of the gross national product for certain countries- 50% for Tajikistan, more than 20% in Nepal and Honduras, followed by more than 10% in

Nicaragua and the Philippines. Furthermore, countries like the Philippines encourage labour migration as a part of an official policy to increase foreign exchange earnings (Semyonov & Gorodzeisky, 2008).

Focusing on the aspect of remittance that is beyond finance, I bring into discussion Eckstein's (2010) notion regarding remittance in connection with social and symbolic capital, remittance and being a migrant can promote and reinforce reciprocity and prestige. Furthermore, Levitt (1998) had introduced the term "social remittance" to refer to the diffusion of cultural forms, that included normative structures, a system of practices and social capital. For instance, migrants might share their newfound ideas about gender roles and identities or political point of view with their families and friends back home. Thus, social remittance in such manner may be demonstrated by migrants returning to their home country with skills and understanding acquired in the country of destination (Bloch, 2005). Yet, borrowing from Kunz (2008), it is important to acknowledge other effects of social remittance, for example, migration to a wealthy Western country might arise movement towards gender equality but in other cases, migration might reinforce a more patriarchal or conservative framework (for more see Kunz 2008).

In summation, as scholars Baratram, Poros and Monforte (2014) explain that migration is not merely the geographical relocation of individuals but a complex social process with wide-ranging consequences for both origin and destination societies. One such complex economic process is remittances, which are created by international migration. The flow of remittances and their effects demonstrates a key contribution to the study of transnational activities. Next, I look at the political transnational ties that immigrants engage in with their homeland and the roles of social media in helping migrants keep them updated about their home country.

2.4.4 Political transnational ties amongst immigrants' and the role of social media

This section of the chapter is dedicated to addressing the political ties immigrants maintain with their homeland. The circumstances that guide such ties will be discussed in two parts (1) the various forms and ways of transnational political activities existing across borders and (2) the presence of global mass media accessed via the medium of social media. I begin by discussing the first part, according to Morawska (2011) political transnational ties have diverse modes of engagement; this includes the participation in events or contributing to the organization on an international level. Engagements on a national level will be by being a part of the home-country elections (if they are allowed) and further involvement in political events. The political activities that the immigrants participate in across national borders affect communities, parties and official institutions in the country of origin. Thus, it is essential to establish what types, scale, and intensity of political engagement the immigrants engage in and what individual and social factors shape such participation (Guarnizo, Portes & Haller, 2003).

To further illustrate this point, I borrow from Morawska's (2011) empirical study on Asian Indians' transnational engagements living in America. According to her, immigrant men were more intensely involved in the home country's politics compared to women. There was the immigrant press that released magazines dedicated to Indian economic, political and cultural news, for example, *India abroad*, *News India*, *Samar,* and *Masala*. Non-resident Indians (NRIs) also have repeatedly appealed to the Indian Government for the issue of dual citizenship, to facilitate the operation of transnational capital for Indians living abroad but at the same time influence the Indian politics.

Furthermore, the trio Guarnizo, Portes & Haller (2003) claim that "several scholars

have argued that migrants' loyalty and commitment to their homelands from afar constitutes an alternative political force that not only alters local traditional structures but also opens up new opportunities for their communities of origin" (2003, p. 1214). Migrants are observed as agents of change, who support and promote local development initiatives through hometown collaboration (Goldring 1996; Smith 1994,1998; Gutierrez, 1995) as well as active political participants (Sichller et al, 1992, Smith 1994; Graham, 1997; Itzigsohn et al, 1999). Similarly, many immigrant communities are considered as an important part of their respective country's electorate. Some of these countries have welcomed the immigrant settlers, and political candidates campaign among expatriates as well to gain their political favours and financial support (Graham 1997; McDonnell 1997; Itzigsohn et al. 1999). At the same time, several states have also introduced constitutional reforms to provide dual citizenship and political representation to their expatriates (Lessinger 1992; Mahler 1998, Guarnizo & Smith 1998).

Such initiatives have transformed the ways migrants have settled in societies. Incentives provided by their homeland are manufactured in such a way that they promote loyalty amongst the expatriates, but at the same time keep the remittances, investments and political contributions flowing. Such situations give rise to a new and stronger "voice" for organized immigrants in the politics of their homeland and home communities (Roberts, Frank &Lozano-Asencio, 1999). Now, I address the second part of this discussion regarding the role of social media as a means to receive the home country's news and current events.

In today's society, the speed and intensity of information and communication flows have increased tremendously and are shaping our everyday lives (Castells, 1996). The Internet is no longer merely a tool for the scientist or the military. The usage and

purpose of the Internet have rapidly developed into a social medium that can weave millions of people together, which enables them to not only consume that information available but also be active on various social media outlets. This phenomenon is known as 'Web 2.0' (O'Reilly, 2005). Social media has evolved and become an important channel to distribute information widely as well as a personal communication tool (Dekker & Engbersen, 2012). This revolution in the information and communication sector is of particular significance to migrants and non-migrants who live in different geographical locations; because this is the way they remain connected and gain information about the home country (Mahler, 2001).

The literature on migration studies has not fully addressed the possible consequences of the use of the Internet for the migration process (Hiller & Franz, 2004; Parhan, 2004; Van den Bos & Nell, 2006; Diminescu 2008; Ros 2010; Komito, 2011). Despite the widely acknowledged significance of information communication technology, there are hardly any empirical findings and theoretical framework governing this nexus of 'age of migration' and the 'network society' (Ros et al, 2007; Borkert et al, 2009). The focus of most of the research regarding the Internet has been on communication use and social ties. Nevertheless, social media at this day and age has much more to offer, not only as a platform to gain information but also the amount and type of information that is accessible.

Thus, it is safe to admit that Web 2.0 has successfully created a de-territorialized social space that facilitates communication amongst people who are geographically dispersed (Dekker & Engbersen, 2012). The people generally depend on social media and apps to keep in touch as well as update themselves about the current events of their home country, thus maintaining a kind of a transnational tie. The concept of social media is not limited only to social networks like Facebook or Instagram, but

also forums like writing blogs, Whatsapp, Twitter, Viber, V chat, etc. This has turned out to be an important tool, not only to keep in touch with family and friends back in the home country but a medium via which the migrants educate themselves about the political, economic, social and cultural events in the home country. For example, on twitter, people can voice their opinions regarding any issue and interact directly with the concerned politician, celebrity or any intellectual figure.

Similarly, on other social media like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram an individual can opt for tailored information to be displayed on their respective home page. This means people can pick and choose the kind of information they want to read and get displayed on their mobiles or computer screens. In this manner migrants' can only select the news they wish to read about or events they want to update themselves with. Thus, in contrast with the traditional mass media and communication media, social media can serve to link activities (Hiller & Franz, 2004) by giving opportunities to individuals residing away from their home country to reconnect with people with whom they have lost contact with (Hiller & Franz, 2004; Ellison et al, 2007) but at the same time, also to keep themselves informed about the activities in their homeland. For example, information on the economic status, recent political or social events or visits of important bureaucratic delegates in the host country, social media can, therefore, be expected not only to strengthen people's communicative habits but also to satisfy their needs to be informed about their homeland.

However, social media can also be responsible to provide users with false or unrealistic information. There is a need to recognize such discrepancies (Dekker & Engbersen, 2012) for instance, the people who have limited access to the Internet, or those who are misled by false or exaggerated information. This is the reason why some of the migrants may still rely on the information received by face to face or over

the telephone. Having outlined the role of social media and maintenance of transnational ties with the homeland, I will now address the last part of this chapter that is immigrants' adaption to the host country with a special focus on issues related to the experience of student migrants.

2.5 Adapting to the host country's culture

The preceding sections were concerned with the movement across international borders. It explored the development of such movements over time due to various factors while reviewing contemporary migratory flows. This section is now concerned with the immigrants' acclimatization to the host country's culture. According to the scholar duo, Kivisto and Faist (2010) the immigrants' process and stories of adaption to the host country's culture are so vital that it is considered the bread and butter of sociology. It clear that the sociologists were engrossed in formulating a conceptual framework for explaining new forms of inclusive solidarity and how is it achieved once the immigrants established roots in the country of destination. However, the scholar duo also adds that this area of study is contested and debates on this topic are based on the flow of immigration. The basic idea that governs this analysis is within the concept of inclusion and exclusion. The concept of inclusion and exclusion is important here because if (and when) the members of the destination countries consider the foreign group members as a threat to their own identity, then the forms of inclusive solidarity may not be successful.

According to Kivisto and Faist (2010), there are three main types of outside group members that are excluded from the home country's society/community; they are (i) indigenous people (ii) ethno national minorities and (iii) immigrants'. In the case of immigrants', the first scenario in which they can face exclusion is when they are not

allowed entry in the host country and even if they are already in the country they may face the uncertainty of deportation. In some circumstances they may be allowed to remain but with the condition that their stay is temporary and that they are in no position to acquire full citizenship (for example, temporary workers, international students). In most of the situations, the people who cross the international border and reside in a new country are barred from being involved in the political decision-making process that impacts their lives (Benhabib, 2008; Bosniak, 2006). One of the best examples to further illustrate this is guest worker. Such migrants are permitted to enter the country because of a shortage of labor, but their presence in any other way is not valued. However, I would like to mention here that contrary to this point, the U. K's election regulation allow commonwealth citizens (this include migrant students' from various commonwealth countries studying in the U.K) to vote during their general elections and EU referendum (for more on this refer to the empirical chapters).

One point to address at this stage what kind of migrants should be categorized as immigrants? According to Kivisto and Faist (2010) by some definitions guest workers, are not be considered as a true immigrant's because their intention is not to settle permanently, which means that if they are defined as temporary by the host country then the guest workers will not be eligible to be permanent settlers and become the integrated members of the new society. With the same notion, undocumented migrants share the same destiny as they are forced to work and in some ways establishing risks at the new country (Bartram, Poros and Monforte, 2014) whilst being aware that their illegal status makes them vulnerable as well as not fit to gain full societal membership. Education-related migration is another category that can be included in this discussion.

Researchers and policymakers have presented their argument regarding how a country's data can be improved if it is inclusive of the students crossing international

borders for education. Moreover, this step will also be beneficial in giving a clearer picture of the global migration trend. In an article titled *"International Students' Role in Migration must be recorded"* published by *The World University Ranking* the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2018) included international students in their definition of *"Temporary Migrants"*, however, it was found that the analysis of such type of migration had an inadequate connection to the actual international education policy. Furthermore, in the 2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants acknowledged "higher education serves as a powerful driver for change (and) shelters and protects a critical group of young men and women by maintaining their hopes for the future".

It is well established that student migration impacts both the sending and the receiving countries. From the sending country's point of view, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2018) 4.6 million students are scattered all over the globe in various educational institutions compared to 2.1 million in 2001. The OECD (2018) suggests that this increase will be stable in future, however, it has been predicted that there are many scholarships programs (for example EU's Erasmus) that are designed to encourage student migration by the year 2020, such opportunities will provide education-related movements for almost million higher education students. Whereas, from the receiving country's perspective the key point to take into consideration is the inflow of student migrants and their financial impact (for example £28 billion for the U.S for the academic year 2017-2018). Furthermore, it becomes the obligation of the receiving country to internationalize their universities. In the same manner student migrants' like other kinds of migrants have an impact on both the receiving and sending countries; they too have a process to sooner or later adapt to the host country's culture in some fashion. I consider two

underlying concepts- *acculturation* and *assimilation* since there is no theory developed so far as to consider the adaptation of the migrant students in their country of educational destination.

2.5.1 Acculturation and acculturation strategies

I first begin with acculturation and acculturation strategies that the immigrants adopt to be a part of the host country's society. Acculturation is defined as "a process by which the cultural patterns of distinct groups change when those groups come into contact with each other- sometimes resulting in the groups becoming less distinct culturally" (Bartram, Poros and Monforte, 2014, p 8). According to scholar Kosic (2002) acculturation strategies signifies the manners in which immigrants interact with the host country's society, mainly (a) the importance of the immigrants own cultural identity e.g. language, habits, and customs of the home culture and (b) their relationships with the members of the host country (Berry et al, 1989). Based on these two issues, four acculturation strategies are identified: assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization (Berry et al, 1989). However, Kosic (2002) mentions that these four strategies were based on the assumption that the immigrants' have the freedom to choose how they want to acculturate into the new country. Previous researches have provided evidence that greater the cultural differences lesser are the chance of favorable adaptation to the host country's culture, thus affecting the choice of acculturation strategies (Horenczyk, 1996). Moreover, Berry (1997) mentions that the immigrant groups with vast cultural differences are not well received by the host country's society, thus restricting them to choose the acculturation strategies they desire in fact, they are rather forced to follow a specific strategy of acculturation.

The concept of acculturation is said to have a long and controversial history in the

field of migration studies. The relevance of this concept grew with the migration history of the USA, especially with the flow of immigration at the brim of the twentieth century (Bartram, Poros and Monforte, 2014). Anthropologists and sociologist like Robert Redfield, Ralph Linton and Melville J Herskovits (1936) defined acculturation as "when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact with the subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups" (1936, p.149), this definition of acculturation was criticized by sociologist Milton Gordon (1964), the basis of his criticism was that definition lacked a structural perspective on how each distinctive group interact. Scholar trio Bartarm, Poros and Monforte (2014) add that Gordon was particularly interested in prejudice and discrimination, thus viewed the concept of acculturation as an unequal exchange of interaction between the cultures of the home and host country, where one country holds a dominant structural position the position of power. Gordon's understanding of acculturation, unlike his predecessors, was via social relationships between the native and the minority groups.

Gordon's point of view that acculturation was a one-way process in which the ethnic minorities adopts the patterns of the culture of the dominant group (Gans 1979, 1998, Alba & Neel 2003) influenced the other subsequent definition of acculturation. The elements of patterns mentioned by Gordon were language, dressing style, personal taste in music and other popular cultures, expression of emotions and religion (Bartram, Poros and Monforte, 2014). Based on this understanding, I have illustrated the process of acculturation amongst Indian migrant students' in the UK in the empirical chapters that follow. However, to fully comprehend the adaptation of the immigrants' in the host country's culture I take into consideration the concept of assimilation as well. Essentially, assimilation is a process by which the immigrants

become like the natives of the host country, which may lead to a reduction or elimination of the ethnic difference between the two groups (Bartram, Poros and Monforte, 2014). The difference between the natives and the immigrants' can be typically reduced to the "ethnic" difference thus scholar duo Alba and Nee (2003) define assimilation as "the decline of an ethnic distinction and its corollary cultural and social difference" (2003, p.11).

2.5.2 Immigrants and Assimilation

Scholars Bartram, Poros and Monforte (2014) state that the concept of assimilation can be used not only to support the empirical evidence to describe what immigrants' do but it can also be utilized to indicate what is expected from them by the natives of the country of destination, this ideology has been supported by the empirical works of scholars like Alba and Nee (1997) and Morawska (1994). The application of this idea is relevant in the trajectory followed by many countries especially in America, in the form of the 'melting pot' which mean that immigrants were expected to blend and disappear (and in some cases they did as well) in the host country's culture and adopted the traits of the new country's society leaving behind the identities that they initially came with (for more see Alba and Nee 1997).

Morawska (2003) illustrates the application of this concept in a multi-layer process that incorporates the immigrants and their children in different segments of the social, economic, political and cultural/social institutions of the host country's society. In the case of the middle class and rising lower class their assimilation is called upward, on the other hand struggling lower and underclass find themselves in downward assimilation also known as adhesive assimilation (Hurh and Kim, 1984). Furthermore, Morawska (2003) states that the kind of assimilation immigrants find themselves

upward or downward, contains patterns and combinations of economic, political, social, cultural and social orientations and practices brought by the immigrants from their homeland. Likewise, the author states, "in each mode, the process of assimilation evolves in a context-contingent and, thus nonlinear and multi-pace fashion" (Morawska, 2003, p. 134).

But how do immigrants assimilate into the country of destination? According to Alba and Nee (2003), three distinctive processes eventually result in assimilation. Bartram, Poros, and Monforte (2014) explain these three processes. The first stage of the process is known as 'Boundary Crossing' this is represented by the predictable routes of assimilation, at this stage individual go through substantial changes while joining the host country's culture, for example, learning a new language, and in some cases rejecting their ethnic background. The second process is known as 'Boundary Blurring' at this stage there is a reduction in the ethnic difference between the immigrants' and the native people at a societal level rather than at an individual level. The differences between groups become more so permeable and less striking or noticeable, for example, the issuing of dual citizenship, bilingualism, etc. Finally, the last process is known as 'Boundary Shifting', which according to Bartram, Poros, and Monforte (2014) is the most sensible readjustment of boundaries because it leans towards inclusion or exclusion of the immigrants' in the host country's society.

However, this process was deemed as an extensive transformation and has been written only as a conjecture. In the case of this research, I examine if and how the students might adapt to the host country's culture? And is it in more than one way? Although, I am aware that the process of acculturation and assimilation require the students to stay in the country after the completion of their course but due to the tight tier 4 (student visa) regulations and termination of post-study work visa (PSW), it has

become very tough for students to remain in the U.K. This has been discussed in the empirical chapter follow.

2.6 Gender and migration in the context of Indian overseas students

Since gender emerged as an important and recurring theme in the narrations of the participants, I have addressed this as a separate topic to support my findings. In almost all the stories of immigrants' women engage more in transnational activities compared to men, for example, keeping in touch with family members back in their home country. This is because the responsibility of keeping the family together and maintaining co-ordinal relationships amongst family members both far and near has been defined as the responsibility of the immigrant women since they are perceived as the guardians of home-country traditions (Morawska, 2011; Maira, 2002).

This thought process is relevant while addressing gender roles and migration in the Indian context as well. While examining the Indian overseas there has not been any substantial research from the gender point of view (Sondhi and King, 2017). This is however unusual because as Chopra (2005) states that over the past 20-30 years, feminist scholars have passionately advocated the relation between gender and migration process. According to Desai (1994), the prevalence of patriarchal society and the subordination of women are not new to the Indian society and the reason for the Indian women's status has a long history. Traditionally, women were considered subordinate to men. Man and women were not considered equal in the eyes of the laws and religion. Society allowed men to have certain rights and freedom; women were excluded from such privileges. There were different sets of standards to judge men and women. Birth determined the status of an individual in the society, thus the disadvantages of women existed because she was born as a woman. Religious laws

also further aggravated the inferior treatment of women.

Although, the status of women in India has come a long way, and there were many movements to initiate the emancipation of Indian women (see Karat, 2005). Still, there is the existence of rules and regulations of patriarchy and patrifocality that control women. I use the concept of patrifocality, here to "refer to the localized male dominance within the family hierarchy and the high gender and generation differentiated power relations and divisions therein" (Sondhi & King, 2017, p. 1309). Furthermore, the concept of patrifocality is important to understand in the Indian context, because it places the male power at the center in the Indian families, which guides the family authority, social roles, and control sexuality especially over women with the logic to safeguard the family's honor within the class and caste (Mukhopadhya and Seymour, 1994).

Thus, Chopra (2005) illustrates the basic gender stereotypical roles expected in a typical Indian middle-class family, these are: boys are trained to be a breadwinner of the house and head of the family; they should get married, have children and take care of their ageing parents. Girls, on the other hand, are trained to be a wife and enter motherhood. They are expected to manage the house and fulfill their household duties, as a wife, mother, and daughter in law. This status of women has however changed and writers like Donnan (2008) and Waldrop (2012) have discussed the various trend adopted by many upper and middle-class Indian families, who encourage their daughters to enter into higher education including sending them abroad to study and sometimes work. But, in such cases the main concern for the parents is that they do not "lapse into the perceived promiscuous western student way of life" (Sondhi & King, 2017, p. 1310) in addition to this, such females are pressurized to return back to India and conform their gender roles within the limitation of the patrifocal family.

Chapter 3

Conversing with the Indian students in the UK: Method and Process

This chapter aims to discuss the research methodology applied in this research. First I address the methodology, epistemology and ontological considerations. Followed by the research design and its justification, sampling methods and recruitment of participants. Next, I disclose my experiences regarding data collection and fieldwork and the researcher's positionality concerning the research and data. I then, discuss the validity and reliability of the research. Lastly, I mention the methods utilized to analyze the data and conclude by highlighting the ethical considerations for the research.

3.1 Epistemology, Ontology and Methodology considerations

The research paradigms are belief systems that are based on the assumptions of epistemology, ontology and methodology (Pitard, 2017). The assumption and understandings of how to research should be conducted also influence the research process (Bryman, 2012), this kind of consideration is referred to as epistemology. It is the branch of philosophy that is concerned about how do we know, what we know (Hofer, 2004). This approach "involves thinking about the nature of knowledge itself, about its scope and the validity and reliability of claims of knowledge" (Willig, 2001; p. 2). This approach encourages reflecting upon how the social world should be studied. Research in social sciences is different from the scientific model of doing research, because both kinds of research require different approaches, which is sensitive towards the qualities of people and social institutions (Bryman, 2001, 2012).

Furthermore, the debate on whether the nature of learning should be a part of personal epistemology is a longstanding. Personal epistemology according to Hofer and Pintrich (1997) and Sandoval (2005) state that id should include the nature and views of knowledge and not the views on the nature of learning. Contradicting this view scholar Elby (2009) states that the personal epistemology should not exclude the views of nature of learning, instead "it is more productive for the community not to coverage on a definition until further empirical and theoretical progress points us towards the best way to carve cognitive structures and their joints" (2009, P. 146). Hence, gathering from the work of scholar Pitard (2017), it is suggested that the nature of learning should be a part of the personal epistemology since researchers may involuntarily choose to ignore, how do we know, what we know.

Consequently, the ontology consideration is based on the assumption that the nature of social phenomena influences the research process (Bryman, 2012). According to scholars Higgs and Trede (2009) ontology is the social construction, experiences and dialogued perceived by human beings. This approach urges the researchers to make use of the narrations and the words used to describe and understand the experiences and perceptions of the world. While placing the research on the ontological-interpretivist-constructive paradigm, it is found that the researcher's understanding and knowledge of the social world are socially built through dialogues and meanings, the researcher and the social world impact each other on multiple interpretations of realities (Snape & Spencer, 2003; Pitard, 2017).

Next, the methodology is primarily a plan of action to conduct a research, which includes what kind of data should be collected, what are the tools utilized to collect the data and how is it analyzed (Beger, 2013, Bryant, 2009, Pitard, 2016). Specifically, in qualitative methodology, importance is given to the values and an objective that the

researcher contributes to their research and what impact it has on the research (Pitard, 2017). According to Ratner (2002) the choice of topic, conceptualizing the idea of the research, selection of method and analyzing the data is guided by subjectivity. Furthermore, Creswell (1998, 2013) suggests that there is a close connection between the development of a framework that guides the research and the philosophy the researchers bring to the research. While discussing the method and process of research, it is vital to address the positioning of the researcher with the research and data (Pitard, 2017). Likewise, recognizing researcher's positioning via reflexivity has been developed as an essential feature in qualitative research inquiry, which will be addressed later in the chapter.

Since this research explored the experiences of higher education Indian students in the UK, it led me to place the research within the domain of interpretive research paradigm. This interpretive or descriptive model has originated from the long history of Weberian sociology, Dilthey's philosophy and George Herbert Mead's social psychology (Barbour, 2014; Gilbert, 2008). The interpretive approach centres around the way humans make sense of their reality and derive meaning from it. "It is predicated upon the view that a strategy is required that respects the differences between people and the objects of the natural sciences and therefore requires the social scientists to grasp the subjective meaning of social action" (Bryman, 2012, p. 30). Thus, following the traditions of qualitative research and placing the research on an interpretivist research paradigm. I seek out to substantiate the various epistemologies (evidence) to the ontologies (ideas) that I conceived to carry on this research. Thus, the research design was selected bearing in mind that the student trajectories of migration follow a sequence; first their motivation to study abroad and the reason they chose UK; second the process of coming to the UK, the role of educational agencies

and finally, the socio-cultural and personal adjustment that the students undergo during their stay in the UK. The present research attempts to highlight that such adjustments and the transnational connections with home affect the overall experience of the student migrants. The research further explores how these areas are linked; more precisely it will attempt to show how the series of events unfold in the life of a migrant student. The rationale to carry out the investigation and the analyses of these three events together is to link these important stages that govern their experience before and during their stay in the UK. The potential links between these dimensions are explored by adopting the appropriate methodological tools, which is discussed afterwards in the chapter.

3.2 Research Design

The goal of the present research is to understand, the intellectual, emotional and socio-cultural experience of the Indian migrant student studying in the UK. To achieve this, I used a qualitative research design, because the traits of qualitative research allowed me to gain access to the rooted processes (Gilbert, 2008; Barbour, 2014; Bryman, 2012) of the Indian students' lives and their educational motivated journey to the UK, rather than simply looking at the characteristics and figures of international students. Qualitative research can expose the actual stories (Barbour, 2014) which is provided by the detailed explanations of the experience of the Indian students' during their sojourn Subsequently, the inductive view that qualitative research generates, where theorizing is based on the content of the data collected (Barbour, 2014; Bryman, 2012) places the research on an epistemological position, stressing on the understanding of the social world through an examination of the interpretation of the world by its participants (Willig, 2001).

Moreover, I choose to carry out an exploratory research more specifically a pilot study because the nature of this kind of research design serves as a guide for a larger study (Ahuja, 2012) as time and the resources to conduct an extensive research restricted me. Many scholars have discussed and stated the benefit of conducting exploratory research for instance, according to Sarantakos (1998), exploratory research is undertaken because of its feasible nature to familiarize the researcher with the social topic, to generate new ideas, formulation of hypothesis and operationalization. Hence, setting the present research in the qualitative- exploratory model confirm that analyzing the narrations of the Indian students' is best presented and explained by the characteristics of qualitative research and exploratory design.

According to Babbie (1998), exploratory studies are conducted for three reasons (1) to satisfy the researcher's curiosity and offer better understanding (2) to test the possibility to conduct extensive research (3) to develop methods that can be utilized for further research, thus adopting the characteristics of exploratory research has permitted me to satisfy all these three points. Likewise Zikmund (1988), mentioned three reasons for conducting research "(i) diagnosing a situation (ii) screening alternatives and (iii) discovering new ideas" (1988, p.73). The present research is conducted for similar reasons and applies its characteristics to understand the intellectual, emotional and socio-cultural experiences of Indian students in the U.K.

3.3 Sampling Method, Recruitment and Sample size

Based on the prerequisite of the present research, I opted to employ a non-probability sampling method. This kind of sampling is "essentially an umbrella term to capture all forms of sampling that are not conducted according to the canons of probability sampling" (Bryman, 2012, p. 201). According to Ahuja (2012), this kind of sampling

is utilized in qualitative exploratory research. I selected to use this sampling strategy since the samples are required to fulfill some basic requirements (Gilbert, 2008, Bryman, 2012). For the present research those requirements were:

(i)   The students' must be Indian nationals.

(ii)   Status of being a registered UG, Masters' and PhD students at a UK university during their stay.

(iii)   The amount of time they have stayed in the UK, for Masters' students and a minimum of 6 months and 1 year for undergraduate and PhD students.

The type of non-probability sampling that I applied was snowball sampling. This type of sampling "is a method for obtaining samples of numerically small groups. It involves contacting a member of the population to be studies and asking them whether they know anyone else with the required characteristics." (Gilbert, 2008). As the recruitment of participants progressed I realized that snowball sampling was a much faster means of obtaining participants. However, this kind of sampling also had some pitfall, like biasness (Ahuja, 2012) and if it includes people within the "connected network" of the participant (Gilbert, 2008). Likewise, snowball sampling might not be representative of the entire population Bryman (2012). Using this method, I interviewed 24 students from the University of Essex, SOAS, Queen Mary and Heriot-Watt University.

The students from the University of Essex were recruited through an advert posted[2] on the Research & Enterprise Office (REO). The REO sent an email alerting the participants on their mailing list about this research and provided a link to the research, on my behalf. Next, the international regional officer for India at the

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[2] Link to the advert: https://www.essex.ac.uk/reo/governance/take-part.aspx

University of Essex introduced me to some Indian students studying at the University via social media and I was successful in getting responses from some of the students. I also contacted the University of Essex Students' Union and asked permission to advertise my participation poster in their Asian and Tamil societies. Furthermore, while attending summer schools and seminars I was mindful about establishing some contacts with Indian students from other universities in the UK and requested for their contact details regarding participation in my research. I recruited the students from other Universities while I went to attend conferences in London, some via word of mouth and few who were friends of the students from Essex.

As mentioned earlier, one of the main requirements to be a part of this research was that the student should have spent a substantial amount of time in the UK to experience the culture of the host country. I scheduled interviews with Indian students who had stayed in the U.K for one year or more. However, this condition placed the Masters' students in an ambiguous position, as the length of all the Master's courses in the U.K universities is only one year, unlike in India, which is for two years. According to the UK Home Office (2017), most Indian students come to the UK to pursue a Masters' degree. Hence, it would have been a major shortcoming of this research to exclude these students. I thought that eliminating these students would mean rejecting a major portion of what make up the total Indian students pursuing higher education in the UK. This would inherently affect the population and my sample size for data collection. Therefore, after discussing with my supervisor I decided to include Masters students, who have stayed in the UK for 6 months.

The table below illustrates the demographic details of the participants recruited for this research:

Table 1: PhD Students

Sl.No	Pseudonyms	Gender	Caste	Place of origin	Funding Status	Parents Occupation
1	Geeta	Female	Unknown	New Delhi	Semi funded	Father & Mother Retired.
2	Soni	Female	Unknown	Pune	Fully funded	Father & Mother are both employed.
3	Pia	Female	Other Backward Classes (OBC)	New Delhi	Fully funded	Father & Mother Retired.
4	Anju	Female	General	Mumbai	Fully funded	Father & Mother both employed.
5	Nilu	Female	General	Mumbai	Fully funded	Father & Mother both employed.
6	Mia	Female	General	Mumbai	Fully funded	Father employed & mother homemaker.
7	Preeti	Female	Motaks	Assam	Fully funded	Father retired & Mother Homemaker.

8	Ram	Male	Brahmin	Kolkata	Fully funded	Father & Mother both retired.
9	Chetan	Male	Brahmin	New Delhi	Fully funded	Father employed & Mother homemaker.
10	Avi	Male	General	New Delhi	Fully funded	Father retired & Mother employed.

Source: The author.

Table 2: Masters' Students

Sl. No	Pseudonyms	Gender	Caste	Place of origin	Funding Status	Parents Occupation
1	Sonam	Female	N/A	Mumbai	Semi funded	Father separated & Mother homemaker.
2	Pooja	Female	Brahmin	Indoor	Fully funded	Father retired & Mother employed.
3	Sona	Female	Unknown	Mumbai	Fully funded	Father & Mother both employed.

4	Ankur	Male	Kais	New Delhi	Self- funded	Father & Mother both retried.
5	Siddhu	Male	Marwari	Mumbai	Self- funded	Father & Mother both employed.
6	Ravi	Male	N/A	New Delhi	Self- funded	Father & Mother both retired.
7	Lokesh	Male	Other Backward Classes (OBC)[3]	Sikkim	Self- funded	Father & Mother employed.

Source: The author

Table 3: Undergraduate Students

Sl.No	Pseudonyms	Gender	Caste	Place of Origin	Funding Status	Parents occupation
1	Alia	Female	General	Kolkata	Self- funded	Father- employed & Mother homemaker.
2	Mona	Female	N/A	U.P	Self- funded	Father- employed & Mother- homemaker.

[3] OBC is a constitutional term used by the Government of India, under Article 338 of the Constitution of India.

3	Meera	Female	N/A	Bangalore	Self- funded	Father & Mother both unemployed.
4	Kiran	Female	Jain	Mumbai	Self- funded	Father & Mother both employed.
5	Tina	Female	Kashmiri Pandit, Brahmin	New Delhi	Self- funded	Father deceased & Mother employed.
6	Amir	Male	N/A	Kashmir	Self- funded	Father & Mother both employed.
7	Pramod	Male	Marwari	New Delhi	Self- funded	Father & Mother both employed.

Source: The author.

Now, I shed some light on the sample size for the research. Unable to justify the sample size is one of the major limitations of any research. To ensure that there is satisfactory analysis of the data received in any given research, there should be enough data to perform credible analysis of the research topic (Gilbert, 2008; Gilbert, Bryman, 2012). However, scholars working on qualitative methodology accept that there is a lack of standardization when it comes to sample size (Marshall, Cardon, Poddar & Fontenot, 2013). For instance, researcher Patton (2002) explains, "Qualitative inquiry is rife and ambiguities. There are purposeful strategies instead of methodological rules. There are inquiry approaches instead of statistical formulas. Qualitative inquiry

seems to work best for people with a high tolerance for ambiguity…. Nowhere is this ambiguity clearer than in the matter of sample size… there are no rules for sample size in qualitative inquiry. Sample size depends on what you want to know, the purpose of the inquiry, what's at stake, what will be useful, what will have credibility, and what can be done with available time and resources" (2002, p.242-243).

Furthermore, during qualitative interviews, sample size can also be influenced by the concept of "data saturation", when the researcher arrives at a point when any new interview they conduct contributes nothing new to the findings (Marshall, Cardon, Poddar & Fontenot, 2013). Apart from data saturation, the other factors that influence the sample size are the quality of interviews, the experience of the researcher, interviews per participant and the sampling procedures (Patton, 2002). In the case of the present research, the factor that influenced my sample size was the fact that this thesis had to be completed in 3+1 year, thus, there was a time-bound and the need to submit this thesis within a specific time. Such constraints have serious Visa implications for international students in the UK, as I am one of them. The sample size for this research consisted of 24 participants made up of 7 students from the undergraduate study (UG), 7 from postgraduate students (Masters) and 10 from doctoral study. I also interview 4 educational counselors from the educational agency *The Chopras*. For justifying my sample size, I gather some collective insight from the guidelines provided for qualitative studies. According to, Marshall, Cardon, Poddar & Fontenot (2013) in their attempt to provide guidelines for the desired number of sample size, they state that qualitative research should include between 20 and 30 interviews.

These groups of scholars further recommend that more than 30 interviews can lead to a mix-up, especially when there is more than one researcher collectively working on

the same topic. However, these scholars also mention that there is no evidence that 30 interviews will yield substantial information for the development of the research and admit that there is still some room for modification and improvement in this area. I would like to mention here that initially, as per the discussion I had with my supervisor, I had aimed for 10 participants each from every level of study; however, I was unable to achieve this because of several factors:

1) I did not receive the kind of response that I had expected from the adverts that I had posted.

2) UG students did not seem interested in being a part of the research.

3) Masters' students were difficult to get in touch because of their hectic class schedule and that they were in the U.K for a limited period.

4) During winters and vacation times most of the students had plans to visit home or travel.

5) There were several students I contacted via email and phone calls who did not respond.

6) I was able to achieve the desired number amongst PhD students because of common friends and the fact that they were all researchers themselves so they would empathize in the situation I was in.

3.4 Data Collection, Fieldwork and Researcher's Positionality

The tool I used for collecting data was interviews. Interview is a means of verbal questioning, research interviews are different from general interviews as interviews for research "is prepared and executed systematically, it is controlled by the researcher

to avoid bias and distortion, and is related to a specific research questions and a specific purpose" (Ahuja, 2012; p.221). More specifically I adopted semi-structured interviews this type of interviews "typically refers to a context in which the interviewer has series of questions that are in the general form of an interview schedule but can vary the sequence of questions. Also, the interviewer usually has some latitude to ask further questions in response to what are seen as significant replies" (Bryman, 2004, 2012; p. 212).

I decided to employ these data collection techniques due to the type of data I wanted to obtain, and using this technique was the best way to gather organic information about the Indian students' intellectual, emotional and socio-cultural experiences in the UK. Qualitative research interviews have "greater interest in the interviewee's point of view" (Bryman, 2004, p 319), and semi-structured interviews fit this requirement for the present research. Since the student participants had to rely on their retrospective memory, semi-structured interviews were the best method to explore their experiences during their journey. Also, interviews allowed me to provide context and understanding to the new emerging themes and offered a broader picture through exploring an individual's behaviors, attitudes and thoughts. Furthermore, it directed me towards exploring new issues and refine questions for future interviews. The main focus while conducting theses interviews was that on one hand, it is vital to gather unique and individual information, while on the other hand, participants should be approached with a focus on answering fairly specific questions that would support the aim of this research.

The interview questions for the participants were driven by the biographical interviewing method (Bryman, 2012). The participants relied on their retrospective memory and narrated their experience when they first came to the UK. I was cautious

not to impose my own empirical and theoretical framework on the participants. After asking a question I gave the participants the liberty to narrate and express their own experiences. This was done so that the participants did not feel the need to fulfill the research objective. I anticipated that once a topic had emerged, I could ask the follow-up question using concepts the participants have mentioned (Hollway and Jefferson 2000). The interviews were recorded using a voice recorder and transcribed the same evening so that I do not forget any important points that came up during the interview. I also took some notes during the interview. I then compiled my notes with the transcribed interviews and stored it securely so that I did not lose any information and to ensure the anonymity and safety of participants' information.

From the first interview that I conducted, I realized that the students were very eager to share their experiences. They were willing to talk about their lives and describe their journey from India to the U.K. My strategy for doing the interviews was to start with a casual approach I wanted the students to feel comfortable with me during the entire interview. Therefore, I started the interview by asking them first to tell me something about them, for example, which part of India they were from? What were they studying? How long they had been in the UK? What did their parents do? Etc. Asking these basic questions helped the participants and me to arrive at a level of comfort and understanding, which I thought was essential before I asked them personal questions about their experience, opinions and feelings. This approach made the interviews natural and most of the participants seemed to gradually open up and went into extensive details of their experience and lives so far. While employing this casual approach, I gained familiarity with the participant's background. Knowing their history helped me spot minor details during the interviews that helped me to make efficient use of my time with them and enabled me to ask very specific and in-depth

questions. For example, the parent's occupation prompted me to ask questions about their funding status and if they received remittance from their home. Employing this kind of method, contributed to the flow of the interview making the entire process natural and following a logical sequence.

Fieldwork

My fieldwork was planned with the point of view to fully grasp the journey of the migrant students from India to UK, so considering the role of educational counseling agencies in this journey was a part of it. Educational agencies provided assistance to the prospective students in the form of securing the desired English language test score, seeking admission and scholarships and finally, the visa process. The importance of such agencies has been addressed in detail in chapter 4.

After doing adequate research I identified two popular educational agencies in India, IDP Education and The Chopras. While I was in the UK I contacted the offices of each of these agencies, I got a response only from The Chopras. Upon further research, I discovered that both the agencies had more than ten branches all over India. Due to time and financial constraints, I had to decide which branches I wanted to visit. I decided to visit the offices in four branches New Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore and Chennai. I selected these cities because most of Tier 4 visa applications made by Indian nationals was from these cities (UK Home Office, 2017). Which meant most of the Indian students travelled to the U.K for higher studies from these cities. I then contacted the offices in these cities and continued my dialogue with the agencies via email and telephone before my visit to India and set up dates for the interview and planned the itinerary for my trip accordingly. My field trip was planned in the following manner:

Table 4: Fieldtrip plans

Sl. No	Date of travel	City	Name of the counsellor
1	13th- 17th July 2016	New Delhi, North India	Mrs Natasha Chopra, CEO The Chopras.
2	21st-24th August 2016	Bangalore, South India	Ms Glenda, senior counsellor.
3	25th-28th August 2016	Chennai, South India	Mr Sumit, senior counsellor.
4	29th -2nd September 2016	Mumbai, West India	Ms Wajita, senior counsellor.

Source: The author.

I prepared a separate information sheet and consent forms for these interviews. I had recorded the interview to transcribe it later. I even supported the findings of the interview with the agency's documents, brochure and guidebooks.

Researcher's positionality

According to Coghlan & Brudon-Miller (2014), researcher's positionality refers to the position of the researcher in terms of the social and political situation of the study. Thus, adopting the practice of reflexivity during the entire research process is

important to announce and take responsibility for positioning the researcher within the research (Pitard, 2017). Reflexivity is considered an important part of qualitative research because this involves the researcher to comprehend the entire process of doing research and also shapes the result (Hardy et al, 2001). It is the researcher's responsibility to reflect upon the manner empirical research is conducted and provides an explanation regarding the research process and arriving at a conclusion (Corlett &Mavin, 2018). Additionally, Cromby and Nightingale (1999) mention two different kinds of reflexivity (a) personal reflexivity and (b) epistemology reflexivity. Personal reflexivity refers to how the values, life experiences and assumptions of the researcher influence the research and epistemology reflexivity refers to how the research method and designs have influenced or restricted the research, and what could have been done differently. Thus, it is essential to take into consideration elements of both personal and epistemology reflexivity.

As a researcher, I was aware of my positionality and my relation between the participants and myself. As mentioned in the introduction, the decision to pursue the research on the experiences of the Indian students in the U.K has been subjective since, I was motivated by my personal experiences and the transformation during this experience that led me to choose this area for research. The subjective position I held based on my nationality and student status, which assisted me to gain access to the participants and formulate the research questions. Being an Indian and an international student myself helped me to understand the context and language, which proved beneficial when I was designing the interview questions. While establishing initial contacts with the participants they were aware that I was an Indian student myself this factor positioned me as an insider (Gilbert, 2008), which had an advantage and a disadvantage. Some of the students felt that because I was from the same country and

a student in the UK they discussed things freely, which was helpful. On the other hand, some of the students assumed that I had similar experiences as theirs' and did not go into the details of narrating their experiences. Such events made me realize that my positionality could influence the information I gather from the interviews.

This factor led me to be attentive to such deficiencies. When I came across such situations I then asked the participants some follow-up questions, and gently insist on elaborating their point of view further. This was the challenging part of conducting the interviews, as I had to maintain a strict interviewer and interviewee relationship, but at the same time, I didn't want this to affect my rapport with the participants. I understood that this conflict was partly a matter of personal reflexivity and partly because of epistemology reflexivity (Pitard, 2017). Initially, when this happened, I was anxious to go back to the question and I struggled a bit to talk about the topic again. Nevertheless, after conducting a couple of interviews I felt I had gained confidence and when I sensed that the student had skipped a part about explaining something, with the assumption that I already had some knowledge about it, I handled it in a more relaxed manner. I simply smiled or nodded as a sign of assurance but still asked them to explain further. Adopting this technique helped me maintain the balance between being a researcher, and retain a friendly nature during the interview. Furthermore, the use of semi-structured interviews was helpful in this particular situation as it allowed the order of questions to flexible and I was able to revisit the area or topic that I thought would be crucial of the research.

3.5 Designing Interview questions and Interview schedule

The interview guide for this research was prepared with the objective to cover the information required for the research. At the same time, the questions had to be open (Ahuja, 2012; Gilbert, 2008, Barbour, 2014) and meant to elicit narrative answers. While designing the interview questions, I was conscious about the fact that the questions should allow the participants to focus on issues of greater importance to them as an international student, rather than the agenda being determined entirely by my research interest. I was very thoughtful about the structure and order of the questions and I believed it had to follow the stages in the journey of the migrant students as mentioned in the beginning section that starts with the motivation/reasons followed by the process and finally their experience.

I wanted the interview questions to follow this particular sequence so that it would facilitate the narration of the series of events as it occurred in the lives of the students. I also paid attention to the content of the interview schedule and designed some specific and contextual questions (Barbour, 2014). Specific questions were designed to generate data to explore distinctions and demographic characteristics of each participant's. Contextual questions ranged from opinions about visa policy changes and border entry requirements to their current lives in the UK. The questions were designed to generate the understanding and relation to the subsequent themes that would emerge and analyzed.

I was also prepared to modify the questions and generate discussions as and when new issues came up and in the process gather valuable data. I was aware of the fact that this was a two-way interaction and was sensitive about why the students were telling a particular story and why he or she had chosen to talk about that certain topic. I

allowed the students to share other issues salient to him or her. There were times when the students felt that they could express their point of views better in their native language, for instance by using a *Hindi* idiom, I encouraged them to do so. This turned out to be a good approach as the students felt that they could speak their mind and express their thoughts better. Throughout the interviewing process, I felt that in being so attentive to the student's experience they felt that everything they said mattered. This gave the students a sense of importance and as the interview progressed they seemed to be more involved and articulate. This helped me to generate very interesting discussions and address issues that I had not envisaged while initially designing the interview questions.

During my fieldwork in India I had also interviewed educational counselors, the main focus of conducting these interviews was to have a clear understanding of the extensive services educational agencies provide to the students, and also how do they approach the prospective students. I used this opportunity to comprehend the student's expectations before they go abroad and to what extent do the educational agencies

help the aspiring students to meet those expectations. Yet, these agencies also have few shortcomings some of which have been identified by Badde (2013) as follows:

1) Agencies don't disclose that they are working for commissions.

2) Directing the students towards institutions that pay the most commissions.

3) Not delivering accurate information regarding the university's program of study and credential conferred.

4) Misguiding the students regarding visa process and collecting unnecessary fees.

5) Assisting the students in writing personal essays and personal statements.

The categories of questions and themes the interviews intended to fulfill (both with the student participants and educational counselors) have been further illustrated in a table and attached in the appendix.

3.6 Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity in qualitative research states that the "trustworthiness of a research report lies at the heart of issues conventionally discussed as validity and reliability" (Seale, 1999; p.266), thus to guarantee reliability and validity the scrutiny of trustworthiness is vital. Additionally, Patton (2001) states that reliability and validity are the two features that each qualitative researcher should be apprehensive about while selecting the research design, analyzing the data and the overall quality of the research. Thus, if securing reliability and validity is essential in research, how can one achieve this? The present research depends on the logic of triangulation to improve the reliability and validity.

Triangulation is a strategy to improve the validity and reliability of a research and its finding (Golafshani, 2003), to further illustrate this, Mathison (1988, p. 13) state "triangulation has risen an important methodological issue in naturalistic and qualitative approaches to evaluation control bias and establishing valid propositions because traditional scientific techniques are incompatible with this alternate epistemology." Patton (2001) while supporting the use of triangulation, states that this strategy can reinforce a study by combining methods, which meant using various kinds of methods or data including qualitative and quantitative approaches, however, this idea has been protested by Barbour (1998), on the basis that combining paradigms is possible, but merging methods within one paradigms may lead to confusion.

Although triangulation strategy is mostly used in quantitative research for generalization Barbour (1998), does not object to the utilization of this approach in qualitative research, but there is a need to define triangulation from the perspective of qualitative research. For instance, if using triangulation in quantitative research data lead to non-confirmation of hypothesis in qualitative research it may require amending the theories (Golafshani, 2003). The main aim of any qualitative research is to "engage in research that probes for deeper understanding rather than examining surface feature" (Johnson, 1995, p. 4), thus, situating the present research on an interpretivist-constructive paradigm helps the research in question to acquire this and provide values to the multiple realities that people have in mind (Golafshani, 2003). To achieve valid and reliable, multiple methods of collecting data should be adopted such as observation, interviews and recording of interviews, which will lead to more valid and reliable construction of realities (Johnson, 1997). Furthermore, "triangulation may include multiple methods of data collection and data analysis but does not suggest a fix method for all researchers. The methods chosen in triangulation to test the validity and reliability of the study depend on the criterion of the research" (Golafshani, 2003, p.604). Therefore, to improve the reliability and validity in the case of this research, I conducted semi-structured interviews which was recorded in a voice recorder and later transcribed, I complimented this method by taking notes during the interview and referring to it while analyzing the data.

3.7 Data Analysis

Finally, when I reached the stage of data analysis I realized that the material I had with me was in the form of large unstructured textual material and not straightforward to analyze. On reviewing the different ways to analyze data in qualitative research, I found that the characteristics of thematic analysis were the most suitable method to

analyze the data. Thematic analysis is one of the common forms of qualitative data analysis. It emphasizes on identifying, examining and recording certain patterns or themes (Bryman, 2012; Jones et al, 2009; Ritchie et al, 2003). Thus, I analyzed the data by constructing an index of 'central themes' and 'sub-themes'. The ultimate aim of thematic analysis is to identify the themes and goes beyond summarizing the data, a good thematic analysis helps to interpret and make sense of the data accumulated (Clarke & Braun, 2013). While doing the analysis, I followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) six phases framework for doing thematic analysis that are:

1) To become familiar with the data

2) Generate initial codes

3) Look out for themes

4) Review the themes

5) Define the themes

6) Write-up

While identifying the themes I searched for patterns that were present across the accumulated data. The appearances of themes in the data are important to explain or describe a particular topic and are associated with specific research questions (Gilbert, 2008, Barbour, 2014). The themes and sub-themes were essentially the recurring motifs in the text. I acquired the themes and subthemes by reading and rereading the transcripts and refereeing to the field notes prepared during and after the interview. While searching for themes I followed the recommendations suggested by Ryan and Bernard (2003), which were:

1) Repetitions

2) Indigenous typologies/ categories

3) Metaphors and analogies

4) Transitions

5) Similarities and differences

6) Linguistic connectors

7) Missing data

8) Theory-related material

I then applied this framework to the data this helped me organize the initial core themes, and further display the themes in terms of subthemes within the background and for each interview conducted (Bryman, 2012). For instance, I constructed a framework for organized themes. I first picked the motivation behind the students to study abroad and why they chose the UK. Second, the role of educational agencies followed by the effect of the changes in the Tier 4 visa regulations. Thirdly, the students' experience, formation of relationships and their transnational connections that construct ties with the homeland. The points that I assumed whilst undergoing this process were (Bryman, 2012):

1) I used the question number to indicate where the transcript framework came from.

2) I was mindful to keep the actual language of the research participants as much as possible.

3) Try not to use too much quote and use abbreviation to eliminate use of too many works

Lastly, I was also open to the idea of other themes emerging while analyzing the data, which I might have overlooked at any given point while analyzing the data.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

The research followed the BSA code of ethics for conducting social science research. The present research design has considered ethical principles of informed consent, safeguarding the confidentiality of the participants and freedom to withdraw from the research at any point.

While conducting interviews, consent was obtained in writing and recorded before starting the interview. I prepared an information sheet and consent forms that the participants have signed, both of them are attached at the appendix. Participants were explained what the interview was about, the day and date and venue were clearly stated at the beginning of the interview. The average time for each interview was one hour. They were also informed that the interviews were recorded and transcribed later. The participants were asked for their permission and only if/when they said 'yes' the interview started.

Since the research generated personal data I maintained anonymity by using pseudonyms while transcribing the interview. This is because I felt that since the stories of the student participants' were personal, the narratives needed to belong to someone. Furthermore, I assured the participants that the details they gave during the interview were confidential and no one other than me would have access to the information. The participants were given my contact details (email and phone number)

and if at any point after the interview they felt they do not want to be part of the research; they could inform me. The interviews were recorded in a voice recorder, which was transferred to my computer that was password protected and only I had access to the recorded interviews. For my security, care was taken about the location of the interview, and I always carry my mobile phone with me. I made it a point to always inform someone (my friends or flat-mate in the U.K and one of my family members in India) about the venue and time of the interviews.

Chapter 4

**Mechanisms Triggering Indian Students' Educational Migration to the
UK**

Reflecting on the conceptual framework of structuration which informs the study, this chapter reviews a constellation of mutually enforcing circumstances ranging from macro- through mezzo-level societal conditions to micro-individual characteristics of human actors which shape Indian students' decisions about whether and where to travel for educational purposes. In the section on macro-level circumstances shaping this movement, I consider globalization or the growing technological, economic and civic interconnectedness of the world, including internationalization of education this is followed by a discussion on mezzo-level conditions covering bilateral political agreements between sending and receiving countries regarding migrants' rights of entry, social entitlements, interpersonal and institutional information and support networks. The last section of the chapter is devoted to migrant students' assessments of the situation, aspirations and decisions. In each of the above sections I present the main contributing factors as identified in the relevant literature supported with citations from the interviews, and interpret those opinions in terms of their dominant tendencies and noteworthy deviations such as gender, caste and level of study similarities and differences they reveal.

4.1 Macro-level Factors

Globalization is a social phenomenon that has a long history and has an impact not only on world affairs but also on other facets of human development like educational institutions. Inspired by Marijik van der Wende's (Eggins, 2003) rationale for globalization that resonates in higher education, this research has identified three

different conditions in which globalization have stimulated restructuration in the higher education sector. Firstly, the economic rationale that beds on the foundation of financial-economic issues; secondly, the cultural rationale the consciousness among educational institutions to become a global platform and open their gates to a wider and diverse population of students; and thirdly, the political rationale, which is identified as arrangement and agreement in the form of country-level visa agreements among nations that allow people to travel and enter a country. In addition to this, there are the latest transport and communication amenities that enable people to transcend space with ease.

According to Gribble (2008), the reduction in the cost of transportation and advances in communication technology has contributed in making studying abroad accessible. Without these developments and alterations, travelling abroad for education would not be a popular phenomenon. However, the findings of the current research have found that the participants did not comment on these factors or the global aspect of their journey. This could be because they were not aware of them or took them for granted; therefore, I am unable to produce any quotations to support this idea. Nevertheless, the present research acknowledges the importance of globalization and the role it plays in shaping this journey of the migrant students.

The findings and testimonies of participants indicate that one of the main factors that shaped the journey of the migrant students were the *Academics and Career Prospects*. Before going further, I believe it is important to fully comprehend the contextual setting of this theme, which has been explicitly explained in the review of literature chapter under educational migration- macro level.

Indisputably, the UK is one of the popular choices for higher education for international students, especially for Indian students, who make up the second-largest number of international students in the UK after Chinese. According to HESA (2016), 16,745 Indian students are studying in the UK. Indian students coming to the UK has been a long and old tradition. They began arriving in the UK during the mid-19th century (Visram, 2002). Scholar and former research student at the London School of Economics, Singh (1963), wrote a book on Indian students in Britain. In the introduction he states that the reason foreign students come to Britain is because "first, the advanced educational system of this country and the long tradition and prestige of some universities, and second, the great social value attached to British degrees and preferences given to them against degrees from other western universities in colonial or ex-colonial countries from where most of the students come from" (1963; p. 1). In accordance, Singh's approach is partly reflected in the students' motivation.

"I didn't like the study culture in India; I have been struggling with it my whole life because it emphasizes what marks you get. I learnt about psychoanalysis while doing psychology just a little bit and it's not offered in India, so I looked abroad in different countries."

(Geeta, female, is a third-year PhD candidate at the University of Essex.)

When I asked her further about the reason she selected the UK specifically, she added:

"Geeta: Well.... actually, the UK was at the bottom of my list...anywhere but there...but this had the best center for psychoanalysis.
Me: Why was the UK at the bottom of your list?
Geeta: You hear a lot about racism and then in the newspapers. I mean I get that they only show the bad stuff and never show the good stuff. Plus, I was

a history buff and I didn't like the colonial aspect...I was like, I am never

going there..."

In contrast, when I asked a Masters student her reason for coming to the UK for her higher education, she shared:

"I looked at some courses in gender studies in India – it only looked at south Asian. I wanted to look at the euro-centric aspect as well – that was important as well. I wanted a degree that allowed me to interact with other cultures as well. The UK because of the colonial history; as well, I wanted to see what it was like."

(Pooja, female, was a Masters student at SOAS, University of London.)

The quotes from the participants support Singh's statement about students choosing to come to the UK for advanced education. This can be further reinstated by author Mukherjee's (2010) observation. She claims that the limitations of the Indian universities (and now the various taught modules offered at UK universities) and the minimal opportunities for research topics made the Indian students aware of the shortcomings of the Indian educational system. However, Singh's second claim seems to be subjective today and dependent on how the students perceive the colonial history India has with Britain. As stated above, some participants might have hard feelings about it, whereas for some this was one of the attractions to come to the UK.

The second and very important factor in choosing the UK is related to funding. As historian Visram (2002) writes, "a few came on government scholarships, but many more were private students, parents sending their sons, and sometimes daughters, at great cost and hardship. A British education conferred economic benefits and status"

(Visram, 2002: p. 86). According to Mukherjee (2010), the government of India had considered introducing scholarships for Indians to study in Britain in 1867 after the success of Satyendranath Tagore[4]. There were two scholarships awarded annually from Indian universities, and scholars were given £200 a year for fees and expenses. Later, in 1904, the government introduced scholarships for £150 for technical subjects. Over the years there have been several scholarships available for Indian students funded by both India and the UK; some of the prestigious ones are Commonwealth scholarships, Charles Wallace India Trust scholarships, Felix scholarships and Goa Educational Trust scholarships. The eligibility to apply for these scholarships depends on the course, duration and level of study.

Nonetheless, it would be oblivious to assume that Indian students today come to UK universities only based on the scholarships offered to them in India. Many UK universities offer scholarships to international students, and some of them are specific to Indian students. It is also important to bear in mind that large numbers of students who join the universities are self-funded as well. The students that I interviewed were a mix of scholarship holders and self-funded. Securing a scholarship was one of the factors that motivated the students to come to a UK university.

> *"My motivation was very subject-specific because I wanted to do my Masters in gender studies; there were many universities that offered this and I applied only to SOAS. I secured a scholarship, so that made it easier for me to decide."*

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[4] Satyendranath Tagore became the first Indian to successfully pass the open Indian Civil Service (ICS) exam in 1864. The ICS was a highly prestigious career choice, known informally as the "heaven-born service". If Indians could gain a post in the ICS they could wield some power over the community and work with the British to have a hand in the control of their country. After the British Crown formally took over India in 1858, the ICS was reformed and superior officers were selected through open exams held annually in London (Mukherjee, 2010).

(Sona, female, was a Masters student at SOAS, University of London.)

"Um… well, to be honest, I wasn't getting to do what I want to do in India in terms of my research. I wanted to do my research anyway; I often found myself being, like, completely unsatisfied in terms of, um… the kind of research I would be able to do by myself, sustaining by myself in India and it's a hard deal. If you want to do research full-time you need to be earning so there is no way you can do that in India. So I was looking for a scholarship position; therefore, I only applied for a place, which gave scholarship, so that was pretty clear. I was getting a scholarship in Bangalore as well, and I had saved up when I was working for a couple of years, but that money had to run out sometime, so in the meanwhile I had applied for scholarship and I thought it was a good opportunity, now that I was fully funded and I could do my research and also see another place."

(Avi, male, is a fourth-year PhD candidate at Queen Mary, University of London.)

This research has found that almost all the PhD students were fully funded, followed by only two funded Masters students, who were both females; however, none of the undergraduate students were funded. The parents of the fully funded students were mostly retired or only one of them was working. Both parents of most of the self-funded students were working or had family businesses.

Another notable feature is that most of the students came to study Masters courses in the UK, which is only for one year, compared to Masters courses in India that are for two years. Few Indian students come to the UK for undergraduate courses and all of the participants I interviewed were fully funded by their families. According to the

findings of the global survey by HSBC conducted in 2015 entitled *The Value of Education: Learning for Life*, it was stated that Indian parents were willing to spend more than they would in their own country to give their children the experience of studying abroad, and nearly 60% of them would consider paying at least 50% more to get a degree from a foreign university.

> *"I wanted to come to the UK firstly to do my MBA and second when I started my under graduation I was working as well; I wanted to work for five years and do my MBA, particularly a one year MBA so that my salary would increase. I was fully supported by my parents and self-funded."*

(Ankur, male, was a Masters student doing his MBA at the University of Essex.)

> *"My father is a businessman and I was not very excited about studying in India; I wanted to experience another country and culture. I am doing accounting and finance; I plan to get some practical experience before I take over my father's business. My father supported my decision and is funding my study in the UK."*

(Pramod, male, is a third-year UG student at the University of Essex.)

Furthermore, while discussing the funding aspect of their studies, a participant shared:

> *"I have a loan from an Indian bank which has a high-interest rate, so I am looking forward to paying that back."*

(Meera, female, is a third-year UG student at the University of Essex.)

The Economic Times[5] (2015) reported that around 300,000 students go abroad from India annually, and 33% of them mortgage their properties for educational loans. Educational loans cover basic course fees, accommodation and other miscellaneous charges. The loan will be in the name of the student; a parent, a spouse or a sibling can be the co-applicant; in Meera's case, it was her father. An educational loan, therefore, plays a vital role in such a scenario by either providing the total cost for the studies or helping bridge the gap between the shortfall and the required amount.

Therefore, irrespective of the student's funding status, whether it is fully funded, self-funded or through an educational loan, students choose to come to the UK because of some factors, as stated by Foskett and Foskett (2006). Many of the universities have an international reputation for the quality of their programs. The international research world has maintained a high profile for UK universities who are researching and publishing in their specialist fields and is therefore well known internationally. British universities have built up strong relationships with national governments, with schools, colleges and universities in many countries, and particularly with those countries that are part of the Commonwealth.

The findings under this theme reveal that the prime motive amongst all the participants from all the three levels of study (PhD, Masters and UG) was quality of education offered by the UK universities. While having further conversations about motivations to come to the UK, the prospect of acquiring good jobs was most prominent among the Masters students, much like what Singh (1963) and Visram (2002) had claimed and previously discussed. The reason behind this could be because some jobs require a level of expertise or knowledge which are not possible to acquire from an undergraduate degree, and insist on a Masters or in some cases a Doctoral degree as an

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[5] The Economic Times edition of 28th August 2015

entry requirement. Furthermore, like Foskett and Foskett (2006) mention that many jobs now prefer applicants to demonstrate their achievements at postgraduate level, either as a requirement for entering the career or a necessity to secure promotion to more senior levels. Having a Masters on the curriculum vitae can improve job prospects substantially, and give the edge in a competitive job market. The typical responses from two Masters students below confirm this:

"I have been…like I said, I have been working for the past seven years and at a certain point of your career you realize that if you want to grow at a quicker pace, at a faster pace, instead of spending five more years or seven more years just to get to the next stage, you realize an education will help you with the same expertise, so that was my motivation to take that one year."

(Sonam, female, was a Masters student studying Global and Comparative Politics at the University of Essex.)

"The thing is I have been working with NGOs for the past seven to eight years in the development sector and I always wanted to go and do my Masters – I just didn't have the money. I didn't know that I could; in fact, no one in my family had done, so I come from a lower-middle-class family. Over the years I realized if I want to go ahead in my career and teach research this is the only way I had to."

(Ravi, male, was a Masters student studying Globalization and Development at SOAS.)

Hence, based on the findings of this research, it is certain to state that the main attraction for Indian students to choose the UK for their higher education is the academic excellence that the universities offer and the funding opportunities available for international students. Additionally, the level of study had an important role to play while discussing, if the students had any desire to work in the U.K after completion of their degree. This thought was strongly expressed by Masters' students only, as their course was for one year (unlike in India which is for 2 years) and they wanted to apply for jobs to earn the money they spent in their education or get a good job based on their foreign degree.

Following the logic of the structuration theory, the present findings place international education as a macro-level factor that influences the decision-making amongst the students. As scholar Wolfel states, "the macro-level influences guide migration decisions; in other words, the individual moves as a result of factors beyond the migrant's control" (2002: p. 5). As found out, academics and career prospects are the most pivotal reason Indian students choose to come to the UK.

As explained previously, according to the different levels of internationalization of education, the mobility of students from one place to another is the first stage of this. This research suggests that the macro-level (education) influence led the students to decide to go to the UK. For the sake of this research, this should be identified as the first step towards decision-making and it prepares them for the journey to become a migrant student. This decision-making process marks the beginning of the students' ongoing actions, as they flow from one migratory pathway to another. The next stage of this pathway and the theoretical themes that shape it will be discussed as the mezzo-level influence.

4.2 Mezzo-level Factors

Faist (1997; 2000) emphasizes on the mezzo-level factor because according to him, mezzo-level links the individual migration decision model to the macro-structural model. This level is in-between the macro- and micro-levels and can be utilized to explain both the enabling and perpetuating factors in migration. In the case of this research, the themes that are identified to be discussed under mezzo-level influence are *(a) Tier 4 (student visa) and border entry requirements*, and *(b) network in the country of destination.* The current research will consider the first theme as the enabling factor and the second as the perpetuating factor under the mezzo-level of influence. The theories that define the level of analysis at the mezzo-level have been discussed in the review of literature chapter under Institutional Theory and Network Theory.

Retrospectively, student visa rules over the last couple of years that have affected student migration in the UK are as follows. In March 2015, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office announced that from 6th April 2015 all nationals outside the EU would be required to pay a "health surcharge" in order to gain access to the UK's National Health Services (NHS), so international students would have to pay £150 per year in order to meet the border entry requirement. Later, the UK home office, on 13th July 2015, notified that international students would have to leave the country after their visas expire, and if they wished to work in the UK, they would have to do this from their home countries. Such decisions made by the UK government play a vital role in shaping the migrant students' experiences during their stay and their prospective plans as they are trapped by hardened migratory policies.

In particular, since the termination of the post-study work visa, there has been a decline in the number of international students applying to the UK, especially Indian students, as they prefer to go to other countries like Australia and Canada that offer them opportunities to apply for work visas after completion of their studies. The table below illustrates the gradual decline in the number of Indian students after the closure of the post-study visa in 2012.

Table 5: Number of Indian Students in the UK per year

Year	Number of Students
2009–10	38,500
2010–11	39,090
2011–12	29,900
2012–13	22,385
2013–14	19,750
2014–15	18,320
2015–16	16,745

Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency 242 (2015–16), Table 9.

The Guardian, on July 2015, reported that the Migration Advisory Committee, to reduce immigration from non-EU countries, suggested making the minimum salary requirement for Tier 2 visas (work visas) £20,800 and a sponsored work visa. After an international student graduates, this is the visa they can apply for; other than that, the only way international students could stay in the country after completing their courses is if they applied for a Tier 1 (graduate entrepreneur), Tier 5 (Temporary worker) or Tier 1 visa (investor). It should be further noted that all the UK universities who are Tier 4 visa sponsors have an obligation to the UK visa and immigration rules. These obligations apply to all taught students who are expected to attend a minimum of 80% of teaching sessions, and research students are expected to meet monthly with their supervisors (UK Immigration Rules, 2016). News headlines and numerous reports suggest that these changes were not well received by the international students. When I asked the students about these changes, the most typical responses that illustrated their attitudes were:

> "*Postgraduate students meeting their supervisor every month: it was kind of annoying, but I can see who is new and generally anxious would be worried. They constantly change the rules and we have to keep up to it. The communication is not efficient. Sometimes you have not done so much work so meeting them every month doesn't make sense.*"
>
> (Anju, female, was a PhD student at SOAS, University of London.)

> "*Well, I would have liked to stay and work here for a bit, and I think it is bad policy because I think for a lot of people, if you are spending £300,000 to come and study here, the huge motivation would be to try and earn some money back and not being able to do that is a problem. NHS fees: that is just crazy; I think it is about £200 and the response, I mean, the kind of*

customer service of the UK is atrocious. So basically I applied for my visa –
they give you a 90-page structure to read and when I applied for my visa
and I didn't take anyone's help and I had figured out that I had to pay my
fees before or I had showed my money for certain period of time, but there
is this thing that you have to pay your fees. I sort of paid for my visa
application fees and I had to withdraw it and I still haven't got the NHS fees
back from the first time I applied for my visa. I think they have got a strict
immigration control and it is very much related to the kind of politics they
are into – the dominant kind of politics, and because I am a globalization
development student I can clearly see why these policies are flawed on so
many levels, and there is a certain amount of tightening of border control at
the time where money and capital flow easily and you restrict the movement
of people. I think that is problematic in many ways."

(Ravi, male, was a Masters student at SOAS, University of London.)

"I came to know about the PSW [post study work] visa only after coming
here. Well, that's very bad news for people who want to work here. Well,
it's difficult; I come from an economically deprived background; even to get
the visa money, my friends gave me the money, my friend paid for my flight
tickets, another friend paid for my NHS and another for my visa. It is
difficult for people who can study abroad but cannot because of financial
constraints, and if they keep on increasing then I don't think many people
will come to this country."

(Preeti, female, is a second-year PhD candidate at the University of Essex.)

The findings under this theme, therefore, support the claim of this research, which is by placing the UK immigration policies at a level that can be used to explain the flow of international students coming to the UK. The immigration policies also serve as the mezzo-level influence as these polices enables the migrant students to lawfully enter the UK. According to the political institutionalism, the actors are seen working within the institutional structure. This aspect can be applied in this situation as the migrant students are bound to regulate within the Tier 4 visa rules, even though they do not want to and express the feeling of being impeded. Thus, this suggests that the journey of being a migrant student is incomplete or rather impossible without abiding by the UK immigration policies.

Nevertheless, while observing if colonialism relates to the participants in this study, the following is the response I got:

"This is a colonization of a different kind; Indians should not have to apply for visas to come here. You all have bloody colonized us, bloody made us poor; we shouldn't be paying exorbitant fees; we should be at par with EU students."

(Soni, female, was a PhD student at SOAS, University of London.)

This point of view is similar to Tharoor (2017), while discussing the myth of British's gifts to the Indian. He writes that the reason British was interested in India was because of its wealthy and economically flourishing society. During the process of colonization, India was economically exploited, ruined businesses and dissolute the indigenous foundations of authority. Every Indian is aware of the repercussions the British had on India, the good, the bad and the ugly, therefore it is no surprise that relating to the history India shares with Britain, it was a common sentiment amongst

the Indian students studying in Britain to feel that they should have a much-relaxed visa regulations and border entry formalities.

However, that is not the case here, in fact, it was reported by The Times of India on June 2018, the UK introduced a list of 25 countries that were included in the relaxed student visa rules. This list was already covering countries like the US, Canada and New Zealand, and now included China, Bahrain and Serbia. The students from these countries will face reduced checks on educational, English language test scores and financial evidence; however, this list did not include India. Such variations in policies reveal that Indian students are still miles away from receiving what they desire- a simpler method to acquire study visa entry to the U.K. As stated earlier, the mezzo level explains the enabling and perpetuating factors in migration; for the present research the immigration policies are considered as the enabling factor and the perpetuating factor is discussed in the section below.

The perpetuation of migration in education-related migration for this research is discussed under the theme *network in the country of destination*. This will be analyzed by borrowing the theoretical understanding of the network theory, as previously discussed in the literature review chapter. American sociologist Massey states that the migrants' networks "are sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants and non-migrants in origin and destination areas through ties of kinship, friendship and shared community origin" (Massey, 1993; p. 448). This research acknowledges that the network mentioned by Massey is prominent among employment-related migration or family reunification. According to Massey (1993), the migrant network increases the possibility of international movement as it would lower their costs and minimize risk when they move to another country. This understanding can be applied for the migrant students as well, as stated in some of the

common responses from the students below, suggesting that they used their interpersonal and social ties to extract information regarding travelling and living in the UK before their arrival.

> *"I did the basic research on coming to the UK on my own, and took help from friends who were already studying in the UK – cousins and friends."*

(Amir, male, is a third-year undergraduate student at the University of Essex.)

> *"Like, my brother is already there, so I went to his place; he was in London at that point of time and I just went and crashed for, I don't know, I think I was sleeping for two days, for ten to 12 hours for two to three days, because I don't know change in time zones; so three days I was just sleeping."*

(Avi is a fourth-year PhD student at Queen Mary, University of London.)

> *"The thing is my sister did her undergrads here in the UK, she did her computer engineering from Southampton, she finished her Masters and she is working in JP Morgan and she is in the IT department in Bournemouth."*

(Alia, female, was a UG student at the University of Essex.)

This kind of network creates a sense of security and familiarity for the prospective students who aspire to go to the UK and the friends and family who already are in the UK. This is similar to what Massey (1993) said: "because of the nature of kinship and friendship structures, each new migrant creates a set of people with social ties to the destination areas"; that is, ultimately, encouraging migration and eventually making it more widespread amongst aspiring students who wish to come to the UK. This

research supports Massey's explanation that the conditions under which the migration takes place may be quite different from those that perpetuate it. For instance, as stated under macro-level of influence, a student wants to come to the UK for a better education system and the career prospects. If the student already has a family member or some social ties in the UK, the existence of this network makes their relocation easier, thus making this a perpetuating factor in their migration process. The social ties the prospective students have in the country of destination helps them to lower the costs, aids their likelihood of locating in a different geographical area and reduces migration-related risk.

Nonetheless, it is essential to mention here that the students cannot solely rely on this kind of network to come to the UK. It should be remembered that this network is only a source of gaining useful information or knowing about life in the UK via somebody else's experience. This research has discovered that, unlike family reunification migration (or employment-related migration in some cases), student migration can happen even if the student does not have any social or kinship contact at the country of destination. The typical testimonies below are from students who had no social or family ties before they came to their country of destination.

> *"I came alone; it was a very exciting experience. I was a little nervous; I was supposed to be in an unknown country for a year – no relatives or friends where I live. I arrived a week after the fresher's week and the course had started and I was a bit behind in my studies so I had to catch up. I did not have accommodation as well; I stayed in a Bed and Breakfast for one night and I found another cheaper place for two weeks until I found a place."*

(Siddhu, male, was a Masters student at the University of Essex.)

"24-hour travel and lost with no one, because I made the entire journey on my own because if you are not from a college or a university you are not making that decision with a group of friends. I am a working person; I made an individual call, so I made that entire journey on my own, and when you have that much time in hand you tend to think, have I made a mistake? I kept sitting on the flight and thinking, god I have taken a huge risk of God knows how many lakhs, lakhs you can't even count any longer because you paid money halfway through; half of it is in your account; you still don't know what's going to happen and you are wondering…that's how your flight goes, ya…the first week, completely lost week, because you are getting used to everything new and what hit me actually was in the first week when we had all those groups and society, had a day over here and I realized there wasn't a society for Indians."

(Sonam, female, was a Masters student at the University of Essex.)

"I think I can describe it as the worst day ever because my flight was delayed, I missed my bus from the university that had been sent to pick me up from Heathrow and I got another bus. I didn't have a phone, I just had a little bit of money on me and I got here by 10 p.m. I was supposed to be here by six and I didn't know the process of trying to find my room and I was a bit confused. Tesco was also closed so I had no bedding and it was really cold. So I just slept on the floor for the first night. Yeah...I didn't have a phone or anything so I couldn't contact anyone to get help."

(Mona, female, was a UG student at the University of Essex.)

Additionally, this research proposes to include the role of educational agencies as the link between prospective students and country of destination, therefore suggesting that in the study of student migration, educational agencies could be considered as part of the network. According to academician Krasocki, "educational agents/agencies are individuals, companies or organizations which provide services on a commercial basis to help students and their parents gain places into study programs overseas" (2002; p. 3). Moreover, educational agencies include several services including identifying study abroad opportunities, advice on course selection, English proficiency tests and educational centers, initial contact with the prospective college or university, admission requirements, visa requirements, travel and accommodation arrangements and employment opportunities (Heaney and Heaney, 2014). The common testimonies from educational counselors below validate this:

> *"Everything, we explain to them everything: career counseling, funding, bank loans, scholarships. We tell students they should get work experience if they can, update themselves with the university, a sandwich program to help them with internship, and encourage them to have work experience, whether it is in India or abroad."*

(Natasha is the CEO of an education agency called The Chopras.)

> *"Muslim students ask if they have a prayer room to pray. We let them know working opportunities, part-time and full-time jobs and jobs after they finish their course. We educate them about weather conditions, especially to students going to Scotland because it is very cold. We also encourage interaction with students going to the same destination, through the use of*

social media – Facebook, WhatsApp – and advise them to book and stay in the same accommodation. We also tell them how to get BRP, get to the assigned accommodation, how to pack, inform them about the different charger points for electronics. We also teach students how to cook, because the students go there and they have to cook themselves; so we share some recipes so that they can practice at home before going, especially for boys."

(Wajitha is a senior educational counsellor at the Chopras, Mumbai, India.)

"We have a pre-departure session for students going to a particular destination. We give them all the information: any dos and don'ts about settling in a new place, things they need to take care of, transportation, how much money and in what form they should carry, how much baggage they can carry, the kind of food available and the options they can choose from. A lot of them have not visited those places in their lives; definitely, it's a new place and a lot of things might be a cultural shock for them. We tell them what things they can do in India that they can't do there. Like here they are under the supervision of their parents, and there they get their freedom. They should know what things they should take care of like traffic rules, talking to people. Provide awareness to the students."

(Sumit is an educational counsellor at the Chopras, Chennai, South India.)

Thus, the findings of this research suggest that educational agents form an important aspect of the decision-making of the migrant students, contrary to what the scholar duo Mazzoral and Soutar (2002) stated – that India is one of the countries where the parents and relatives influence the choice of study destination for students intending to

study overseas. Some students choose to take assistance from educational agencies and most of the usual responses from the students were:

"They helped me to fill my visa application."

(Ankur was a Masters student at the University of Essex, and he took assistance from an educational agency called The Oberoi in New Delhi.)

"I took help for a visa application from The Chopras. I also got five-day coaching from the British Council for an English test. They were pretty good."

(Preeti, female, is a third-year PhD candidate at the University of Essex, and took help from The Chopras, New Delhi.)

"They helped me with everything – actually filling in my UCAS and applying at the universities and then for my visa work and everything. Like, whatever I would have done on my own, I wouldn't have been able to do it, as they helped me out in everything; even my visa paperwork. They helped me with everything."

(Mona, female, is a third-year UG student at the University of Essex, and she approached an agency called Education Link House in UP.)

Before 2010, the UK actively encouraged institutions to use educational agents (Hulme et al., 2013). However, after the dismissal of the post-study work visa and the subsequent decrease in the number of international students, there was a decline in the number of educational agencies recruiting students internationally to choose the UK for their higher education. Nevertheless, due to the nature of services and assistance

educational agencies provide the prospective students, this research recommends that they should be a part of the network and the mezzo level of influence. This is because the educational agencies, like the interpersonal and social ties, perpetuate the education-related migration. It might not be interpersonal but these agencies provide as much information as other societal ties would provide to the prospective students going to the UK.

Thus, the findings of this research show that, while the mezzo-level factor places the migration policies at the center that shapes their decision-making process to study in the UK. The political institutions explain the enabling aspect, which is in the form of bilateral government agreement and the issue of visas to enter the UK. It was found that the level of study and funding status of the students had an important part in shaping the attitudes of these students. PhD and Masters' students expressed their dissatisfaction and frustration towards the changes in the tier 4 visa rules and border entry requirements. This is because owing to the history India has with Britain, they felt that Indian students deserved some relaxation in terms of entry into the UK and the tuition fees. Self-funded students were also unhappy about the extra surcharges that were added in the process of moving to the UK since they relied on their parents' or family to support their education in the UK.

For the perpetuating factor, at the mezzo level, I take into account the network theory, with the inclusion of educational agency. While discussing this factor, students from different level of studies had different approaches towards educational agencies. It was found that all of undergraduate students and few Masters' students had taken assistance from educational agencies unlike all PhD students and most of the Masters' students as they felt that the services the educational agencies offered was something

they could do on their own and did not want to pay money on something they could easily do it online.

Thus, the mezzo-level factor inclusive of Tier 4 (student visa), border entry requirement and the network in the country of destination identified as the enabling and perpetuating factors respectively, represents the second stage in the process of the journey of student migration. The next section will discuss the individual factors and the micro-level influence in the decision-making process in student migration.

4.3 Micro-Level Factors

This section will now address the micro-level factor of the migrant students' process, which has been discussed under the theme of personal motivation. The current research has discovered that there are individual factors that drive the students to decide to migrate. These themes are examined using the conceptual contexts of the behavior model and the value-expectancy model, which have again been discussed in the review of literature chapter of this research. The elements of the value-expectancy model were visible in the testimonies of the students based on two societal dividers (i) caste and (ii) gender

 (i) Caste

The findings of the present research suggest that caste-related motivation to migrate was revealed only by the students belonging to high castes. Their quotes below highlight their intentions to migrate:

> *"Umm...I think I wanted to study literature and do research; my parents wanted me to go abroad since I was a kid. I think she just wanted to give me more opportunity. In upper-caste households (and I am using this very*

specifically) it is a very weird thing that India will let you down, and I wonder if it is actually the result of the Mandal Commission[6] and creating reservation but it is never consciously stated as such. The idea always is that you haven't made it good if you haven't gone to the US or UK if you haven't got an education in the west. My mother said that I had to go abroad for better education."

(Chetan, male, was a PhD candidate at SOAS, University of London.)

"It's an interesting question...I guess I wanted to...um...go abroad from a temperamental issue, like, I didn't want to, like, just...go outside the barriers of the comfort zone...aaa...and just explore the world."

(Ram, male, is a third-year PhD candidate at the University of Essex.)

It is important to observe that the students belonging to the high-caste Brahmin mention about their parents insisting on them getting an education abroad and how this can be transpired as a symbol of success, maintaining social status. Similarly, in terms of experience, a mention is made about going outside the barrier of the comfort zone. This could suggest that the student wanted to experience something outside the realm of a high-caste society/community. For sociological research, this factor is of high value since only the participants belonging to high castes mention the importance of maintaining a social status and experiencing something outside the societal privileges associated with coming from a high caste. This is at par with

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[6] The Mandal Commission in India was established in 1979 by the Janata Party government under Prime Minister Morarji Desai with a mandate to "identify the socially or educationally backward". Reservations and quotas for people to redress caste discrimination and used 11 social, economic, and educational indicators to determine "backwardness". In 1980, the commission's report affirmed the affirmative action practise under Indian law whereby members of lower castes (known as Other Backward Classes and Scheduled Castes and Tribes) were given exclusive access to a certain portion of government jobs and slots in public universities, and recommended changes to these quotas, increasing them from 27% to 49.5% (National Commission for Backward Classes; Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment).

Bourdieu's (1986) understanding of cultural capital, that an individual is defined by his or her affiliation to their social class. Bourdieu refers to dominant culture as cultural capital since via the educational system it can be transferred into wealth and power (Haralambos, 2014). Thus, the reproduction of culture could be the factor somehow guiding these students to travel abroad for higher education.

(ii) Gender

While looking at migration from a gender perspective, the findings of this research suggest that gender does play a role in shaping the decision-making process. The typical quotes from the female students were as follows:

"I think I like the lifestyle here; I'd rather spend my prime age here rather than in India."

(Kiran is a third-year UG student at the University of Essex, and she has been dating a British man for the past six months.)

"I wanted to live on my own as well. So I thought it would be a good break and an experience with my lifestyle and not just academics, so…"

(Meera was a UG student at the University of Essex, and she has been in a relationship with a German man for four months.)

"If they [parents] come to know that I have a boyfriend, they might find a boy for me and get me married…I don't have any pressure from family now to get married since I'm studying full-time…my parents won't ask me to get married during my studies."

(Nilu, female, is a third-year PhD student at the University of Essex.)

"I also wanted to meet someone…I met my boyfriend on a dating website, Guardian Soulmates. Simone was the third person I met and it was quite lovely. My parents know about him; he came to India last year and my parents are waiting for us to get married."

(Soni, female, was a third-year PhD candidate at SOAS.)

The testimonies from Kiran and Meera were in contrast to what scholars Hercog and Laar (2016) stated; that is, that individualist quests for international exposure and learning about new cultures are absent in the context of developing countries like India. While in conversation with these students, they were very clear about why they came to the UK and what they wanted to achieve. Apart from academic reasons, the international environment and a chance to live independently drew them. This is similar to studies regarding European students and their individualistic decisions to study abroad (Findlay et al., 2012; King and Ruiz-Gelices, 2003; De Grip et al., 2009).

Furthermore, Nilu's and Soni's quotes support Morokvasic's (1984) claim that women migrate, not only because of economic motives but also to get married or other societal constraints (this has been addressed in detail in Chapter 2). Research by academics like Yakaboski, Sheridan and Dade (2014), while discussing the marriage and dowry options amongst south Indian migrant students, stated that females might use their foreign education as a conscious strategy to delay marriage, which one of the participants has confirmed. This factor is important to the research in question, as it was only female participants who were verbal about this issue. However, there was one male respondent who shared his perspective:

"If I was girl, they would have supported me but the pressure would be immense; to be a girl at 32 and not married, my parents would be anxious and would want to get me married given the fact that my parents are very progressive. They would find it extremely difficult to cope with having an unmarried daughter who has crossed a certain age; they would be very anxious, and in a way that is what I am escaping from as well; I don't subscribe to that."

(Ravi, male, was a Masters student at SOAS, University of London.)

Research suggests that in some parts of India a foreign degree is commonly used to negotiate for dowry in the practice of "property transmission at marriage" (Srinivasan, 2005, p. 525). With a dowry or arranged marriage system, "marriage partners are generally assessed by their education, employment, wealth and social backgrounds as well as caste membership" (Bhopal, 2009, p. 29). It is a common practice for men with a foreign degree to demand higher dowry, translating a western degree into increased family social status and marriage opportunities (Constable, 1997; 2003). However, this research did not come across any findings to support this idea.

4.4 Conclusion

As the structuration model provides the reasoning behind the structural opportunities that shapes the journey of the migrant students from one migratory pathway to another. This process is first initiated by the motivations behind choosing the UK as the country of destination. This is followed by the fulfillment of the requirements to lawfully enter the country with the guidance of interpersonal ties and educational agencies and finally driven by the individual motivation. These motivations identified by the present research have been designed by adopting the explanatory structure of

the theoretical model of macro-, mezzo- and micro-level factors of the migration decision-making process. The syntheses of the various theories and concepts with demographic differences, like level of study, funding status and gender have further assisted in analyzing the findings of this research.

Academics and career prospects have been identified as the macro-level factor influencing the decision-making process among the migrant students. This has been further analyzed with the conceptual framework of internationalization of education, recommending that education-related migration has been possible because of globalization and the restructuration of higher education. Thus, this suggests that the macro-level (education) influence leads the students to decide to go to the UK.

The mezzo-level factors have been discussed under the theme *Tier 4 (student visa) border entry requirements and networks in the country of destination*. Both of these themes have been analyzed under the theoretical lens of institutional theory and network theory respectively, further elaborating on the enabling and perpetuating factors under the mezzo-level. The immigration policies explain the enabling aspect and the network in the country of destination with the inclusion of the educational agencies refining the perpetuating factor of the mezzo-level influence amongst the migrant students. The present research considers this the next stage in the student migration process.

Lastly, *the personal motivations* are identified as the micro-level influence, further analyzed under the behavioral model of value expectancy. The current research recommends that various subjective factors influence the decision-making process and these can be further classified under the societal dividers of (i) caste and (ii) gender This represents the last stage of the decision-making process.

Since this study considers the journey of student migration as flow from one stage to another, these findings so far suggest that the migrant student's journey occurs in the platforms discussed above. However, this migratory process does not stop there; what happens to these students after coming to their country of destination? Thus, the experience of the migrant students after they come to the UK and during their stay will be discussed in the chapters that follow.

Chapter 5

Transnational Connections and Indian Overseas Students in the UK

This chapter analyzes the connections that Indian students maintain with their homeland while studying for their degrees in the UK. The chapter is organized in the following way; first, I focus on the issue of nostalgia, which the students feel for their home country, and familiar places, family and friends that motivates them to sustain various forms of transnational involvements. Next, I review the different types of these connections as facilitated by the developments pointed out in the literature on immigrants' transnationalism: Indian students' visits to and regular contact with their home country made possible by the rapid advancement in global transportation and communication technologies; regular reception by students in the form of financial support from home facilitated by the globalization of economy; and their interest and participation in civic-political events in their home country, made possible via global media spreading the news about different regions around the world and international/bilateral agreements between countries. Generated by all the above factors is the last form of Indian students' transnational engagements reported in the chapter, under "living India" in the United Kingdom through partaking in Indian food, participating in Indian festivals and, importantly sharing each other's company and speaking their home-country's language. As I report on these feelings and activities, I note the factors that further differentiate students' transnational engagements, namely, gender and level of study. I now follow the above announcement with the following titles:

5.1 Nostalgia for Homeland

I begin this section by highlighting the forms of expression and contents of nostalgia that have emerged. Mobility and changes in the lives of these students have made nostalgia a typical experience as they live away from their homeland. In this particular case, it revolves around the representation of the idea of home and to what extent do such feelings of nostalgia incite them to maintain connections with their family and friends in India.

"I think about home every day and I cry sometimes even now, just like this weekend I was creating a big drama about how I want to go back to India and I hate this country. I just find it very lonely, not enough friends and not enough community; that's what I miss the most. I miss someone just randomly coming over to my house without calling or making an appointment. I miss the constant hustle and bustle of people going in and out of the house; you know, someone like the dhobi [dry cleaners] will come or the doodh wala [milkman] will come; there is always something happening in India. Here, I'll sit the whole day and die and no one will know – I hate that."

(Nilu, female, is a PhD student at SOAS, University of London.)

"Friday night is Hindi movie night. I am a big Bollywood fan, and it is interesting, I haven't been able to understand this myself that I listen to Hindi and English songs. Back in Delhi I had more time than I have here, but I never deliberately listened to Hindi songs, old Hindi songs like Kishore Kumar or watch old Hindi movies; I would never deliberately listen

to those songs but here we (me and my other Indian friends) end up watching movies from that era; there is a feeling of nostalgia; I end up playing the song playlist on YouTube. I don't know what this is; there is an absence of these sounds around me. In a home setting or a place like Delhi, you have in cabs or restaurants someone playing Hindi songs. I used to be sick and tired of listening to that, but here I miss that; I want to listen to something familiar."

(Pooja, female, was a Masters student at SOAS, University of London.)

"I think about my home, but especially when I have to cook, when I have to wash my clothes and when I am sick. I fell sick a few weeks back when I went to London and came back from there because the weather there was pretty bad and I was missing my home because the thing is when you fall sick you want someone around you always. Back home when you are sick you are treated like you are some kind of queen or a princess and here, I was like, I was not even able to get out of my bed. But I still had to go out, because I had to get medicine and cook as well. I miss home very badly, but now I think I have got used to it."

(Mona, female, is an undergraduate student at the University of Essex.)

"I do think about home; I haven't gone home after my course has started. I hope not to go home for a while because I am just, I don't want to go back to Delhi, so I mean I just don't go back to Delhi simply because, um…I just, I think I don't want to go back to that way of life. I think Delhi is regressive in so many ways; there is this pressure on how you are; I mean, as a man in

Delhi, you know, for all its misogyny one would assume it is easier being a man being in Delhi. It's just that there is this pressure on people; it sorts of binds you, restricts you. Go out on the street, everything shuts by 9–10; you can't use public transport; that is a problem; it's polluted; it's just there are just loads of things that play on my mind when I think about Delhi and these are triggers in my mind. What it is, the kind of life I was living when I was in Delhi, working in an office 9–5 and coming back; it is not, just, that is something I am not looking for. So in my mind when I think about Delhi, it is the heat, the dust, how people are rude, and traffic, road rage. I live with my parents; that is the only good thing about

Delhi."

(Ravi, male, was a Masters student at SOAS, University of London.)

"Last five or six years, I found that I don't miss home; I generally miss home only until I have bought the ticket to go home in the summer. So, I don't miss home as the place itself but I do miss the people over there, my parents and friends; I do miss sharing time with them."

(Ram, male, is a PhD student at the University of Essex.)

The testimonies stated above suggest that there is a contrasting perception about nostalgia between female and male students. In my interviews, the female students expressed evidently that they are attached to home more (15 out of the total of 24 participants), than the male students (nine out of 24 participants). Although both male and female students showed signs of restorative nostalgia, females in particular specifically displayed signs of reflective nostalgia (Boym, 2001). Female students

embraced their memories of home. Their memories of home held a close connection with their friends and family. They missed the comfort of home. Popular culture in the form of *Hindi* movies and songs trigger memories of home and reminded them of a familiar feeling. Miyazawa (2012) states that nostalgia is an imaginative process of adjustment that involves interaction between the past (memories), present (reconstruction of the past based on the memories) and future (projection of memories that are to come). Although this phenomenon is common in the stories of the immigrants, the same description is adopted to explain the feelings of nostalgia that the female participants have expressed in this research. In comparison to the female students, the male students' testimonies reveal that they were not attached to home in the similar way. The memories of home existed in the form of relationships they share with people. It was apparent that they preferred their lives in the UK rather than the lives they left behind in India. But, the one thing that they longed for was the close relationship with family and friends, which indicated that they showed signs of restorative nostalgia (Boym, 2001).

To comprehend this gender difference about nostalgia for home, I take into account the memories of homeland generated by gender roles guided by the patriarchal structure of the Indian society. The findings from the interviews imply that the female students seemed to be aware of the domestic situations at home, and it was such familiarities that generated the feelings of melancholy among them. The female students showed closer connection with home compared to male students; they were expected (by their families in India) to make more effort to engage in things happening at home and maintain close connections with family and friends in India. This is similar to the studies on immigrants that show that women have a more significant role in restoring nostalgia. The male students, on the other hand, gave value

only to the relationships that they shared with their kin and friends. This confirms that females are supposed to be closer to the notion of home (see Maria, 2002; McDowell, 1999; Sharp, 1996). For more on this see Chapter 2.

Thus, referring to the discussion on restorative and reflective nostalgia, the female participants of this research show signs of both restorative and reflective nostalgia, which is collective in nature unlike their male counterparts who seem to experience only reflective nostalgia, which is subjective in nature. Such finding signals the importance of including the feeling of nostalgia in the present study because while being in conversation with my participants, I realized that nostalgia was the initial factor that instigated the migrant students' to maintain a relationship with their homeland, how is this done is unfolded in the sections that follow in this chapter. In the next section, I address the external factor that facilitates these engagements.

5.2 Students' Transnational Connections Due to the Advancement in Transportation and Communication Technologies

Reflecting on the immigrants' transnational connections, I consider the Indian student's visits to India and the systematic communication with friends and kin as social transnational connections. The advancement in the field of transport as indicated by the frequent and cheap flight rates to destinations around the globe help sustain transnational ties. In the same manner, the Internet-based communications, which have replaced face-to-face ones (Vertovec, 2004), are popular and convenient means of keeping in touch particularly through social media, Such factors are responsible for maintaining and strengthening the social transnational connections between the Indian migrant students and their homeland. I was interested to know if

and how the students kept in touch with their family and friends in India, whilst being mindful about any gender differences.

"I am very close to my parents; I am very close to my mum especially, and so I have to, like, call them...like, if I didn't call them for a couple of days they will ask me what is wrong if I am feeling okay. Only yesterday my grandmother had a go at me; she was like you are supposed to call home even if it is just to say hi."

(Alia, female, was an undergraduate student at the University of Essex.)

"I WhatsApp with my friends every day and talk to my parents every day. I also visit India quite often. I have gone home four times till now."

(Nilu, female, was a PhD student at SOAS, University of London.)

"I am their only child so they find it hard not talking to me, so I have to talk to them twice a day. That's a mandatory thing for me. If I forget to call them, at times that happen that you are so busy...like, my Tuesdays are so busy. I am busy from 9 am till 6 pm so I don't have time to call them, so that day is hard and they are shouting at me scolding that I don't miss them It's just today they started doing that, so I have to talk to them twice a day. I am going home during the summer break."

(Mona, female, is an undergraduate student at the University of Essex.)

"I talk to my parents almost every day because my mother calls me and my father once a week. My sister is need-based – sometimes it's a lot and sometimes it's less. Because of social media, they know what I am up to, the

things I put up on Facebook and Instagram indicate how I am doing overall."

(Anju, female, was a PhD student at SOAS, University of London.)

"I guess every, I mean family, I talk now we have WhatsApp and everything so it's mostly through messages but if you mean like Skype, my parents' computer is not working right now...so but usually it has been once a week. But now Skype is not working. So probably talk over the phone twice a week on WhatsApp."

(Ram, male, is a PhD student at the University of Essex.)

Throughout the conversations with the students it was clear that they took the interconnectedness of the world brought about by globalization for granted. In this world-spanning intensification of interconnection, the proliferation of transport and communication, cheap international calls and various social media has coincided with other processes of globalization (Vertovec, 2009). The cheap flight tickets and offers from airlines and travel agencies make travelling between two international destinations frequent and convenient. For example, on 9th February 2017, the British High Commission[7], New Delhi, announced that the number of flights between the UK and India would increase to boost tourism and trade. Cheap international calling rates as low as 1p per minute, by mobile companies such as *Lycamobile* and *Lebara,* facilitate such communications. The popularity of using social media as a platform to communicate has also increased over the last five years. The various Internet data packs available for all popular mobile connections in the UK make it easier for

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[7] https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-india-to-increase-flights-to-boost-tourism-and-trade

students to keep in touch via mediums such as *WhatsApp*, *V-chat* and *Viber*, to name a few. Almost all these mobile phone apps have a video-calling feature that enables the students to be in constant touch with their families and friends in India.

It was found that female students (15 out of the total of 24 participants) were more often in touch with people back at home compared to the male students. This gender-specific difference is initiated by the "everyday routinized activities and practices" (Al-Ali, 2002: 250) within the Indian family. From the testimonies above, it appears that the perpetual need of being in touch is reciprocal between the female students and their family members. From the family's side, there is the persistent need of knowing about their wellbeing (more so among young undergraduate female students), and if there is any kind of interlude in communication with them, the family members tend to worry. I interpret this factor in two steps: first parents keep in touch because they worry, and the female students in return keep in touch because of their close connection with home, and at the same time they want to keep their parents updated so that they don't worry.

Therefore, for conceptual clarity, the origination of this reality is connected to the patriarchal grip on Indian women, females are under constant scrutiny from their parents, thus the frequent phone/video calls are the only way parents can exercise some form of restriction whilst their daughters live away from home. On the contrary, there are no such concerns from the parents of male students. Hence, the analysis of the transnational connections amongst the Indian migrant students suggests that the patriarchal domination is not weakened through transnational connections, but changes its form (For more on gender differences in immigrants' transnational connections of this type, see McDowell, 1999; Maria, 2002; Walton-Roberts, 2004; Morawska, 2011). The next section that follows addresses the regular reception of

financial support by the students from their family members in India facilitated by the globalization of the economy.

5.3 The Students' Transnational Connections and Globalization of Economy

According to Guarnizo (2003), the economic transnational ties involve multiple economic activities that emerge from the migrants' relations with their homelands. However, this would not be possible if there wasn't already an existence of a fully functioning global economy. This part of the chapter is dedicated to discuss the economic transnational activities of the Indian migrant students at an attitudinal and behavioral levels. On an analytical level, scholar Baccagni (2012) states that immigrants have a fondness towards consuming goods from the countries of origin. However, concerning the current research, there was no such comment made by any of the students that explicitly expressed that they were fond of consuming Indian goods in terms of household or luxury items from India. Hence, I move ahead to analyze the economic ties on a behavioral level.

For immigrants, maintaining economic transnational ties include managing their home country's household income, remittances sent home or investments in local establishments or businesses (Morawska, 2011). However, this is different in the case of migrant students, as they are not in a position to send remittances. Instead, they receive remittances from their families in India. Every UK University categorically publishes the tuition fees and living expenses for international students each year. After visiting the websites of various UK universities[8], I found that the yearly tuition fees (2017–18) for undergraduate students studying outside London ranged from

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[8] University of Essex, University of Southampton, University of Bristol, School of African and Oriental Studies, London School of Economics and Queen Mary, University of London.

£13,350 to £16,536, and for Masters and research degrees, £14,450 to £21,000 approximately. For undergraduate students studying in London is £16,575 to £18,408, and for Masters and research degrees is £18,074 to £23,016. I also found the monthly expenses for international students, which is £900+ outside London and £1000+ within London. Parents in India depend on various methods to send these remittances some of them use bank transfer, multi-currency cards or services of companies like Western Union and MoneyGram. Apart from the actual money they send, they also have to pay the service fee to the bank or the service provider and the difference in currency exchange. The value of a currency depends on several factors like imports and exports, inflation; employment, interest growth and the political situation at the home or the host country.

One of the biggest political changes that the UK has faced since last year is Brexit. Although UK's decision to leave the European Union does not have a direct impact on the Indian students in the UK, however, it did influence the rate of currency exchange. The Times higher education report in 2016 stated that with the drop in pounds sterling, international students could pay less tuition fees compared to what they were paying in the previous years. Furthermore, the Economic Times (2017) reported that Brexit had resulted in a big drop in the value of pounds sterling, which may result in many Indian students choosing the UK as their educational destination. Although the parents of self-funded students might have found a little relief in this situation, the fact still remains that they will have to pay a large sum of money to support their children's education.

The current research found that receiving remittances from home depended on the student's funding status, the level of study and the parents' occupations. According to

the findings, all the undergraduate students interviewed were self-funded, and their parents in India sponsored their university fees and living expenses. Working part-time was very rare amongst these participants, as almost all of them were advised to concentrate on their studies by their parents instead of finding a job or working. Some of the typical responses I received from them were:

"My father is a businessman and my mother is a housewife and it's a very typical Indian household situation, and my family comprises of my grandfather, my father, who is always working and he is always almost not there, and my mum, and I have three dogs. I am a self-funded student – he did the same for my elder sister as well, who studied in Southampton. Sending money monthly is expensive so they send me it in bulk that I have to ration out for the month."

(Alia, female, is an undergraduate student at the University of Essex.)

"I am from Delhi, my father is a businessman and my mother is a lawyer. I am a self-funded student – my tuition fees and my parents send my living expenses from India. My tuition and accommodation fees are already paid so they send my money from home whenever I need it."

(Promod, male, is an undergraduate student at the University of Essex.)

"My mum is a teacher and my dad is a businessman; my tuition fees and pocket money are sent to me by my parents. I came to the UK with some money; once that gets over they will send me more."

(Amir, male, is an undergraduate student at the University of Essex.)

For most of the students, their parents supported their tuition and living expenses, except for one. When I enquired about how she covered her expenses, she shared: *"Me: So your tuition fees are covered by the educational loan you got; what about your living expenses?*

Meera: I work three jobs.

Me: Where do you work?

Meera: I work in the sports center on campus as an event manager for cricket and tournaments and stuff and I work on a farmers' market on

Thursdays and I used to work in a hotel in Maldon as a waitress."

(Meera, female, is an undergraduate student at the University of Essex; she had shared at the beginning of the interview that both her parents were unemployed.)

So, these findings show differences based on the students' level of study and the employment status of their parents. The parents/parent who are employed are in a good position to sponsor not only their tuitions but their maintenance expenses as well, unlike in the case of Meera, who had an educational loan for her tuition fees and worked three jobs to pay for her expenses. I carry on the discussion further by focusing on Masters students now.

While interviewing the Masters students I discovered that there was a combination of self-funded, fully funded and partially funded students. Therefore, receiving remittance from home depended on the status of their funding or their professional history. When I asked the students about their funding status, some of the common responses were:

"I am on a full scholarship; my tuition fees and expenses are taken care of."

(Sona, female, was a Masters student at SOAS, University of London.)

"Sonam: My parents are separated so I am living with my mother but as an earning member. I was for a long time the only one earning of my family, so I have taken a huge risk financially, not only on myself but on my family as well.

Me: So your mother is a homemaker?

Sonam: Yes, she used to work; she is a retired schoolteacher.

Me: What about your funding status?

Sonam: I am partly sponsored by the university, um…so one-third of my fees have been taken care of by the university.

Me: What did you do about the rest of the fees and other expenses? Sonam: I had money saved when I was working, so I am depending on that money."

(Sonam, female, was a Masters student at the University of Essex.)

"My mother is a lawyer and Dad works for a public limited company. I am a self-funded student; my parents take care of the tuition fees and other expenses."

(Siddhu, male, was a Masters student at the University of Essex.)

"Both my parents are government employees and they have sponsored my tuition fees and living expenses. They send me enough so that I can survive comfortably in Edinburgh."

(Lokesh, male, was a Masters student at Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh. I later found out that after the completion of his course and before going back to India, he worked at a pub as a bartender and earned enough money to support himself for the last few months of his stay in Edinburgh.)

"Ravi: I am self-funded because I am 32 years old and the age limit for my scholarship application was 30.
Me: What about your living expenses here in London?
Ravi: I had some money saved up when I worked, which is getting over very soon, and I have to look for a job or something now."

(Ravi, male, was a Masters student at SOAS, University of London, and both his parents were retired.)

The Masters' students I interviewed gave me mixed answers because of their different funding statuses. However, it was clear from the conversations that the self-funded students were aware of the financial predicaments they were placing their families in and wanted to find a job or get a job as soon as they completed their studies. The next part of this section will focus on research students.

During the interviews, I found that there was a combination of fully funded and self-funded PhD students. The funded students had received various scholarships from

their respective universities, like the University of Essex Doctoral scholarship, the Queen Mary University of London postgraduate research studentship and the School of African and Oriental Studies research studentship, to name a few. In further conversations with the students who had received these scholarships, their typical responses were:

> *"I received the scholarship; otherwise my parents wouldn't have afforded it."*

> (Avi, male; his father has retired and his mother is a teacher.)

> *"I am here because I received the scholarship."*

> (Ram, male; both his parents have retired.)

The families sponsored the tuition fees for the self-funded students, but unlike the self-funded undergraduates and a few Masters students, they did not depend on their families to send them remittances. They informed me that they were working at their departments as teaching assistants. They used this money to support their lives in the UK. Some of the typical answers from these participants were as follows:

> *"My living expenses I get from the part-time job. I feel so bad to still depend on people back home."*

> (Geeta, female; her father is a government employee and her mother is a teacher.)

> *"I teach undergraduates and Masters students. I enjoy teaching and I think this has given me some experience for my future teaching career and financial support to live in London."*

(Pia, female; her parents have both retired.)

It was common among PhD students to be employed in their departments and rely on this experience for their prospective academic jobs. Apart from getting paid for these jobs, the teaching aspect of the jobs attracted the research students, and even the fully funded students disclosed that they taught one or two modules for them, it was more about the experience rather than the financial aspect.

In summary, the undergraduate students were self-funded and depended on their families for tuition fees and living expenses (except for one). If the parents' occupations can be used to measure the class position, it can be derived that students from high classes (one or both parents being fully employed) could afford to cover their tuition fees and maintenance expenses, except for one who worked three jobs to pay for the living expenses. There was a combination of the fully funded, semi-funded and self-funded amongst Masters' students. The dependency on their family members to send them remittance depended on the participant's funding status and employment history, as some self-funded students used the money they had saved during the time of their employment to cover their living expenses. Moreover, some of the Masters' students showed some signs of realization that they needed to make their provisions regarding living expenses. In this case parents' occupations played a role students belonging to a lower-class position could not depend on their parents for remittance and had to make their own arrangements.

In terms of PhD students, some were fully funded and some self-funded. Self-funded students found employment at their departments as teaching assistants, which provided them with the financial support they required. There was a clear intention among these students to work if they didn't have funding and did not depend on their

families for any kind of financial help. It is worth noting here that most of the PhD students had either both or one retired parent, therefore securing scholarship was an important factor that determined if they could come to the UK. The self-funded students among this group only depended on their families for the payment of the tuition fees and not for living costs.

In order to highlight the reality of remittance being sent to the Indian students studying abroad and the impact on the economic status of India, the RBI (Reserve Bank of India) in 2016 stated that remittances sent under the heading "studies abroad" has increased from $10.1 million in April to $1 billion in January 2017. The Indian Express[9] reported that close to 300,000 students travel abroad for higher education, and the number has been increasing every year ultimately increasing the outward remittance as family members and relatives send money to these students. As a result, the government has increased the permissible limit of money sent abroad from $125,000 to $250,000, for further educational allowances and medical emergencies and expenses.

Lastly, it would be a significant oversight if I do not mention that the students take gifts home for their families and friends in India. I do not have quotes from the students to support this point however; it is a very common courtesy to take some gifts for people back home. This could be something specific that a family member or a friend has asked for or something in general as a sign of goodwill. The present research is aware of such activities and considers this as a form of sending remittance, and engaging in transnational economic activities between the host and home country. The next section is about the interest and participation by the students in civic political

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[9] https://indianexpress.com/article/business/banking-and-finance/1-billion-was-sent-overseas-forstudents-in-last-nine-months-rbi-2759870/

events due to the existence of international agreements between nations and the popularity of global media powered by social media.

5.4 Students' Transnational Political Ties and the Role of Social Media

This section is dedicated to examining the political transnational ties that Indian migrant students maintain with India. The structural circumstances that guide such ties for this research are discussed in two parts: 1) the existence of international agreements between nations, and 2) the prevalence of global media received through the medium of social media. I choose to present my findings in this manner as the structural existence of both these factors (although not interconnected explicitly) assist in analyzing both the social and personal involvement in long-distance nationalism or patriotism. The section below discusses the first point, for which I take into account the bilateral political relationship maintained between India and the UK, especially the rights of the Indian citizens residing in the UK, based on their commonwealth status.

The various global political activities that immigrants engage in can be in the form of participation in their home country's election, involvement in the local politics or contribution towards an international organization. These can also include activates and involvements in political activism, distance voting and exercising dual citizenship (Boccagni, 2009). I take into consideration the same kind of activities and analyses them on a social level amongst the Indian students. I base my investigation on two prominent political events that have happened in the UK over the past three years that involved the Indian students studying in the UK, which are (i) participation in the UK general elections and the European Union membership referendum, and (ii) attending the Indian Prime Minister's visit to the UK.

(i) The UK general elections and the European Union membership referendum

The political relationship that Indian citizens have with the UK is unique. According to the electoral commission in the UK, qualifying Commonwealth citizens are eligible to vote at UK general elections despite not having a British citizenship. In the past three years, the UK has had two general elections and the European Union membership referendum. When I asked the students if they had voted or registered to vote for any of the elections, the common responses I got were:

"No, what is the use? It is not beneficial for us; it is not like we will get to home fees or enjoy facilities like any other home student would."

(Chetan, male, is a PhD student at SOAS, University of London.)

"It is a long process to register and then finding the polling booth; it is just too much work."

(Mia, female, is a PhD student at SOAS, University of London.)

"I think I would have if I the had time, just for an experience."

(Ravi, male, was a Masters student at SOAS, University of London.)

Whilst conversing with the students about exercising their voting rights in the UK as Commonwealth citizens, I discovered that there was unawareness and difference in opinions amongst them based on their levels of study. I found that the undergraduate students were not aware that they could vote or the procedure to register to vote. In further conversation with these students, it came to light that most of them belonged to a young cohort (18–20 years old), and due to their young age none of them had prior voting experience in their home country (the voting age in India is 18); some of them

did not even have voter cards[10]. On the other hand, when I asked the same question to the Masters' students, some of them were unaware and some of them suggested that due to the short duration of their courses they did not think it was feasible to register to vote. Finally, most of the PhD students revealed that they found the entire idea redundant, as the outcomes of the elections did not have any direct impact on their status. The common notion that I gathered from such conversations was that there was a feeling of purposelessness; despite having voting rights like any British citizens and having a say in the future of the country, they still had to pay international tuition fees and were governed by the Tier 4 visa rules. Due to these factors, the Indian migrant students showed no interest in being involved in the political scenario of the UK.

(ii) Indian Prime Minister's visit to the UK

In November 2015 a big reception was organized in the honor of the Prime Minister of India, Mr Narendra Modi. His visit to the UK had already dominated the headlines on various news channels owing to the controversies that it was surrounded with. When I asked the students whether they went to attend this event or if they would be interested in the future, some of the common responses were:

"No, I didn't go. I went for the protest against him."

(Mia, female, is a PhD student at SOAS, University of London.)

"I was thinking of going there to protest but I didn't know what happened and I didn't go."

(Preeti, female, is a PhD student at the University of Essex.)

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[10] An Indian voter card is an identity document issued by the Election Commission of India; this also serves as an identity card for Indian citizens while casting votes in the country's municipal, state and national elections.

"No, I don't subscribe to any politics; I went to protest when he came."

(Ravi, male, was a Masters student at SOAS, University of London.)

My conversation with students regarding the PM's visit to the UK clarified that there was a behavioral difference based on level of study. Amongst the undergraduate students, there was a general lack of awareness and they did not seem to have many political opinions. I propose that the students' young ages and lack of political involvement in their home country are responsible for this inexperience. On the other hand, Masters and PhD students had strong views, which could be due to their general awareness and political views. Most of the students expressed that they did not go to the event, and instead went to protest against the PM. Many agendas surrounded the protest[11]. However, there were a couple of students who expressed that they would have gone to the event provided they had accommodation or made prior arrangements for travelling to London. Although there was a difference in opinion regarding the visit of the Indian Prime Minister to the UK, whether to support or protest, this event urged the students to be involved with the political scenario of their home country, I consider this as a political transnational involvement between the Indian students and India. Next, I focus on the existence of global news and the dependency on social media by the Indian students in the UK to gain access to the news from India.

To analyze the political transnational connections on an attitudinal level, I engaged the participants in a conversation about their political interest and if and from where did they receive news about politics and currents events happening in India. The findings

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[11] The Guardian 12 November 2015: https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2015/nov/12/indian-pmconfronted-by-angry-protesters-in-downing-street

that surfaced suggested that the awareness about home politics was more amongst Masters and PhD students. Some of the typical responses I got were:

"I get most of my news from Facebook because it has done a great job at what Twitter used to do to source the news, getting the news delivered to you, like personalized, for Indian sources I would say The Economic Times; it is always great even for non-economic issues. The Indian Express is up next in my rankings; the Hindu after that. For regional, I would read, yes, The Telegraph, um... and a local language newspaper, the Janta Bazar. I think it's very important for my professional reasons and I know a lot of people don't do that but I like to keep in touch with what's going on in the local news; you get a lot of insights, observational insights that you won't get otherwise, news from really local stuff that is close to what is happening and which is helpful for someone like me in my career."

(Ram, male, is a PhD student at the University of Essex.)

"I guess, The Independent, The Guardian I was already following to a certain extent, but yes, I read them more now, The Mirror maybe or some local political and The McDowell, and some different political news. I start following up also local clubs that I would like to go to. Also, what else, yes, cultural forums, museums, you know, these, Londonist and you, Time Out London and stuff like that; not just London but other places. So the same thing I would do in India, so I started following a lot of these; is that your question? I follow news from India as well; these are in addition to what I already subscribed to when I was in India."

(Avi, male, is a PhD student at Queen Mary, University of London.)

"I follow NDTV to follow Indian activities. I am very involved with the things happening back in India. I do follow The Guardian. I try to find more and more about the UK politics as well."

(Anju, female, is a PhD student at SOAS, University of London.)

"I follow news on Twitter, The UK Guardian, The Independent, South Asian Politics, Times of India. I have some gender accounts that I follow about round table and Dalits., I have been very aware of my surroundings and the things happening in India. I like to discuss pressing issues that happen in India."

(Sona, female, was a Masters' student at SOAS, University of London.)

Throughout the conversation with the students, I realized that the degree to which students subscribed to political news depended on their levels of study and the kind of courses they were studying. Some of the undergraduate students revealed that they relied on the news feeds they received from their social media web pages. On the other hand, Masters students were very specific on which news they followed so were the PhD students, as illustrated by some of the testimonies stated above. During the interviews, the students disclosed that they relied mainly on the virtual format to read news. Social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook provided students special tailored news (politics, sports and culture from India). It is known that this sort of medium makes following news and currents events from home much faster and easier, details of which have been discussed in the review of literature chapter. Due to the popularity of using social media that assists students to keep themselves updated, the

present research recommends this as a factor that encourages students to maintain political connections with their home country at an attitudinal level.

5.5 Living India in the United Kingdom

Finally, in this section I focus on the ways Indian migrant students identify with their home culture; I analyze their food consumption habits and the celebration of festivals. All the contributing factors discussed earlier, both internal (nostalgia for homeland) and external (global transport, economy and media), facilitate the students partaking in Indian culture during their stay in the UK. I consider the combination of two structural circumstances that encourage the migrant students to identify with their home culture, i.e. the historic colonial connection between India and the UK and globalization. The colonial relations have ensured and generated intimate connections between the two countries, contributing to the evolution of a significant Indian diaspora community in the UK. Besides, globalization has made it possible to experience a close interrelation between two countries. Based on these two conceptual frameworks, I examine the food consumption habits amongst the Indian migrant students.

On an attitudinal level, Boccagni (2012) states that immigrants generate self-identification with their home cultures, like art, folklore, etc. With the current research, I did not come across any such comments the students made; nevertheless, what emerged from the findings was the significance of consuming Indian food. Food is an important element in the definition of culture: "in homo sapiens food not only nourishes but also signifies" (Fischler, 1998: 276). To support this claim, I depend on studies done on food and migration (see Valentine, 1999). During the interviews, I found that some of the participants were nervous about not finding the same kind of food that they ate in India and they wanted to bring as much as possible with them

when they first arrived in the UK, even though they were fully aware of the number of Asian/Indian stores located in the UK. Some of the typical responses I got were:

"I had a lot of luggage with me, because we Indians, we crave for our food so much and because we don't get that kind of food here, so one suitcase was filled with food, and the other one was filled with clothes, and the other one I had a laptop bag, and I had a backpack; so I had four items with me to carry."

(Meera, female, is an undergraduate student at the University of Essex.)

"Nilu: We [the participant and her friends] never meet without food being our focus; we cook; it is always Indian food.

Me: Where do you get the ingredients from, especially the spices? Nilu: I get all my spices from back home. I have a whole drawer of spices and I use them quite regularly."

(Nilu, female, is a PhD student at SOAS, University of London.)

"I think a lot of conversations are around food like we [the participant and his friends] automatically gravitate around food, you know, dal chawal ([lentils and rice]) and stuff; I am just assuming you know what dal chawal is."

(Ravi, male, was a Masters student at SOAS, University of London.)

"Ram: We just hang out, like, talk; maybe sometimes they [Indian friends] cook...most of the time is cooking.

Me: Do they cook Indian food?

Ram: Ya

Me: Is it always-Indian food or do they try something else? Ram: Let me think...were they cooking something else? No, they were always cooking Indian food; one of them is vegetarian, so, and she is a bit, um...sort of...conservative Gujarati girl, so she cooks Indian food all the time."

(Ram, male, is a PhD student at the University of Essex.)

"I am very Indian in that ([food habits]), Indian mallu[12], rice, curry and chapatti [flat bread]. I made my effort to make all my masalas from home; we have particular spices that we use and I got everything from there, even salt and sugar. I am very particular that I eat home food every other day."

(Pia, female, is a PhD student at SOAS, University of London.)

The persistent eating practices among the Indian students are similar to any migrant communities all over the world (Codesal, 2010). In the context of food and migration, it is essential to acknowledge that this practice is not only a means to eat home food, but also to organize an event when friends come together and try to recreate the feeling of togetherness that is absent from their lives in the UK. As scholar Ahmed (1999) states, due to the change in the geographical location, the familiarity of home food, whether it is by cooking, buying or even sharing it, helps the migrants ease this transition. I would like to point out here that all my participants had lived in the UK for a minimum of six months, and more than a year in most cases. Therefore, it can be

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[12] Mallu is an informal short form for Malayali: they are people who are from the south Indian state of Kerala.

said that this custom of cooking Indian food and spending time with their Indian friends has been their way of life in the UK for a while. From a sociological perspective, this is thought-provoking because this not only suggests that this form of transnational activity prevails amongst Indian migrant students, but it is also similar to how the Indian diasporic community maintain their home culture (see Jayaram, 2004).

With all the conversations about Indian food, I could not help but ask the participants if they had tried any local Indian restaurants since there are quite a few of them especially in London. Some of the usual answers I received were:

"There are a couple of places, like Sagar and Dishom, that I go to when I am craving Indian food."

(Chetan is a PhD student at SOAS, University of London.)

"When I have a craving for Indian food and then I go out and find a good Indian place and eat, it is just my laziness; I don't like to cook. I do go to Indian places here a lot; however, I feel they are not authentic; I have found a few good ones. Last week I invited a friend for tea in Dishoom. I had a chai [tea], the real masala chai. I was so happy; I drank three cups of tea. Those little things remind you and make you nostalgic about things you like." (Sona, female, was a Masters student at SOAS, University of London.)

"I have been to a few places that do Indian cuisine but I felt they were not authentic; it's a mix of Indian and Bangladeshi food."

(Ram, male, is a PhD student at the University of Essex.)

"Indian restaurants here put sugar in their curry it tastes awful; that is not how we cook food back home. I don't like them."

(Tina, female, is an undergraduate student at the University of Essex.)

So, on one hand, there were students who had discovered a few places that they could rely on when it came to satisfying their craving for Indian food. On the other hand, some students did not enjoy Indian food in the UK because it was not authentic according to their standards. What does authentic Indian food mean? The first thought that came to me was, being miles away from my home country, of course, finding a place that serves *dal* (lentils) and *naan* (oven-baked breads) exactly like Moti Mahal in New Delhi is rare. So, what does finding authenticity in your food mean? And rejecting it once you find out that it does not taste the same?

Author Krishnendu Ray in his book *The Ethnic Restaurateur* (2016) says that the demand for authentic food means that people want a replica, a true copy of expectations, and an ideal version of what a dish should taste like. To further elaborate on this idea concerning the present research, I borrow from the study conducted by scholars Koc and Welsh (2001), moving from one geographical location and cultural space to another, these Indian students experience a glimpse of flexibility in their identities. They are recognized by their national identities, as they leave behind their other intricate local identities (castes, family backgrounds, local places they belong to, etc.) back in India. In this transitional period when their identities are pinned in the wider global arena, holding on to the knowledge of what authentic Indian food tastes maybe a method to compensate for all these so-called losses. As Fischler (1998) states, as an essential component of our culture, food is also central to our sense of

identity. Such feelings were shared amongst all the students, irrespective of their levels of study, gender or any sociocultural differences.

Apart from food habits, there were other practices like language, attire and religious customs that the students mentioned; some of the typical ones were:

Language:

> *"We [Amir and his Indian friends in the UK] crave for Hindi, so we speak*
> *in Hindi."*
> *(Amir, male, is an undergraduate student at the University of Essex.)*
> *"Me: Do you talk to them [Indian friends in the UK] in Hindi or English?*
> *Ram: I think it's both, um...but it's mostly Hindi."*
> *(Ram, male, is a PhD student at the University of Essex.)*

In terms of language, it was common among all students to speak in Hindi amongst their Indian friends; they shared that speaking in Hindi came naturally to them, especially if they were sharing something emotional or personal. Language in the present scenario acts as a binding factor amongst these students and generates a sense of solidarity, making them feel secure and heard in a foreign land.

Attire:

> *"I wear a lot of Indian clothes, lots of colour, kurtas, kurti, and my defiance*
> *against the entire blue, black, grey colour wearing society. I have also*
> *decorated my house with Indian motifs – I have a rajaiee [blanket], my*
> *curtains are from FabIndia [a chain of stores that sells products handmade*

by craftspeople across rural India], bed sheets from India, and we want to buy a few Indian paintings when we go back to India."

(Soni, female, was a PhD student at SOAS, University of London.)

"I wear kurta sometimes; I haven't worn a saree but I haven't got an opportunity to wear it, but most of the clothes I own are very Indian."

(Anju, female, was a PhD student at SOAS, University of London.)

"I am afraid of wearing Indian motif clothes, to be honest. I was wearing the Indian clothes (kurta) and I took the bus to the campus and this woman started abusing; I don't know if she was being racist towards me or she was screaming at someone else. I just don't feel comfortable growing a beard in that case. Nothing needs to happen but I don't feel safe."

(Chetan, male, was a PhD student at SOAS, University of London).

Conversely, when it came to Indian attire, female students across all levels of study were more inclined towards wearing Indian clothes and decorating their houses with Indian motifs. All female students had brought at least one item of Indian attire with them and had worn them to festival celebrations or intended to do so in future. Such enthusiasm was absent among male students, mainly because they did not want to look different from the rest of the crowd, and attract attention, as they felt that there was some sort of stigma attached to men wearing Asian/Indian motif clothes (or even growing facial hair). Females, on the other hand, enjoyed wearing Indian attire and felt proud to do so.

To study cultural transnational connections on a behavioral level, I asked the students about their engagement with any Indian/Asian community or society in the university or outside, or participation in celebrating any kinds of festival after coming to the UK. The factor I considered to analyze this was the internationalization of education. I took into account the consciousness among educational institutions to become global platforms to recruit a diverse population of students. Steps are taken by the universities to make the international students a part of the university communities by setting up various communities and societies, for instance, Indian or Asian societies and celebrations of festivals within the university campus or outside. During my conversation with the students, I comprehended that the young undergraduates and Masters' students were more involved and enthusiastic about being part of the Asian or Indian societies compared to PhD students. Some of them preferred to celebrate festivals with their close friends or with the local community. Some of the typical responses I received were:

> *"I am just a member of the Asian society; I do attend if there is Diwali or Holi celebration with friends."*

(Pramod, male, is an undergraduate student at the University of Essex.)

> *"I am not a member of any society or community; like I said, MBA does not give you time; I did not want to be involved in cultural events and all. I would have liked to go for the Holi celebration, but I had a presentation from 9 till 2. Diwali celebration was good. I helped the president of the international student association with Diwali shopping; we went to Southall. Diwali was okay but not that interesting because there was such vast decoration as they do at Christmas, which they could have done and,*

like, for Chinese New Year, they could have used those stuffs. It was a very short programme. I did like the event they had in Sub Zero; there was an event that was held on the same evening, so the Malaysian and Asian societies performed in an Indian song; there was a band that came and performed. The Tamil society also performed. I guess a few Indian students participated."

(Ankur, male, was a Masters student at the University of Essex.)

"No, I basically can't be bothered. I was a part of the South Asian society, but I just volunteer, not actively involved though. I tried celebrating Diwali one time but then I was like, no, I am out. I cannot handle extreme devotion."

(Chetan, male, was a PhD student at SOAS, University of London.)

The findings suggest that being a part of any cultural society/association depended on the level of study, as students at undergraduate and Masters' level seemed more interested and involved in becoming a part of the cultural community and celebrating festivals in comparison to PhD students. It was also found that female participants in general, were more inclined towards making an effort to celebrate festivals amongst friends or attend celebrations organized by local Indian communities.

"I went for the new Navaratri festival [Hindu festival] that the Indian community in Colchester was celebrating; so we went there; that was very nice; they kept it like home and they had puja and Arati and Dandiya and all."

(Geeta, female, is a PhD student at the University of Essex.)

"I am just a member of the Kashmiri society. During Durga Puja I went for the puja in Camden; being away from home and experiencing the puja and everything was a good feeling. It was quite similar to how we celebrate it at home, eating bhog and getting dressed."

(Sona, female, was a Masters student at SOAS, University of London.)

"I am not a part of any society as such, especially not when it comes to celebrating festivals. I have a group of Indian friends; you have already interviewed them, right? So whenever there is a Diwali or Eid, we meet and celebrate it together; we cook Indian food, play cards, basically meet up and eat!"

(Anju, female, was a PhD student at SOAS, University of London.)

The reason behind this is the expectation that females are essentially associated with being more deeply rooted with their culture and tradition compared to males (Maria, 2002; McDowell, 1999; Sharp, 1996), as discussed earlier in Chapter 2. This ideology stems from the distinctive gender roles that exist in Indian society, which seem to have followed them even in the UK, as women are intensely involved in maintaining cultural ties with the home country and act as guardians of home-country traditions (Morawska, p. 159, 2011).

5.6 Conclusion

The present chapter suggests that certain structural circumstances have made the Indian migrant students conducive to maintaining transnational ties with their home

country. Firstly, is the nostalgia for homeland; followed by the advancement of global transportation and communication; then, the existence of global economy; followed by the existence of bilateral political agreement between nations and the use of social media to access global news; and lastly, bringing the elements of Indian-ness in the UK are globalization and internationalization of education. Each of these circumstances has encouraged the students to maintain emotional and individualistic ties with their home country.

These transnational ties can be categorized as social, economic, political and cultural. Under social transnational ties, I analyzed the students' nostalgia about home on an attitudinal level that highlights the gender disparity among the students based on the idea of home female students seemed to be more attached with home compared to males. On a behavioral level, I discussed the students' visits and systematic communication with their kin and friends in India. Economic transnational ties analyzed the flow of remittance. Not all the students were involved in this type of activity and their engagement depended on the students' level of study, funding status (self-funded, semi-funded or fully funded) and the parents' occupation determining their class position.

For the attitudinal level analyses of political transnational activity, I considered the students' interest to follow and keep systematically informed about the current political events in India. The responses varied amongst students and solely depended on their levels of study. The interest was keen amongst PhD students followed by Masters and then undergraduates. For the behavioral level, analyses were based on two events: i) participation in the UK general elections and the European Union referendum, and ii) the Indian Prime Minister's visit to the UK in 2015. In both cases the participation of the Indian students were low. For the first event, there was almost

nil participation amongst Indian students, as no one wanted to vote. For the second event, most of the students had gone to protest the PM's visit or expressed their wish to do so following the controversy that surrounded his political visit to the UK. Even though this was not the ideal kind of participation that was expected from Indians residing in the UK, this research acknowledges this as maintaining political transnational ties with India because the protest was related to the events that happened in India.

In terms of maintaining cultural transnational ties with India on an attitudinal level, I analyzed how the Indian migrant students generated self-identification with their home culture by consuming Indian food and how this practice signified their "Indian-ness". I further added that speaking in Hindi, wearing Indian clothes, decorating their homes with Indian motifs and following religious practices in the UK should be considered as maintaining Indian culture. On a behavioral level, I recognized the students' affiliations with Indian or Asian society or communities and celebrating various Indian festivals in the UK. The findings suggest that undergraduate and Masters students were more involved in being a part of a cultural society. It was also found that female students made more efforts to celebrate Indian festivals compared to male students due to their societal gender norms and expectations.

Based on the findings of this research and its analysis, I conclude that even though Indian students in the UK engage in different types of transnational activities, the simultaneity that the students create with home and the host society depends on the individual characteristics of the students, like gender, level of study, funding status and class position based on their parents' occupations. Therefore, the current research proposes that all the transnational activities contribute towards each Indian migrant

student having a unique experience during their stay in the UK, therefore shaping and

making each experience different from one another.

Chapter 6

'Not Completely from There, Not Completely from Here' – Indian

Migrant Students and Adaption to the Host Country's Society

The previous empirical chapters revealed the factors that encouraged the Indian migrant students to travel abroad and the intensities of transnational connections through their transformative journey. This chapter will now explore the role of symbolic homeland in the lives of these students in the UK and *if* and *how* they adapt to the host country's culture. I do this by first, reflecting on what is meant by "culture" and the representation of this concept in the studies related to student migration. Following this, I consider two underlying concepts *acculturation* and *assimilation*, and an effort is made to examine if and how the Indian migrant students adapt and adjust to their host country's culture. Subsequently, I examine the different acculturation strategies that the migrant students may adopt whilst they interact with the host country's society. Although there are four acculturation strategies (assimilation, integration, separation and marginalization) that have been identified in the field of immigration studies, I merely consider assimilation. Next, taking on the understanding of assimilation I identify and address the constellation of mutually occurring circumstances that form the multilayer processes of assimilation into the host country's society. Lastly, I support the application of the concepts of acculturation and assimilation by quoting significant testimonies from the interviews, whilst being mindful about any notable variations, such as gender, level of study and place of origin.

6.1 Culture and Student Migration

During my interviews and interaction with the students, I realized that when they first arrived in the UK their relocation suddenly and almost instantaneously imposed a variety of challenging roles that they were expected to learn. Here, I am referring to the habits and rituals that people in the UK follow for example, standing in a queue and waiting for their turn, not crowding while withdrawing money from the ATM and maintenance of personal space, to point to a few. These local customs are common to all the visitors in the UK, however, following these kinds of practices (saying "please" and "thank you", general politeness) is likely to shape the experiences of the students and could enhance the experiences of maintaining cordial relationships with their peers, which may in turn help them to become emotionally well-adjusted in a new country. All the international students in the UK come from diverse cultural backgrounds, and they are expected to "adjust" to a well-defined set of behaviours that require them to learn the new and "proper" roles (Spradley and Phillips, 1972). These new roles are spread around the UK educational system and the British society. These can be in terms of abiding by the rules of the Tier 4 visa for instance attending classes, working part-time (20 hours a week), travelling in and around the UK and while entering and departing the country. This process has thus become a very important step to maintain a definite identity and to avoid conflicts, which has become a kind of coping strategy that can be applied either if the students decide to return home or stay after concluding their studies (Pedersen, 1980; Wong-Rieger, 1984).

However, with globalization, and the redesigning of the world into a smaller living place (Chen, 1999), people are now, more than ever, aware of the various traditions and cultures of other parts of the world, especially in a university setting (for example, formation and operation of international student bodies and celebrations of non-local

festivals like *Eid*, *Diwali*, *Holi* or *Chinese New Year*). Consequently, the adjustment of the international students into a new country may not be as rigid as the predecessors (Spradley and Phillips, 1980; Pedersen, 1980; Wong-Rieger, 1984) suggested. But this does not change the obvious that different cultures use different interactions, communication practices and methods, which inevitably lead to discrepancies in language, body language, conflict resolution and closure (Gudykunst and Ting-Tommey, 1998). Misunderstanding and struggling to adjust in a new country's culture can lead to frustration and confusion and affecting the student's studying and living conditions (Andrade, 2006). Yet, if this adjustment is successfully managed, then this will lead to a fulfilling stay and a chance for a better learning and understanding of a new society, which will work in favor of the students (Townsend and Lee, 2004).

This brings my discussion to inquire, what is culture? In the context of student migration, culture is defined as "the set of values, beliefs, behaviors and customs that distinguish a society" (Mahoney, Trigg, Griffin and Pustay, 2001, p. 373). Similarly, according to scholar Trompenaar's (1993) point of view, "culture is how these dilemmas reconciled since every nation seeks a different and winding path to its own ideals of integrity" (1993, p. 165). Since there has been an increasing interest in the area of student migration, one recurring theme that is often highlighted while discussing cultural differences amongst international students is the adaptation to the host country. The UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCIA) published on their website[13] (2017) seven elements that contribute towards such adjustments, (a) climate: the British climate is colder, which the students can find hard to adjust to, (b) food: similarly the taste, preparation and cooking style of British food is different; it may be bland compared to other cuisines, (c) language: speaking in English all the

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[13] https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Preparation-and-Arrival

time, getting used to the common lingos, accent and speed at which people speak may be an issue, (d) dress: students may not be used to the dressing style and it may come across as immodest and revealing, (e) social roles: students have to get used to public displays of affection or same-sex relationships, things that they might not have encountered in their home country, (f) "rules" of behavior: these include being polite, saying sorry, saying thank you, maintaining basic etiquettes and being punctual, to mention a few, and (g) values: upholding the culture they bring with them from their home country and not being judgmental regarding cultures of other countries.

While preparing the interview schedule and the questions for the participants I did not direct any questions to unfold the elements of such adjustments. This was because I was more inclined towards obtaining evidence regarding the migrant students' adaptation to the UK's culture or how they perceived their home culture after arriving in the UK. However, while going through the interview transcripts, I discovered some signs of adjustment. I found that, firstly, not all of the participants experienced severe adjustments issues, and, secondly, my findings exposed that the intensity and degree of such adjustments depended on two factors: (1) the place the student originally came from (big city or small town), and (2) gender. During my conversations with the participants, it was evident that those who came from big cities, which comprised of 21 participants out of a total of 24, showed no signs of experiencing any form of major cultural adjustments. Students who grew up in big cities were used to the hustle and bustle of big cities like London. However, there were a few comments about adjusting to the weather, but most of them expressed that they enjoyed the cooler weather compared to the harsh heat in India. In addition to this, there were mentions of the local British food and how different it was compared to the food they were used to eating. However, this was not a serious issue due to the strong presence of Asian food markets

and restaurants in the UK. In the section that follows, I discuss the process of acculturation amongst the Indian overseas students in the UK.

6.2 Acculturation and Student Migration

This section examines if there are any signs of acculturation amongst the Indian migrant students living in the UK and, if there are any, what are those? Most research on this area is limited only to immigrations, sojourners and other ethnic groups (Bartram, Poros and Monforte, 2014). Thus, this research identifies the need to include the cultural changes affecting international students as well. Acculturation as previously explained, is a process by which the cultural patterns of a particular group change when they come into contact with the members of another group, which may result in the group becoming less culturally distinctive. Thus, inspired by the reasoning laid down by Gordon (Bartram, Poros and Monforte, 2014), and based on the findings of this research, I categorize and investigate the elements of acculturation in three themes: (1) Language, (2) Dressing style, and (3) Food.

(1) Language: India has 22 major languages; *Hindi* is the official language; however, English is also spoken widely across India. Speaking in English is not uncommon in India. However, the findings of the present research suggest that the regularity of speaking in English amongst the participants depended on where they came from (whether they came from big cities or small towns).

> *"I am still not very confident with my English; no one in my family speaks in*
>
> *English. My level of English was very secondary. Only after I moved to*
>
> *Delhi, I spoke to my teacher and friends in English. When I came to the UK,*
>
> *I was scared if people would be able to understand what I would say. I am*

still learning English I would say. Back in India I hardly spoke in English and here I have to do it all of the time."

(Preeti was a PhD candidate at the University of Essex; she is from a northeast part of India, from a state called Assam.)

"India is a country where you have to speak in English otherwise people will think that you are illiterate. English is something you are used to, especially when you are educated; you are expected to speak in fluent English and write in good English. I used to speak in Hindi with my friends and family back home but here, of course, I have been speaking in English much often."

(Mona was an undergraduate student at the University of Essex; she comes from a small town in Uttar Pradesh.)

"In terms of language, definitely using more of the British English; my accent and everything is pretty much American. I have noticed that I have been using more of British English while writing in social media or communicating with my local English friends."

(Ram is a PhD candidate at the University of Essex; he is from the city of Kolkata.)

For theoretical precision of my findings, I depend on Gordon's definition of acculturation, and his study about the first-generation immigrants in the American society. In his research, he considered language as the first principal element to measure the extent of acculturation (Gans, 1998, Alba and Nee, 2003). Likewise, Alba and Nee (2003) confirm that the first generation of the Irish, Italians and eastern

Europeans first acculturated and later assimilated over a period of time by absorbing the customs and common practices of the American life; one of the principal approaches towards this process was fluency and proficiency in English. However, the "new" immigrants presented a slightly different picture, since they had acculturated at different rates depending on which nationality they belonged to. In the case of international students in the UK, presenting the proof of their English language proficiency is the first step towards complying with the rules of the host country. English language tests like IELTS, TOEFL and Pearson facilitate such requirements. According to the British Council, the Tier 4 (General) student visa for degree level and above requires the prospective student to score 5.5 overall and a minimum of 4 on each of the four segments, which comprises of reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Hence, international students have to secure a specific score in their English language test to be eligible to entry the UK. This is the proof that they have adequate knowledge in English language and "that language acquisition is the first (and necessary) step towards creating and maintaining primary relationships with individuals and institutions in the host society" (Alba and Nee, 2003). Thus, going by this logic, language acquisition amongst immigrants in a new country is the first step towards acculturation. The testimonies of the participants confirm the same, yet it can be concluded that those who came from big cities did not have to make much of an effort to acculturate into the new country, compared to participants who came from smaller cities did not have much practice in speaking in English back in India. From language, I now move on to the style of dressing and observe any kinds of changes pointed out by the participants.

(2) Dressing style: In the present research, I consider any comments on the changes experienced by the participants in their style of dressing as a sign of acculturation. While in conversation with the students, some of the relevant comments were:

"I don't know! I wouldn't attribute this to being in England; maybe I am just becoming older, so I am dressing less like a grad student and more like an adult. I would say, maybe a bit of the British people dress so well here, especially in London. I mean in the US nobody gives a shit; everyone's in their sweat pants, but here that's not the case, so you can say that there is some kind of induction to the British style, especially when you see well-dressed people in London."

(Ram is a PhD candidate at the University of Essex and he is from Kolkata.)

"I wouldn't say much has changed; in terms of clothes, I tend to follow the trend even when I was in India; that hasn't changed."

(Tina is an undergraduate student at the University of Essex; she is from Delhi.)

"In the sense of clothes and dressing up, yes it has changed a bit, not too much; like, here, I cannot wear the traditional formal dress that I used to back home."

(Mona is an undergraduate student at the University of Essex and she is from Uttar Pradesh.)

"Nothing has changed; I am from Mumbai; we probably dress more formally than people do here because when we go to work, we just cannot

get up and go to work in casuals, we cannot wear sports shoes to work. I do wear Indian clothes here; I am very Indian when I have to be. For example, our new year or something, I have worn a kurta [traditional Indian dress], something to similar to what I used to wear at home. Also, in festivals like Diwali, I have a lot of Indian friends here so we celebrate the festival together."

(Soni was a PhD candidate from SOAS, University of London, and she is from Pune.)

The findings derived from the testimonies suggest that only the male participants had a slight inclination of being influenced by the dressing style of the host country. All the female participants shared that they did not experience any changes in the way they dress. The reason for this is because females are mostly well aware of the current fashion trends globally and India itself has a large market of international clothing stores, which makes following the latest styles easier. Apart from that, India now has online stores of brands that include the UK street fashion as well, thus making the female participants conscious and less likely to change their style of clothing. In terms of wearing less Indian traditional attires, this could be because there are fewer occasions and opportunities to wear them. Men, on the other hand shared that they were generally not very keen on following any fashion trends but were influenced by the clothes men wore in the UK. While in conversation with them, it dawned upon me that the changes in dressing styles were only because they are in a new place and observed what the other men were wearing. They felt the need to change with the availability of numerous stores on the local high street. Next, I report on the participants' acculturation towards the host country in terms of the food they consume.

(3) Food: While discussing food and eating habits amongst the Indian migrant students in the UK, I mentioned the importance of food and that it is a part of the migrant students' identities that they bring with their homeland. While enquiring about their food habits after their long stay in the UK, the following were the most common responses from the participants:

"I still eat Indian food every day, at least one meal. If I don't have my rice than I don't think I can survive; I come from north-east India – I have to have my rice. I hate fish and chips; I tried it on my second day in the UK; I have tried it again and I still hate it; I think I don't like British food. However, I did used to make pasta and stuff in India; the frequency has increased now. I have realized that lately, I have started eating more western food after my living in the UK, except fish and chips!"

(Preeti was a PhD candidate at the University of Essex; she is from the state of Assam and their staple diet is rice.)

"I do cook Indian food, but now it has reduced; earlier I used to cook every day, but now if I cook Indian food, it's once in two weeks, because this year my year has been a bit hectic due to studies., I never got enough time to cook so I was living on sandwiches or noodles, just baked or oven- heated food, those things; at times I used to make salad and survive on those.".

(Mona is an undergraduate student at the University of Essex; she is from Uttar Pradesh and her staple diet are flat wheat bread and lentils.)

"I have found my way around the very tedious Indian style of cooking; I do things the easy way: chuck it in the oven and you know bake stuff, and eat

those kinds of things., It has made things easier and in the process, I try to cook local British food as well. In India, we don't generally have ovens and stuff".

(Nilu is a PhD candidate at the University of Essex and she is from the city of Mumbai.)

It is intriguing to observe changes that the students have shared in their testimonies because, previously they shared that they would go to lengths to find an Indian/Asian shops and purchase Indian spices and other food items. However, this seems to have changed now, since they want a break from the tiresome and elaborate Indian style of cooking, thereby adapting to the UK's style of cooking. I apply the understanding of "'selective acculturation'" here for theoretical clarity. Similar to Gibson's (1988) concept of multi-linear acculturation, selective acculturation is a process when the immigrants' absorb and attain certain practices of the host society while maintaining their own cultural identity. Alejandro Portes (2009) had designed three acculturation concepts (Consonant, Selective and Dissonant) to analyze the way the first- and the second-generation immigrants acculturate. According to him, "selective acculturation occurred when the parents and children learn the language and culture of the host society and, at the same time, retain significant elements of their original culture or remain part of their ethnic communities" (for more, see Waters et al., 2010).

Similarly, in the case of this research the students seem to have preserved their 'Indian-ness' by cooking Indian food once in a while, but at the same time, showed signs of acculturation to the UK life by adopting the ways of cooking and a significant change in the preparation and consumption of food. The studies on immigrants' adjustments have since suggested that any group first acculturate and then assimilate

into the host country's society. Therefore, the findings suggest that Indian students in adapt to the language, dressing style and food in the UK, but they still do not feel that they belong to a new culture, or that they have abandoned their home country's culture, this could be because students are by definition temporarily studying abroad (except a few who find jobs or get married and settle in the host country), so their experience is different from other immigrant groups. In the next section, I examine and address the constellation of mutually existing factors that enable the migrant students to assimilate into the UK's society.

6.3 Assimilation and Student Migration

I begin the final section of this chapter by revealing the cluster of circumstances that contribute to the process of assimilation. I borrow from Morawska's (2003) variety of combination and the analytic strategy in assimilation. While talking about these strategies she focused on the Indian immigrants and their assimilation into American society. For the present research, I carve out the essential features of these strategies, to analyze what do these students assimilate into? For instance, according to Morawska (2003), familiarity with western life and knowledge of the English language tends to ease the immigrants' paths to adapt to the host country's culture.

I have found this to be true in the case of this research as well. Out of a total of 24 participants, 21 came from big cities. While in conversation with the participants, I gathered that students who lived in big cities took less time to adapt to their lifestyles in the UK, compared to the other three participants who came from small cities. Similar to Morawska's (2003) multilayer process of integration in the host country,

this research also analyzes the adaptation process of Indian students in three-layers discussed under the following sub headings:

1) *Socio-economic adaptation*. I begin with the socio-economic adaptation of the students, because I realized that this factor had a direct and important role causing a ripple effect on other aspects of the migrant students' experiences and their adjustments while in the UK. The findings of this research imply that the students who came from economically sound backgrounds (12 out of the total of 24 participants) they all had some experience of travelling abroad for vacations or visiting relatives for work or education. While in conversation with these 12 students, I found that all of them gave a similar answer when I asked them about their experience in the UK.

> *"I did visit my sister when she was in her first year so we had, like, a family trip to, like, check out her university, so I first came to the UK when I was 15 or 16. After two years I was here to do my undergrads, so I feel I didn't have must adjustment to make while settling down here."*

(Alia was an undergraduate student at the University of Essex; she is from the city of Kolkata. Her father is a businessman and they have an actively running family business.)

> *"Actually, I have been in the UK before; I worked here. First I lived in a place just outside Glasgow, when I was 21. I was there on a volunteering exchange program, in the year 2010–11. I was supervising the same work as well, so because of that experience I already had an idea about living in the UK."*

(Ravi was a Masters student at SOAS, University of London, and he is from

New Delhi; both his parents were working but have now retired.)

"I was excited to be away from India. I hated the US when I was studying there and also hated the UK at the beginning because I was so homesick. However, I found and I thought that the UK was different, it has excellent public transport, and the time difference was not that much, and it was closer to home. Because I lived outside India in the US before coming to the UK, it gave a sense of adapting to a new space and place, and I feel I took less time adjusting to my life in the UK."

(Soni was a PhD candidate at SOAS, University of London. She is from Pune and both her parents are doctors.)

The common pattern among all the above testimonies is that their previous visits to the UK or any other international destination facilitated their current stay in the UK. I tie this to the economic and social status of the families that these students come from and the fact that all live in the metropolitan cities. This observation is similar to what Morawska (2003) mentions in her study about Indian immigrants, that their prior knowledge about the western ways of life and business, and fluency in speaking English had eased their process of settling down in the US. Although in her study the immigrants were settled in the US, however, in the present research the students are in the UK only for a specific time.

Furthermore, the interview transcripts revealed an association between international travelling experience and the students' integration into the host country's society. I found that those students who had travelled outside India were aware and more acceptable regarding other cultures. They experienced less cultural adjustment and

took lesser time to adjust into the new society. The students' prior travelling experiences depicted a wider perspective regarding global knowledge and the ability to view new customs without any cultural bias. The evidences of these attributes can be highlighted by the testimonies below:

"My experience in the UK has been great; I am used to travelling to foreign locations. I think that is what makes me very free regarding my food choices, making friends, and open to taste new cuisines and learn about new cultures."

(Pramod is an undergraduate student at the University of Essex and he is from New Delhi. His father runs a successful family business and his mother is a lawyer.)

"Actually, I have been travelling alone for work. I hadn't been to the UK but I have been to the US and I have been travelling alone so it was not a big deal. I feel like such experiences help a person to make new friends from different cultures, especially in London, since it is a multi-cultural city."

(Sona was a Masters student at SOAS, University of London, and she lives in the city of Mumbai; both her parents are working in the government sector.)

Thus, based on the above statements, the findings of this research suggest that the students who had prior experience of travelling abroad had the opportunity to explore new cultures, expand their knowledge and awareness. They utilized such life experiences when they came to the UK, first during their interactions within the university setting, which later expanded to other spheres of the host country's society especially after the students had a wider social circle and friends.

2) Freedom. Whilst looking for reasons that helped the migrant students settle in UK, I noted a recurring idea of freedom amongst the female participants (15 out of the total of 24), which was absent amongst the male participants. On further enquiry regarding what kind of freedom they experienced after coming to the UK, some of the popular comments from them were:

"I have freedom, freedom in every sense, even what I am wearing, eating, staying alone or staying at or with boys; but with freedom comes responsibility as well; it has made me independent but responsible as well."

(Mona, female, is an undergraduate student at the University of Essex.)

"Absolutely, I have more freedom. Majorly in terms of security it is more secure for women here than in India. Women can go out and have fun without even thinking about being safe or safety; if nothing there is the safety bus [Student Union late-night bus service] *to go back to home to among other things."*

(Tina, female, is an undergraduate student at the University of Essex.)

"Here people do not care about how you are dressed; they don't poke their nose in other people's business. I am not scared to go out during the day or night or evening; it's not the same when I am in my home town."

(Preeti, female, was a PhD candidate at the University of Essex.)

I compare this finding to Morawska's (2003) study on Indians settled in the US and the pressure of living in a patriarchal society back in India. The study shows that most of the Indian women have embraced the notion of gender equality after coming to the

US (for more, see Lessinger, 1995; Sheth, 1997; DasGupta, 1997). Similarly, in the case of the Indian female students in the UK, they have expressed that they enjoy the "freedom" of wearing what they want to, socializing with the opposite gender (maintaining a friendly or romantic relationship), which is otherwise objected by the families, and feeling safe. It is not new information that Indian women are not safe or do not feel safe in India. Numerous news articles report that India is the most dangerous country for women. An article in *The Guardian*[14] states that in a recent survey conducted by the Thomson Reuters Foundation, India has been named the world's most dangerous country for women. Thus, it comes with no surprise that young migrant women living and studying in the UK want to make the most of the freedom and sense of safety that they receive, enabling them to embrace this feature of the UK.

3) Bicultural identities: In order to elaborate on this point, I borrow from Nirvana Man's (1997: 153) very apt metaphor, a "salad bowl" much like the mix and match of different ingredients in a salad bowl, the migrant students also arrive in the UK with their dominant Indian culture gets mixed with the cultures of the host country, which they adapt to during a matter of time. According to the testimonies of the participants, some of the elements from the host country's society are:

> *"Whenever I am in India, I always miss the cleaner air; I miss the friendly people around here [the UK]. It is very dusty in India and I coughed a lot and then there is garbage all over the place. I was thinking why can't people throw their rubbish in the dustbin like they do it here; I do at least for my house when I visit. And, when I have to get inside a bus, I always insist on standing in a queue like people do it here, but they push and shove. After I*

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[14] https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/jul/02/india-most-dangerous-country-womensurvey

started living in the UK, I have noticed such kinds of changes in me and I try to practice the same when I am visiting my hometown."

(Preeti was a PhD candidate at the University of Essex, and she is from the state of Assam.)

"Even if I still think of home in India, I don't feel like I fit in there anymore, in the sense that the viewpoints of most people are very different from mine. Now it is very difficult to adjust especially when you know and are aware of certain things in life and things are not always how they seem. My life in the UK has helped me become this person; this wouldn't have been possible if I always lived in India".

(Tina is an undergraduate student at the University of Essex, and she is from New Delhi.)

These features (in the forms of feelings, actions and gaining perspective) of the British life that the migrant students have integrated into their lives are similar to Morawska's (2003) observation about the Indian immigrants' assimilation into the American ways of life. In the form of recreation of the American dream, lifestyles, professional cultures and other perceptions, for example, the equality in gender roles. Yet, since UK already has a colorful multicultural society, the findings suggest that these students are assimilating into a student group rather than into the British ways of life.

Next, to discuss how has this transition affected the lives of the students? I quote a testimony from one of the participants:

"I am between somebody from there [India] and here [UK] because I am not somebody completely from there and not somebody from here, so I am in-between right now. So there is this transition period that is going on; either I'll be knocked away at this side or knocked away at my original place."

(Nilu is a PhD candidate at the University of Essex, and she is from the city of Mumbai.)

The notion of home and the sense and security of belonging to a particular place is complex in a life of a migrant. In the case of education-related migrations, migrant students have to follow a specific set of regulations and fulfill the essential border entry requirements (Tier 4 student visas in the UK) to reside in the country of destination for a specific time. This situation may change if the students are successful in securing job opportunities shift their visa from student visa to work visa. However, in reality, this is very hard to achieve for international students. Nevertheless, in their period of stay they do encounter these feelings of being in-between places, both geographically and emotionally. Thus, in such situations, the definition of home is complex, as the sense of home is trans-located since the migrants' places of origin are different from their places they reside (Ahmed, 1999). Therefore, like in the cases of many immigration stories, is home the place they have left behind? or is it the one they are creating with their experiences? This question echoes in the journeys and the stories of the migrant students as well.

6.4 Conclusion

As mentioned in the opening section of the chapter, the two underlying concepts I depend on to explain the adaptation of Indian students in the UK are acculturation and

assimilation. Although these concepts are used to provide explanations for immigrants and permanent settlers, I utilize the ideas related to these concepts to draw a conceptual framework to analyze how the Indian students adapt to the culture of the host country. This research is aware that since students are in the UK for temporary periods, during this time they are not assimilated into the British society but into the university setting. Based on the three stages of assimilation (Bartram, Poros and Monforte, 2014) – boundary crossing, boundary blurring and boundary shifting (as mentioned in the review of literature chapter) – I examine this process in the case of the Indian migrant students in the UK. There are clear signs of boundary crossing in the form of language, the migrant students speak more in English and familiarize themselves with the common and local jargons. Getting influenced by the British fashion and their sense of style is another sign of boundary crossing. Similarly, changes in food consumption, the students have incorporated British food and the style of cooking, and have slowly broken away from the traditional and tedious Indian style of cooking.

In the second phase of assimilation, boundary blurring, the ethnic difference between the immigrants and the native people is reduced at a societal level rather than at an individual level. For example, this can be achieved by the issuing of dual citizenship. The manifestation of this process among the Indian migrant students is unfeasible because the population of them isn't enough to form a community and undergo a societal level change. In addition to this the Tier 4 visa regulations state the duration of their stay in the country. Therefore, the only way these students can live in the UK after their courses finish is if they secure jobs (in which they have to follow the rules of the work visa), or if they get married to a local citizen. Lastly, the issue of dual

citizenship is also not applicable to Indian citizens since the Indian Government does not allow dual citizenship.

Finally, coming to the last process of boundary shifting, which is the readjustment of the boundaries that are shifted towards either inclusion or exclusion in the destination country's society, the migrant students are not involved in this process since they are constantly guided by the regulations of the Tier 4 student visa. Thus, the duration of their stay has an expiration date, making them unable to go through the process of boundary shifting. Thus, according to the findings of this research, the Indian migrant students, due to the nature and restrictions surrounding their stay in the UK, show only the first sign in the process of assimilation. As concluding remarks, based on the findings of this research, it is evident that the acculturation strategies and the understanding of assimilation may not be adequate to comprehend the experiences of the Indian students in the UK. This is mainly because their integration mainly occurs in university settings, their nature of migration is mainly temporary and finally, only when these students live in the UK permanently do the issues of acculturation or assimilation start to kick in. Thus, there is a need for a theoretical framework to understand the adaptation experiences of international students as a whole.

Chapter 7

You don't have to go home, but you can't stay here: The Conclusion

In this final chapter of the thesis, I begin by presenting an overview of the research. Next, I discuss the important findings of the research, this is followed by the contribution to the field of student migration studies, and finally, identifying areas of future research in this field.

7.1 Overview of the Research

Facilitated by personal experiences and the inspiration drawn from the fictional migration narratives, I conceived the idea of researching the lives of overseas Indian students in the UK. This conception was designed to trace the trajectories of the student's migratory process like a journey; a journey that begins with a motivation to study abroad, preparation to relocate, making sense of the visa rules that guides their stay, assistance from educational agencies and the personal factors that encourage them to move abroad for higher studies (Chapter 4). The second stage of the journey starts when the students arrive at their destination and sustain various forms of transnational involvement. These kinds of connections are facilitated by the developments in transport, communication, economy, social media and civic-politics (Chapter 5). The third stage of the journey is about acclimatizing to the host country's culture. After spending a substantial amount of time in the UK, the students may adopt certain parts of the host country's culture (Chapter 6).

Organizing the process of student migration in this manner gave the research a planned structure, an orderly manner of sequence as it would unfold in the lives of the students, empirical clarity, and due to the research's exploratory character, an

opportunity to employ a combination of various theoretical and conceptual frameworks borrowed from immigration studies to make sense of the data accumulated. Structuration theory is a general model I apply to study this migration flow, which makes it obligatory to review migration from both individual and societal perspectives. Adopting this theory enables the research to give equal importance to human agencies and societal structure in the process of migration, and discuss how the changing scenarios of the economies, politics and globalization contribute to the flow of migration (Wolfel, 2002).

7.2 Important Findings

As mentioned in the introduction the research questions for this study were framed focusing on the process of migration and the experiences of the Indian students in the UK. Chapter 1 addresses the process part of the research questions. Based on the findings and analysis for the first research question under process, it was found that academics and career prospects complemented by the prestigious reputation of the UK education standards, were the main motivation for the students deciding to travel abroad for higher studies. This was true in the case of undergraduate, Masters and PhD students, irrespective of their funding (sponsored or self-funded) status. No notable deviation based on gender, caste or level of study had surfaced. However, for the prospective students to aspiration to travel abroad for education has been possible only because of internationalization of education, which is the product of globalization. Thus, this research places globalization and internationalization of education as the macro-level factor that motivates the students to travel internationally for higher education.

Addressing the second question under process, this research found that the Tier 4 (student visa) rules and border entry requirements are considered as a mezzo level factor that influences the student's decisions to relocate for educational purposes. As Faist (1997; 2000) states, the mezzo level, which is situated between the macro and micro levels can be utilized to explain the enabling and perpetuating factors in migration. It was found that the Tier 4 (student visa) and border entry requirements acted as the enabling factor. It was no surprise that the constant changes and the strict student visa rules were not well received by the international students. In the case of this research, the decisions of the UK home office to cancel the post-study work (PSW) visa and that international students had to return to their home countries after the completion of their courses had affected the self-funded students and Masters students the most. The reason for this was because the students (and parents) had invested their time and money to acquire a foreign degree with the hope that they would be able to utilize their knowledge and skills and gain work experience in the UK before they returned home. Due to this, the students felt unwelcomed and in the words of one of the respondents:

"We are good enough only for our money but not when it came to utilizing our skills and expertise on a professional level."

Accordingly, the Tier 4 (student visa) and the border entry requirements, along with the network in the country of destination, emerged as the enabling mezzo factor. Likewise, the findings of the research found that the educational agencies acted as a perpetuating factor because it was found that students from all levels of study had approached the educational agencies for guidance and assistance. However, this practice was common among Masters and undergraduate students only. For this

particular research, such agencies acted as networks in the country of destination since they provided a wide range of services and assistance for prospective students. Much like Massey's (1990, 1993) network theory, that provided kinship and friendship structures that create social ties and perpetuate migration, educational agencies do the same for Indian students travelling to the UK, but in their case, the social ties would be introducing them to the students already studying in the UK. However, the testimonies of the PhD students revealed that they did not take any assistance from such agencies, the reason being that they were mature and felt confident enough to complete the paperwork and other official formalities, like admission procedures, liaisons with the university, enquiring about scholarships and applying for visas, without any assistance.

This research further identified two societal dividers, in the form of (i) caste and (ii) gender as personal and family motivations and formed the micro-level factor that influenced the students' decision-making processes. In terms of caste, studying abroad seemed more important to students belonging to high castes as compared to students from other lower castes. This was because a foreign degree was seen as a symbol of success and maintenance of social status, similar to Bourdieu's (1986) concept of cultural capital. Second, gender also played a role in shaping the decision-making process amongst the students, as it was only the female students who advocated about how they perceived their relocation. For them, this experience was about living independently, the possible prospect of finding suitable life partners of their choice and living their lives outside the traditions and norms of the Indian culture.

Now I discuss the findings for the research questions under the "experience" of the students. The first question under this section is concerned with the maintenance of transnational connection with the homeland. The analysis of data under this topic has

been discussed in Chapter 5. One of the important aspects that appeared while analyzing the data was the nostalgia that the students feel for their home. Migrants' and immigrants' emotional connections with their homeland are not new, and the same was reflected in the findings of this research. However, this present research has found that feelings of nostalgia encouraged the students to maintain ties with friends and family in India. Upon scrutiny, it was revealed that all the students showed signs of reflective nostalgia, but female students, in particular displayed signs of reflective nostalgia (Boym, 2001). It was found that the memories of home were governed by the patriarchal structure of the Indian society. Thus, the roles of females in a typical Indian household shaped the way they reminisced and felt closer to home compared to the male students.

Next, the research discussed that the changes in information technology, transport and communication are the determinants that facilitate the to and fro movement between nations and maintaining ties with home country. In this scenario as well, female students flew back home and maintained Internet-based communication more often than male students. This is because the parents of the female students feel the need to know their whereabouts; this ideology is rooted in the patriarchal grip on women by the Indian society. So, the only way that the parents can demonstrate any form of restriction is by the regular information about their situations. Hence, the analysis of the transnational connection amongst Indian students suggests that the patriarchal domination is not weakened via transnational connections; rather, it changes it form.

Similarly, this research claims that the existence of the global economy enables the flow remittance from India to the UK. Normally, immigrants send remittance to their home countries; however, in the case of student migration, it's the students that

receive remittance from their homes. The findings suggested that the receipt of remittance depended on the students' levels of study, funding status, previous and current employment status and their parents' occupations. Almost all of the undergraduate students were self-funded and had at least one working parent, and all of them received remittances from their homes. With the combination of the funded, semi-funded and self-funded among Masters students, there were a few who received remittance from home, but later started working or depended on their savings. In the case of PhD students, most of them were fully funded and few self-funded. The self-funded students were all employed part-time because they did not want to be a burden on their families and supported their living expenses.

The next finding that emerged during the data analysis was the transnational political ties that the students engage in during their stay in the UK and the role of social media in acquiring news from their homeland. The transnational political ties were examined based on two events: (i) participation in the UK general elections and the European Union membership referendum, and (ii) attending the Indian Prime Minister's visit to the UK. The opinions regarding these two activities differed based on the students' levels of study. For the first event, undergraduate students were not aware that they could vote; this could be because of their young age and lack of awareness. Amongst the Masters' students, some of them were unaware and some of them did not find it useful to register to vote because of their duration of stay. Lastly, all the PhD students were aware of their voting power they could exercise in the UK. However, they felt that their voting rights did not represent their voice since they would not bring any changes to their international student status.

Regarding the second event, the findings show that due to undergraduate students' young age and their limited interest in political involvements at their home country,

they had a passive attitude towards the Indian PM's visit. However, on the other hand, Masters and PhD students were very vocal about their viewpoints; it was evident that this was because of their general awareness and interest in home politics. This led me to my next inquiry about how they maintained political ties with India? Upon analyzing the data, I found out that the existence of global news and the circulation of domestic and international news via social media supported the maintenance of political ties with the home country. Thus, this research recommends that using social media is a factor that encourages the students to maintain political connections with their homeland.

Furthermore, while analyzing the cultural transnational ties that the students maintain with their homeland, it was found that they generate the idea of "self-identification" with their home culture whilst staying in the UK by consuming Indian food, wearing Indian clothes, speaking in their native language and decorating their homes with Indian motifs. Seeking authentic Indian food, cooking and inviting fellow Indian friends for dinner or socializing were common amongst all students, so was speaking in *Hindi.* However, wearing Indian attire and decorating homes with Indian motifs were specific to female students due to their societal gender norms and expectations.

The final set of findings examines if and how the students adapt in the U.K (Chapter 6). This analysis was based on the concepts of acculturation and assimilation, utilized while discussing the immigrants' settlement in a new country. However, the findings pointed out that since students are by definition temporarily in the UK their experiences are not going to be the similar to migrants moving for a longer time or relocating immigrants. The findings reflect that migrant students adapt to the new lifestyles and accept the culture of the host country, but they do not feel like they belong to a new culture, neither do they abandon the culture of their home country.

7.3 Contribution to the Field of Study

The following are the contributions of this research to the field of study based on the key findings:

1) The dominant idea of this thesis is that student migration like any other migration process is complex and follows a certain procedure. First, it starts by a motivation to travel to the U.K for higher education, second, enabled by student visas and clearing border entry requirements with the help of educational agencies, their vision of travelling to the U.K for studies comes closer to reality. Finally, when they arrive at their country of destination their experiences in the host country shapes their overall stay.

2) According to the present research, the process of decision making and travelling to the UK is influenced by various structural circumstances. In this thesis, such opportunities are explained with the help of structuration theory via the sequence of macro-, mezzo- and micro-level factors. The table below further illustrates themes and theories discussed under each level based on the data analyzed.

Macro Level

Theme	Theoretical framework
Academics and career perspective	Globalization, Internationalization of Education

Mezzo level

Theme	Theoretical framework
Tier 4 visa and border entry requirements	Institutional Theory

Network in the country of destination	Network Theory

Micro-level

Theme	Theoretical framework
Personal Motivation	Value expectancy model, Behavior model

3) Understanding the journey of the Indian students to the U.K in this manner contributes to the existing body of knowledge on "student migration", in a more systematic manner. The role of each structural circumstance in the form of macro-mezzo-micro level factors complemented by appropriate theoretical framework provides an orderly explanation of the different stages of student migration process. This is vital and a pragmatic approach in understanding student migration. Subsequently, the research also provides a qualitative dimension to quantitative representation (like OEDC, Project Atlas, surveys and data) on education-related migration.

4) Another contribution of this study is to emphasize that student migration cannot be homogenized; the story of each student's journey is different and so are their experiences. According to the findings of this research, the various societal differences like gender orientation, caste, level of study, funding status, place of origin and parents' employment are considered while analyzing the journey of the students, thus representing variations in their experiences of the students.

5) This research highlights the importance of educational agencies and its role in building networks in the destination country. Since they serve a similar purpose as friends and relatives do in the migration process, as discussed in Chapter 4.

6) Lastly, this research identifies that there is no such theoretical framework that can be utilized to give an account of the students' adjustments into the country of destination. Relying on the concepts of adjustment or assimilation is inadequate; thus, there is a need for a clearer framework to address if and how international students adapt to the society of the host country.

7.4 Future Research Area

I acknowledge that this research has its limitations. I have observed and presented student migration in the form of a journey. Several societal circumstances pave the way for this kind of migration. In this research this journey has only reached as far as after the students' adaptions to the new country's culture. This, however, is not the end. This study can further go on and examine what happens to the students after they return to their home country. Maybe the journey will conclude after coming full circle and my research only represents a part of their sojourn. Another prospect for study could be the lives of the returned students, in order to fully comprehend how the experiences of living and studying in another country have shaped their ideas of "home", and what aspects of their lives in a foreign country they continue to adapt, and if they don't, why is that?

Similarly, keeping in line with the thought that international student experiences cannot be homogenized, a study conducting a comparative analysis of the overseas student experience (for instance, on Indian and Chinese students, as they make up the

highest number of international students (OEDC, 2017) can be conducted in order to analyze and highlight the different student life experiences. Lastly, another opening for future research could be regarding those people who start their journey as a student but end up settling as permanent residents in the country of destination. This transition could be because of marriage or job opportunities. The experiences of such people and the way they observe the country of destination will be different as they have to let go of their home country's identity to fully become part of a new country.

In summation, the aspiration to conduct this research emerged as a personal interest and also has been motivated by my life experiences so far. My interactions with other fellow PhD students from all over the world, who later became my friends, and their stories made me curious and inquisitive. Every interaction and conversation helped me gain important perspectives, which have been examined based on various theoretical frameworks and contextual understandings. Whilst referring to the notable and important studies of student migration to the best of my ability, I have attempted to contribute to this field of study by specifying that student migration represent relocation for a limited period. This relocation, like any other kind of migration, begins with a motivation and involves maintenance of transitional ties and adaptation to the culture of the new country. This overall experience constitutes the making and understanding of student migration.

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Appendix 1

Ground Covered in the Interviews for student participants

The table below further illustrates the categories of questions and the themes the interview intended to fulfil.

Type of Questions	Index for Themes
Characteristics of the participants	Socio-demographic information
United Kingdom as an educational destination	*(First stage in the journey of student migration)* Motivation to study abroad/reason to choose UK for higher education
I) Role of Educational agencies II) Visa Policies and other boarder entry requirements	*(Second stage in the journey of student migration)* The process of coming to the UK and reflecting on the use and importance of educational agencies in student migration. Changes in the Tier 4 (student visa) policies and the student's attitudes towards such changes.

I)	Geographical and Cultural Relocation Relationships	*(Third stage in the life of students)* Student's initial and on-going experience in the UK.
II)	Transnational activities (social, economic & political)	Development of relationships with Indian and International students they meet during their stay.
III)		Maintaining contacts back home/changes in cultural and political views/associations with home societies and communities/celebrations of
		festivals/adapting to the culture of host country/new habits acquired.

Appendix 2

Ground Covered in the Interviews for educational counselors

The table below further illustrates the categories of questions and the themes the interview intended to fulfill.

	Types of question	Index of themes
I)	How do they approach the students?	Accessibility of applying to study abroad
II)	Information regarding universities and courses offered	
I)	English language proficiency test	Assistance in applying to study abroad
II)	Admissions	
III)	Scholarships	
IV)	Visa application	
I)	General advises and recommendations	Preparing the students for their life in the UK
II)	Working (applying for National Insurance Number) and living in the UK	

Appendix 3

Information Sheet and Consent Form for Student Participants

FORM OF CONSENT TO TAKE PART IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

CONFIDENTIAL

Title of project: The intellectual, emotional and sociocultural experience of Indian students in the U.K.

Aim of the project: This research is conducted for the fulfilment of Sociology PhD degree at University of Essex. It is about the intellectual, emotional and socio-cultural experiences of Indian students studying the U.K. The study explores the role of symbolic homeland and the forms and intensities of transnational connections they maintain through these transformative journeys.

Name of principal investigator: Tilotama Pradhan

Name of the supervisor: Professor Ewa Morawska

My name is……………………………………………………. I freely give my consent to take part in this project in the titled "The intellectual, emotional and sociocultural experience of Indian students in the U.K", and have been given a copy of this form for my own information.

I understand that:

1. I have been informed about the purpose of research, and the reason that I am taking part in this research project.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary. I am free to withdraw from the project at any time, without providing any reasons, without prejudices, and without penalty.

3. Details relating to anonymity and confidentiality of the information I provide have been explained to me. I understand that some of the information that I give to the researcher can be used for academic purpose, and I can choose to

be anonymous if I want. Everything that I tell the researcher will be held in the strictest confidence.

4. The researcher will take some notes during the interviews. The interview will be audio-recorded within my permission.

5. I have opportunity to ask any questions during the interviews.

6. The timing of the interview will be approximately one hour.

7. The copy of this agreement will be provided to me, and it will be kept confidential with the other information that I will provide during the interview.

I would like my anonymity to be guaranteed
Yes/No

Participant's signature: ……………………………………… Date: ……………………...

Researcher's signature: Tilotama Pradhan   Date: ………………………

I would be very grateful for your participation in this project. If you need to contact me in the future, please find my contact details below:

Tilotama Pradhan
PhD Student
Department of Sociology
University of Essex
Wivenhoe Park Colchester
CO4   3SQ
tpradh@essex.ac.uk
(07448152173)

Appendix 4

Information Sheet and Consent Form for Educational Counselors

FORM OF CONSENT TO TAKE PART IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

CONFIDENTIAL

Title of project: The intellectual, emotional and sociocultural experience of Indian students in the U.K.

Aim of the project: This research is conducted for the fulfillment of Sociology PhD degree at University of Essex. It is about the intellectual, emotional and socio-cultural experiences of Indian students studying the U.K. The study explores the role of symbolic homeland and the forms and intensities of transnational connections they maintain through these transformative journeys.

Name of principal investigator: Tilotama Pradhan

Name of the supervisor: Professor Ewa Morawska

My name is……………………………………………………. . I freely give my consent to take part in this project in the titled "Journey of the Indian Students and maintenance of the home culture during their stay in the UK", and have been given a copy of this form for my own information.

I understand that:

1. I have been informed about the purpose of research, and the reason that I am taking part in this research project.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary. I am free to withdraw from the project at any time, without providing any reasons, without prejudices, and without penalty.

3. Details relating to anonymity and confidentiality of the information I provide have been explained to me. I understand that some of the information that I give to the researcher can be used for academic purpose, and I can choose to be anonymous if I want. Everything that I tell the researcher will be held in the strictest confidence.

4. The researcher will take some notes during the interviews. The interview will be audio-recorded within my permission.

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6. The timing of the interview will be approximately one hour.

7. The copy of this agreement will be provided to me, and it will be kept confidential with the other information that I will provide during the interview.

I would like my anonymity to be guaranteed
Yes/No

Participant's signature: ………………………………………… Date: …………………………...

Researcher's signature: Tilotama Pradhan   Date: ………………………

I would be very grateful for your participation in this project. If you need to contact me in the future, please find my contact details below:

Tilotama Pradhan
PhD Candidate
Department of Sociology
University of Essex
Wivenhoe Park Colchester
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tpradh@essex.ac.uk
(07448152173)

Appendix 5

Ethical Approval Form

Application for Ethical Approval of Research Involving Human Participants

This application form should be completed for any research involving human participants conducted in or by the University. 'Human participants' are defined as including living human beings, human beings who have recently died (cadavers, human remains and body parts), embryos and foetuses, human tissue and bodily fluids, and human data and records (such as, but not restricted to medical, genetic, financial, personnel, criminal or administrative records and test results including scholastic achievements). Research should not commence until written approval has been received (from Departmental Research Director, Faculty Ethics Committee (FEC) or the University's Ethics Committee). This should be borne in mind when setting a start date for the project.

Applications should be made on this form, and submitted electronically, to your Departmental Research Director. A signed copy of the form should also be submitted. Applications will be assessed by the Research Director in the first instance, and may then passed to the FEC, and then to the University's Ethics Committee. A copy of your research proposal and any necessary supporting documentation (e.g. consent form, recruiting materials, etc) should also be attached to this form.

A full copy of the signed application will be retained by the department/school for 6 years following completion of the project. The signed application form cover sheet (two pages) will be sent to the Research Governance and Planning Manager in the REO as secretary of the University's Ethics Committee.

1. Title of project: The intellectual, emotional and sociocultural experience of Indian students in the U.K.

2. The title of your project will be published in the minutes of the University Ethics Committee. If you object, then a reference number will be used in place of the title.
   Do you object to the title of your project being published?   No

3. This Project is: Student Project

4. Principal Investigator(s) (students should also include the name of their supervisor):

Name:	Department:
Tilotama Pradhan (Student)	Sociology
Dr Lydia Morris (Supervisor)	Sociology

5.

Proposed start date: January 2016

6.

Probable duration: 12 months

7.

No

Will this project be externally funded?

8.   If Yes,

What is the source of the funding?
Self-Funding

9.

If external approval for this research has been given, then only this cover sheet needs to be submitted

External ethics approval obtained (attach evidence of approval)   No

---

Declaration of Principal Investigator:

The information contained in this application, including any accompanying information, is, to the best of my knowledge, complete and correct. I/we have read the University's *Guidelines for Ethical Approval of Research Involving Human Participants* and accept responsibility for the conduct of the procedures set out in this application in accordance with the guidelines, the University's *Statement on Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice* and any other conditions laid down by the University's Ethics Committee. I/we have attempted to identify all risks related to the research that may arise in conducting this research and acknowledge my/our obligations and the rights of the participants.

Signature (s):. Tilotama Pradhan

Name(s) in block capitals: . TILOTAMA PRADHAN

Date :24.06.2015

Supervisor's recommendation (Student Projects only):

I have read and approved both the research proposal and this application.

Supervisor's signature:
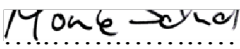
Ryan   7/8/2015

Outcome:

The Departmental Director of Research (DoR) has reviewed this project and considers the methodological/technical aspects of the proposal to be appropriate to the tasks proposed. The DoR considers that the investigator(s) has/have the necessary qualifications, experience and facilities to conduct the research set out in this application, and to deal with any emergencies and contingencies that may arise.

This application falls under Annex B and is approved on behalf of the FEC
                    x

This application is referred to the FEC because it does not fall under Annex B
                    ☐

This application is referred to the FEC because it requires independent scrutiny
                    ☐

Signature(s): *Monıe Schmid*

Name(s) in block capitals: ....MONIKA S. SCHMID...……..………….……….

Department: …Language and Linguistics…

Date: …12/08/2015………………………………………………..

The application has been approved by the FEC
                    ☐

The application has not been approved by the FEC
                    ☐

The application is referred to the University Ethics Committee
                    ☐

Signature(s):
        ....………………………
        …………..

Name(s) in block capitals:
        …..……………………….

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

Date:

………………………………………………………………………………………

…………

Brief outline of project (This should include the purpose or objectives of the research, brief justification, and a summary of methods. It should be approx. 150 words in everyday language that is free from jargon).
This research examines the intellectual, emotional and socio-cultural experiences of Indian students who come to the U.K to obtain higher education. The study explores the role of symbolic homeland and the forms and intensities of transnational connections they maintain through these transformative journeys. According to this research, a typical student migration begins with personal or circumstantial motivation, aided by bilateral political agreements and educational agencies. Maintenance of economic, political, socio cultural transnational ties and adjusting to the culture of a new country, all this contributes to the understanding of student migration.   The research will investigate this by addressing three areas, firstly, the reasons why migrant students chose to come to UK to study. Secondly, how will they fulfil all the requirements for their admissions and the visa process and maintain transnational ties with their homeland and ultimately how and if they adapt to the cultures of the host country. This research will be qualitative research because it relies on the narration of the experience of the migrant students, which will be achieved by semi structured interviews.

Participant Details

2.   Will the research involve human participants? (indicate as appropriate)

Yes

3.	Who are they and how will they be recruited? (If any recruiting materials are to be used, e.g. advertisement or letter of invitation, please provide copies).
	The participants will be migrant Indian PhD students from University of Essex and other universities in UK. The participants will initially be recruited by posting an advert on the Research & Enterprise webpage. The Research & Enterprise Office will alert their mailing list to the existence of this project and provide link to the poster. I have already contacted the REO they will place an advert on my behalf once I have obtained the ethical approval.
	I have also contacted Mr Sundeep Sharma who works at the University's International office and is responsible for recruitment of Indian students; he will be helping me in introducing PhD students from the University.
	Other means of recruitment are contacting the Students' Union to request them to advertise my poster to the Asian and Tamil societies. I will also contact the Communications Team to advertise it on 'Essex Spirit', an e bulletin which is sent to all the students. Once I have some initial respondents I will try to use word of mouth recruitment, and if necessary will extend my research to other universities using similar methods.
	I will also be interviewing recruiting agents and counselor working in educational agencies in India like IDP and Chopras. I will be travelling to four cities in India Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, Mumbai and New Delhi. I have selected these cities because they have the highest number students applying to come to UK for higher studies. I will contact these agencies via email and telephone prior to my next visit to India, which is going to be in June 2016. I have prepared a separate information sheet and consent forms for this interview.
	Will participants be paid or reimbursed?
	No

4.   Could participants be considered:

    (a)   to be vulnerable (e.g. children, mentally-ill)?   No

    (b)   to feel obliged to take part in the research?   No

If the answer to either of these is yes, please explain how the participants could be considered vulnerable and why vulnerable participants are necessary for the research.

Informed Consent

5. Will the participant's consent be obtained for involvement in the research orally or in writing? (If in writing, please attach an example of written consent for approval):

Yes

How will consent be obtained and recorded? If consent is not possible, explain why.

> The consent will be obtained and recorded before starting the interview, using the information and consent form attached. Participants will be explained what the interview is about, the day, date and venue of the interview will also be clearly stated at the beginning of the interview and that it will be recorded and will be later transcribed. The participants will be asked for their permission and only if they say yes will the interview commence.

Please attach a participant information sheet where appropriate.

Confidentiality / Anonymity

6. If the research generates personal data, describe the arrangements for maintaining anonymity and confidentiality or the reasons for not doing so.

> This research will generate personal data; this research will maintain anonymity by changing the names of the participants while transcribing the interview. The researcher will assure the participants that the details they give out during the interview will be confidential and only the researcher will have access to that information. The participants will have all the contact details of the researcher and if at any point after the interview they feel they do not want to be a part of it they can contact the researcher and inform her.

Data Access, Storage and Security

7. Describe the arrangements for storing and maintaining the security of any personal data collected as part of the project. Please provide details of those who will have access to the data.

> The interview will be recorded in a voice recorder which will be transferred to the researcher's personal laptop where it will be stored and password protected. The researcher is the only one who will have access to the data collected which will be later transcribed, and again securely stored.

It is a requirement of the Data Protection Act 1998 to ensure individuals are aware of how information about them will be managed. Please tick the box to confirm that participants will be informed of the data access, storage and security arrangements described above. If relevant, it is appropriate for this to be done via the participant information sheet   (✔)

Further guidance about the collection of personal data for research purposes and compliance with the Data Protection Act can be accessed at the following weblink. Please tick the box to confirm that you have read this guidance (http://www.essex.ac.uk/records_management/policies/data_protection_and_research.aspx)   (✔)

Risk and Risk Management

8.   Are there any potential risks (e.g. physical, psychological, social, legal or economic) to participants or subjects associated with the proposed research?

No

If Yes,

Please provide full details and explain what risk management procedures will be put in place to minimise the risks:

9.   Are there any potential risks to researchers as a consequence of undertaking this proposal that are greater than those encountered in normal day-to-day life?

No

If Yes,

Please provide full details and explain what risk management procedures will be put in place to minimise the risks:

> Care will be taken about the location of interview, and I will carry a mobile phone with me. Someone will always be informed beforehand about the venue and time of the interview.

10. Will the research involve individuals below the age of 18 or individuals of 18 years and over with a limited capacity to give informed consent?

   No

If Yes, a criminal records disclosure (CRB check) within the last three years is required.

   Please provide details of the "clear disclosure":

Date of disclosure:
Type of disclosure:

   Organisation that requested disclosure:

11. Are there any other ethical issues that have not been addressed which you would wish to bring to the attention of the Faculty and/or University Ethics Committees