

Motivations and Experiences of International Students at UK Private Further Education Colleges that were closed down by the Home Office: Implications of the Points Based System

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Abstract

British universities are renowned for their excellence and high standards in delivering quality education in a diverse, creative and inviting environment and have always attracted international students from across the world. This study explores the motivations and experiences of international students studying at UK private Further Education (FE) colleges and in particular the effect of the Points Based System (PBS). The PBS was introduced by the UK Labour Government in 2009 to control and monitor so-called 'bogus' colleges and students. The immigration status of international students and the effect of the PBS have remained a matter of political controversy and debate to the present day.

The thesis explores the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation of a sample of 33 international students at private FE colleges, pursuing their goal of obtaining a UK degree which were closed down by the Home Office. It critically examines the different effects of the PBS on their studies. It is based on the fusion of two theoretical approaches, Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Organismic Integration Theory (OIT). In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with these students, recruited to the research using snowballing sampling techniques. Their responses have been thematically analysed to give insight into their experience of the challenges, and hardships they faced due to the change in government policy.

Their reactions to this can be seen through the different levels of motivation (external, introjected, identification and integrated) which have been identified and co-related to the key themes such as 'status' and the 'impact of immigration policy' which constitute the extrinsic factors of motivation from those that emerged. This study demonstrates how this has affected their level of motivation and legal status in the UK. Further, the study shows that social environment plays a major role in the need to satisfy psychological needs which can either promote or hinder personal growth and motivation.

To conclude, this thesis qualitatively investigates international students' experiences whilst they pursue their studies in UK private FE colleges. It also contributes to the existing literature because the implications of the PBS on international students

studying at private FE colleges have not been investigated to the same extent as in Higher Education universities and state funded colleges in the UK.

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Abbreviations

AOC	Association of Colleges
ACC	Association of Chartered Certified Accountants
BAC	British Accreditation Council
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BCS	British Computer Society
BERA	British Educational Research Association
BIS	Department for Business Innovation and Skills
CAS	Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
CTH	Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality
DES	Department of Education and Science
Dfe	Department for Education
DI	Dearing Inquiry
DIUS	Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills
EEA	European Economic Area
EFA	Education Funding Agency
EPLOC	External Perceived Locus of Causality
ERA	Education Reform Act
ETS	Educational Testing Service
EU	European Union
FE	Further Education
FECs	Further Education Colleges
FP	Funding Programme
GFE	General Further Education
HE	Higher Education
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
HEPs	Higher Education Providers
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency
HNC	Higher National Certificate
HND	Higher National Diploma
HO	Home Office

LEAs	Local Education Authorities
NCIHE	National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OFFA	Office for Fair Access
Ofqual	The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation
OIT	Organismic Integration Theory
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PBS	Points Based System
PCFC	Polytechnics and Colleges Funding Council
PLOC	Perceived Locus of Causality
PSW	Post Study Work Visa
REC	Research Ethics Committee
REP	Register of Education Providers
SDT	Self-Determination Theory
SFA	Skills Funding Agency
SFR	Statistical First Release
SLC	Student Loan Company
UFC	Universities Funding Council
UGC	University Grant Commission
UK	United Kingdom
UKBA	United Kingdom Border Agency
UKCISA	United Kingdom Council for International Student Affairs
USA	United States of America

Dedication

This thesis is submitted in memory of my loving brother, who passed away couple of years ago. I express my deepest gratitude and heartfelt thanks for being my inspiration and best friend. I hope that you are proud of me and I will miss your presence in this journey that I am now going to embark upon.

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Conference Presentations and Proceedings

Presented a talk on “*Domestic Degree vs Foreign Degree: An Overview of Nepalese Students Studying at UK Educational Institutions*” at the 1st NRN Global Knowledge Convention: Expanding Nepal’s Knowledge Pool Through Diaspora held in Kathmandu, Nepal from 12-14 October 2018

Presented a paper on “*The Role of Private Further Education Colleges in the UK and its Impact on International students*” at the Annual BERA Conference held in University of Leeds from September 12 to 14, 2016

Presented a paper on “*The Role of Private Further Education Colleges in the UK and its Impact on International students*” at the International Academic Conference on Teaching, Learning and E- learning in Budapest 2016 (IAC-TLEI 2016), Hungary on April 15 – 16, found at <https://books.google.co.uk/books?isbn=8090579191>

Presented my research “*The Role of Private Further Education Colleges in the UK and its Impact on International students*” at the PGR Seminar, Department of Education, Brunel University London on June 30, 2016

Presented a paper on “*The role of Private Further Education Colleges in the UK and their impact on international student’s learning*” at the i2i: Inquiry to Impact, Graduate Student Conference, Oxford Story held at Oxford University on March 15 to 16, 2016 Proceedings found at <https://ora.ox.ac.uk/objects/uuid.../bin2750fef5-555c-47b1-816d-ab7246546619>

Chapter One – Introducing the Study

1.1 Introduction

Demand for higher education is growing rapidly around the world and Britain is no exception to this where, every year, more than 430,000 overseas students from 180 countries come to the UK to study (UKCISA, 2015). International students have always been attracted to UK universities and colleges because these are recognised worldwide for their high standards and the quality of education. In the UK, the value of the education-related export market is estimated at £14.1 billion and is projected to reach £26.6 billion by 2025 (Conlon, Litchfield & Sadlier, 2011). Higher education in the UK is thought to be expensive in comparison with other countries like the USA, Australia or Canada (Binsardi & Ekwulugo, 2003). Nevertheless, education has become the fifth largest service export sector in the UK and therefore it plays a very important role in the UK economy (UK Government, 2013).

The main purpose of this study is to explore the motivations and experiences of a particular group of international students studying at UK private Further Education (FE) colleges, which were subsequently closed down by the Home Office in light of a new immigration policy, the Points Based System (PBS). This Points Based System was introduced in 2009 by the UK Labour Government to control and monitor so called 'bogus' colleges and students. Through this research, based on the fusion of two theoretical approaches, Self Determination Theory (SDT) and Organismic Integration Theory (OIT), I critically examine the different types of motivation in international students who come to the UK to pursue their studies in private FE colleges. I have linked the key themes to emerge from the study to the different types of extrinsic factors of these students' motivation. By undertaking this study, I therefore, aim to find answer to my main research question, which is:

What are the experiences of international students at UK private FE colleges in light of the government policy related to immigration, the Points Based System?

The main research question has been further guided by the following research sub-questions:

- 1) What motivates international students in FE to come to study at private FE colleges and not public colleges or universities in UK?
- 2) What were the views of the international students studying in private FE colleges about the Points Based System in light of the policy change in 2014?
- 3) What were the experiential implications of the policy change on international students studying in private FE colleges after their colleges was closed down by the Home Office?

I have used a qualitative research design whereby I conducted 33 semi-structured interviews with different international students studying at private FE colleges in the UK in order to find out about their experiences and educational journey. They were recruited using the snowballing sampling technique and the data was analysed using thematic analysis.

This chapter begins with a discussion on the background of the Further Education system in the UK and introduces private FE colleges and the issue of being termed as 'bogus' colleges, which sets the context for the study undertaken. It also provides a section on my personal motivation towards the study followed by the outline of the thesis towards the end of the chapter.

1.2 Background of Further Education (FE) System

In the UK, the Further Education (FE) sector forms one of the biggest sectors of education. FE establishments are first and foremost social enterprises operating independently at the heart of their community (Finlay, 2009) and delivering a wide range of academic and vocational education and training to a range of learners from the age of 14 upwards, a provision that is not delivered in higher education institutions. This includes basic skills, A-Levels, National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs), foundation degrees, diplomas, apprenticeships, work-based training, personal and community learning.

Generally, FE is a post-compulsory education (in addition to that received at secondary school) that is distinct from the education offered in universities (HE). FE can include any level from basic skills training to higher vocational education such as City and Guilds, or Foundation Degrees and includes education which is taught in FE

colleges, work-based learning, and adult and community learning institutions for people who are over 16 years old (DfES, 2007).

Colleges in England that are regarded as part of the FE sector include General FE (GFE) and tertiary colleges, sixth form colleges, specialist colleges (mainly colleges of agriculture and horticulture and colleges of drama and dance) and Adult Education institutes. In addition to this, FE courses may be offered in the school sector, both in sixth form (16-19) schools, or more commonly, sixth forms within secondary schools. FE is often seen as forming one part of a wider learning and skills sector, alongside workplace education, prison education, and other types of non-school, non-university education and training.

Learners in FE colleges are very diverse as they come from different backgrounds to study in these FE learning institutions where workplace-based learning is also a notable feature of the market. Learner's decision-making about what to study and where to study also depends on a number of factors that influence their decisions including informal advice from families, guardians or peers; the reputation and type of FE institutions. However at present, their choices about FE tends to be more localised and, as such, time and cost of travel are the key constraints for them to decide which FE college to choose depending on their subject of interest or specialised areas.

The post-16 sectors of further and higher education have expanded rapidly over the last twenty years. Traditionally, as noted by Bartlett & Burton (2007, p. 230) higher education was regarded as an elitist sector for public school and grammar school pupils and universities were for a minority of academically successful pupils. The 1960s saw the development of polytechnics run by Local Education Authorities (LEAs) that were designed to give an alternative to the traditional approach to education. The polytechnics were developed to provide more applied courses at degree level that would be appropriate to meeting the needs of industry. Over time, however, they also began to offer degree courses that were similar to those run by traditional universities.

The Education Reform Act 1988 (ERA) brought further changes to the education sector and freed polytechnics from the LEAs and created a new funding body, the Polytechnics and Colleges Funding Council (PCFC). The Act also reshaped the University Grant Commission (UGC), which funded universities, and created the Universities Funding Council (UFC) in its place. This avoided universities expansion

as they tried to protect their unit of resource. The polytechnic and college sector, on the other hand, were prepared to increase recruitment of students for whom, as Green (1994) notes, received only tuition fees. This led to the expansion of student numbers that took place largely in polytechnics and colleges between 1988 and 1992, and which was achieved with lower per capita funding (Bathmaker, 2003).

Until 1992, the policy for higher education in England and Wales was dominated by the existence of two sectors – public and autonomous sectors, with different institutions, organisational structures, purposes, traditions and cultures (Pratt, 2001). In the ‘public sector’ were the polytechnics and colleges of higher education. The universities constitute the ‘autonomous’ sector. In 1965, a ‘binary policy’ was announced, to maintain, alongside the universities, the distinctive contribution of the local authority technical colleges to vocationally and professionally oriented higher education (Crosland, 1965, p.19). The policy rejected a ‘ladder’ system in higher education and the historical tendency of institutions in the technical college tradition to aspire to university status, a phenomenon later called ‘academic drift’ (Pratt & Burgess, 1974).

The 1992, the Further and Higher Education Act abolished this binary line, a move that was seen as a means of facilitating greater competition between institutions and ensuring expansion at reduced costs (Bartlett & Burton, 2003). The Further and Higher Education Act 1992 gave polytechnics and some of the leading colleges of higher education full autonomy with degree-awarding powers and the right to use the title of ‘university’. The higher education funding councils for England, Scotland and Wales were introduced in order to fund all institutions under the new system.

Since further education institutions were given independence from Local Education Authorities (LEAs), they have faced many changes and become more responsible for their own finances. This development was an important part of creating the market within further education provision. The introduction of this demand-led approach, together with a decline in central funding, has meant that these colleges have had to become more flexible with increasing proportions of staff employed on part-time and temporary contracts. Both FE and HE have witnessed the development of management cultures in a similar form to that of business and industry. Since FE has a greater impact on the whole UK workforce than HE, this means that learners in FE

deserve as much support as undergraduates and, since a better skilled workforce is a more productive workforce, this means providing learners and employers with courses that meet their needs (Matheson, 2008). Until now, FE colleges faced many bureaucratic difficulties in offering flexible training and qualifications and especially in gaining funding for them (Brennan, 2003). However, the Education Act 2004 and various FE- related White Papers have allowed greater flexibility within the FE sector to help increase the skills levels and remedy skills shortages.

The involvement of colleges in HE is long standing (Scott, 2009) and some trace their higher-level work back to the 1950s or earlier while others came into higher education for the first time during the rapid and dramatic expansion at the end of the 1980s and the early 1990s. Although the polytechnics and other large providers of HE were removed from local government in 1988, the higher education that remained with further education colleges was 'substantial and diverse' (DES, 1989). Its 120,000 students studied mainly part-time for short-cycle vocational qualifications, such as the Higher National Certificate (HNC), Higher National Diploma (HND) and a range of higher-level technical and professional qualifications. During the expansion years these numbers grew to around 146,000 (Parry, 2003).

However, when expansion was brought to a halt in 1994, it was estimated that over 30,000 students were taught on franchised or collaborative programmes in further education institutions (HEFCE, 1995). As a result, the polytechnics were able to target many of their courses at the local and regional populations served by partner colleges and in turn, franchising offered colleges a welcome source of additional funding; it offered further education students enhanced opportunities to study for higher education; and the stimulus and status of higher-level teaching was attractive to college staff (Abramson, Bird & Stennett, 1996).

A major difference between the expansion years up to 1994 and the resumption of growth soon after was the extent to which higher education in colleges was a policy actively favoured by government (Parry & Thompson, 2002). As a result of legislation in 1988 and 1992, a two-sector tertiary system was founded on the assumption that institutions allocated to the further education sector should be solely concerned with teaching at levels below higher education. In the second period, from the late 1990s onwards, that policy presumption was reversed or at least heavily qualified by

government efforts to expand higher education in the college sector. This two-sector tertiary system during the first period was retained for the second. It is within this framework that the current reforms in higher and further education are being implemented.

Further, the recommendations of the Dearing Inquiry (1996-97) to resume growth in higher education and charge tuition fees were accompanied by specific proposals inviting FECs to play a leading role in the expansion of undergraduate education. It was proposed that FECs be accorded a 'special mission' for the teaching of undergraduate qualifications below the Bachelor's Degree (NCIHE, 1997) and the colleges were expected to become the main providers of these qualifications to be funded directly by HEFCE. The inquiry viewed indirect funding relationships, especially those involving more than partner, as a potential threat to standards. The Dearing mission for FECs was intended to curtail any such upward academic drift.

Since 1997, a major element in policies in college settings for teaching of higher education has been aimed at securing increased growth, broader participation, greater diversity and more work-focused forms of higher education. Under the Labour governments of Blair and Brown, indirect funding became the preferred model and Further Education Colleges took advantage of opportunities to provide teaching at Bachelor level. As such, instead of a special mission, colleges were now encouraged to collaborate as well as compete with universities in the drive to expand.

The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) was responsible for policy development and monitoring in FE Colleges. In 2005, it began a review of this activity in light of the changes to funding, fees and student support that followed the White Paper on higher education in 2003 (DfES, 2003), which reaffirmed the important role of colleges in higher education. However, since 2009, the new Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has overseen the Further Education sector, although some parts (such as education and training for 14-19 year olds) fall within the remit of the Department of Education (BIS, 2015).

"Putting students at the heart of England's higher education (HE) system was the central theme of the Government's reforms announced in 2011" (BIS, 2011 p. 4). The White Paper justified further marketisation of higher education, introducing the triple tuition fee and put more emphasis on partnership between FE and HE in terms of

types of courses offered, international students enrolled and transferred in between. The FE system plays a crucial and important role in securing wider government ambitions of economic and social success through its development of the skills and talents of young people and adults. The UK economy benefits by almost £11 billion directly and by about a further £12 billion indirectly, per annum from education-related exports (Kim, 2009). Universities, on the other hand, have become increasingly entrepreneurial in recruiting students and exporting learning services as clear revenue streams. They employ university marketing staff specifically for recruiting foreign students and overseeing international initiatives (Hayden, 2007). With a clear economic imperative to expand into the international arena, universities are therefore pushing ahead and the education race is on. Since 2010, the FE sector has been through a period of rapid change and increased competition. Many colleges have seen the recruitment of international students as a key mechanism for supplementing overall college income in times of reduced Government funding for FE.

1.3 Context of the Study

The roots of British FE colleges are often to be found in nineteenth century 'mechanics' institutes (Walker, 2015), but further education in England has been notable for its complex and often under-resourced development in the shadow of schools and HE focussed educational policy discourses (Tomlinson, 2005). The FE market is a highly complex market with learners coming from a wide range of backgrounds participating in learning with one (or more) of 1,150 publicly funded FE providers across the country (BIS, 2016). Private Further Education Colleges or educational establishments in UK are not regulated by the state unlike the publicly funded education colleges and universities. This allows English language schools and private FE colleges to easily establish themselves as legitimate and effective providers of education which, in some cases, have been set up for other purposes. The recruitment of international students specially Tier 4 students has become a vital part of the responses to the changes in the way FE is funded by government and although there were wider social benefits to having these students, the income that could be generated by recruiting these international students remained one of the most crucial reasons at present.

Colleges of Further Education are a popular choice for international students who are taking a university preparation course or completing vocational qualifications on a full

or part time basis. Most UK colleges are public institutions but there are also many private colleges which cater for specific types of students. However, it is important to note that although both publicly and privately funded colleges carry the name 'FE' they have very little in common in terms of ethos, history, culture and size. The major distinction being that only state funded FE colleges are subject to regular government inspection to ensure that their courses meet national standards for quality. In addition, some universities retain the word 'college' as part of their titles. These HE institutions are not the same as private colleges but have full university status. As private colleges and English language schools are not subject to regulation, variable quality may result despite establishing and marketing themselves as legitimate and effective providers of education. In some case, they may have been set up for other purposes.

Private FE colleges attract a wide range of students with different study background many of whom are from non-traditional study backgrounds. For example, some students may be older and/or already in employment, or be studying part-time and/or have families. The type of courses that are popular for international students at private FE colleges are International Foundation Year courses and Higher National Certificate and Diploma (HNC/HND) courses. International Foundation Year is designed for international students who are about to finish studying in their native country, but who may not achieve the required grades to begin studying at a UK university. Students on an International Foundation Year programme will study a specific subject pathway that also includes specific English language skills. HNC and HND courses are offered by many FE colleges. These are level 4 (HNC) and level 5 (HND) qualifications and are normally equivalent to 1st and 2nd year level of university degree programmes. They have a vocational focus (for example, travel and tourism) and are popular with international students. External bodies with high standing in different professions award these qualifications. Students applying to study for an HNC/HND will usually need to already have good 'A' level passes (the equivalent of level 3) or have successfully completed a Foundation Year Programme.

The recruitment of international students, especially Tier 4 students, has become a vital part of the response to the changes in the way FE is funded by government and although there were wider social benefits to having these students, the income that

could be generated by recruiting these international students remained one of the most crucial reasons at present.

However, recruitment of international students from outside of the European Union must also fit with Home Office policy on immigration. The Tier 4 Points Based System (PBS) for non-EEA adult students who want to come to or remain in the UK for their post-16 education was introduced in March 2009 in order to address problems of 'bogus' colleges and students (The Home Affairs Committee Session, 2008-2009). Since there has been a continued fear that student status can be, and is, used as a 'backdoor' route to long term immigration by non-bona fide students who would not otherwise be admitted to the UK, rules were tightened in July 2011 (UKBA, 2013). The key changes for the private FE sector recruiting international students included:

- Institutions wanting to sponsor students needed to be classed as a Highly Trusted sponsor (from April 2012) and become accredited by a statutory education inspection body by the end of 2012.
- UK Border Agency (UKBA) intends to introduce 100,000 in-country, face-to-face interviews for visa applicants in order to determine more accurately their suitability for Tier 4. The students who cannot speak English without an interpreter would be refused visa as they would not meet the required minimum standard.
- Students at publicly-funded FE colleges are now able to work 10 hours a week (full-time in vacations) while students at Higher Education Institutions are able to work 20 hours a week (full-time in vacations) whereas students at privately-funded education providers are not able to work at all.
- Dependants of only postgraduate students studying at universities and government-sponsored students will be allowed to come to UK and apply for MBA visa extensions or entrepreneur visas.
- The overall time that can be spent on a student visa is limited to 3 years at lower levels (as previously) and 5 years at higher levels.
- The Tier 1 (Post Study work) route that allowed students to seek two years employment experience after the completion of their course has been closed. Only graduates who have an offer of a skilled job from a sponsoring employer under Tier 2 of the Points Based System will be able to stay to work.

Furthermore, students could be asked to face a new 'credibility interview' introduced in July 2012 where they could be requested for an interview by the Entry Clearance Officers to confirm that the student's intentions to study in the UK are genuine, if they have concerns over a student's intentions to study or any of the supporting documentation and information submitted with their visa application.

However, these measures have been subject to criticism, not least because efforts to prevent entry of 'fake' or 'bogus' students have disproportionately negative consequences on the market for genuine international students. Private FE colleges have been affected most by the introduction of this system. They saw sponsored visa numbers drop by 46 per cent over the course of one year, while the overall number of sponsored visas issued via Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) rose by 5 per cent (Office for National Statistics, 2013). Furthermore, this led to the closure of many private colleges while others, unable to recruit international students due to the new immigration rules, have voluntarily shut down or gone into liquidation. This affected a number of international students studying there as they were not allowed to complete their course and were issued with a 60-day notice to either find a new college or leave the country. Therefore, these stringent immigration policies and new visa rules have led to the damaging perception that the UK no longer welcomes international students (Lambert, 2012). Against this context, the next section begins by first explaining the term 'bogus' in the context of this study and the extent of the bogus college phenomenon in UK private FE colleges followed by the scale of international students studying at these colleges.

1.4 Issue of Bogus Colleges in UK Private FE Colleges

In the context of this study, the term 'bogus college' refers to an illegitimate educational establishment set up primarily to enable non-European Economic Area (EEA) nationals to come to the UK on fraudulent student visas. However, lack of regulation also allows for the existence of colleges that are of "very poor quality and are ripping off students who believe that they are coming for a genuine educational experience" (Millns, 2009).

Between January 2005 and March 2009, only international students who could show they had a place to study, or were already studying at an institution which appeared on the Register of Education Providers (REP) operated by the then Department for

Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) were granted entry clearances or extensions of stay as students. Institutions that were publicly funded, inspected and audited and those private institutions that underwent voluntary accreditation and inspection by the British Accreditation Council, the English in Britain Accreditation Scheme administered by the British Council, the Adult Learning Inspectorate, the Association of British Language Schools or the Education and Training Inspectorate Northern Ireland, were automatically entered onto the REP.

However, private colleges and institutions without accreditation were also able to be put on the list or register of approved education providers by providing evidence of their registration as a legal business with Companies House, details of their staff and staff qualifications, floor plans to show classrooms and other facilities, and a copy of their prospectus offering evidence of the teaching they provided.

Further, these colleges charged overseas students thousands of pounds in fees for a place in the UK on a student visa. There is evidence that they deliberately misinformed students. They often claimed to have well-equipped campuses and infrastructure but, in reality, were operating from temporary office addresses with their website consisting of pictures of college building or landscapes which were nothing like their actual locations. The bogus college phenomenon was prevalent to such an extent that one such example based in East London, called the Cambridge College of Learning, sold several thousand fake postgraduate diplomas in business management and IT courses, charging between £2,500 and £4,000 for each qualification. In a period of two months, the Home Office received 2,542 post-study visa applications from this college, which made the immigration officials suspicious about the college's actions. When the UK Border Agency subsequently raided the premises in December 2008, they discovered just three classrooms and eleven desks. After this, the students who were enrolled with the college were informed by the UKBA that their visas were invalid and that they must return back to their home country (McDermott & Newling, 2009).

In another instance of bogus college activity, a 2009 Home Office investigation was launched after The Times newspaper presented evidence that hundreds of men from Pakistan's North West Frontier had paid at least £1,000 to a gang to be admitted into bogus colleges, while some paid £2,500 for fake diplomas, attendance records and degrees (Shepherd, 2009). Eleven colleges were established in London, Bradford and

Manchester, including one that had enrolled eight terrorism suspects subsequently arrested in Manchester and Liverpool in April 2009. The college had three small classrooms and three teachers for 1,797 registered students (Norfolk, 2010).

As a reaction to this, there was an enquiry led by Home Office which followed an investigation by The Times, which compiled a dossier on bogus colleges that included details of another college that claimed to have 150 students, but secretly enrolled 1,178 and offered places to an extra 1,575 (Shepherd, 2009). Following this investigation, two of the universities at Liverpool also admitted that they enrolled four graduates from one of these bogus colleges namely, the Manchester College of Professional Studies.

Thus, this crackdown on bogus colleges led to the introduction of a more thorough accreditation-vetting scheme for private further education colleges and closer scrutiny of international students. Furthermore several colleges were closed down by the Home Office after an investigation conducted by the ETS Global Limited English testing centre concluded that students had fraudulently obtained English language test certificates taken between the period 2012 and 2013 as explained later in the next section. It therefore follows a widespread concern about the lucrative trade in bogus colleges operating as cover for student visa fraud, which has had severe consequences for the 'authentic' international students who were studying at these colleges who not only had their college registration suspended by the Home Office, but had also paid money in good faith towards a British education, now find themselves without a registered educational provider and also with a very real chance of losing their student visa. Next, I discuss the number of colleges and international students studying at one of these private FE colleges that were closed down by the HO to understand the impact of this phenomenon it had on these international students studying at private FE colleges in UK and who were directly affected by these changes and restrictions.

1.5 Student Numbers and Private FE Colleges in UK

According to the Association of Colleges (AoC), as of February 2019, there are 257 colleges in England - 174 are general further education colleges; 57 sixth form colleges; 14 land-based; 10 specialist designated and 2 art, design and performing

arts (AOC, 2019). There are 26 colleges in Scotland, 14 colleges in Wales and 6 colleges in Northern Ireland. In the UK, a small but growing private sector is located predominantly in London and in other cities in England. The exact number of students from home or overseas who are studying for qualifications in the private FE sector is not known, as no statistics are routinely collected (HESA, 2011). As such, there is no firm data on the number of international students in private FE colleges. Private colleges are not required to collect data on student nationality and Home Office student visa statistics do not separate out the publicly funded college sector from the private college sector. The largest group of private providers are those colleges that have been validated by UK HEIs to award their degrees (or which offer their franchised programmes). These are almost all based in London and, until recently, have been targeting international students. The number of such colleges is hard to specify, since using a UNESCO definition of “degree level” education would bring in many organisations offering only professional qualifications such as those offered by the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), British Computer Society (BCS) and the Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality (CTH). However, the British Accreditation Council (BAC), one of the two bodies authorised to accredit these providers for the purposes of UKBA recognition as entitled to receive a Tier 4 licence, reported in March 2010 that it had accredited 177 colleges to offer higher education qualifications. BAC estimated at that time that some 25,880 students were studying in these colleges for HEI-validated awards. The Accreditation Service for International Colleges (ASIC), the second body authorised to accredit private colleges, also listed 427 organisations that it had accredited, some of which will be offering higher education.

In 2007, the Home Office carried out inspections of 1,200 colleges on the register of approved education providers prior to it being implemented, 25% were found not to be genuine and a further 69 colleges were removed from the register following visits from the UK Border Agency compliance officers (UK Border Agency, 2007). As a result, in 2008, this register was subjected to a great deal of criticism after the government admitted that since the register’s establishment, almost half of the institutions on the list had been struck off. (BBC News, 8 January, 2008).

Following the crackdown on bogus colleges, the UK Border Agency responded to these concerns by introducing a greater level of scrutiny of educational establishments

under new immigration regulations called the Tier 4 Points Based System in March 2009. Under this new system, international students were only able to apply for a visa if they were sponsored by an accredited further or higher education institution. In order to sponsor students, institutions must register and be approved by the UK Border Agency and, in addition, hold valid accreditation from one of the approved educational accreditation bodies. These accreditation bodies are Accreditation UK, the British Accreditation Council, the Accreditation Service for International Colleges, the Association of British Language Schools, the Church of England Ministry Division and Ofsted (Home Affairs Committee, 2009). However, insufficient quality assurance procedures by the then Department for Innovations, Universities and Skills for private educational establishments on the register of approved education providers between 2005 and 2009, allowed bogus colleges to bring foreign nationals into the UK on fraudulent student visas. As a result, the UK Border Agency and the government implemented tougher sponsorship arrangements. It is therefore difficult to confirm a precise figure for the number of bogus colleges in existence.

The previous 2009 Register of Education Providers listed approximately 15,000 education and training organisations, about 4,000 of which offered courses to foreign students. The UK Border Agency licensed 1,594 educational establishments as sponsors under the Tier 4 Points Based System (Home Affairs Committee Report, 2009) implying that around 2,400 colleges on the REP, which were enrolling foreign students, have either not applied to be sponsors under the new system or have not been approved. Since then more colleges have been suspended as a result of an investigation conducted by the ETS Global Limited English testing centre which concluded that around 45,000 immigrants may have fraudulently obtained English language test certificates taken between the period 2012 and 2013. As a consequence of this investigation, initially 57 private FE colleges lost their licence to recruit international students on 24 June 2014. The Home Office also took action against three universities which were:

- Glyndwr University (Tier 4 licence suspended)
- University of West London (unable to sponsor new students) and
- University of Bedfordshire (unable to sponsor new students)

More colleges have been suspended since, and following the investigation into testing and visa fraud that began in June 2014, a further 65 private FE colleges have lost their Highly Trusted Status which enabled them to recruit Tier 4 international students. List of 65 private FE colleges that were revoked and some who surrendered their licence is attached in Appendix G. All 33 international students who participated in this study were studying in one of the private colleges listed in Appendix G. However, it should be noted that because a college closes down, it does not necessarily mean that it is 'bogus' since like any other business, colleges can close for a variety of reasons. The current list of approved education providers as of March 2019 is 1,205 sponsors licensed under the Tier 4 Points Based System including both public and private education institutions recognised by the Home Office:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/register-of-licensed-sponsors-students>).

Hence, since it is difficult to ascertain the exact number of bogus colleges that were operating, we can only estimate the figure by looking at the difference between educational establishments listed on the previous Register of Education Providers, which provided the only means of obtaining a student visa until March 2009, and those listed on the register of sponsors under the points based immigration system, which has replaced the Register of Education Providers and requires more stringent checks of educational establishments' credentials. Around 2,200 colleges were on the Register of Education Providers but are not on the register of sponsors. Whilst failing to transfer from the Register of Providers to the register of sponsors does not necessarily mean a college was bogus, we may surmise that a significant proportion of those operating were not legitimate.

In addition, since accurate data on international students in further education in the UK are generally unavailable as "...only Government-funded learners are recorded centrally and record of their nationality is limited to those studying in Scotland. Therefore, it is not possible to say how many international FE students study in the UK" (HM Government 2013b p. 15) and how many students have been impacted by their college closing down. This lack of hard data is in some ways emblematic of the way in which FE as a sector has tended to be marginalised in what is the generally over-audited world of UK education but, given the data available directly to FE

colleges, there is reason to believe that most, but by no means all, of the various estimates that emanate from government sources are reasonably accurate.

There are therefore serious concerns that so many colleges on the government's list or register of approved education providers have turned out to be bogus and the impact it has had on international students who were studying there is unimaginable. There has been a long-standing problem with bogus colleges often set up to sell fake degrees or as part of an immigration and visa scam, allowing people to enter the UK as students as discussed above.

Hence, against this background, this study attempts to fill the gap in terms of understanding the implications and experiences of immigration policy such as the Points Based System on international students studying at UK private Further Education colleges after their colleges were closed down by the Home Office with particular focus on the types of motivation caused by various external or extrinsic factors and the hardships and sacrifices they make to fulfil their dreams in order to get a UK degree. Further, the study concludes that social environment plays a major role in their endeavour to satisfy their psychological needs which can either promote or thwart their personal growth and motivation.

1.6 Personal Motivation

First, being an international student myself, I was interested in the debate and criticism about the new immigration policy which is the Points Based System introduced in 2009 to control and monitor abuse of bogus colleges and students. Under the new system, the government introduced various tough new immigration rules and took very strong action against institutions who did not comply with their rules. As a result, a number of international students and private education providers suffered serious consequences and dilemmas after the Home Office decided to suspend or close down private FE colleges that failed to comply with the rules and did not meet the required standards.

Second, I had the opportunity to work as a part-time administrator in one of the private FE colleges North West College London, for seven years which gave me first-hand experience of the effect of the PBS and tougher immigration rules on both the private FE providers and international students studying there. I was able to interact with international students coming from different developing countries which allowed me to

understand their experiences and hardships very well. I witnessed the aspirations and motivation of many international students and the sacrifices they made to achieve their goals and adapt to the new environment and country that they did not originally belong to. Having paid money in good faith for a British education, they now found themselves without a college and with a very real chance of losing their student visa. Some, whom I personally encountered, said that they were in a great dilemma as to where their future now lay. Some students were finding it hard even to make ends meet. One student said that he does not want to ask for any more money from home as his family were already shocked that the money they had saved for their son's bright future had all gone to waste, so he did not want to trouble them further. Such is the deplorable plight of some genuine international students studying at private further education colleges in the UK that they have been suffering through no fault of their own. Therefore, this motivated me to investigate more about the international students' experiences and changes in their level of motivation while in UK.

Further, while I was working in a private college I was studying for my Master's Degree at Brunel University London and that gave me a broader understanding of the differences between the teaching facilities, learning environments and experiences of international students studying in a university or private college. I was very curious to find out why international students were attracted to UK private FE colleges and not to universities or public funded colleges. Hence, this motivated me to investigate more about international students' experiences in UK private FE colleges. While doing my initial research, I found out that no research has been done at all about the experiences of international students in private FE colleges as is the case for HE institutions.

I therefore spotted a gap where the voices and experiences of FE international students was missing from the public narrative especially in the light of the new immigration policy and the Points Based System which had affected international students immensely at private FE colleges in UK after it had been closed down by the Home Office. Hence, I decided to take up this study and look into it from a deeper, global perspective.

1.7 Structure of the Thesis

The purpose of this study is to explore the motivations and experiences of international students studying at UK private Further Education (FE) colleges which have been

closed down by the Home Office in light with the new immigration policy, the Points Based System (PBS) which was introduced to control and monitor 'bogus' colleges and students. Through this research, I present a model based on the fusion of two theoretical approaches, Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Organismic Integration Theory (OIT) and critically examine and evaluate the different types of motivation in international students who come to UK to pursue their studies in private FE colleges. The study concludes that social environment play a major role in their need to satisfy their psychological needs which can either promote or thwart their personal growth and motivation. This study is organised into five main chapters and details for each chapter are shown below. I have used this outline for each chapter to give the reader a picture and an overview of the study and steps involved in undertaking it.

Chapter One begins with an introduction and brief background of the research undertaken. It discusses the purpose of the study by stating the main research questions followed by sub-research questions which I aim to find answers and reflect upon. It also provides a brief history of the Further Education system in the UK and introduces private FE colleges and the issue of being termed as 'bogus' colleges which sets the context for the study undertaken. This chapter also provides a section on my personal motivation towards the study followed by the outline of the thesis towards the end of the chapter.

Chapter Two presents the literature review related to the motivation and experiences of international students studying at UK private FE colleges. This chapter begins with a background on the marketization of education and its implications on UK higher education followed by tracing the history of international student's growth and mobility. The factors which determine the motivation of international students is then discussed along with their experiences within the theoretical framework of the study and its contribution to the study.

Chapter Three describes the methods and methodology used in conducting this study. It explores the research approach taken, the theoretical framework and methodological standpoint is explained. The data collection method is detailed and justified along with the design of the data analysis. Relevant ethical considerations are explored and challenged considering the choices made. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 33 international students who were recruited using the

snowballing sampling technique and thematically analysed to give insights into their experiences and implications they faced due to the change in immigration policy, the Points Based System.

Chapter Four presents the results and discussion from the analysis of data. The key themes are discussed first, followed by a detailed discussion of the analysis and their implications. It also presents a model based on the fusion of two theoretical approaches, Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Organismic Integration Theory (OIT) and critically examines the different types of motivation in international students who come to UK to pursue their studies in private FE colleges.

The thesis ends with Chapter Five which summaries the key findings of the study by answering the main research questions and sub-research questions. This is followed by a discussion on the unique contribution to knowledge and the limitations outlined for the study. Further, I provide some recommendations for policy and practice and finally conclude by offering some suggestions for future research in context.

1.8 Chapter Summary

In this study, I have planned to explore the experiences and motivations of international students in private FE colleges which have been close down by the Home Office to pursue their goals. I also set out to investigate their reasons and motives in choosing private FE colleges over UK universities in light of immigration rules and what challenges and barriers they face. An in-depth semi-structured interview was conducted with 33 international students who were recruited using the snowballing sampling technique. In this chapter, the research aims and questions have been clearly identified.

The significance of the research and personal motivation has been discussed in the context of the main purpose of the study. Data will be analysed and discussed using the thematic analyses. The study will also provide a rich picture of the different types of extrinsic motivations in international students through the two theoretical approaches, Self-Determination Theory and Organismic Integration Theory. The body of the literature, which underpins the study, is discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter Two - Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Within the UK context, the existing literature emphasises the impact of Tier 4 Points Based System policy on non-EU students at FE colleges and in Higher Education (HE), both at universities and elsewhere in the public sector, but not to the same extent in the private sector. Generally, while a robust body of qualitative research looks at the cross-cultural difficulties of international students, too little attention is given to the examination of visa policies on students' lives and experiences. This study aims to explore how the new policy changes have affected the lives of the international students studying in Tier 4 private FE colleges in the UK which have been closed down by the Home Office. The main purpose of the Tier 4 PBS policy was argued to control abuses in the education sector. Most certainly, however, not all private colleges are bogus, and not all students are fraudulent. These students suffer most when private colleges lose their Tier 4 sponsorship (either because they proved to be bogus, or because they have registered some illegitimate learners knowingly or unknowingly).

Keeping the research objectives in view, this chapter presents the literature that underpins this study related to the motivation and experiences of international students in UK educational institutions followed by the challenges they face which can also be directly related to international students studying at private FE colleges after their colleges was closed down by the Home Office. This chapter begins with a background on the marketisation of education and its implications on UK higher and further education followed by tracing the history of international student's growth and mobility. The factors that determine the motivation of international students in general is then discussed which can be identified with international students studying at UK private FE colleges along with their experiences within the theoretical framework of the study.

2.2 Role of Education

Education today has become an integral part of economic, social, political and technological life. It is primarily regarded from an economic point of view and the social and moral values of education seem to be diminishing to the extent that education policy is increasingly thought about and made within the context of the 'pressures' and

requirements of globalisation (Ball, 2008). The role of education is confined to a means of producing “labour and skills and of values, like enterprise and entrepreneurship, and of commercial ‘knowledge’, as a response to the requirements of international economic competition” (Ball, 2008 p.11).

Globalisation is a process that also has economic, social, political and technological aspects and comprises of ideologies such as free markets to enable free trade, increased mobility for students and highly skilled workers and the rapid movement of information through powerful new digital technologies. Education and economy are interrelated and the implications that globalisation has had on developed countries such as Britain and also developing economies like India and China where the impact of knowledge-based economy has already taken its toll. As such, Britain is well placed to become one of the main sources of supplying highly skilled high waged workers as education, knowledge and skills play an important role but today Britain is facing threat from other powerful emerging economies like India and China.

On the other hand, knowledge economy, a much-used term in relation to contemporary education policy is derived from the idea that education and knowledge can be both treated as a commercial product. It plays a crucial role in the current economic model whereby technological developments have transformed the majority of wealth creating work from manufacturing to knowledge based. In other words, the development of a knowledge economy can be understood in terms of the increasing role of knowledge as a factor of production and its impact on skills, learning, organisation and innovation which has a number of implications for education and education policy.

This shift from the traditional meaning of education to a global knowledge-based economy represents the highest stage in evolutionary development as nations compete for ideas, skills and knowledge that contribute to economic advantage by ‘out-smarting’ economic rivals (Brown, Lauder and Ashton, 2008). Schools, colleges, universities, think tanks, design centres and research laboratories are now on the front line in the search for competitive advantage. This is reflected in current attempts by organisations such as the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development’s (OECD) Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) studies and the International Education Association (IEA) to develop comparative measures of

academic quality and performance, along with global rankings of universities such as that developed by Shanghai's Jiao Tong University (Marginson, 2006). It is therefore, no longer the qualities of individual students within national systems that are benchmarked, but the quality of these national education and training systems as a whole.

Over the past two decades, researchers have focussed their attention on globalisation and neo-liberalism (Marshall, 2001; Davies et al. 2005; Kim, 2005; Kim, 2006). Following the adoption by the British government of globalisation and the market liberalisation of education during the 70s and 80s, British universities have been affected by new policies on higher education (Beckmann and Cooper, 2004; Kim, 2006). Due to marketisation of education, associated with economic globalisation, education policy is now tied to economic gains. As such, the liberalisation and marketization of education has had, and continues to have, profoundly damaging consequences for the British education system and society more generally (Beckmann and Cooper, 2004). In particular, the expansion of the 'new managerialism' in schools and universities – a corresponding element of market restructuring – has led to new forms of organisational control within welfare institutions privileging the 'freedom to manage' over other welfare discourses (Clarke, 1998, p.176), leading to what Ball refers to as "the terrors of performance and efficiency – performativity" (Ball, 1998, p.190).

There is no doubt that education is directly related to the demands and inevitabilities of globalisation. As such, it is very important to employ the right kinds of teaching methods and recruitment tools in education that are central to economic policy because it is through education that the knowledge and creativity necessary for innovation are developed. Further, in order to compete in the knowledge economy by 2020 as a nation of world-class skills, there is a serious need and concern for a shift in attitudes and aspirations in UK workplaces, schools, colleges, universities, government and society itself.

British universities, just like business organisations, are now under pressure to maximize profit through the scramble for international students to boost university enrolment (Kim, 2005; Alexiadou, 2001). They conform to the demand of the market by scouting for international students who in turn generate funds for the economy and,

as a result, students are now regarded as ‘customers’ and are subjected to the “process of infantilisation”. They are effectively “socialized in an educational machinery rewarding receptivity and the ability to reproduce other people’s experience” (Christie, 1997:14).

2.3 International Student’s Growth and Mobility in UK

Tracing the history of international student’s mobility, since its foundation in 1901, the Rhodes Scholarships scheme has been considered as the archetype of a programme designed to foster imperial citizens. In his will of 1901, the Cape Colony politician and mining magnate, Cecil John Rhodes, left his considerable fortune to the establishment of a scheme of travelling scholarships that he hoped would foster good imperial citizens. Rhodes thought that bringing the most promising young men from across the English-speaking world to Oxford would instil into their minds the advantages to the Colonies as well as to the United Kingdom of the retention of the Unity of the Empire and the beneficial effect the union of the English-speaking peoples throughout the world would confer (Pietsch, 2011). Rhodes believed that this scheme of giving the experience of living and studying together in a residential university would broaden the views of his scholars, instruct them in life and manners and in the process foster ties of mutual understanding that would serve to hinder war since Rhodes was of the view that educational relations (that) make the strongest tie (Zeigler, 2008).

However, the scholarships established by Cecil Rhodes in 1901 were not the first that connected opportunities for colonial students in Britain with imperial citizenship. There were opportunities such as the 1851 Exhibition programme and the scholarships of the Gilchrist Trust followed by an array of Travelling Scholarships which began to be established by the settler universities of the Southern Hemisphere in the second part of the nineteenth century. Throughout the period, these travelling scholarships were always complemented by the private actions of the wealthy colonial elite from across the regions of the Empire who simply paid for their sons and daughters to attend university in Britain. In combination, these private efforts and the rich array of nineteenth century travelling scholarships had been bringing considerable numbers of colonial students to study in Britain long before the foundation of the Rhodes scheme.

The Rhodes scholarships were, wrote the Chancellor of Vanderbilt University, Harvie Branscomb, in 1947, the first large-scale programme of international scholarships ever

established, and they served as the model not just for the Marshall but also the Fulbright schemes (Branscomb, 1947). However, in more recent years Rhodes scholarships have undergone reclamation. They were argued by Ben Wildavsky – himself a beneficiary of Rhodes’s Will – the first scholarship programme that sought both to fashion and to attract the human capital of a global knowledge economy (Wildavsky, 2010). Rather than imperial or national, increasingly it is now good global citizens that Cecil Rhodes’s travelling scholarships are thought to create (Rice University, 2010). As a consequence, Western States have increasingly sought to attract global talents and especially international students as part of a strategy to expand their knowledge economies (Findlay, 2010). They believe that, as Williams (2009) notes, human capital, knowledge and creativity rather than natural resources are the keys to economic development.

Ever since then, the influx of international students to the UK has been increasing and their role is crucial to the national interest as they bring in money, innovation and good diplomatic connections; three things the UK needs most right now (The Guardian, 2010). The next section discusses the recruitment of international students in UK in comparison to other leading countries.

2.4 Recruitment of International Students in the UK and other leading countries

The terms, ‘international’, ‘overseas’ and ‘foreign’ are used interchangeably in the literature to refer to students studying in another country. The definition of international students varies in each country in accordance to their own national education system. For instance, in the UK distinction between international students and home students is based on fee status. Home students also include those from the European Union. In Australia, home students usually include New Zealanders and vice versa. In the UK, the definition can also be based on domicile, whereas many other countries distinguish based on nationality or immigration status (Morrison, Merrich, Higgs and Metais, 2006). In short, in the UK, ‘international’ is the term used to refer to students from countries outside the EU. Therefore, students studying in both public and private FE colleges and universities can come from very different cultural, language and religious backgrounds to those of the host culture (Haung, 2008).

Further Al-Quhen (2012) defined an international student as one who is enrolled in a UK education institution undertaking an undergraduate or postgraduate course and who is neither a UK citizen, refugee, nor immigrant. Since there is no other distinction made anywhere in the literature between international students studying at UK private FE colleges or public colleges and universities other than the reasons mentioned above, for the purposes of this study, an international student will be defined as a non-EU student who does not have a permanent residence in the United Kingdom (Tran, 2011) and who has been studying at a private FE college in UK which has been closed down by the Home Office.

Demand for higher education is growing rapidly around the world and Britain is no exception to this and the number of university students increases every year. The UK is the second most popular destination for higher studies among international students after the United States of America (The UK Government, 2013). British universities are renowned all over the world for their excellence and high standards in delivering quality education in a diverse, creative and inviting environment. As such, the benefits of attracting international students to English universities and colleges are numerous.

According to the recent Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA 2016/17), there were 2,564,470 HE students in 2016/17, across publicly funded HE providers, further education (FE) providers and designated courses at alternative providers (APs). 81% of all students at UK HE providers came from the UK in 2016/17 (this figure has been the same since 2013/14) out of which 6% students were from other European Union (EU) countries while the remaining 13% came from countries outside the EU. Also, proportions of students from outside the UK varied by both level and mode of study in 2016/17. However, UK students made up the majority of enrolments for all modes and levels of study.

Proportions of students from outside the UK also varied across the four administrations: England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. England had the greatest proportion of non-EU students at 14% while providers in Scotland had the greatest proportion of other EU students at 9%. The total number of non-UK students studying in the UK in 2016-17 was 442,375 (HESA, 2016/2017), out of which 42% of students studying at postgraduate level were from outside the EU as shown in Table 1 below. However it is interesting to note that, there has been no drop in the number

of students from other EU countries between 2015/16 and 2016/17 despite the EU referendum (Brexit) result in June 2016.

Country	Total EU students (not incl UK)	Total non-EU students	Total international students
England	104,875	258,710	363,585
Scotland	21,245	31,045	52,290
Wales	6,235	14,970	21,206
Northern Ireland	2,480	2,810	5,290
UK	134,835	307,540	442,375

Table 1: International Student Numbers by UK Nation 2016-17 (HESA 2016/17)

International students enhance the culture of British institutions and give UK students the opportunity to live, work and build networks with other young people from a diverse range of countries and cultures. But perhaps more importantly, international students bring revenues to the wider economy and the role they play has been seen by Labour as “an economic silver-bullet, a win-win for both the education sector and the broader economy” (Migration Observatory 2011, p.2). The export earnings of higher education, including tuition fees and spending by non-UK students, has been estimated at £7.9 billion for 2009, and according to Universities UK’s estimates, the sector could see a potential growth of £16.9 billion by 2025 (Universities UK 2012a).

Britain has always attracted international students from all over the world and there is no doubt that Britain benefits from immigration. However, the growing concern over the number of migrants in the UK has become a political and social issue that has prompted the government to propose changes to the way migration will be managed in the future (Achato, Eaton and Jones, 2010). Further, in June 1999, Prime Minister Tony Blair announced his ‘Prime Minister’s Initiative on International Education’, that aimed to capture 25% of the global international education market by doubling the number of international students in the UK. This increase in international student numbers, as Findlay (2011, p. 178) notes, was seen explicitly “as a means of financing the government’s objective of opening higher education to a larger proportion of the

UK population without increasing taxes”. Over the following decade, the number of non-EU students arriving in the UK tripled (Blinder, 2011). International students are said to be worth ‘up to £12.5 billion annually to the UK economy’ (Home Affairs Committee, 2011, p. 8). The table below shows the top ten non- EU countries recruited from by the UK.

Country	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14
China (PRC)	95,090	91,215	89,540	87,895
Malaysia	16,370	17,405	17,060	16,635
United States of America	17,580	17,115	16,865	16,485
India	16,550	16,745	18,320	19,750
Hong Kong (Special Administrative Region)	16,680	16,745	16,215	14,725
Nigeria	12,665	16,100	17,920	18,020
Saudi Arabia	8,065	8,570	8,595	9,060
Singapore	7,300	7,540	7,295	6,790
Thailand	6,175	6,095	6,240	6,340
Canada	5,915	5,980	6,075	6,350

Table 2: Top Ten Non-EU Sending Countries (HESA 2016/17)

Besides the UK, the other two major countries that have the highest number of international students are Australia and the USA. It is, therefore, important to understand the trends and issues related to the government policies and strategies they employ towards international students which are discussed briefly below for our understanding of this study.

In Australia, education is now their third biggest export sector, generating \$18.6 billion in 2009 and supporting approximately 12,500 jobs across Australia. In addition, international students supplement and diversify their labour force in the longer term if they meet Australia’s skills needs and choose to remain in or return to Australia. International education in Australia has its origins in the Colombo Plan, launched in 1951, which is best known for sponsoring thousands of Asian students to study or train in Australian tertiary institutions. From these beginnings, international education grew

steadily. In the 1980 and 1990s, it became a diverse sector with more providers catering for increasing numbers of fee-paying international students. The sector was characterised by responsive, innovative providers, students and effective regulation which appreciated Australia's unique position at the interface of Western and Asian economies. Since then, the international education sector has continued to evolve enormously in the last two decades. There are now more than 1200 education providers offering education services to international students in Australia and as a result international competition is also increasing.

Recognising the importance of international education for Australia and reflecting their desire that international students have a positive and rewarding experience, the Australian government has stated that the purpose of the International Students Strategy for Australia (2010 to 2014) is *“to support a high-quality experience for international students, in order to ensure a sustainable future for quality international education in Australia”* (ISIS, 2012 p.4). This strategy has been developed collaboratively by Commonwealth, State and Territory governments through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), emphasising that all governments are responsible for aspects of the international student experience. Further, considering the enormous changes to the international education sector in the last 20 years in Australia, it is very important that governments continually improve and better coordinate existing programmes as well as develop new initiatives.

Similarly, a range of global and internal domestic factors is also shaping the number and patterns of international students enrolling into USA higher education institutions. With the increase in student enrolments, so is the number of USA higher education institutions seeking to attract international students expanding. In terms of figures, the USA is the undisputed front-runner with approximately 723,277 foreign enrolments in 2010-2011 followed by the UK and Australia, respectively with 330,000 and 280,000 registered overseas students (Institute of International Education, 14 November 2011).

International student mobility in the first decade of the 21st century has been transformed by two major external events – the September 11 attack in 2001 and the recession of 2008 (University World News, 2011). The 9/11 attack forced the USA to tighten their visa requirements for students which led to an advantage for the UK and

Australia who cashed in on this opportunity and were successful in absorbing and recruiting most of the growth in international students. However, the two countries did not benefit from this opportunity for long as the recession of 2008 exposed two aspects of international students' enrolment in these countries – an unmanageably high proportion of international students compared to home students and issues of quality raised by the use of aggressive recruitment practices (International Student Mobility Trends, 2011). In 2009, international students represented 21.5% and 15.3% of higher education enrolment in Australia and the UK, compared to less than 4% in the US, according to the OECD (OECD, 2011).

Nevertheless, the USA still remains a highly attractive destination for international students even following the disruption post 9/11 and a downturn of 22,556 students enrolling in the USA institutions, however, recovery was relatively quick and by 2010 had achieved a record level of 723,277 (Hudzik and Briggs, 2012). It is worth noting that international students from China, India and South Korea account for 46 per cent of total enrolments in the USA while in Australia, 47 per cent of enrolments come from those same top three countries but in the United Kingdom only 20 per cent come from China and India (Hudzik and Briggs, 2012). According to the recent statistics, the number of Chinese students coming to UK for their studies far exceeds any other nationality; almost one third of non-EU students in the UK are from China (HESA, 2016). This is the only country showing a significant increase in student numbers (14% rise since 2012-13). India is the next largest number from where non-EU students come to UK but the number has declined by 26% since 2012-13.

According to the “2010 Open Doors Report” published on the US Embassy in China website the number of USA visas issued to Chinese students to study at USA universities increased by 30 per cent from more than 98,000 in 2009 to nearly 128,000 in October 2010, placing China as the top country of origin for international students which led to overall total number of international students with a USA visa to study at colleges and universities increased by 3 per cent to a record high of nearly 691,000 in the 2009-2010 academic year. The 30 per cent increase in Chinese student enrolment was the main contributor to that year's growth, and Chinese students accounted for more than 18 per cent of the total international students (USA TODAY, 8 December 2009).

U.S. colleges and universities have always welcomed students from China, where the higher-education system cannot meet the demand. Three years ago, a record 10 million students throughout China took the national college entrance test, competing for 5.7 million university slots. Colleges in USA can provide limited financial help if foreign undergraduates fail to qualify for U.S. federal aid. But fortunately, due to China's booming economy in recent years, more Chinese families can afford to pay and this has dramatically increased the number of Chinese student enrolments in institutions in the USA.

The UK has always welcomed large numbers of international students and their importance has been recognised by both institutions and government. Their presence in UK universities and colleges has many positive impacts, including promoting the quality and range of programmes available; to increase the resource output; to enhance revenue generation; to internationalise the student and staff body and to improve efficiency and international competitiveness (Bohm et al. 2004).

Since they are recruited in a totally separate admissions stream from domestic students and their tuition fees are unregulated by the government, they can pay as much as three to five times the rate charged to domestic students. In 2011-2012, the median international undergraduate tuition fee was £10,500, compared to £3375 for domestic students (Universities UK, 2011). Tuition fees for domestic students also increased dramatically in England in 2012-2013, to an average of £8385 and maximum of £9000 (Tannock 2013; OFFA 2012). But international student's fees remain considerably higher than those charged for domestic students who, furthermore, have access to a whole system of loans and bursaries that international students do not. The high fees paid by international students therefore are seen as opening up educational opportunities and increasing social mobility for domestic students by subsidising the British higher education system. They also make a significant academic contribution (Andrade, 2006) by broadening the perspectives of home students and academics/teachers (Bartram, 2008; Charles-Toussaint and Crowson, 2010; Wang, 2012) and offering the opportunity to become potential contributors to the local knowledge economy (Tange and Jensen, 2012).

In recent years, international students have also become an increasingly important group within what are typically known as 'further education' (FE) colleges in England,

and in FE colleges across the UK more widely. It has been reported that in 2011-12 international students in the UK FE paid £350m in tuition fees, of which £30m was generated through transnational education (TNE) provision, and that international students in FE spent in the region of £980m on their living expenses whilst in the UK (HM Government, 2013a, p. 22). In the context of FE this income is more than significant, but to maintain a sense of proportion it is worth noting that FE related income from international students in the UK stands at roughly 10 per cent of that which is derived from international students in UK HE.

Hence from the above discussion, it can be summed up that the role of international students has always been vital and crucial and as such the issue of immigration and international students should be treated fairly and carefully. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) estimates that in 1980 over a million students were enrolled at universities and colleges outside their country of origin and that two decades on, the figure had almost doubled; less than a decade after that it had tripled (The Economist, 2010). However international students in general, do face a variety of challenges in the UK which the next section aims to explore by first understanding the various factors that motivate them to come to UK for their studies followed by the challenges that they face to gain a degree which can also be related to international students studying at private FE colleges in the UK.

2.5 Motivations for Choosing to Study Abroad

Keeping the research objectives in view, this section is divided into two parts: the motivations for international students for going abroad to study and the main challenges they face in the UK. As I mentioned earlier in the beginning of this chapter that there is limited literature on the experiences of international students in Private FE sector, therefore for the purpose of this study, we refer and relate general international student's experiences and factors of motivation with international students studying at private FE colleges.

2.5.1 Factors of Motivations in International Students

There is a fairly substantial body of literature that has sought to identify the motivations or choice criteria used by international students to select countries and institutions (e.g. McMahon, 1992; Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002; Binsardi and Ekwulugo, 2003;

Gatfield and Chen, 2006; Maringe and Carter, 2007; Chen, 2008; Wilkins and Huisman, 2011a). The majority of empirical studies have been concerned with examining the movement of students to Western countries such as Australia, the UK and US.

The student's decision-making process is a highly sophisticated process in which the student passes through certain stages as Jackson (1982) and Maringe and Carter (2007) note, which include problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision and evaluation of the purchase decision. McMahon (1992) conducted one of the earliest studies on the factors that influenced international student decision-making where she proposed two models to explain the flow of international students from 18 developing countries to the US during the 1960s and 1970s. The first model was concerned with 'push' factors from the source countries, which included the availability of higher education and each country's economic strength, while the second model focused on the economic, political and social 'pull' factors of the US as a destination for higher education study.

Since then almost all of the research on international student motivations and decision criteria conducted has adopted McMahn's 'push-pull' framework. One such popular studies is Mazarrol and Soutar's (2002) where they examined the motivations most of 2,485 students who had gone from four different Asian countries to Australia in order to undertake a post-secondary programme. Mazarrol and Soutar (2002) concluded that push factors operate within a source country to initiate the student's decision to study overseas, while the pull factors operate in the host country to attract students to that particular country over other countries. In other words, push factors encourage students to move out of their home countries whereas, pull factors operate in a host country where the students are likely to go for study.

In understanding the motivations of international students, Maringe and Carter (2007) and Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) have used a push-pull model to explain international students' migration patterns as shown in the figure below which this study has also incorporated so as to understand the different factors of motivation in international students studying at private FE colleges in the UK.

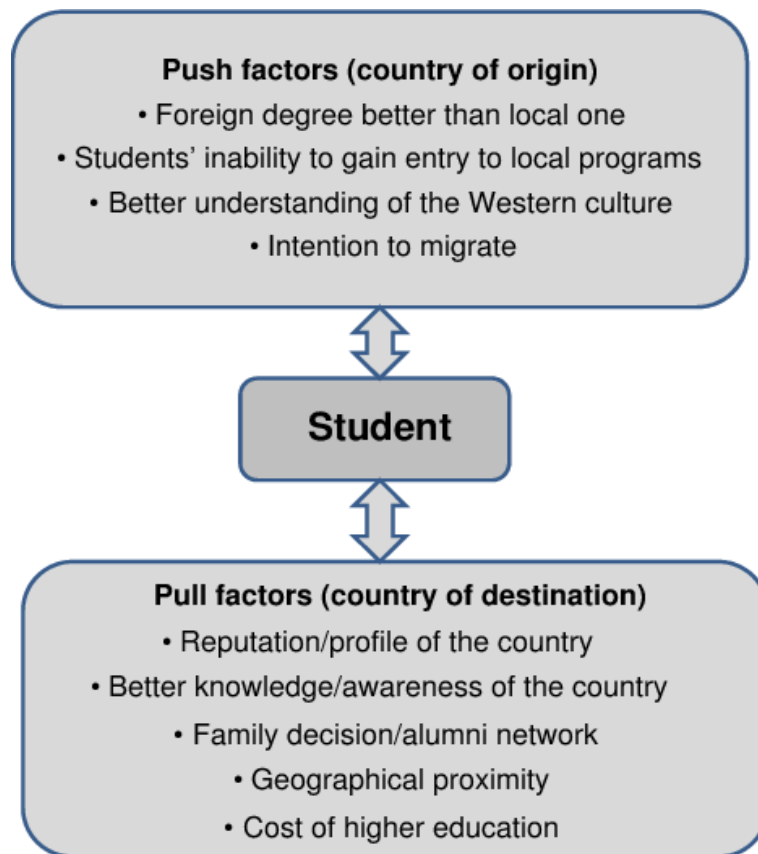


Figure 1: Mazzarol and Soutar's (2002) Push and Pull Factors

Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) describe various push factors such as:

- lack of courses in the home country
- the availability of better courses abroad
- failure to gain admission at local institutions
- the wish to migrate
- to enhance the study experience or to explore the Western world.
- Employer's preference for overseas education
- political and economic problems in home countries

On the other hand, pull factors include:

- a better learning environment
- advancement in knowledge and technology
- their good reputation
- cost effectiveness

- recommendations from a friend or relative
- geographical attraction
- good social links
- opportunity to improve English language skills
- opportunity to experience a different culture.

Besides the above-mentioned pull factors, a country's immigration policy also plays an important role in attracting international students such as the ease of obtaining visas and the immigration process in some countries (Chen, 2007). Another important factor is working facilities during the study period. Studying in a foreign country is more expensive for students from developing countries than their home countries. Thus, students often want to work while studying (Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002; OECD, 2013b). As a result, part-time work opportunities to help cover the cost of higher study in the host country attracts prospective students (Maringe and Carter, 2007). Further the desire to settle in the host country on a permanent basis has also been identified by Chen (2007) as another significant pull factor.

Benefits to the international student from studying abroad are immense, and studies have reported the opportunities for the student to gain a new and exciting chance to mix with a wide range of nationalities (Brown and Holloway, 2008), to increase their level of confidence and responsibility in learning (Warring, 2010), and to have their views challenged and experience personal development as they become independent thinkers and agents for change (Campbell, 2010; Kelly, 2010) while gaining experience in relation to intercultural learning and competence (Ippolito, 2007; Kelly, 2010).

Bhattarai (2009) states that employers in Nepal prefer foreign degree holders over locally educated applicants which motivate the more affluent parents to send their children abroad for their further education, perpetuating the trend. Further he also states that besides the advantages of learning abroad, earning is another incentive attracting Nepalese students to the UK (Bhattaria, 2009). Generally, the students believe that with a foreign degree or qualification they will be able to enhance their career options and acquire new skills that are more compatible with the international market (Chang, 2012).

According to Campbell (2010), when students achieve an international degree they become employable global graduates who improve their career perspectives and, in some cases, upon returning home, become leaders in their chosen field, often in positions of influence (Gribble, 2008; Kelly, 2010; Luxon and Peelo, 2009; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2008; Pietro and Page, 2008). Further, the experience gained can also transform their ideas and mind-set in relation to engagement with the world (Intolubbe-Chmil et al. 2012; Kelly, 2010) and challenge their sense of self (Kim, 2005), as well as improve their language skills (Kettle, 2011). Many students' experiences are therefore enormously beneficial and can shape their outlook for the rest of their lives (Furnham, 2004).

This learning experience is important not only for international students but also for those involved in the teaching and facilitation processes. The international student not only contributes to the diversity of the student population but in doing so also adds fresh perspectives during classroom discourse (Charles-Toussaint and Crowson, 2010; Lee and Rice, 2007). Wang (2012) noted that the international student can help academic members of staff recognise the influence of their own cultural background on their values and those of home students and, as Lee and Rice (2007) highlight, increase tolerance, understanding and appreciations of different countries and cultures around the world.

Likewise, home students can also benefit from the mixed cultural experiences that they would be less likely to gain from an all home student group which may help prepare them for future encounters with diversity (Andrade, 2006). An increased number of international students on campus can also enhance cross-cultural understanding and provide greater opportunities for them to become involved in university and local community life (Lee and Rice, 2007; Sherry et al. 2009) which in turn enhances academic reputation and affords opportunities to establish global connections (Andrade, 2006; Bartram, 2008; Sherry et al. 2009) and increase international research opportunities (Gribble, 2008).

Currently, international students choose to study in the United Kingdom for a variety of reasons. Goldbart et al. (2005) found that the choice of country often related to the colonial and post-colonial links of the students' own country with the United Kingdom, as well as language. According to Gray et al. (2003), quality provision was the most

important factor influencing the decision of the international student to study abroad. Other authors highlight reasons including; to improve English and to gain cultural experience (Goldbart et al. 2005; Kelly, 2010; Kettle, 2011; OECD, 2008; Pietro and Page, 2008), to improve career prospects (Teichler, 2004), service quality and reputation in relation to hospitality and tourism (Pereda et al. 2007), the reputation of the institution and other financial and personal reasons (Goldbart et al. 2005) are determining factors.

2.6 Main Challenges faced by International Students in the UK

According to Evans and Stevenson (2011), the decision to study abroad often involves large personal, social and financial investments on the part of the students, their families and their employers. This investment may also relate to what Chirkov et al. (2007) identified as rewards for the student in relation to their own goals, rewards from parents, or gaining social approval and/or feeling that they 'should' or 'ought' to study abroad to pursue intrinsic and extrinsic goals. Intrinsic goals are meaningful relationships and personal growth and societal contact, while extrinsic goals may be related to financial success, popularity, fame and physical health outcomes.

The UK education environment is, in many ways, full of possibilities with a highly diverse context, set within a multicultural society. However, there are limiting factors as well which constrain the intercultural potential and consequently international students face a variety of challenges in the UK. Some international students may self-select into peer groups consisting mainly of people from their own or similar cultures and so have limited opportunities to interact with the multicultural environment outside the university. They do not feel that they are interacting on an equal basis with other students, particularly during their first year of studies when they are experiencing cultural and learning shocks at their strongest (Schweisfurth and Gu 2009).

Culture shock is an issue highlighted by many authors and is described by Brown and Holloway (2008) as anxiety from losing familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse which, according to Sobre-Denton and Hart (2008), are difficult to access. It is a period of mourning for one's own cultural context which is also related to the concept of 'homesickness'. There is no set time period over which students experience culture shock and so each student adjusts at a different pace (Brown and Holloway, 2008; Wang et al. 2012).

Dominic (2011) also suggested that many students have a strong pre-conception about British culture and society prior to their arrival which may not match their experience in reality. Sobre-Denton and Hart (2008) noted that if such inaccuracies are not recognised in advance, then the student could become doubly shocked by the cultural differences. In such situations, support for students should be through supervision and relationships with other students (Evans and Stevenson, 2011).

Further, international students also take time to adapt themselves into the new environment they are exposed to while studying abroad. Adaptation is a dynamic, complex shift in personal identification (Tran, 2011), a dual process that includes not only cultural but also psychological change (Berry, 2005). It does not change, however, the core of who the student is as an individual (Smith and Demjanenko, 2011). Wang et al. (2012) found that culture shock decreases after the first semester while Campbell (2010) reported that although it takes time to adjust, students report that the process had been positive and that they had learned from negative experiences and could adjust more easily to new situations with increased confidence and positive outcomes.

Students come to the United Kingdom in order to improve their cultural knowledge and there is an opportunity to celebrate cultural differences within the learning environment. Those institutions who work with international students need to become familiar with different values and beliefs, customs and traditions (Chalungsoth and Schneller, 2011). The curriculum needs to identify cultural diversity in order to assist curriculum designers, university instructors and educational decision makers (Al-Quhen, 2012).

While there are opportunities for cooperative learning and social experiences, these are not always successful and there is evidence that some students from overseas find they do not always share common goals with their UK counterparts. Despite an evident desire to maximize interaction from the international students, these constraints have led some of them to choose to avoid intercultural situations where their own study goals are compromised. As such, international students may find that they need to develop different learning strategies and study patterns from those used in their own countries (Chalungsoth and Schneller, 2011).

There are also different attitudes to knowledge across various cultures and so international students often have to address not only language difficulties but must also adjust to a different education system within a diverse academic environment. There are significant variations in the teaching, learning and examination systems to those they have been familiar with at home.

According to Rushton (2006), in some cultures teachers are considered the ultimate authority where it is believed that it is inappropriate to ask questions as by doing so they challenge their knowledge. Similarly, critical thinking is not encouraged and the class environment is typically silent. By contrast, in the UK, critical thinking and personal contributions to a seminar are highly valued. Thus, many international students initially struggle to participate actively in seminars and tutorials (Rushton, 2006). Non-EU students in UK universities lack analytical and critical thinking approaches because their home institutions do not promote and encourage such skills (Shaheen, 2012).

Further, Subhash (2013) reported that penalization for plagiarism, communication and the diverse examination/evaluation system were the major learning problems that had impacted on the academic performance of international students. The perceived significance of learning success to family, proficiency in English and social communication with compatriots were the most significant predictors of academic performance of all international students (Li et al. 2009, p.13)

Bartram (2009) notes that student satisfaction is a key indicator of quality in this context and increasing consumer expectations regarding value for money and student support and guidance are now key auditable areas within the inspection frameworks. Smith (2007) notes that seeing the international student as a consumer and the institution as a provider can undercut the authenticity of the relationship, while Erichsen and Bolliger (2011) suggest that a more caring approach to advisory relationships should include a strong link between physical and emotional equilibrium (Brown and Holloway, 2008).

Also, in terms of the provision of responsive and appropriate authority support, much depends on the institution and on the specific individuals upon whom the students rely. So, peer and teacher support with positive guidance can also enrich an international student's learning experiences. Proficiency in English is significantly associated with

both academic success and psychological adjustment (Poyrazili, 2003) and may well be the most important enabler of positive learning outcomes for international students (Karuppan and Barari, 2011). A lack of familiarity with the language can lead to confusion, misunderstandings, anxiety, stress concerning participation and presentations and difficulties with course and programme content (Erichsen and Bolliger, 2011). In order to assist the students, the teachers/academics need to make the environment non-threatening (Nambiar et al. 2012) and help the student to practise English and contribute to discussions.

International students definitely have many issues and stresses to deal with when coming to study in the United Kingdom and face cultural, social and emotional changes in their learning experiences. However, the problems and challenges faced by international students studying at private further education colleges in the UK, especially after the closure of their colleges due to new immigration policy is very different to students at FE public Colleges and universities which needs to be explored and understood. In order to understand their challenges, it is important first to understand the background, characteristics and features of the UK's immigration system, in particular the Tier 4 Points Based System. The next section aims to discuss this and the implications that followed for these international students studying at UK private FE colleges after the change in government policy which led to the closure of their colleges by the Home Office.

2.7 The UK's Points-Based System for Immigration

Points Based System for non-EEA national work and study visas was launched in the UK in 2008. Visa eligibility is determined by satisfying a set of mandatory criteria such as qualifications, occupation and language skills to which a fixed number of symbolic points are attached. A June 2016 briefing by the Migration Observatory, based at the University of Oxford, summarises:

A points system is a way of selecting labour migrants based on their characteristics, such as their educational qualifications, language proficiency, work experience and occupation. The best-known examples of points systems are from Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Traditionally, the main feature of a points system has been that it admits migrants based on their qualifications rather than because an employer has

selected them to fill a specific job (although some points systems do require or strongly prioritise people with a job lined up) (Migration Observatory, 2016)

Points-based selection systems are most closely associated with economic immigration categories (i.e. work visas). Canada introduced the idea of a points-based system for economic immigration in the late 1960s, and Australia has had one since the 1970s. Several other countries have applied points-based systems in various forms, including New Zealand, Denmark, Singapore, Hong Kong, and the UK.

There are five 'tiers' to the points-based system. Each tier contains several different visa categories (and some sub-categories), with varying associated conditions and mandatory eligibility requirements which are as below:

- **Tier 1:** for high value migrants (categories for entrepreneurs; investors; graduate entrepreneurs; and migrants with exceptional talents in science, humanities, engineering, medicine, digital technology, TV and film, fashion or the arts)
- **Tier 2:** for sponsored skilled workers with a long-term job offer (categories for general skilled workers; Ministers of religion; sportspeople; and intra-company transfers (which is split into two sub-categories).
- **Tier 3:** for low skilled workers. This tier has never been used because it has been assumed that any need for low skilled workers can be met from within the resident/EEA workforce.
- **Tier 4:** for students (categories for child students (age 4-17) and adult students (age 16 or over). Eligibility to work as a Tier 4 student depends on the circumstances of the case.
- **Tier 5:** for temporary workers (categories for Youth mobility limited to certain nationalities and five sub-categories for classes of temporary worker with job offer/sponsor generally staying for two years or less).

Of these categories, Tier 2 (General) is the main visa route for bringing skilled non-EU/EEA workers to the UK. Visas are also available for dependant family members of points-based system migrants. The eligibility criteria and associated conditions, including permission to work, vary depending on the sponsoring family member's visa category.

2.7.1 Characteristics and Development of the UK's Points-Based System

The UK's system has always combined elements of points-based and sponsor-led approaches (Gower, 2018). Although the then Labour Government said that the system was inspired by Australia's model, there have always been some significant differences between the UK's system and those in other countries, including Australia. Calls for the UK to adopt a system closer to the 'Australian model' have persisted, although it has not always been obvious what advocates specifically have in mind, particularly since both countries' systems have undergone various reforms. Some of the significant features of the UK's approach include:

- (i) The UK's points-based system does not only cover for work visas but also includes student visas, visas for sportspeople, entrepreneurs and investors within its scope.
- (ii) The assessment of points for visa eligibility is essentially symbolic. Each visa category specifies certain mandatory criteria which must all be satisfied to be eligible for a visa. Each of the criteria have a fixed number of points attached and there is no scope for flexibility over the number of points awarded, or the possibility to off-set points accrued in one category against those needed in another. Therefore, a person who satisfies the mandatory eligibility criteria will automatically accrue the number of points required and a person who cannot satisfy one of the criteria will not have the number of points needed. However, the only exception to this is the separate points test for restricted Tier 2 (General) sponsorships which does allow for differentiation between eligible applications.
- (iii) The main points-based visa categories require the migrant to already have a job/study offer or endorsement from an approved sponsor.
- (iv) People wishing to come to work in the UK have few alternative visa options to applying for a visa within the points-based system. People who enter the UK under the points-based system are given temporary permission to remain initially, and some of them become eligible to stay permanently compared to other countries where several different temporary/permanent work visa categories are available for those under points-based categories.

- (v) There is no overall central planning for the number of people to be admitted under the points-based system, although certain visa categories within it are subject to fixed quotas.

However, despite the features mentioned above it has been argued that the pursuit since 2010 of a target to reduce annual net migration to the tens of thousands had led to the system becoming far detached from its original design and rationale and that the UK now has a points-based system in name only:

The tinkering with what was a flexible system has culminated in a system which is anything but points based. All supply side logic has dissipated, the admission system is now rigid, high skilled immigration has all but disappeared from Britain's knowledge economy, and far from enhancing tourism as the design of the PBS was intended, the tier five visitor visa has become so convoluted it is labyrinthine in its complexity. (Consterdine, 2015).

2.7.2 The Policy Rationale

From the outset, the points-based system was presented as a simplified system which was nevertheless more stringent and objective than its predecessors. Successive Ministers were also keen to draw parallels with the Australian points-based system as the then Home Secretary Jacqui Smith contended in a Written Ministerial Statement:

One of the key changes to reform migration will include a firmer, faster and fairer Australian-style points system. The new system will be simpler and more transparent, ensuring that only those migrants Britain needs can come to work or study in the UK... The points system replaces subjective decision making with an objective transparent process that is more robust against abuse (House of Commons Library, 2008).

However, by the time it was launched in 2008/2009, the points-based system differed to the outline in the Five Year Plan in some respects. There have been many significant changes to the system, rules and guidance since its first inception. Changes over the whole lifespan of the system have included:

- Introducing more targeted visa sub-categories in Tier 1 and Tier 2, such as for graduates, entrepreneurs, and people with exceptional talents in certain fields.
- Strengthening the resident labour market test and successive updates to the Shortage Occupation List.

- A succession of changes to eligibility criteria and conditions attached to Tier 2 (Intra-Company Transfer) visas and Tier 4 (General) visas (mostly becoming more restrictive).
- Raising the minimum skill and salary levels for Tier 2 visas.
- Reintroducing some scope for officials to exercise discretion when determining applications (“evidential flexibility”).
- Changes to sponsor licensing requirements and entitlements – generally speaking, introducing more demanding criteria for sponsorship licenses, and restricting certain sponsorship rights to the most trusted sponsors.

Most of the significant changes however were made under the Coalition and Conservative Governments since 2010 which included as stated in House of Commons Briefing (2016)

- Closure of the Tier 1 (General) sub-category, which was arguably the closest example of a ‘pure’ points-based UK visa category, in December 2010. It enabled highly skilled workers to come to the UK without a job offer which the Coalition Government considered that it had not been effective in attracting highly skilled workers.
- Closure of the Tier 1 (Post-Study Work) visa in April 2012, for similar reasons. It has been replaced by some new visa options for international graduates which are more narrowly focussed: Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneur); Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent) and Tier 4 (General - Doctorate extension scheme).
- Introducing limits on the number of visas available in certain categories.
- Changes to the eligibility criteria and associated conditions for Tier 1 (Investor) and Tier 1 (Entrepreneur) visas, such as by providing for faster eligibility for permanent settlement and allowing for longer periods of absence from the UK during the qualifying residence period.
- Restricting eligibility for skilled worker visas (Tier 2 General) to ‘graduate level’ jobs and raising the minimum salary requirement.
- New restrictions on eligibility to stay permanently in the UK, notably a £35,000 minimum salary requirement for settlement for sponsored skilled workers (Tier 2 General), with exceptions for scientists and researchers doing PhD level jobs, and workers filling vacancies on the shortage occupation list.

- Introducing new maximum lengths of stay and out of country “cooling off” periods for some categories of skilled worker.
- Limiting international students’ entitlements to work, bring dependent family members to the UK, extend their stay, and ‘switch’ into a work visa category.
- A further package of reforms to Tier 2 visas, implemented between autumn 2016 and spring 2017, intended to reduce non EU economic migration. Notably: increasing the minimum salary threshold for experienced staff (to £30,000), adjustments to the points test for ‘restricted’ Tier 2 visas, streamlining the intracompany transfer route, and introduction of Immigration Skills Charge for employers (House of Commons 660, 2016)

2.7.3 Criticism of the Points Based System

The points-based system is also not free from criticism and has been criticised that it has failed to live up to its stated objectives such as simplicity, transparency, objectivity and flexibility (Gower, 2018). The system has come to be widely regarded by individual applicants, sponsors, immigration lawyers and the judiciary as unduly complex, burdensome and costly. It has been criticised for being particularly ill-suited to the needs of small and medium-sized businesses, to the point that some do not see it as a viable means for filling a vacancy. Critics point out that the Immigration Rules, application forms and associated guidance for each visa category run to hundreds of pages, and that the difficulties of keeping up to date with the requirements are exacerbated by the frequency of changes. There are very prescriptive evidential requirements, significant penalties for non-compliance, and limited opportunities to correct errors or challenge refusal decisions through reviews or appeals. The structure and design of the system have sometimes struggled to accommodate the needs of certain employment sectors, and efforts to remedy this have in turn added to the complexity of the system.

There has also been some debate over whether the system has proved to be sufficiently robust against fraudulent applications. Some have argued that the strong emphasis on objective evidence and paper-based application processes left Home Office caseworkers powerless to prevent visas being issued to fraudulent applications (e.g. where there are doubts about credibility) (Gower, 2018). Governments have identified particular causes for concern over the years in certain visa categories, such

as Tier 4 (students) and Tier 1 (Investor/Entrepreneur). This has led to some changes, for example the introduction of “genuine entrepreneur” and “genuine student” tests, arguably resulting in an uneasy compromise between objectivity, transparency and firmness (Gower, 2018).

Against this background, I will discuss the Tier 4 Points Based System for international students and the hostile environment policy in the next section which forms the main focus of this study.

2.8 Tier 4 Points-Based System and Hostile Environment Policy

Over the course of the past 10 years, immigration policy has been subject to rapid change as successive ministers have attempted to effectively manage immigration to the UK. The Points Based System (PBS) introduced by the previous Labour government under Gordon Brown’s leadership, was intended to simplify channels for migration to the UK and provide a flexible system to manage migration in the national interest. The Tier 4 points-based category for non-European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland, aged 16 or over was introduced in March 2009, for those students who wanted to come to or remain in the UK for their post-16 education, in order to address problems of ‘bogus’ colleges and students (The Home Affairs Committee Session 2008-09).

Under the Tier 4 Points Based System, non-EEA international students who require a student visa in the UK are awarded points if they can demonstrate that they have been offered a place on a degree programme and that they have sufficient funds to maintain themselves. According to Points Based System, any institution recruiting international students must have a license and be a highly trusted sponsor – a status determined by the UK Border Agency (now known as Border Force and part of the Home Office since March 2013). Since 2011 the right to work during study was also denied to non-EEA students studying in private colleges.

Further, the coalition government under David Cameron and Nick Clegg introduced various additional measures and changes to this tier in order to reform the existing immigration policy for international students as I have already outlined earlier in my introduction chapter. Briefly the changes for international students under the Tier 4 PBS included an increase in the level of competency in English language for those

coming to study at undergraduate level and above; a requirement that students sign a declaration that the funds they will be drawing on to support their studies are genuinely available; work during term time and work placements is restricted to international students studying at a 'recognised body' (universities) or a publicly-funded further education college; only postgraduate students studying for longer than twelve months, or government-sponsored students, are allowed to sponsor dependents; Tier 4 visa holders are restricted to maximum five years of study on courses at degree level and above (with some exceptions); while the Tier 1 (Post-study work) route was closed to new applicants, the Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneur) route was created for up to 1,000 graduates, and upon completion of study students can also apply for a Tier 2 visa if they have a graduate level job offer of at least £20,000 per year from an employer who is a licensed sponsor (Robinson, 2013).

The United Kingdom is the second most popular destination among international students, after the United States of America, for higher education (The UK Government, 2013). UK academic degrees are recognized worldwide for their high standards and the quality of education and as such every year, more than 430,000 overseas students from 180 countries come to the UK to study (The UK Council for International Student Affairs, 2015). These international students contribute to the country's culture, social life and the economy (Wiseman and Davies, 2013).

As pointed earlier by Binsardi and Ekwulugo (2003) the tuition fees of universities located in USA, Australia and Canada are very expensive in comparison to UK universities (Binsardi and Ekwulugo, 2003) so international students are apply for admission to private colleges. Some of these private colleges are also affiliated with publicly funded universities and offer graduate, postgraduate and PhD level courses just as offered in universities. In order to become eligible for Master's degrees offered by universities, most international students, especially from the developing countries who have undergraduate degrees in their home countries, take diplomas with certain credits in these private colleges as the most cost-effective way to obtain a UK university degree. In the UK education system, a Master's degree consists of 180 credits; 120 credits are obtained from study modules and the remaining 60 credits from a dissertation. At a private college, students can complete a postgraduate diploma worth 120 credits and then transfer to a university to complete the dissertation and earn the remaining 60 credits to claim a Master's degree. This is known as a top-up

postgraduate degree and is very popular among the international students as it is cheaper when compared to tuition fees at universities or publicly funded colleges (Mughal, 2016).

As a result, a number of international students especially from the developing countries are attracted to private FE colleges for this particular reason as discussed earlier regarding the pull factors. However, some private colleges enrol 'bogus' learners and abuse the immigration system for their own financial gain who pretend to be genuine learners and use these so called bogus colleges as an easy route by which to enter or remain in the UK (Slack, 2014). In 2009, the UK government introduced the Tier 4 policy as a restriction to these practices (Wiseman and Davies, 2013). According to this policy, as mentioned earlier, any institution recruiting international students must be a highly trusted sponsor (UKBA, 2014). In 2011, the UKBA imposed further restrictions on Tier 4 adult students (16 and older) intending to study in the UK with the maximum stay on student visas restricted to eight and a half years. Subsequently, however, PhD candidates were exempted from this restriction. Also, students at publicly funded further education colleges were limited to working a maximum of 10 hours per week during term time. Before this policy, they had the right to work up to 20 hours in term time. They were permitted to spend a maximum of three years on undergraduate courses and five years at graduate level. The students attending private colleges are subject to the same restrictions and in addition their right to work was totally denied. At this time, the Post Study Work (PSW) Visa, which allowed graduates to take employment for up to two years, was also terminated and students studying at private FE colleges were restricted from bringing in their dependents into the UK (UKBA, 2014).

During 2011-12, as a consequence of the policy changes, the number of post graduate students in the UK from non-European countries fell by 1% for the first time in sixteen years (Taylor, 2013). The number of international students attending publicly funded Further Education colleges also declined because of the changes in Tier 4 regulations. Further Education colleges reported concerns about the reputational impacts any further restrictions to Tier 4 students would have, with the UK being perceived as 'unwelcoming' to Tier 4 students which would eventually lead to further reductions in Tier 4 genuine learners (Wiseman and Davies, 2013, p.6).

Further, the coalition government included international students in its net migration target, which aimed to significantly reduce net migration to the UK from hundreds of thousands of people to tens of thousands by the time of the 2015 general election. To make progress towards this target, the government had sought to substantially reduce the number of international students coming to the UK. The consequence of this has been an overarching policy to create a 'hostile environment' which led to series of immigration policies that have made international students feel under attack and unwelcome.

The hostile environment policy was introduced by Theresa May, the current Prime Minister, during her time as the Home Secretary. Mrs May first spoke about it in 2012 when challenged on why annual net immigration, then running at about 250,000, was not reaching the promised tens of thousands her response was: *"The aim is to create, here in Britain, a really hostile environment for illegal immigrants"* (Hill, 2017, p. 11-28).

This hostile environment policy was translated in the Immigration Acts of 2014 and 2016 which included strict measures to prevent people from accessing employment, healthcare, housing, education, banking and other basic services. It also implemented a more complicated application process for leave to remain based on the principle of 'deport first, appeal later', whilst encouraging voluntary deportation through strategies like "Go Home" vans (BBC News, 2018).

Since the general election in 2010, the UK government has made many changes to student visas and the requirements on 'sponsoring institutions', which will have the effect of further reducing the number of international students coming to the UK and the length of their stay. One of the major changes was that, from April 2012, the option of non-EEA students staying for up to two years to seek employment after finishing a degree course was significantly restricted. Any student, prior to the immigration reforms, completing a postgraduate degree at a designated UK higher education institution was entitled to apply for a post-study work visa lasting two years under the Tier 1 visa route. Post-study work (PSW) visas have now been closed, with students instead being invited to transfer into the Tier 2 route when their student visa comes to an end. However, the requirements under Tier 2 are more stringent and only graduates

with an offer of a skilled job from a sponsoring employer with a minimum salary of £20,000 per annum are able to stay on under a Tier 2 work visa.

The UK Council for International Affairs Tier 4 student survey in 2011 found that the closing down of the Post Study Work (PSW) visa route had a strong negative impact on international students considering coming to the UK to study; meanwhile, changes in dependent visas had a moderate impact (The UK Council for International Student Affairs, 2011). Consequently, these measures are likely to reduce numbers of genuine students as well as those who may have been abusing the student category.

International students form the most significant proportion of non-EEA immigrants but a growing number of organisations are now calling for international students to be removed from the UK's net migration statistics, simply because these students are largely in the UK for only a short time. Home Office research showed that only 1% of those who entered the UK on student visas in 2006 had achieved permanent settlement five years later, with an additional 17% having ongoing leave to remain (Home Office, 2013). In response the government has argued that it cannot do this because it is bound by the UN definition of net migration and therefore had rejected calls from 70 of Britain's universities to stop counting foreign students as immigrants (BBC News, 31 May 2012).

On the contrary, Australia, USA and Canada, our leading competitors in the international student market, do not include international students in their calculations of net migration for the simple reason that these students are overwhelmingly transitory (Cavanagh and Glennie, 2012). They are only viewed as more long-term additions to the population if they switch immigration categories to a route that allows them to stay on, for example in a work-based category.

Therefore, all these factors are contributing to a climate of uncertainty for prospective and current international students and do not inspire confidence for those considering investing in a British university education. In short, continued inclusion of international students in the government's immigration policy and the strict visa rules are having a negative impact on the perceptions of UK education and on the levels of motivation for international students at UK private FE colleges who aspire to achieve a UK degree. The next section will discuss the theories of motivation in general followed by

the detailed analysis of Self-Determination Theory and Organismic Integration Theory which forms the theoretical framework for this study.

2.9 Theories on Motivation

From the very beginning, various thinkers have tried to find out what motivates people. Different approaches and cross-disciplinary theories have been postulated to explain motivation. For example, some theories claim that people or students are motivated by material rewards, desire to increase their power and prestige in the world, interesting work, enriched environments, recognition, or being respected as an individual. Although each of these theories has some truth, no single theory seems to adequately explain all human motivation.

Student motivation is an essential element and as such the method or process of motivation must be inventive, encouraging, interesting, beneficial and provide tools that can be applied to the student's real life. The environment too needs to be accessible, safe, positive, personalized as much as possible and empowering. It is important to note here that the push-pull model in Figure 1 above does not contain motivation as a factor in either the pull or the push. As such, I add this factor of motivation in my conceptual framework of SDT and OIT, which is explored later in this chapter. Motivation is optimized when students are exposed to a large number of these experiences and variables on a regular basis. In other words, in their learning experiences, students should have many sources of motivation (Palmer, 2007; Debnath, 2005; D'Souza and Maheshwari, 2010).

Many discussions of motivation begin by making a distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. As a result, it is important firstly to understand the difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is defined as the doing of an activity for its own sake, for the pleasure and satisfaction derived from its performance rather than for some separable consequence where people engage in activities that interest them and they do so freely, with a full sense of volition and without the necessity of material rewards or constraints (Deci and Ryan, 1985). Intrinsically motivated behaviours represent the prototype of self-determination – they emanate from the self and are fully endorsed. It inspires action even when there is no perceived external stimulus or reward.

Extrinsically motivations, in contrast, are instrumental in nature. They are performed not out of interest but because they are believed to be instrumental to some separable consequence. Extrinsically motivated behaviours are not self-determined in the way that intrinsic behaviours are. They provide incentives to engage in action which may not be inherently pleasing or engaging, but which may offer benefits in terms of perceived potential outcomes. The kind of factors in the push-pull model could be seen as extrinsic and that intrinsic is entirely missing. More recently, however, theory and research have suggested that there are different types of extrinsically motivated behaviours and that these types differ in the extent to which they represent self-determined versus controlled responding (Ryan and Connell, 1989). Some behaviour is self-determined because of their intrinsic needs to achieve their goals in life whereas some behaviours are controlled behaviours due to the external factors that they have to undergo in their learning experiences which are discussed in the later chapters.

Although more valid explanations of motivation have been developed, early motivational theories such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Victor Vroom's Expectancy theory are important as they represent the foundation from which contemporary motivation theories were developed and are still being used across various disciplines and fields in education. Pintrich and Schunk (2002) were of the view that in the past, drives, needs and reinforcements were put forward to explain the primary source of motivation to which Eccles and Wigfield (2002) have argued that current theories and research studies on motivation focus more on an individual's beliefs, values and goals as the primary source of motivation. Using this as my background, I begin this section by first providing a brief discussion on the theories of motivation in general and then focus on the tenets of Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which forms the theoretical framework for this study.

2.9.1 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow's hierarchy of needs, on which he based his theory of motivation and personality is one of the most well-known theories of motivation. Maslow based his theory on a classification of all human needs into a hierarchical manner from the lowest to the highest order. He starts with the idea that people always tend to want something and what they want depends on what they have. Maslow proposed that there are five

different basic levels of need that people seek to meet (Mullins, 2007, p. 258) which are briefly discussed below:



Figure 2: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

- (i) Physiological needs – This is the first or lowest level of needs and include needs that are basic to human life such as food, clothing, shelter and water. These needs relate to the survival and maintenance of human life and exert tremendous influence on human behaviour. The psychological needs according to this theory should be achieved first before other higher level of needs emerge. After the psychological needs are satisfied, their needs move to a second level.
- (ii) Safety needs – This is the second lowest level of needs. In this level, a person needs to feel secure in his or her family and in a society. They need to feel protected against violence. The need for safety is manifested in job security, savings and insurances for health, mental health, old age and disability.
- (iii) Social needs – This is the third level of Maslow's hierarchy. Man is a social being and is therefore interested in social interaction, companionship, belongingness, etc. It is this socialising and belongingness that explains why individuals prefer to work in groups and have good friendships.
- (iv) Esteem needs – This is the fourth level of needs and refers to self-esteem and self-respect. They include such needs which indicate self-confidence, achievement, competence, knowledge and independence. The fulfilment of esteem needs leads people to receive appreciation from other people

based on their achievement. However, inability to fulfil these needs results in feelings of inferiority, weakness and helplessness.

- (v) Self-Actualisation needs – This is the highest level of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. The development of this need is based on the satisfaction of the other four lower levels of needs. It refers to the need for self-fulfilment and the tendency to realise one’s full human potential.

The essence of this theory lies in the fact that when one need is fulfilled, its strength diminishes and the strength of the next level increases (Latham, 2007, p.31). Maslow does note that one level of needs does not necessarily have to be totally fulfilled before a person moves to the next level. The individual can be partly satisfied with one level and still seek satisfaction at the next level (Salanova and Kirmanen, 2010).

Of motivational theory, Maslow said, ‘Sound motivational theory should ... assume that motivation is constant, never ending, fluctuating, and complex, and that it is an almost universal characteristic of practically every organismic state of affairs’ (Maslow, 1987, p.7). He drew a distinction between behaviour theory and motivation theory while allowing for the effects of the environment on motivation and argued that “behaviour is determined by several classes of determinants, of which motivation is one and environmental forces are another” (Maslow, 1987, p.11).

In contrast to this view, many educationalist who study motivation today do not theoretically distinguish between behaviour and motivation in precisely the way that Maslow proposed; instead, they look at cognitive and social constructs, sometimes in addition to needs and affective factors, when developing theories and designing research on motivation and motivated behaviour (Pintrich, 2003, p. 670).

Maslow’s hierarchy of needs and a person’s desires to satisfy them can be considered intrinsic. He was of the view that these needs were universal to humans, but that they could manifest in myriad ways based on environmental conditions and an individual’s culture and history (Maslow, 1987, p.28-29). This can be considered as a very important view because, if his theory is valid, although individuals may behave differently in different contexts, the assumption is that motivation is highly individual and individually constructed. In the situated view, motivation is seen largely as a result of socio-cultural constructs and interactions with the environment (Pintrich, 2003). This differentiation echoes an earlier philosophical and psychological argument about the

roles of nature vs. nurture in human development. Just as our discussions of human development have become more sophisticated in their recognition of the interplay of nature and nurture, so must our views of motivational factors take into account the complexity of the interactions between intra-psychological and socio-cultural influences as reflected by Pintrich (2003).

However, Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory is also not free from criticism. The main criticisms are firstly that the needs may or may not follow a definite hierarchical order and may overlap. For example, even if safety need is not satisfied, the social need may emerge. Secondly, the need priority model may not apply at all times in all places. Thirdly, Maslow's proposition that one need is satisfied at a time is also doubtful since human beings are mostly guided by multiplicity of behaviour. Lastly, the level of motivation may be permanently lower in some people. For instance, a person suffering from long-term unemployment may remain satisfied for the rest of his life as long as they can get enough food.

2.9.2 Victor Vroom's Expectancy Theory

The concept of expectancy was originally formulated by Vroom and it stands for the probability that action or effort will lead to an outcome. It is a cognitive process theory of motivation. The theory is founded on the basic notions that people will be motivated to exert a high level of effort when they believe there are relationships between the effort they put forth, the performance they achieve and the outcomes/rewards they receive. Expectancies may be described in terms of their strength. Maximal strength is indicated by subjective certainty that the act will be followed by an outcome, while minimal strength is indicated by the subjective certainty that the act will not be followed by the outcome (Vroom, 1964).

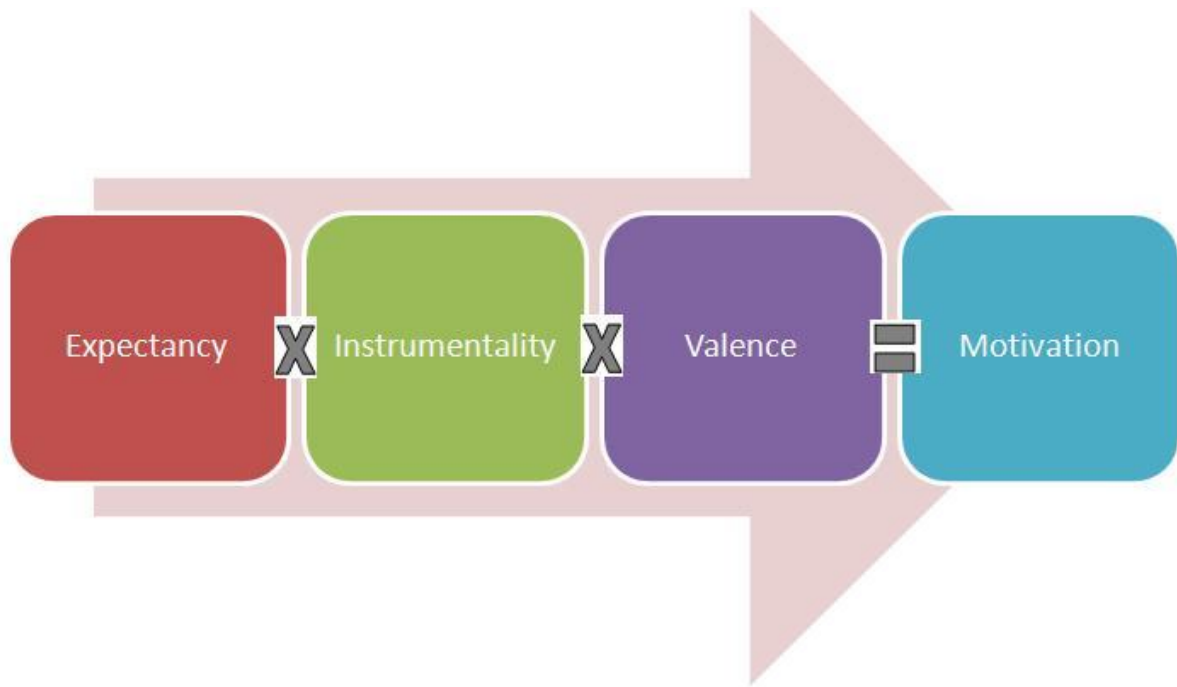


Figure 3: *Victor Vroom's Expectancy Theory*

The key constructs in the expectancy theory of motivation are:

- (i) Valence – According to Vroom, valence means the value or strength one places on a particular outcome or reward.
- (ii) Expectancy- Relates effort to performance
- (iii) Instrumentality- By instrumentality Vroom means the belief that performance is related to rewards.

Thus, Vroom's motivation can also be expressed in the form of an equation as follows: Motivation = Valence x Expectancy x Instrumentality. Further the entire three variables must have high positive values to imply motivated performance choice. If any one of the variables approaches zero level, the possibility of a motivated performance also touches zero level. However, this theory too has its critics. Firstly, the assumption that people are rational and calculating makes the theory idealistic. Secondly, the expectancy theory does not describe individual and situational differences.

2.9.3 McClelland's Need Theory

Another well- known need-based theory of motivation, as opposed to hierarchy of needs of satisfaction – dissatisfaction, is the theory David McClelland and his associates proposed known as McClelland's Theory of Needs / Achievement

Motivation which states that human behaviour is affected by three needs - Need for Power, Achievement and Affiliation.



Figure 4: McClelland's Need Theory

Need for Achievement - Need for achievement is the urge to excel, to accomplish in relation to a set of standards, to struggle to achieve success. In other words, it is a behaviour that directs one towards competition with a standard of excellence. McClelland found that people with a high need for achievement perform better than those with a moderate or low need for achievement and noted regional/national differences in achievement motivation. Through his research, McClelland identified the following three characteristics of high need achievers:

- (i) High-need achievers have a strong desire to assume personal responsibility for performing a task and for finding a solution to a problem.
- (ii) High-need achievers tend to set moderately difficult goals and so are cautious and calculated risks.
- (iii) High-need achievers have a strong desire for feedback related to performance.

Need for Power - Need for power is the desire to influence another individual's behaviour as per your wish. In other words, it is the desire to have control over others and to be influential which results in ultimate satisfaction to man. People who have a high need for power are characterized by:

- (i) A desire to influence and direct somebody else.
- (ii) A desire to exercise control over others.
- (iii) A concern for maintaining leader-follower relations.

Need for Affiliation - Need for affiliation is a need for open and sociable interpersonal relationships. In other words, it is a desire for relationship based on co-operation and mutual understanding. The need for affiliation, in many ways, is similar to Maslow's social needs. The people with high need for affiliation have the following characteristics:

- (i) They have a strong desire for acceptance and approval from others.
- (ii) They tend to accept and appreciate to the wishes of those people whose friendship and companionship they value.
- (iii) They value feelings of others.

However, McClelland's need theory also has some limitations. Firstly, since need and satisfaction of needs is psychological, the person may sometimes even not be aware of his own needs. In such cases, it will be difficult to understand anyone's need. Secondly, there is no direct cause and effect relationship between need and behaviour. One particular need may cause different types of behaviour in different people. On the other hand, a particular individual behaviour may be the result of different needs and lastly, the psychological and safety needs are more important as compared to McClelland's need. The next section now includes a detailed discussion on Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which forms the theoretical framework of this study.

2.10 Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) was proposed by Deci and Ryan (1985, 2000 and 2002) and is useful for understanding the motivational basis of human behaviour. The theory is an approach to human motivation and personality that uses traditional empirical methods while employing an organismic meta-theory that highlights the importance of humans' inner resources for personality development and behavioural self-regulation (Ryan, Kuhl and Deci, 1997). In the field of education, the theory of Self-Determination is concerned primarily with promoting in students an interest in learning, a valuing of education and a confidence in their own capacities and attributes. These outcomes are indications of being intrinsically motivated and internalising values and regulatory processes that result in high-quality learning and conceptual understanding as well as enhanced personal growth and adjustment.



Figure 5: Self-Determination Theory

The theory addresses the factors that energise people's behaviour and moves them into action, as well as how their behaviour is regulated in the various domains of their lives. They are focussed at the psychological level (rather than the sociological or physiological levels), thus using human perceptions, cognitions, emotions and needs as predictors of regulatory behavioural developmental and experiential outcomes (Ryan and Deci, 2000b).

The concept of psychological needs has been central to organisational behaviour for decades, although there has been some debate about the utility of the concept (Salancik and Pfeffer, 1977). When used in organisational theories, people are viewed as differing in the strength of particular needs and as such their needs have been treated as individual differences. From that perspective, need strength is assessed and used either directly or in interaction with job characteristics to predict motivation, job satisfaction and work outcomes (Hackman and Lawler, 1971; McClelland and Burnham, 1976).

However, in comparison to other theories of motivation as discussed earlier in this chapter, SDT defines needs differently. Specifically, consistent with the positions of psychologists such as Harlow (1958) and White (1959), SDT defines needs as universal necessities, as the nutriments that are essential for optimal human development and integrity (Ryan, Sheldon, Kasser and Deci, 1996). According to this definition, something is a need only to the extent that its satisfaction promotes psychological health, and its thwarting undermines psychological health. Using this definition, the needs for competence, autonomy and relatedness are considered important for all individuals, so SDT research focuses not on the consequences of the strength of those needs for different individuals but rather on the consequences of the extent to which individuals are able to satisfy their needs within social environments (Gagne and Deci, 2005) which this study also aims to achieve.

However, the most crucial characteristic of the SDT is that it makes an important distinction between two types of motivation, which are autonomous motivation and controlled motivation. Traditionally, motivation theories have treated motivation as a unitary concept focusing just on the total amount of motivation people have for behaviours in order to predict how vigorously they will engage in those behaviours and many contemporary theories of motivation still do. SDT, in contrast, has always put its primary emphasis on the types of motivation people have for various behaviours. The theory maintains that, although knowing the amount of motivation people have for behaviours may allow one to predict the amount or quantity of the behaviours they will exhibit, assessing types of motivation is necessary for predicting the quality and maintenance of those behaviours (Deci and Ryan, 2015).

SDT has been developed and researched through a set of five mini-theories, which together comprise the theory's formal framework. Each mini-theory was initially introduced to explain phenomena that emerged from experimental and/or field research on factors affecting human motivation and optimal functioning. In the next section I briefly list and define each of these mini-theories in order of their introduction into SDT with a broader discussion on OIT in the later part of this chapter.

2.10.1 Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET)

Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET) is concerned with how social contexts and interpersonal interaction either facilitate or undermine intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is defined as doing something for its own sake, and applies to activities such as play, sport and leisure. CET stresses the importance of autonomy and competence to intrinsic motion, and argues that events that are perceived to detract from these will diminish intrinsic motivation. CET specifically addresses how factors such as rewards, deadlines, feedback and pressure affect feelings of autonomy and competence and thus enhance or undermine intrinsic motivation. For instance, CET explains why some reward structures, for example, financial incentives, actually detract from subsequent motivation, a phenomenon that is often called 'the undermining effect of rewards' (Deci, Koestner & Ryan, 1999). In short, CET addresses the topic of the impact of social contexts on intrinsic motivation. Competence and autonomy are considered crucial aspects of intrinsic motivation in this theory.

2.10.2 Organismic Integration Theory (OIT)

Organismic Integration Theory (OIT) addresses the process of internalisation of various extrinsic motives. Here the focus is on the continuum of internalization, extending from external regulation, to introjection (for example, engaging in behaviours to avoid guilt or feel approval), to identification, to integration. These forms of regulation, which can be simultaneously operative, differ in their relative autonomy, with external regulation being the least autonomous form of extrinsic motivation and integrated regulation the most autonomous. SDT research shows that the more autonomous the person's motivation, the greater their persistence, performance and well-being at an activity or within a domain. OIT further suggests that internalization

and integration is facilitated by contextual supports for autonomy, competence and relatedness. That is, individuals are more likely to internalise and integrate a practice or value if they experience choice with respect to it, efficacy in engaging in it, and connection with those who convey it. Considerable research across the globe shows that more internalization of cultural practices is associated with greater wellness and performance (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

2.10.3 Causality Orientations Theory (COT)

Causality Orientations Theory (COT) describes individual differences in how people orient to different aspects of the environment in regulating behaviour. When autonomy-oriented, a person orients to what interests them and acts with congruence. When control-oriented, a person primarily regulates behaviour by orienting to social controls and reward contingencies, and when impersonally oriented a person focuses on their lack of personal control or competence. COT is also used to explain how primes or prior stimuli activate certain orientations in people, affecting subsequent motivation.

2.10.4 Basic Psychological Needs Theory (BPNT)

Basic Psychological Needs Theory (BPNT) elaborates on the concept of basic needs by connecting them directly with wellness. BPNT posits that each need exerts independent effects on wellness, and moreover that the impact of any behaviour or event on well-being is largely a function of its relations with need satisfaction. Research on BPNT shows that aggregate need satisfaction predicts individual differences in health and wellness, as well as within personal fluctuations in wellness across time. In short, BPNT proposes the three basic needs: autonomy, competence and relatedness and argues that environments that support these needs promote psychological well-being.

2.10.5 Goal Contents Theory (GCT)

Goal Contents Theory (GCT) addresses intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Research has shown that materialism and other extrinsic goals such as fame or image do not tend to enhance need satisfaction, and thus do not foster well-being, even when one is successful at attaining them (Kasser & Ryan, 1996; Niemiec et al. 2009). In contrast, goals such as intimate relationships, personal growth, or contributing to one's

community are conducive to need satisfaction, and therefore facilitate health and wellness. GCT has also been applied to how goals are framed. Evidence suggests that goals framed toward intrinsic aims are better adhered to than those focussed on extrinsic outcomes (Vanteenkiste et al., 2006).

The five mini-theories discussed above together constitute SDT and provide specific propositions in multiple domains open to test and refinement. Given its broad scope, SDT has spawned research, and controversy, in numerous areas. One issue has been the impact of rewards, which SDT argues can powerfully exert control over behaviour, but often at the cost of subsequent intrinsic motivation or internalization. Another controversy is the cross-cultural generalisability of SDT. SDT suggests that whether collectivist or individualist, male or female, people function most effectively and experience greater mental health when their behaviour is autonomous rather than controlled. This cross-cultural hypothesis has been actively tested (Chirkov, Ryan, Kim & Kaplan, 2003).

2.11 Theoretical Framework of the Study

Based on the above concept, I will now address my conceptual framework on which this study is based which is the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and explore the Organismic Integration Theory (OIT), a sub-theory within SDT, which I had briefly introduced earlier in the previous section. According to SDT, people are motivated to grow and change by innate psychological needs in order to achieve psychological growth and integration as well as for constructive social development and well-being. Deci and Ryan (2002) suggest that when people or an individual experience the three innate needs which are competence, connection or relatedness and autonomy then they become self-determined and can be intrinsically motivated to pursue the thing that interests.

Deci and Ryan (1985) to detail the different forms of extrinsic motivation and the contextual factors that either promote or hinder internalization and integration of the regulation for these behaviours on the other hand, introduced Organismic Integration theory (OIT). The concept of internalization describes how one's motivation for behaviour can change from amotivation or unwillingness to passive compliance, to active personal commitment.

Self-Determination Theory begins by embracing the assumption that all individuals have natural innate and constructive tendencies to develop an ever more elaborated and unified sense of self. That is, people have a primary tendency to forge interconnections among aspects of their own psyches as well as with other individuals and groups in their social worlds (Deci and Ryan, 2002). The theory, then, identifies that people need to feel the following three key psychological needs to achieve psychological growth and integration as well as for constructive social development and personal wellbeing:

- (i) Competence (Harter, 1978; White, 1963) – where individuals need to gain mastery of tasks and learn different skills.
- (ii) Connection or Relatedness (Baumeister and Leary, 1995; Reis, 1994) – where individuals need to experience a sense of belonging and attachment to other people.
- (iii) Autonomy (deCharms, 1968; Deci, 1975) – where individuals need to feel in control of their own behaviours and goals.

Deci and Ryan (2000) further suggested that when people or individuals experience these three innate needs they become self-determined and able to be intrinsically motivated to pursue the thing that interest them.

In other words, people are moved to act by very different types of factors with highly varied experiences and consequences and can be motivated because they value an activity or because there is strong external coercion or may be urged into action by an abiding interest or by a bribe. They can behave from a sense of personal commitment to excel or from fear of being watched. This issue of whether people stand behind a behaviour out of their own interests and values, or do it for reasons external to the self, is a matter of significance in every culture (Johnson, 1993) and represents a basic dimension by which people make sense of their own and other's behaviour (deCharms, 1968; Heider, 1958; Ryan and Connell, 1989).

When compared between people whose motivation is authentic (literally, self-authored or endorsed) and those who are merely externally controlled for an action typically reveal that the former, relative to the latter, have more interest, excitement, and confidence, which in turn is manifested both as enhanced performance, persistence, and creativity (Deci and Ryan, 1991; Sheldon, Ryan, Rawsthorne and Ilardi, 1997)

and as heightened vitality (Nix, Ryan, Manly and Deci, 1999), self-esteem (Deci and Ryan, 1995), and general well-being (Ryan, Deci and Grolnick, 1995). This is so even when people have the same level of perceived competence or self-efficacy for the activity.

Thus, a major focus of Self-Determination Theory because of the functional and experiential differences between self-motivation and external regulation has been to supply a more differentiated approach to motivation, by asking what kind of motivation is being exhibited at any given time. By considering the perceived forces that move a person to act; this theory has been able to identify several distinct types of motivation, each of which has specifiable consequences for learning, performance, personal experience and wellbeing. Also, by articulating a set of principles concerning how each type of motivation is developed and sustained, or forestalled and undermined, Self-Determination Theory at once recognizes a positive thrust in human nature.

Further, a key concept in SDT is perceived locus of causality (PLOC), which is a measure of felt autonomy for behaviour (Ryan and Connell, 1989; Sheldon, 2002). PLOC measures the reasons for one's actions and ranges along a continuum from internally motivated to externally motivated behaviour. SDT proposes that when individuals have a more internal PLOC (I-PLOC) for behaviour, they will exert greater effort and experience greater satisfaction in performing the behaviour than when they have a more external PLOC (E-PLOC; Deci and Ryan, 2000; Ryan and Deci, 2002). In other words, PLOC refers to the extent to which individuals perceive their own actions as a result of either external or internal factors.

However, Organismic Integration Theory (OIT) is concerned with internalisation of the regulation of behaviour and values and, furthermore, the influence of the fulfilment of basic psychological needs on regulatory style and motivation orientation. Regulation of behaviour may be autonomous (self-determined) or controlled, depending on the degree of internalisation. Internalisation is not viewed in terms of a dichotomy external–internal, but rather in terms of a continuum (Ryan and Deci 2002). The OIT proposes a continuum of regulation types from non-regulation to intrinsic regulation where a certain regulatory style leads to a certain motivational orientation as shown in the Figure 7 below.

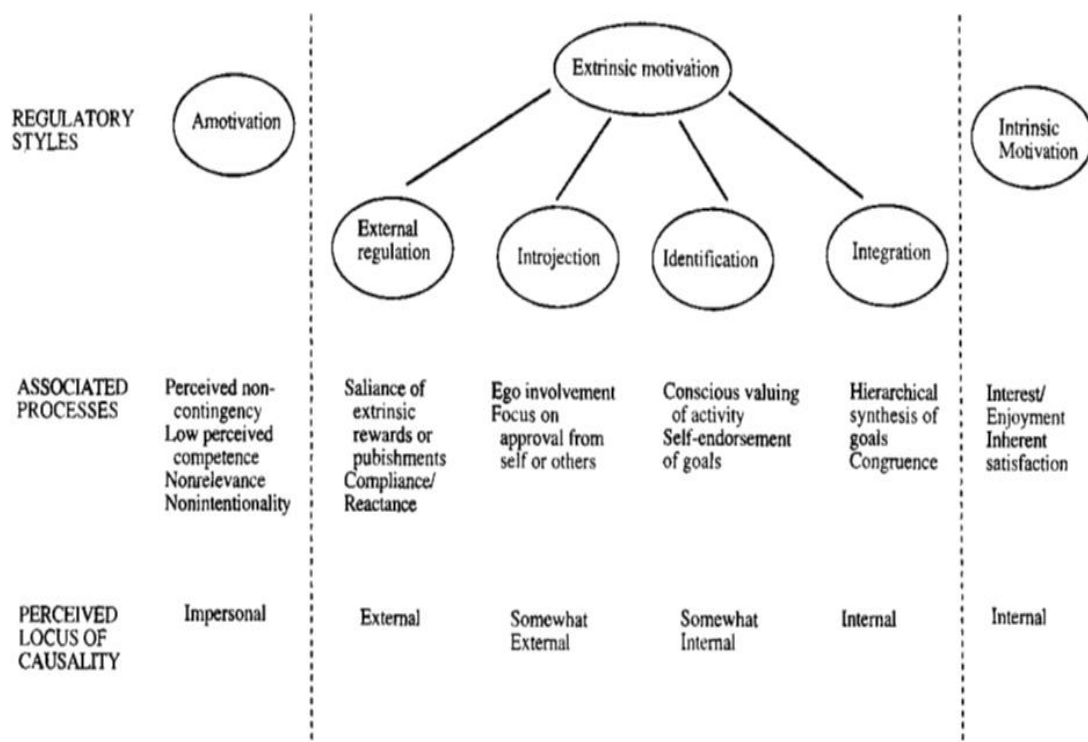


Figure 6: A taxonomy of human motivation (Ryan and Deci, 2000)

Deci and Ryan (2000) divided the continuum into three different motivations: intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation and amotivation. The four regulation types of extrinsic motivation are, in increasing order of internalization, external regulation, introjected regulation (somewhat external), identified regulation (somewhat internal) and integrated regulation. Intrinsic motivation is not further differentiated and is referred to as intrinsic regulation. In SDT, researchers maintain that the more self-determined or internalized extrinsic motivation is, the deeper or better the observed behaviours or outcomes will be (Grolnick and Ryan, 1987; Vansteenkiste et al. 2005; Stefanou et al. 2013).

As seen in Figure 6, at the far left is *amotivation*, which is the state of lacking an intention to act where a person's behaviour lacks intentionality and a sense of personal causation. Amotivation results from not valuing an activity (Ryan, 1995), not feeling competent to do it (Deci, 1975), or not believing it will yield a desired outcome (Seligman, 1975). Just to the right of amotivation, is a category that represents the least forms of extrinsic motivation, referred to as *external regulation*. Such behaviours are performed to satisfy an external demand or obtain an externally imposed reward

contingency. Individuals typically experience externally regulated behaviour as controlled or alienated and their actions have an external perceived locus of causality (deCharms, 1968).

A second type of extrinsic motivation is *introjected regulation* which describes a type of internal regulation that is still quite controlling because people perform such actions with the feeling of pressure to avoid guilt or anxiety or to attain ego-enhancements or pride. In other words, introjection represents regulation by contingent self-esteem. A classic form of introjection is *ego involvement* (Nicholls, 1984; Ryan, 1982), in which a person performs an act in order to enhance or maintain self-esteem and the feeling of worth. Although the regulation is internal to the person, introjected behaviours are not experienced as fully part of the self and thus still have an external perceived locus of causality (EPLOC).

Further, a more autonomous or self-determined form of extrinsic motivation is *regulation through identification* where the person has identified with the personal importance of behaviour and has thus accepted its regulation as his or her own. Finally, the most autonomous form of extrinsic motivation is *integrated regulation*, which occurs when identified regulations have been fully assimilated to the self. This means they have been evaluated and brought into congruence with one's other values and needs. The more one internalises the reasons for an action and assimilates them to the self, the more one's extrinsically motivated actions become self-determined. Integrated forms of motivation share many qualities with extrinsic because behaviour motivated by integrated regulation is done for its presumed instrumental value with respect to some outcome that is separate from the behaviour, even though it is volitional and valued by the self.

At the far right hand end of the figure is *intrinsic motivation*. This placement emphasises that intrinsic motivation is a prototype of autonomous and self-determined behaviour. Intrinsic motivation is characterised by intrinsic regulation and self-determined behaviour. Intrinsically motivated individuals engage in certain activities freely, led by the feelings of interest and enjoyment. According to Ryan and Deci (2009), "the basis of intrinsic motivation is interest" (p. 177), that is interest with a close relationship to process-oriented motivational concepts such as intrinsic motivation or the experience of self-determination. Intrinsically motivated behaviours are conducted

because of the inherent satisfaction of the behaviour per se, not because of any external consequences or reinforcements separable from the activity (Ryan and Deci 2002). Interest, in turn, consists of valence beliefs that feeling-related and value-related: feeling and value related (Schiefele, 1999). This means that a certain activity is interesting and intrinsically motivating because it is highly valued by a person, or it generates pleasant feelings.

Along the continuum, internalisation of the regulation of behaviours increases and the motivation for certain behaviours becomes more autonomous (Ryan and Deci, 2002). Students with an autonomous motivational profile (intrinsic motivation and the well internalised forms of extrinsic motivation) have higher grades, are more persistent in their studies, learn better, are more satisfied and experience more positive emotions towards school (Guay et al. 2008; Niemiec and Ryan 2009; Reeve and Halusic 2009). In a broader context, autonomously chosen goals are related to individuals' increased likelihood of attaining their goals and thus enhancing their well-being (Vasalampi et al. 2009).

Subsequent studies have extended these findings concerning types of extrinsic motivation, showing for example that more autonomous extrinsic motivation is associated with greater engagement (Connell and Wellborn, 1990), better performance (Miserandino, 1996), less dropping out (Vallerand and Bissonnette, 1992), higher quality learning (Grolnick and Ryan, 1987), and greater psychological well-being (Sheldon and Kasser, 1995) among other outcomes. Additionally, there appears to be cross-cultural generalizability to the model as presented in Fig. 1 (e.g. Hayamizu, 1997).

Greater internalization appears, then, to yield manifold adaptive advantages (Ryan, Kuhl, and Deci, 1997), including more behavioural effectiveness (due to lessened conflict and greater access to personal resources) and greater experience of well-being. Given the clear significance of internalization for both personal experience and behavioural and performance outcomes, the critical applied issue concerns how to promote the autonomous regulation of extrinsically motivated behaviours.

Because extrinsically motivated behaviours are not inherently interesting and thus must initially be externally prompted, the primary reason people are likely to be willing to engage in the behaviours is that they are valued by significant others to whom they

feel (or would like to feel) connected, whether that be a family, a peer group or a society. This suggests that the groundwork for facilitating internalization is providing a sense of belonging and connectedness to the persons, group, or culture disseminating a goal, or what in SDT we call a sense of *relatedness*. In support of this, Ryan, Stiller and Lynch (1994) found that relatedness to teachers (and parents) was associated with greater internalization of school-related behavioural regulations.

A second issue concerns perceived *competence*. Adopting as one's own an extrinsic goal requires that one feel efficacious with respect to it. Students will more likely adopt and internalize a goal if they understand it and have the relevant skills to succeed at it. Thus, support for competence (e.g. offering optimal challenges and effectance-relevant feedback) facilitate internalization.

According to the SDT approach, a regulation that has been internalized may be only introjected and that type of regulation could well leave people feeling satisfaction of their needs for competence and relatedness. However, to only introject a regulation and thus to be controlled by it will not leave the people feeling self-determined. The theory, therefore, suggests that autonomy support also facilitates internalization; in fact, it is the critical element for a regulation being integrated rather than just introjected. Controlling contexts may yield introjected regulation if they support competence and relatedness, but only autonomy supportive contexts will yield integrated self-regulation. To fully internalize a regulation and thus to become autonomous with respect to it, people must inwardly grasp its meaning and worth. It is these meanings that become internalized and integrated in environments that provide support for the needs for competence, relatedness, and autonomy.

In Self-Determination Theory, internalisation is viewed as a motivated process since it is a proactive process through which people transform regulation by external contingencies into regulation by internal processes (Schafer, 1968). People are inherently motivated, out of the three basic needs to internalize and integrate within themselves the regulation of uninteresting activities that are useful for effective functioning in the social world and that the extent to which the process of internalization and integration proceeds effectively is a function of the social context.

2.12 Justification for SDT and OIT

In Self-Determination Theory, different types of motivation based on different reasons or goals give rise to an action which can be however very different when one is behaving for intrinsic versus extrinsic reasons. According to Self-Determination Theory, these different motivations reflect differing degrees to which the value and regulation of the requested behaviour have been internalized and integrated. Internalization is the process of taking in a value or regulation and integration is the process by which individuals more fully transform the regulation into their own so that it will emanate from their sense of self. Internalization and integration are clearly central issues and continually relevant for the regulation of behaviour across the lifespan. In nearly every human phase of life, certain behaviours and values are prescribed, behaviours that are not interesting and values that are not spontaneously adopted. The concept of internalization describes how one's motivation for behaviour can range from amotivation or unwillingness, to passive compliance, to active personal commitment. With increasing internalization (and its associated sense of personal commitment) come greater persistence, more positive self-perceptions, and better quality of engagement.

Self-Determination Theory proposes that there are various types of extrinsic motivation, some of which do indeed represent impoverished forms of motivation and some of which represent active, agentic states. Understanding these different types of extrinsic motivation and what fosters each of them is an important issue for educators who cannot rely on intrinsic motivation to foster learning that is also a crucial factor in understanding different types of extrinsic motivation in international students studying at UK private FE colleges. Therefore, in order to understand the extrinsic motivations of these students under study, Self-Determination Theory has been related to *Organismic Integration Theory (OIT)*, which was introduced to detail the different forms of extrinsic motivation and the contextual factors that either promote or hinder internalization and integration of the regulation for these behaviours (Deci and Ryan, 1985) as shown in the figure 7 below:

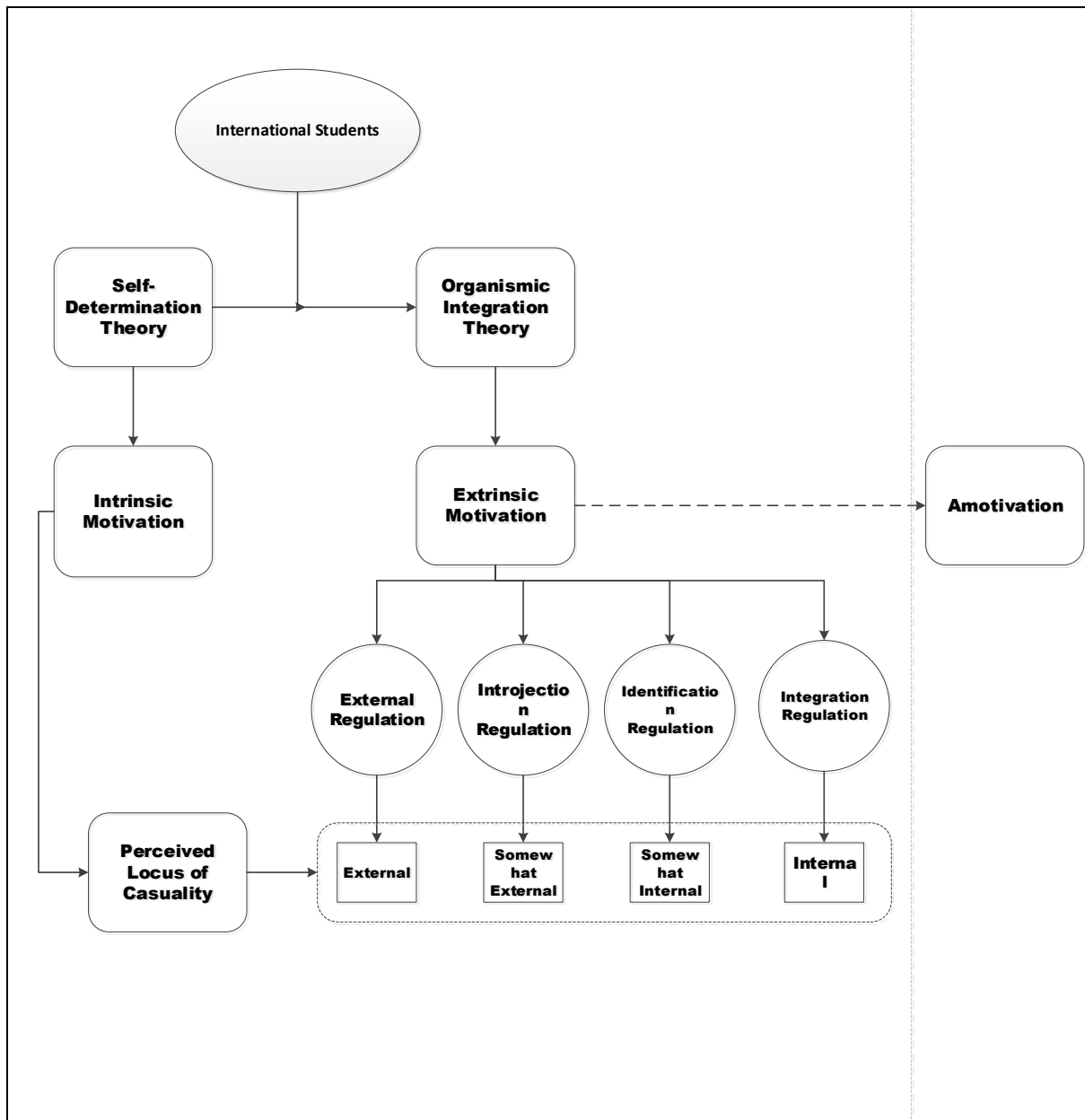


Figure 7: Initial Model for Fusion of Self-Determination Theory and Organismic Integration Theory

Further, the primary difference between SDT and most other motivation theories is that the focus of SDT is on the relative strength of autonomous versus controlled motivation, rather than on the total amount of motivation. It is important for a motivational theory to differentiate types of motivation so as to use them in making predictions because research has shown that, whereas autonomous motivation facilitates effective performance and well-being, controlled motivation can detract from those outcomes, particularly if the task requires creativity, cognitive flexibility or deep processing of information (Gagne and Deci, 2005).

I also aim to identify three different categories of students (Category A, B and C) based on their experiences and data collected and interpret their types of extrinsic motivation (as proposed by OIT) in terms of the basic psychological needs of relatedness, competence and autonomy (as proposed by SDT). By doing this, I evaluate how, when a behaviour in international students is self-determined, the regulatory process becomes choice, but when it is controlled, the regulatory process becomes compliance or in some cases even defiance.

It is evident, as discussed earlier in this section, that most international students are highly motivated to pursue their goals and obtain a UK degree as they believe it is enormously beneficial to them in many ways. International students not only get a chance to learn in a multi-cultural environment but also get a platform to increase their level of confidence and responsibility in learning (Warring, 2010) which helps them to become globally employable graduates as well as to improve their language skills. Therefore, many students' experiences, as Furnham (2004) notes, are enormously beneficial and can shape their outlook for the rest of their lives. But in their process of learning, they encounter various hardships and challenges often due to different cultural or social environmental factors and expectations.

Based on this concept, Self-Determination Theory (SDT) has been interrelated with Organismic Integration Theory (OIT) in this study as shown in the figure above. By doing so I aim to make the critical distinction between international student's behaviours which are intrinsically motivated by push factors such as to gain a better education, family and peer recommendations, to explore the world and new multicultural environments, which are volitional and accompanied by the experience of freedom and autonomy – those that develop from one's sense of self, against those behaviours which are extrinsically motivated due to pull factors such as quality of education, work opportunity, immigration and other personal and human factors which are accompanied by the experience of pressure and control and are not representative of one's self.

The dimension that ranges from self-determined to being controlled in one's intentional response has also been described using the concept of Perceived Locus of Causality (de Charms, 1968; Ryan and Connell, 1989). This was done so that I could investigate and understand the notion of different types of motivation in international students,

especially those coming to pursue their studies in UK private FE colleges and how this regulated their behaviour after the Home Office shut down their colleges.

To conclude, the fusion of Self-Determination Theory and Organismic Integration Theory has been presented in this study in order to make the critical distinction between international student's behaviours that are volitional and accompanied by the experience of freedom and autonomy – those that develop from one's sense of self - and those that are accompanied by the experience of pressure and control and are not representative of one's self. Intrinsically motivated behaviours, which are performed out of interest and satisfy the innate psychological needs for competence and autonomy are the prototype of self-determined behaviour. Extrinsically motivated behaviours—those that are executed because they are instrumental to some separable consequence—can vary in the extent to which they represent self-determination. Internalization and integration are the processes through which extrinsically motivated behaviours become more self-determined. The social contextual conditions also support intrinsic motivation and facilitate internalization and integration of extrinsically motivated tasks. The studies have been interpreted in terms of the basic psychological needs. That is, social contextual conditions that support one's feelings of competence, autonomy and relatedness are the basis for maintaining intrinsic motivation and becoming more self-determined with respect to extrinsic motivation which can be also related to the international students under study as discussed later in the results chapter.

2.13 Chapter Summary

According to the tenets of Self-Determination Theory, humans have an intrinsic desire to learn, and this desire is fuelled by the basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness. If we want to engage individuals at all levels of our educational systems in meaningful growth and learning experiences, we need to design environments and systems that support these needs. We can do that by developing educational policies at the governmental level that support the creation of systems that encourage autonomy and competence rather than imposing rewards and sanctions that undermine intrinsic motivation.

In short, it is important to realize that the psychological growth described by Self-Determination Theory, does not happen automatically and it requires continuous

sustenance. According to Deci and Ryan, social support is the key. Through our relationships and interactions with others, we can either foster or thwart well-being and personal growth. Further, giving people extrinsic rewards for already intrinsically motivated behaviour can undermine autonomy. As the behaviour becomes increasingly controlled by the external rewards, the individual begins to feel less in control of their own behaviour and intrinsic motivation is diminished. As such, according to this perspective, social environments can either assist or enable the growth and integration propensities with which the human psyche is endowed, or they can disrupt, forestall and fragment these processes resulting in behaviours and inner experiences that represent the darker side of humanity (Deci and Ryan, 2002). The next chapter outlines the methodology applied to conduct the research and how the data were collected, sampled and analysed whilst keeping ethical considerations in mind.

Chapter Three - Methods and Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In chapter 2, I critically reviewed the literature relating to the motivations and experiences of international students studying at UK and the various challenges and motivational factors they face while they pursue their studies away from their home country. This chapter explains the methodological approach used in this study to explore the motivations and experiences of 33 international students studying at UK private Further Education colleges which have been closed down by the Home Office, in light of the new immigration rules, the Points Based System. I begin with a discussion of ontology and epistemology of the research followed by sample selection, qualitative methods, ethical considerations, data analysis process and finally a discussion of the validation processes undertaken before, during and after the research.

3.2 Research Problem

The Points Based System was introduced to tighten and reduce record flows of immigration. As such, there is an enormous pressure on the new government to slash immigration as thousands of extra migrants have come into Britain under a supposed tough new points system. With the introduction of the Points Based System by the UKBA, many private colleges have been shut down as they did not comply with the UKBA rules and regulations. Some of them have been voluntarily shut down or gone into liquidation as they are not able to recruit any international students due to the new stringent rules introduced by the UKBA.

The purpose of this study is to explore the motivations and experiences of international students studying at UK private FE colleges which have been closed down by the Home Office and the barriers and social implications they have faced in light of the immigration policy, in particular, the Points Based System which were introduced in order to control and monitor the bogus colleges and students. By undertaking this study, I aim to find the answer to my main research question which is:

What are the experiences of international students at UK private FE colleges in light of the government immigration policy related to, the Points Based System?

The main research question has been further guided by the following research sub-questions:

- 1) What motivates international students in FE to come to study at private FE colleges and not public colleges or universities in UK?
- 2) What were the views of the international students studying in private FE colleges about the Points Based System in light of the policy change in 2014?
- 3) What were the experiential implications of the policy change on international students studying in private FE colleges after their colleges was closed down by the Home Office?

3.3 Ontological and Epistemological positioning

As this study took shape, the need for a philosophical component to understanding the existing data became vital. In general, philosophical perspectives influence the way in which the researcher interprets the data, not only influencing the way in which it is understood in context (Newby, 2009), but also the way in which the research is taken from the design to conclusion. Moreover, understanding philosophical standpoints can help the researcher to understand the interrelationship of the research concerned, including methods and methodology with that of others.

According to Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls and Ormston (2014), the two key philosophical issues in social research are ontology and epistemology. Ontology ‘concerns the very nature or the essence of the social phenomenon being studied’ (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007). The phenomenon here is what can be known about the experiences and factors of motivation of international students studying in private FE colleges. Ontology is the study of being (Crotty, 1998, p.10) and is concerned with what constitutes reality, in other words what *is*. As such, my ontological position is first to study and understand who these international students are, and second, why they are attracted to come to study in UK private FE colleges. Thirdly, in the process, how immigration rules and closure of their colleges had an impact on their lives.

Epistemology on the other hand is defined as 'a science of knowledge studied from the philosophical point of view' (Horrigan, 2007 vii). It is concerned with how we know and what we know (Crotty, 1998); it involves 'the nature of the relationship between the knower and what can be known' (Guba and Lincoln, 1998 p.83). Based on this, my epistemological position is to explore the relationship between the different types of extrinsic motivation in international students while they pursue their studies in private FE colleges and the various challenges they face after the closure of their colleges, without imposing my own assumptions on them (Creswell, 1994). I aim to do this in light of the Self Determination Theory and Organismic Integration Theory which forms the conceptual framework for this study. The experiences of these international students are then reduced to a central theme to capture the essence of the study and find answers to the research questions stated earlier in this chapter.

3.5 Interpretative Research Philosophy

Gephart (1999) classified research paradigms into three philosophically distinct categories: positivism, interpretivism and critical postmodernism. The key features of these three perspectives includes worldview, the nature of knowledge pursued, and the different means by which knowledge is produced and assessed within each paradigm or worldview. However, there is no evidence as to whether these research paradigms are necessarily opposed or whether they can be seen as contributing a different role in the same study.

Interpretivism is an 'essential methodological tool in the social sciences' (Williams, 2012, p. 88) where 'interpretivists believe there is a clear distinction to be made between the natural and the social world, and therefore we need a methodology and methods of gathering data that are more in tune with the subjects we are studying' (Grix, 2010, p. 83). As I am studying the reasons behind the motivations and experiences of international students studying at UK private FE colleges in face of the government policy relating to immigration, I have obtained qualitative data using semi-structured interviews.

My research questions are designed to interpret the lived experiences of 33 international students and the challenges they face as they aspire to get a UK degree. Interpretivism is criticised for working at a higher level of (data) generality, whereas

interpretivists believe it to be a meaning-making process where observers' self-interpretation can be more dominant over participants' interpretations. For this reason, I have chosen an epistemological interpretive route as the aim is to understand the meaning of an occurrence rather than to generalise the outcomes from data (Cranton, 2001; Walker, 1996). Moreover, the interpretive approach can provide valuable novel information that requires application in the area being studied and for further research.

Further, according to Willis (1995), interpretivists believe that there is no single correct route or particular method to knowledge. Walsham (1993) argues that there is no correct or incorrect theory in interpretive tradition. Instead they should be judged according to how interesting they are to the researcher as well as to those involved in the same area. In other words, they derive their constructs from the field by an in-depth examination of the phenomenon of interest and is concerned with understanding the world as it is from subjective experiences of individuals. They use meaning oriented methodologies, such as interviewing or participant observation that rely on subjective relationship between the researcher and subjects. This is why for this study the participants were interviewed using the semi-structured interviews so as to build a meaningful relationship between myself and the participants thus understanding the phenomena through the meanings that people in this study, international students studying at UK private FE colleges, assign to them (Deetz, 1996).

Interpretive research does not predefine dependent and independent variables but focuses on the full complexity of human sense making as the situation emerges (Kaplan and Maxwell, 1994). It is an interpretive approach that seeks to bring the reader closer to the phenomenon being studied (Bansal and Corley, 2011), allows an examination of social dynamics as process and enables understanding of human behaviour and the complex, relational quality of social interactions (Cope, 2005; Leitch, Hill and Harrison, 2010).

Furthermore, the interest of interpretivists is not the generation of a new theory but to judge or evaluate and refine interpretive theories. Walsham (1995 b) presents three different uses of theory in interpretive case studies which are: theory guiding the design and collection of data, theory as an iterative process of data collection and analysis and theory as an outcome of a case study. In this study, therefore, the use of theory as an iterative process between data collection and analysis has been applied.

3.6 Research Methodology

Since the nature of the research has been established and the conceptual framework formed through identification of ontological and epistemological perspectives and the underlying philosophy for the research clarified, decisions can now be made about the methodology to be chosen, as informed by the underpinning philosophy appropriate for the aims and objectives of the study.

In order to conduct this study, a qualitative research design or methodology has been used. Qualitative research is a rich, diverse and complex field (Madill and Gough, 2008) and aims to do one or more different things: give voice to a group of people or an issue, provide a detailed description of events or experiences, develop theory, interrogate the meaning in texts (identifying discourses or demonstrate the discursive features of a text) and or engage in social critique (Braun and Clarke, 2013). In other words, qualitative research deals with and is interested in meaning. It records the messiness of real life, puts an organising framework around it and interprets in some way. It is exploratory, open-ended and organic and produces in-depth, rich and detailed data from which to make claims.

The main aim of this research was to explore the richness and uniqueness of different views and factors affecting motivation of the international students studying in private Further Education colleges in the UK which have been closed down by the Home Office. The purpose of qualitative research is to describe, understand and interpret human phenomena, human interaction or human discourse (Liehtman, 2013). As such, using qualitative methodology will enable me not only to study the present situation of international students studying at private Further Education colleges in the UK, but also assist me to analyse and discuss their conditions, dilemmas and opinions in the current scenario for a “better, enriched and more insightful” approach to the topic of research under study (Green, 2005).

Furthermore, qualitative research is aimed at explaining social phenomena in their natural context through verbal description and analysis of complex data such as; interviews, documents, field notes or images. It is subjective in nature and describes the issue being researched in depth. It is flexible because it allows adaption in the interaction between researchers and their participants (Creswell and Clark, 2007). Neil (2007) urged that qualitative research requires in-depth study of human behaviour. It

measures standards for research design and analysis. It uses only rational and relevant data for policy and program evaluation and is further used with the aim of developing a theory. Considering all this, I now discuss in the next section my sample selection, methods and data analysis used in order to understand the essence of this study.

3.7 Sample and Sampling Technique

In qualitative research, there is no definite answer concerning the appropriate sample size. According to Patton (2002, p.244),

There are no rules for sample size in qualitative inquiry. Sample size depends on what [a researcher] wants 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.

For the current study, snowballing technique was implemented to choose the participants. In the process of sample selection, it is essential, as a researcher, to select those that will provide the information required since the quality of a piece of research not only stands or falls by the appropriateness of methodology and instrumentation but also by the suitability of the sampling strategy that has been adopted (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011).

Snowballing technique involves the sample selection being built up through the network of the researcher and other participants. To begin with, I contacted students for interviews who came from different developing countries such as India, Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nigeria and Philippines to get their views and opinions about their learning experiences and motivation while studying in UK private FE colleges. I also planned to interview private education providers or registrars to get their views on the changes in immigration rules and how they were affected by them. I conducted a semi-structured interview with one of the Managing Directors of a private college in Reading. However, due to the change in government policy and closure of many private further education colleges by the Home Office I faced various challenges and problems collecting data for the research and found it difficult to gain access to international students and staff from colleges. As a result, with the consent of my supervisor, I decided to interview only international students in UK private FE colleges

that had been closed down by the Home Office. In order to do this, I had to find an alternative means of recruiting participants, who, in the end, came primarily through my own social network (Yu, 2009) of friends and colleagues.

The data collection process however was not straightforward. I started my data collection in the College where I was working as a part-time administrator but the college was closed down by the Home Office and it was difficult to approach students. Using the snowballing technique, I built my sample through the networks that I had, and those of other participants involved. Further as Patton (2002) notes, the most common form of snowballing is where the researcher asks the participants if they know anyone else who might want to take part in the research conducted. The invitation to take part was therefore either from myself as a researcher or from an existing participant.

Using my own social network as a starting point, I sent emails and contacted students via Facebook, informing them about my research and asking if they, or friends, were willing to participate in an interview about the effect of the closure of their colleges. Initially, my approaches were mainly ignored, whilst others were reluctant to participate or give any information regarding their experiences. However, with the help of a friend, who is a member of the National Students Union and active social media user and blogger, we advertised through Facebook if any participant would be interested as shown in the figure below:

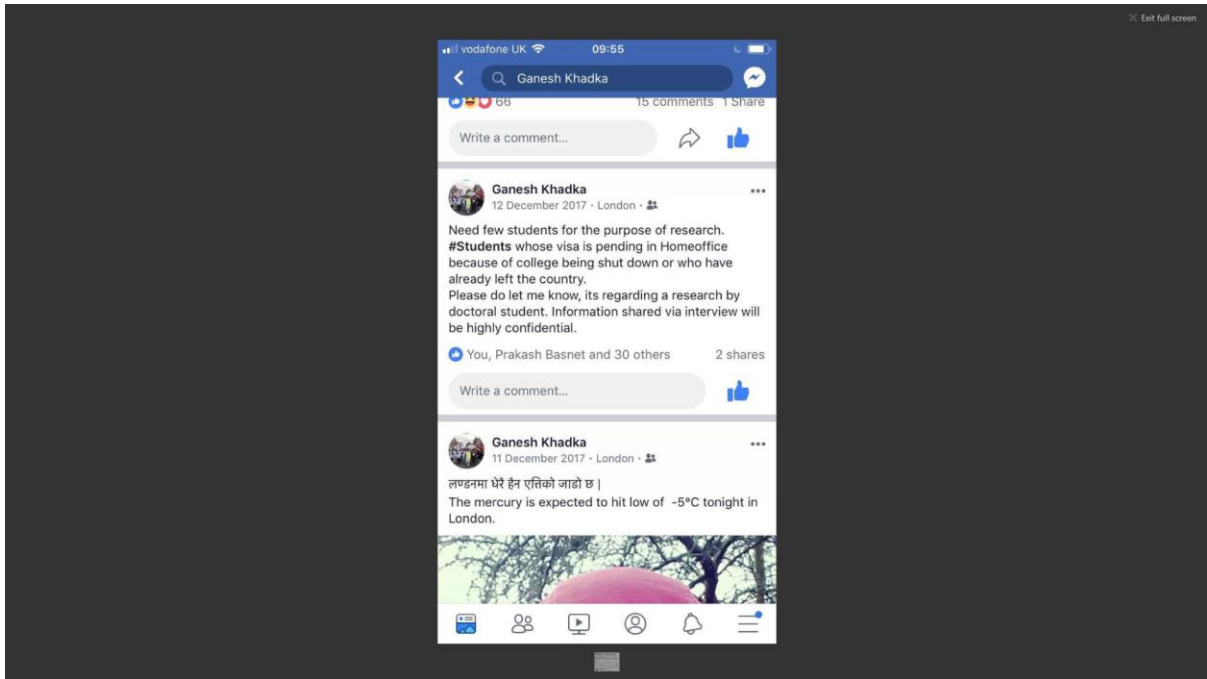


Figure 8: Advertisement in Facebook

Seeing this advertisement at Facebook, few students responded to him and he sent their details to me. I followed and spoke with the students and informed them about the aims and purposes of the research and arranged interviews according to their preference and convenience. They responded well while for few I had to persuade them by frequent messages to take part as they were reluctant. By doing so I was able gather few international students who were still in UK to participate in the study and through them I was able to recruit others who had left the country to take part. Examples of some of the conversations I had with these students are presented as screenshot below. This way I was able to build trust and, in the end, was successful in conducting 33 semi-structured interviews.

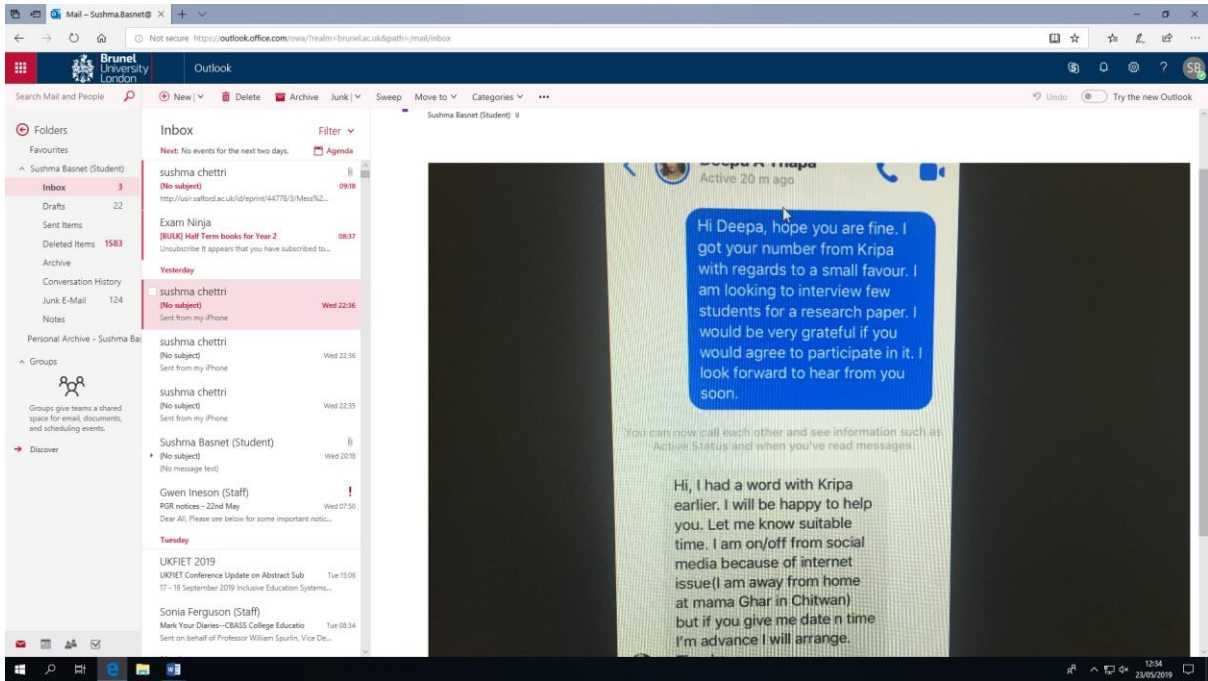


Figure 9: Invitation for Participation (Outside UK)

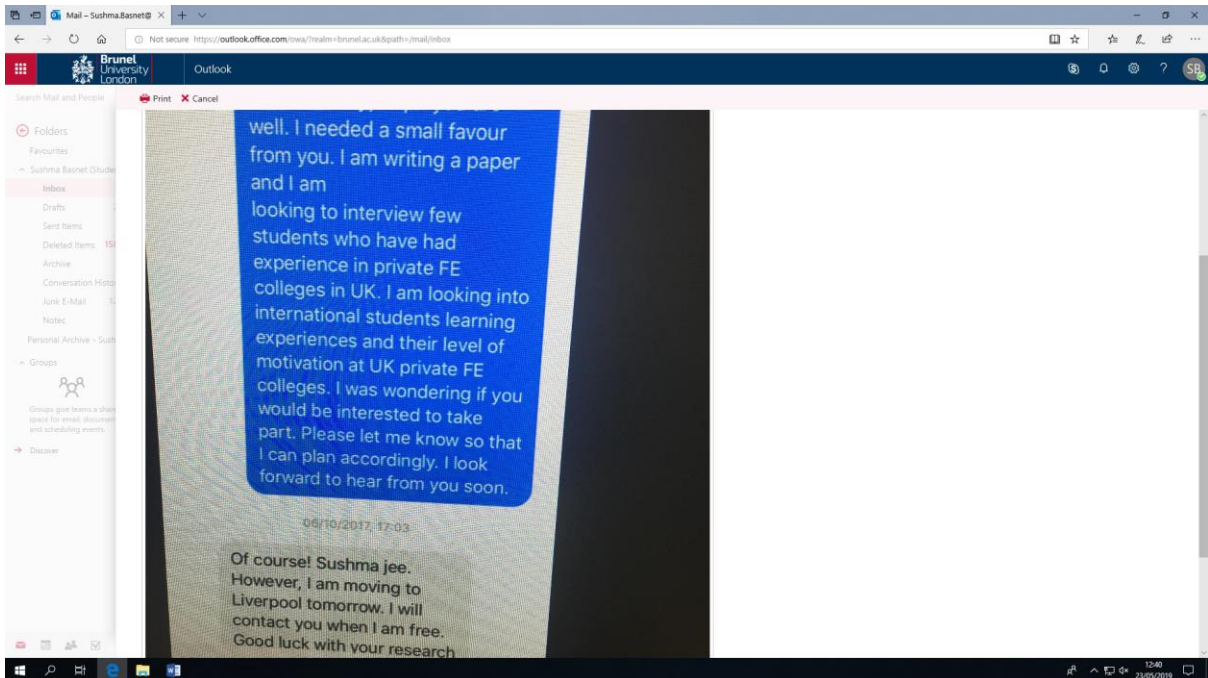


Figure 10: Interview for Participation (in UK)

All the participants selected for the interview were international students who had initially come to UK private further education colleges for their studies rather than attend universities in their country of origin. Out of the 33 students interviewed, 23 were male and 10 were female as shown in the table below. As many had to return home while others had to struggle to maintain their visa and legal immigration status in the UK, the range of countries represented was more limited than originally planned, namely Nepal, India, Uzbekistan and Pakistan. The majority of students who were interviewed were from Nepal, three came from India, one from Uzbekistan and three from Pakistan. As I am a Nepalese national, it was easier for me to get in touch with Nepalese students and convince them to participate in the research as it was easy to build a sense of trust with them. As these students were going through numerous pressures after the closure of their colleges they found it difficult to trust anyone.

Table 3: Biography of Students Interviewed

Name	Age	Gender	Country	Status
1.Sagar	25 to 30 years	Male	Nepal	Returned Home
2.Sunil	19 to 25 years	Male	Nepal	Work Permit
3. Rafaqat	25 to 30 years	Male	Uzbekistan	Returned Home
4. Deepak	19 to 25 years	Male	Nepal	Studying in University
5. Tina	25 to 30 years	Female	Nepal	Studying in University
6. Ravi	19 to 25 years	Male	India	Waiting for Passport
7. Rakesh	19 to 25 years	Male	India	Waiting for Passport
8. Neha	19 to 25 years	Female	Nepal	Waiting for Passport
9. Suman	19 to 25 years	Male	Nepal	Returned Home

10. Pradeep	19 to 25 years	Male	Nepal	Waiting for Passport
11. Kushal	19 to 25 years	Male	Nepal	Waiting for Passport
12. Milan	19 to 25 years	Male	Nepal	Married to British
13. Kamal	19 to 25 years	Male	Nepal	Work Permit
14. Pratap	19 to 25 years	Male	Nepal	Waiting for Passport
15. Iman	19 to 25 years	Male	Pakistan	Returned Home
16. Bimal	19 to 25 years	Male	Nepal	Returned Home
17. Shristi	19 to 25 years	Female	Nepal	Waiting for Passport
18. Jaffar	19 to 25 years	Male	India	Waiting for Passport
19. Mohammad	19 to 25 years	Male	Pakistan	Waiting for Passport
20. Deepa	19 to 25 years	Female	Nepal	Waiting for Passport
21. Sneha	19 to 25 years	Female	Nepal	Waiting for Passport
22. Salman	19 to 25 years	Male	Pakistan	Work Permit
23. Tilak	19 to 25 years	Male	Nepal	Waiting for Passport
24. Prashant	25 to 30 years	Male	Nepal	Waiting for Passport
25. Anil	25 to 30 years	Male	Nepal	Studying in University

26. Monica	19 to 25 years	Female	Nepal	Returned Home
27. Sheela	19 to 25 years	Female	Nepal	Returned Home
28. Preeti	19 to 25 years	Female	Nepal	Waiting for Passport
29. Sonia	25 to 30 years	Female	Nepal	Waiting for Passport
30. Sushil	25 to 30 years	Male	Nepal	Returned Home
31. Kiran	19 to 25 years	Male	Nepal	Returned Home
32. Jenish	19 to 25 years	Male	Nepal	Returned Home
33. Rita	25 to 30 years	Female	Nepal	Waiting for Passport

The students, as seen in the table above who were interviewed were between 19 and 30 years of age, which shows that students from a young age do consider the UK as a destination for their studies. It is interesting to note here that out of 33 students interviewed, 25 students fell into the 19 to 25 years of age category while only 8 students fell into the age category of 25 to 30 years. This difference in age category shows that UK is hugely popular among the teenagers or youngsters as their choice of studies in contrast to the choices made by older adults, which could be due to various reasons which will be discussed in detail in the findings chapter. Further, it is also important to note here that the 33 students interviewed were put into 3 categories which are discussed below so that data collected could be related to the research questions undertaken for this study as shown in table below:

Table 4: Category of Student's Status

Category A (Waiting for Visa/ Passport)	Category B (Switched category/ university/college)	Category C (Returned Home)
Ravi	Sunil	Sagar
Rakesh	Deepak	Rafaqat
Neha	Tina	Suman
Pradeep	Milan	Iman
Kushal	Kamal	Bimal
Pratap	Salman	Monica
Shristi	Anil	Sheela
Jaffar		Sushil
Mohammad		Kiran
Deepa		Jenish
Sneha		Prashant
Tilak		
Preeti		
Sonia		
Rita		
Total: 15	7	11

In the above Table, Category A includes 15 students who have their passports still held by the Home Office and are waiting to hear the decision after the closure of their college. Category B includes 7 students who found a new sponsor or switched visa category and are living in the UK. Category C includes 11 students who left the UK and have returned to their country. This categorisation of students was helpful in order to understand the main purpose of the study which was to explore the motivations and experiences of these students studying at private FE college which have been closed down by the Home Office and how the immigration policy affected their motivation.

Further, it is also important to note here that besides the 33 interviews mentioned above, another two interviews were also conducted but not included in this study. The first interview was with a Registrar at a college in Reading prior to the closure of college

and the second interview was with an international student but he passed away in London in 2015 at the initial stage of my data collection so I decided to exclude these two interviews from my data collection. Thus, the final sample included 33 international students who were enrolled as Tier 4 students in Tier 4 independent education providers located in London. There were no home students enrolled at either of the colleges they were studying. The average fee for undergraduates and postgraduates per diploma course was £2500. The duration of the course ranged from 12 to 18 months and the colleges were offering professional courses in business management, accounting, hospitality and tourism.

3.8 Interview Exercise

Interviews are the most common method of obtaining data and were deemed in the research to give the richest means by which international student perceptions could be explored via their accounts of experience at UK private FE colleges. Punch (2009) notes, the interview is the most prominent data collection tool in qualitative research and a very good way of accessing people's perceptions, meanings, definitions of situations and constructions of reality. It is also one of the most powerful ways we have of understanding others. As Jones (1985) rightly puts it,

In order to understand other persons' constructions of reality, we would do well to ask them.... and to ask them in such a way that they can tell us in their terms (rather than those imposed rigidly and a priori by ourselves) and in a depth which addresses the rich context that is the substance of their meanings.

The main method used to collect the data were semi-structured interviews that allowed me to explore in depth the experiences of international students studying in private Further Education colleges in the UK and the different factors that motivated them. In addition, the 33 respondents involved in this study chose, or were given, a pseudonym and as might be expected, they disclosed only those details with which they were comfortable, resulting in a rich and varied, often lively, data collection. It was thus the most appropriate method to collect data as a semi-structured interview is the type of interview where the participants express their viewpoints in a relatively open but designed interview situation, using the questions 'why' and 'how' (Flick, 2002) which helps to generate and develop a better understanding of the study being undertaken.

The interview exercise was in two phases and comprised of open-ended questions with some more probing questions in between. The first phase was a face-to-face semi-structured interview with 23 students where 13 open-ended questions were asked. However, while transcribing and analysing the data, I found that the data was too general as the questions were too generic and did not capture the essence of the experience faced by the participants after the closure of their colleges. As a result, I revised the interview questions since I felt that in addition to general comments, I needed to press for in-depth personal comments on their experiences and motivations at UK private FE colleges in line with the main research questions and sub research questions. For example, in the first phase of interview I asked the question below:

Q. Why do you think a number of international students like you, are attracted to the UK?

The response to this question was very general and it did not give me their personal reason for coming to UK to study but gave instead a general view. So, I revised the question as below for the second interview:

RQ: Why did you decide to come to UK for your studies?

By doing this I was able to capture their personal feelings and choice more vividly than in the first phase of interviews. Similarly, another example was:

Q. Why do a vast majority of international students from the developing countries prefer to choose private further education colleges to universities?

The above question was revised as:

RQ: Why did you choose private further education colleges over universities?

The second interview phase was even more challenging as I could not find any students to interview since most of them had been affected by the closure of colleges, some of whom had returned home whilst others were struggling to remain legally in the UK as is evident from the conversation I had with one of the participants as shown in the screenshot below:

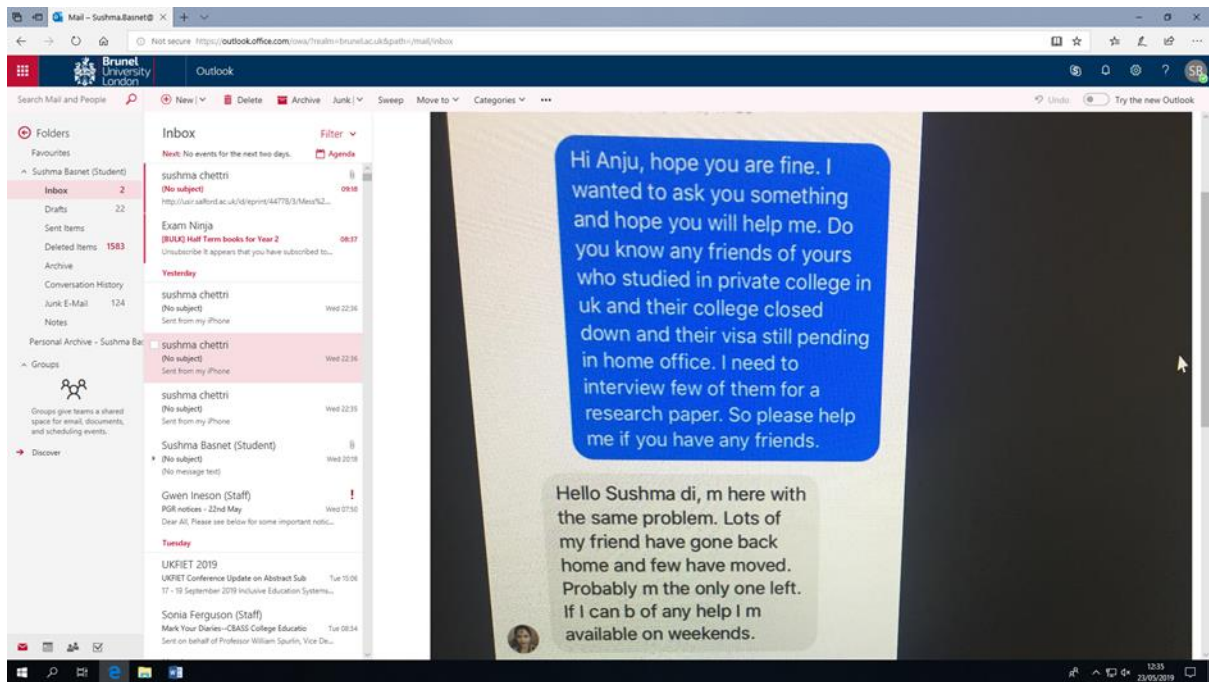


Figure 11: Interview for Participation (in UK)

I therefore conducted a second phase of Skype interviews with 10 students using revised open-ended questions, which elicited responses more personal to their experiences.

As the interview process began, the advantages of a face-to-face interview over a Skype interview became evident. The face-to-face interview built rapport with the interviewee, helping me to observe the mood and behaviour mannerisms of respondents as well as clarifying any issues that were confusing to the interviewee (Eric, 1999) which was not possible whilst conducting the Skype interview. However, before I discuss the limitations that Skype had on this particular study, it is essential to talk about the advantages that it had over face-to-face interviews while conducting this study.

3.9 Advantages of Skype Interview

An advantage of using Skype as a qualitative research tool was that it allows researchers to transcend geographical boundaries, by nullifying distances and eliminating the need 'to visit an agreed location for interview' (Rowley 2012, p. 264). As discussed earlier in this chapter regarding the limitations I had recruiting students for data collection, especially in light of the closure of their colleges, to use Skype for

interviewing was very convenient to reach out to those students who had returned home thus breaking down the barrier of 'time and space' (Burkitt 2004, p. 222). In addition, it provided 'an opportunity to talk to otherwise inaccessible participants' (Deakin & Wakefield, 2013, p.5) giving contributors a greater freedom to participate in the research without the need to travel. With Skype, 'the place of the interview becomes much more fluid' (Deakin & Wakefield 2013, p.7) as interviews can easily be conducted from the comfort of one's home, eliminating not only the need to travel but also the need to find a venue, which may be unfamiliar to the participants and possibly cost money to hire.

Further, time can be used in a more flexible way, around the needs of participants, while retaining synchronicity with the interviewer. Cater used Skype for her interviews because (2011, p. 2) 'many participants live busy lives' and Deakin and Wakefield state that (2013, p. 6) 'Skype interviews allowed for greater flexibility' with regards to timing of the interviews; a huge benefit for me as researcher especially with regard to time difference that needed to be managed between UK and outside UK.

In addition to above, Rowley (2012, p. 265) claims that for 'telephone and Skype interviews something of the rapport and richness of the interaction may be lost.'. However, on the other hand, some participants may be more inclined to open up when being interviewed via Skype, because they can stay in their own chosen environment or, as Hanna (2012, p. 241) states, 'both the researcher and the researched are able to remain in a safe location without imposing on each other's personal space.' This was found to be true as the students were comfortable giving the interviews from their own bedroom and were more relaxed talking about the experiences they had when they were in UK private colleges, the consequences after the closure of their colleges and the effect of the immigration policy. The fact that the participant is in a familiar environment may be, as Seitz (2015, p. 4) suggests 'more beneficial to participants who are shy or introverted, allowing them to feel more comfortable opening up in front of a screen'.

3.10 Disadvantages of Skype Interview

According to Cater (2011), building a rapport over Skype is challenging and this was experienced with the first few interviews as they were more reserved and less responsive. 'Rapport is ... about trust – enabling the participant to feel comfortable in

opening up to you' (King & Horrocks 2010: 48). Therefore, in order to create a connection with participants I exchanged a series of emails and messages before the interview so as to build the rapport as Seitz suggests that 'emailing several times before Skyping might strengthen rapport.' (Seitz 2015, p. 5). By doing this, I slowly built trust and it became easier for both parties to communicate.

On the other hand, as Seitz (2015) suggests, technical difficulties may also create a loss of intimacy. If, for, example, the connection is lost during an emotional conversation 'this creates an abrupt feeling in the interview that is hard to move forward from' (Seitz 2015, p. 4). However, while conducting the interviews there was no problem concerning rapport. Even on those rare occasions when the call was interrupted by the loss of connection, there was no problem resuming the conversation. Rapport was good possibly because most of the participants were known to myself (either in person or through previous repeated contacts via email or Facebook messages).

Another limitation that I faced while conducting the Skype interviews was the issue of body language. While conducting face-to-face interviews, body language such as eye-to-eye contact and hand gestures assisted in building rapport with the students, which was not the case with Skype interviews as noted by Seitz (2015) and Petralia (2011, p. 114):

One of the imperfect aspects of using Skype to communicate is that it is virtually impossible to look the person you are speaking to in the eyes because of the position of the camera in relation to the screen (the camera would have to be directly in the centre of the screen to correct this). In face-to-face communication, eye contact can be a powerful tool for establishing trust.

Moreover, it can be argued that the fact that Skype allows people not to look someone in the eye during an interview might actually also be an advantage in helping shy people to open up. I experienced this with one student who was very shy who, in a face-to-face interview, would not have spoken as freely and openly about his experiences and motivations in UK private colleges as he did in a Skype interview. However, there are other non-verbal cues that may be missed such as 'tone of voice, and gestures, which all provide a certain richness to qualitative data' (Hesse-Biber & Griffin, 2012, p. 56).

With Skype video calls we can see facial expressions, thus avoiding some of what Holt (2010, p. 116) refers to as the 'the lack of non-verbal communication' that telephone interviews have. More often than not, however, we can only see the face, missing important cues from the rest of the body. Bayles (2012, p. 578), in relation to Skype, argues that 'in a head and shoulders presentation we lose the full range of postural, gestural, and expressive movement that the body conveys, as well as the intentionality that is carried and expressed in that movement.' This limitation can be overcome, according to Seitz (2015: 4) though, by listening more carefully to the participant's voice and looking carefully at their facial expressions and 'researchers should use their own facial expressions deliberately to convey understanding and emotion too.' All these advantages and limitations were kept in mind during the Skype interviews.

Hence to summarise, semi-structured interviews were used to collect final data which included 23 face-to-face interviews and 10 Skype interviews with international students asking them about their learning experiences and motivations while they were studying in UK private further education colleges in particular after they were closed down by the Home Office. With interviews on Skype or face to face there was interaction between the researcher and the participant and, during transcription, the researcher could engage with the data and almost relive those moments of interaction and remember the personality and the emotions of the participants (Iacono, Symonds & Brown, 2016).

Wolcott (2009) added that semi-structured interviews are a very simple, efficient and practical way of getting data about things that cannot be observed; such as feelings and emotions, as people are able to talk about something in detail and depth. The meaning behind an action may be revealed as the interviewee is able to speak for him or her self with little direction from interviewer. In addition, Chandra and Sharma (2007) stated that complex questions and issues can be discussed and clarified. Also, they are easy to record during the interview with both audio and video tapes.

However, there is always the danger of bias creeping into interviews, largely because 'interviewers are human beings and not machines, and their own behaviours may have an effect on respondents (Selltiz et al. 1962). Many factors can result in bias and there are always dangers in research carried out by individual researchers, particularly those who have strong views about the topic they are researching which can occur

deliberately or unwittingly. It is therefore very important that as a researcher we must be 'wise and vigilant, critical of our interpretation of the data, regularly question our practice and wherever possible triangulate (Bell, 2005). In the next section, I therefore discuss about my positionality as a researcher so that the data analysis was not biased.

3.10 Positionality: Insider and Outsider Researcher

The issue of researcher membership in the group or any area being studied is relevant to all approaches of qualitative methodology as the researcher plays an important role in both data collection and analysis (Dwyer, 2009). Regardless of whether the researcher is an insider where he shares the participant's role, characteristic or experience under study or an outsider to the commonality shared by participants, the personhood of the researcher, including his or her membership status in relation to those participating in the research, "is an essential and ever-present aspect of the investigation" (Dwyer, 2009, p. 55).

The impact of insider epistemology has been considered by qualitative researchers who are insiders to the population as well as by those who are outsiders. In this study, as a researcher I can position myself as an insider as well as an outsider, as these two elements overlapped each other due to its 'permeable' (Merton, 1972, p. 37) aptitude.

Kanuha (2000) stated that an insider research refers to when researchers conduct research with populations of which they are also the members so that the researchers shares an identity, language and experiential base with the study participants (Asselin, 2003). I had an inside knowledge about the experiences of coming to UK as an international student. As an insider, I felt connected to the participants as I could relate to their experiences of being away from home in order to pursue their dreams and also at the same time sharing some of the commonalities that they faced like homesickness, culture shock, language barrier, and immigration rules etc. which most participants expressed while collecting the data. This insider role status allowed me to be more accepted by the participants and as a result they were more open while I conducted the interview which enabled me a greater depth to the data gathered. Another benefit of being an insider was that it automatically provided a level of trust and openness in my participants which would have likely not been the case otherwise.

Due to change in policy and the closure of many private FE colleges it was very difficult to collect data and to gain their confidence so that they could share their true experiences and implications of the circumstances they were in light of the Points Based System. But when I approached them and told them that I was an international student myself studying PhD at Brunel University they felt some commonality and agreed to take part in the study. The participants were more willing to share their experiences because there was an assumption of understanding and an assumption of shared distinctiveness; it is as if they felt, “You are one of us and it is us versus them (those on the outside who don’t understand) (Dwyer, 2009, p. 58).

However, sharing a shared status and a common ground in this case, being an international student to begin the research, it has the potential to impede the research process as it progresses and has its own limitations too. Adler and Adler (1987) suggest that in this “ultimate existential dual role” (p, 73), researchers might struggle with role conflict if they find themselves caught between “loyalty tugs” and “behavioural claims” (Brannick and Coglan, 2007, p. 70). Asselin (2003) has further pointed out that the dual role can also result in role confusion when the researcher responds to the participants or analyses the data from a perspective other than that of researcher. She pointed out that role confusion can occur in any research study but the risks is higher when the researcher is familiar with the research setting or participants through a role other than that of a researcher. Therefore, in order to avoid this role confusion, I believe that I did not influence my viewpoints based on my interests and identity during data collection (by using the interview guide) which relied completely on the participant’s perception. Moreover, I was not familiar with the academic experiences and the challenges they faced with the change in immigration policy which had a direct effect on student’s studying at private FE colleges. I came to UK as an international student to study my Master’s degree at Brunel University which is well-renowned while all the participants under the study came to UK private FE colleges for undergraduate course. As a result I had no experience of being a student at private FE colleges as such my academic experiences and the challenges they faced which the Government imposed on them was different in comparison to them.

Even though I was an insider to an extent, I consider my position as an outsider too because in spite of being an international student myself and sharing some similarities like coming from same country Nepal as most participants were, I did not experience

the implications of the immigration policy which had affected these students tremendously. I only had the opportunity to work as a part time administrator in one of the private FE colleges in London, which gave me a platform to have a first-hand experience about the effect of the PBS and tougher immigration rules on both the private FE providers and international students studying there. This gave me a wider picture to make a comparison between the teaching facilities, learning environment and experiences of international students studying in a university and private college.

Hence, it is clear that there are both pros and cons of being insider versus being outsider status of the researcher. The positive and negative elements of each has been considered carefully in this study and as Acker (2000) concluded that the insider-outsider question cannot be fully resolved and that perhaps it is necessary not to bring the issue to a close but to find a way to work creatively within the tensions created by the debate which is to follow the lead of other researchers and attempt to find a way to be both which I have aimed to be in this study as a researcher.

3.11 Data Analysis

In qualitative research, data analysis is a challenging and highly creative process. Shenton (2004) explained that, through the process of data analysis, the researcher brings order, structure and meaning to the mass of data collected. Blaxter and Tight (1996) acknowledged that data analysis in qualitative research comprised the searched for explanation and understanding, in the course of which, concepts and theories are likely to be advanced, considered and developed. It involved breaking the information collected into manageable themes, patterns, trends and relationships. In addition, Mouton (2001) stated the aim of analysis is to understand the data through an inspection of the relationships between concepts, constructs and variables, to see whether any patterns or trends can be identified or isolated, or to establish themes in the data.

However, the data analysis was not a straightforward process. Once the data was collected the process of transcribing the interviews and giving meanings to text was equally challenging. Qualitative research deals with and is interested in meanings and it was essential that as a researcher I captured those meanings that were relevant for this study. There were instances where students spoke more about other issues like

the government policy and politics which was not the main aim of the interview. So differencing those quotes into meaningful themes and categories was very difficult. However, qualitative research is also all about the messiness of real life which I did try to put while analysing the data and interpreting it in an organised framework so as to produce in-depth, rich and detailed data from which to make claims.

Thematic analysis was used in this study as 'a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data' (Braun and Clarke, 2006). For Miles and Huberman (1994), this type of data analysis technique helps researchers to develop an understanding of the subject they are examining. Thematising aims to answer what is going to be examined, why and how. According to Fink (2000), responding to these questions is essential for conducting data collection, analysis and interpretation.

It minimally organises and describes data sets in (rich) detail. A theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question and represents some level of patterned response of meaning with the data set (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Themes can be identified, according to Braun and Clarke (2013), in a data-driven, 'bottom-up' way on the basis of what is in the data; alternatively, they can be identified in a more 'top-down' fashion, where the researcher uses the data to explore particular theoretical ideas or brings those to bear on the analysis being conducted (bottom-up and top-down approaches are often combined in one analysis). As such, thematic analysis can be applied to data in different ways, from experiential to critical; to develop a detailed account of a phenomenon or some aspect of a phenomenon; it can also be used to develop a critical, constructionist analysis which can identify the concepts and ideas that underpin the explicit data content, or the assumptions and meanings in the data (Braun and Clarke, 2013). Therefore, thematic analysis offers the chance to learn basic data handling and coding skills, without having to delve deep into any theoretical constructs and at the same time using other analytical approaches which is an excellent method for a qualitative research.

Braun and Clarke (2006) and Patton (1990) provided an outline of six phases of thematic analysis which has been used in this particular research, applied to the research question and data. In many ways analysis is not a linear process, researchers can move back and forth as needed. The six phases of analysis are discussed as below:

3.11.1 Phase 1: familiarising myself with data

Braun and Clarke (2006) emphasised that it is vital for the researcher to immerse themselves in the data to the extent that they are familiar with the depth and breadth of the content. Immersion involves repeated reading of the data, doing so in an active way, searching for meanings, patterns and so on. Bird (2005) urged that it is ideal to read through the entire data set at least once before beginning coding as ideas; identification of possible patterns will be shaped as data is read through.

Whether or not a researcher is aiming for an overall or detailed analysis, searching for latent or semantic themes, or data or theoretical insight, will inform how reading proceeds. Regardless, it is important to be familiar with all aspects of data (Patton, 1990). At this phase, I acknowledged one of the reasons why qualitative research uses smaller samples as the reading and re-reading of the data is time consuming. Braun and Clarke (2006) warned researchers not to skip over this phase of reading and re-reading the data, as this phase provides the bedrock for the rest of the analysis. I therefore took notes or formulated ideas for coding during this phase, so that I could go back in subsequent phases and understand the aegis of ideas and coding that continues to be developed and defined through the entire analysis, which is its essence.

3.11.2 Transcription of verbal data

All the verbal data collected through interview was transcribed in written form in order to conduct thematic analysis. The process of transcription is time consuming, frustrating and at times boring. But as Bird (2005) stated, transcription is a key phase of data analysis within interpretative qualitative methodology. Transcription of verbal data is recognised as an interpretative act where meanings are created, rather than a mechanical one of putting spoken sounds on paper (Lapadat and Lindsay cited in Braun and Clarke, 2006). During transcription I had to retain the information that I needed from the verbal account and in a way that is true to its original nature (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

3.11.3 Phase 2: generating initial codes

The second phase began when I read and familiarised myself with the data and generated an initial list of ideas about what is in the data and what is interesting about it (Bird, 2005). It involved the production of initial codes from the data. Codes identify a feature of the data (semantic content or latent) that appears interesting to the analyst, so that the data can be organised into meaningful groups.

Bird (2005) stated that there are a number of ways of coding extract. For this study, coding was done manually. During the data analysis I coded the data by writing notes on the texts that was analysed by using highlighters or coloured pens to indicate potential patterns or by using post-it notes to identify segments of data.

3.11.4 Phase 3: searching for themes

In phase 3, as Patton (1990) suggested, I refocussed the analysis at the broader level of themes rather than codes, which involved sorting the different codes into potential themes and collating all the relevant coded data extracts within the identified themes. At this phase, Braun and Clarke (2006) emphasised it may be useful to use visual representations to help the researcher to sort different codes into themes. This is when the researcher is thinking about the relationship between codes, between themes and between level of themes or sub-themes.

3.11.5 Phase 4: reviewing themes

At this phase, I devised a set of candidate themes which involved the refinement of those themes. Braun and Clarke (2006) pointed out that by doing so it will become evident that some themes are not really themes as there is not enough data to support them, or the data is too diverse, while others might collapse into each other. So as Patton (1990) emphasised, at this phase I used dual criteria for judging categories – internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity so that the data within themes would cohere together meaningfully, while other themes would be clear and identifiable from others.

This phase involved two levels of reviewing and refining. Level one involved reviewing at the level of the data coded extracts. Here I first read all the collated extracts for each theme and considered whether they appear to form a coherent pattern (Patton, 2002).

If the themes appeared to form a pattern, then I moved to the second level of this phase. If the themes did not fit, it needed to be considered whether the theme itself was problematic or whether some of the data extracts within it simply did not fit. Then the themes had to be re-worked, creating a new theme, finding a home for those extracts that did not currently work in the existing theme, or discard them from the analysis so as that the themes adequately captured the contours of the coded data or the thematic map and then move on to the level two of this phase.

Level two involved a similar process, but in relation to the entire data set. At this level, I considered the validity of individual themes in relation to the data set, but also whether the thematic map in this study (the table as shown below) accurately reflected the meanings evident in the data set as a whole (Patton, 2002). To some extent, what counted as accurate presentation depended on the theoretical and analytical approach (Tuckett, 2005). However, in this stage I again re-read the entire data-set for two purposes; the first was to ascertain whether the themes worked in relation to the data set, the second was to code any additional data themes that had been missed in the earlier coding stage. The need for re-coding from the data set was to be expected as coding is an on-going process (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

Braun and Clarke (2006) further suggested that if the thematic map or table worked, then the researcher could move to the next phase. However, if the map did not fit the data set, then I had to return to further reviewing and refining the coding until a satisfying thematic map or table was devised. In doing so, it was possible to identify new themes and the need to start coding as well. Table 5 below shows the pilot drafting of the initial themes to the final themes and sub-themes concluded at the end followed by the discussion of the emerging themes.

Draft 1	Draft 2	Draft 3
1. Quality, Choice and Aspiration – British degree perceived as a fastest route to a prosperous future; Parental and peer influence and UK history	1. Ambition, Quality and Reputation – UK history of quality education and reputation; Exposure to the global world and route to a prosperous future;	1. Aspiration – UK'S Reputation; Global prosperity; Social influence

of quality education and reputation; Education vs status quo or income and socio economic status; Decision Making	Parental and peer influence.	
2. More preference to private Further Education colleges than Higher Education by international students - Expense and accessibility; Same level of degree and standard; Role of agents in decision making; Cultural differences and adaptability.	2. Private Further Education Colleges vs Higher Education and Universities – Expense and accessibility; Cultural differences and adaptability; Role of agents in decision making.	2. Choice – Accessibility; Culture; Recruitment Pressure
3. Barriers, Choices and Challenges International Students face in the process of learning – Effectiveness of points based system; Before the rule and after the rule scenario; Criminalisation of international students; Notion of bogus and types of different learners.	3. Barriers, Challenges and Consequences – Effectiveness of points based system and cracking down of bogus colleges; Private colleges as a visa and fake certificate factory; Psychological and emotional conflict; Stringent immigration rules and frequent changes.	3. Status – Being bogus; Psychological and emotional conflict
4. Immigration has become a political issue rather than a social issue – Benefits of immigration	4. Immigration as a xenophobia – Immigration more a political issue than an educational issue;	4. Impact of immigration policy- Political issue than an educational issue;

<p>to UK; Government's policy and approach towards immigration; International students treated as 'cash-cows'; Growing concern over the number of EU migrants.</p>	<p>Government policy in practice and its impact on international students; International students treated as 'cash-cows' and being criminalised; Growing concern over the number of EU migrants and its impact on international students.</p>	<p>Students as cash cows; Xenophobia</p>
<p>5. Future Prospects and Opportunities for International Students – Education vs Work experience; Stringent visa rules and Government policy; Negative perception about UK treatment to international students; Promote equality of opportunity.</p>		

Table 5: *Pilot Drafting of Initial Themes to Final Themes*

3.11.6 Phase 5: defining and naming themes

Tuckett (2005) acknowledged this phase begins when researchers have a satisfactory thematic map or table of the data. At this point, Braun and Clarke (2006) emphasised it is important not to try and get a theme to do too much, or to be too diverse and complex by going back to the collated data, extracts for each theme and organised them into a coherent and internally consistent account, with accompanying narrative. It was important not just to paraphrase the content of the data but identify what was interesting about it and why (Tuckett, 2005).

For each individual theme, a detailed analysis note was needed. As well as the story of the themes told, I described how it fitted into the broader overall story of the data in relation to the research question. As part of the refinement process, I had to identify whether or not a theme contained sub-themes. Sub-themes can be useful for giving structure to a particularly large and complex theme and also for demonstrating the hierarchy of meaning within the data (Braun and Clarke, 2006) as shown in the table above.

3.11.7 Phase 6: producing the report

The final phase began when I had a set of fully worked out themes, and involved the final analysis and write-up of the report as discussed in Chapter 4 of this thesis. The task of the write-up of thematic analysis was to tell the complicated story of the data collected in such a way as to convince the reader of the merit and validity of the analysis. It was important that the write-up of the analysis, including data extracts, provided a concise, coherent, logical, non-repetitive and interesting account of the story of the data within and across themes (Patton, 2002).

Hence, while conducting this research and my data analysis I followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) and Patton's (1990) outline of six phases of thematic analysis as mentioned above. While conducting the thematic analysis, several readings of the transcribed data was done so as to transcribe and familiarise myself with the data, noting down initial ideas as well as considering and coding the developing categories and themes, defining and naming themes, reviewing themes and searching for themes before producing the final report. In thematic analysis, the creativity of the researcher in presenting the result in terms of a story-line, model or a map is encouraged during the final stage of data analysis. All these were taken into consideration which gave a final opportunity for analysis of the research questions and literature in order to produce a scholarly report of the analysis in my concluding chapter of this study.

3.12 Trustworthiness in Qualitative Data

Trustworthiness is the corresponding term used in qualitative research as a measure of the quality of research and is the extent to which the data and data analysis are believable and trustworthy. There is no best and globally accepted criterion adapted to evaluate the rigour of any qualitative research (Noble and Smith, 2015). Usually,

strategies employed to assess the rigour of quantitative data are not similar to those used to evaluate qualitative data due to different philosophical and methodological assumptions of each approach (Anney, 2014). However, as Krefting (1991, p. 214) stated, 'not all qualitative research can be assessed with the same strategies'. Assessing the accuracy of qualitative findings is not easy, and therefore, there are several possible strategies and criteria that can be used to determine the trustworthiness of qualitative data 'reliability and validity or rigour' in literature such as Leininger (1985) and Kirk and Miller (1986). However, this study has followed Guba's model (1981) because it is relatively well-developed in terms of concept or abstract idea and has been applied by educational qualitative scholars for a number of years (Krefting, 1991).

According to Guba (1981), the main issues that should be considered to evaluate the quality and relevance of the qualitative data and to ensure the rigour/trustworthiness are:

- Credibility
- Transferability
- Dependability
- Confirmability

In this section, I will now briefly explain each of the aforementioned qualitative research criteria in relation to trustworthiness and how I employed them during this study.

3.12.1 Credibility

Credibility in qualitative research is defined as the extent to which the data and data analysis are believable and trustworthy. It refers to the researcher's confidence in the findings sought and if it measures what is planned to be measured (Holloway and Wheeler, 2002 and Macnee and McCabe, 2008). Lincoln and Guba (1985) were of the view that credibility is one of the most important factors for evaluating the rigour of a research project.

Providing a detailed description of the problem, methodology, data collection and analysis enhance the quality of qualitative research (Shenton, 2004). I have therefore, described the issue of government policy relating to immigration and the implications

it had on the motivation and experience of international students studying at UK private FE colleges thoroughly and provided a full explanation of the data collection and analysis methods implemented.

According to Krefting (1991), the aim of any qualitative research is to describe or understand a situation or a phenomenon of interest from the participant's viewpoint and the participants are the only individuals who can legitimately judge the credibility of the findings. In this statement, Krefting (1991) argues that for qualitative research, the ability of participants involved in the interviews to recognise their experiences in the research findings is a sound strategy for evaluating the quality of the inquiry findings. Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007) described member checking into the findings as the heart of credibility.

In order to accomplish this, I followed up with some participants involved in this study and asked them to cross-check the interview data that was transcribed and analysed. The interviewees went through the transcribed interview sheet which I presented to them in order to verify if they were actually reading what they had said and confirm that it was an accurate representation of the interview conversation. Further, the data analysed was credited by sending the rough drafts of the transcribed and interpreted data to my Supervisor who went through them and made sure that they were accurately recorded, transcribed and reported correctly. Also, I was aware of the possibility that there may have been traces of bias while interpreting the data and therefore I replayed the tape-recorder several times at short intervals so as to make sure that exactly what the interviewees had said was coded and interpreted correctly.

3.12.2 Transferability

Research findings are transferable or generalizable only if they fit into new contexts outside the actual study context. Transferability is the extent to which findings can be generalized. Generalizability refers to the extent to which one can extend the account of a particular situation or population to other persons, times or setting than those directly studied (Maxwell, 2002).

A qualitative researcher can enhance transferability by detailing the research methods, contexts and assumptions underlying the study. Seale (1999) advocates that transferability is achieved by providing a detailed, rich description of the settings

studied to provide the reader with sufficient information to be able to judge the applicability of the findings to other settings that they know (p.45). Keeping this in mind, in this study I have included:

- A broad knowledge of the context in which the work was carried out.
- An extensive background of the issue being investigated.
- Biography details of the samples selected such as the number of private FE colleges, the number of participants involved and their background, the methods adopted, length and period of data collection.

Hence, I have taken up all the above considerations and tried to provide a rich, thick description of the study by providing a detailed description of the phenomenon or main argument of the study that includes my interpretation, in addition to the observed context and processes. I have also provided a thorough accounting of the methods and procedures followed during and after data collection so that data and description speak for themselves and thus enable readers to appraise the significance of the meanings attached to the findings of the study and make their own judgement regarding the transferability of the research outcomes. Therefore, the generalizability issue has to be resolved by the reader of the research report based on how the researcher's and the reader's contextual frameworks. It is a matter of judgement of the context and phenomena found which allows others to assess the transferability of the findings to another setting (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003, p. 268).

3.12.3 Dependability

Dependability is the 'stability of findings over time' (Bitsch, 2005, p. 86). It refers to the extent to which research findings can be replicated with similar subjects in a similar context (Merriam, 1998, p. 205). It emphasises the importance of the researcher accounting for or describing the changing contexts and circumstances that are fundamental to the consistency of the research outcome.

Krefting (1991) suggested that describing research process, methods, analysis and interpretation can improve the consistency of the findings. The research design, data gathering process, methods used in collecting and analysing data and the interpretation of qualitative data were thoroughly described in this chapter which will allow future researchers to restudy the findings.

Further, according to Guba and Lincoln (1982, 1985), the dependability can be enhanced through a single audit and audit trail strategies. The academic supervisors reviewed the findings of this study, research plan and implementation. Data were collected and analysed concurrently. As an audit trail and for cross checking the research process, I have kept the documents such as raw data (interview transcripts), analysed data and interview notes and records.

3.12.4 Confirmability

The degree to which others can corroborate the findings is called confirmability (Baxter and Eyles, 1997). The findings of this current study are derived from the participant's experiences, ideas and perceptions. In addition, a single audit is a primary criterion for establishing confirmability of a qualitative study (Guba, 1981 and Lincoln and Guba, 1985). It is therefore a good idea that the researcher archives all collected data in a well-organised, retrievable form so that it can be made available to them if the findings are challenged. As such, qualitative data of this study were collected and analysed concurrently.

Besides ensuring credibility, peer debriefing and examination strategy also helps to ensure the confirmability of a research enquiry (Anney, 2014). As a result, the research process, methodology and findings were discussed in conferences and workshops that I had attended during this study.

In conclusion, all the above-discussed strategies were employed during the overall study so as to ensure the trustworthiness of the data collected and study undertaken. In the next section, I now present the ethical considerations that were taken into account while conducting this study.

3.13 Ethical Considerations

For any research, ethical concerns are important in protecting respondents and participants involved in the research (Rossman and Marshall, 2006). The present study adheres to the ethical principles and values discussed in Brunel's Ethical Application Form. An ethical approval was sought from the Local Ethics Committee of Sport and Education School, Brunel University London, which included information on

the nature of the research, such as the aims and objectives, project time frame, methods of recruiting participants and consent letters.

Silverman (2000, p. 201) reminds researchers that they should always remember that, while they are doing their research, they are in actual fact entering the private spaces of their participants. This in turn raises several ethical issues that should be addressed during and after the research has been conducted. Creswell (2003) states that the researcher has an obligation to respect the rights, needs, values and desires of the informants. Miles and Huberman (1994) list several issues that researchers should consider when analysing data and caution researchers to be aware of these and other issues that may arise before, during and after the research has been conducted. Some of the issues involved whether; (i) the participants had full knowledge of what the study was about, (ii) any harm and risk involved in the study, (iii) honesty and trust in presenting data, (iv) privacy, confidentiality and anonymity maintained in the study and (v) intervention and advocacy.

Cultural sensitivity is also another unexpected concerns relating to ethical issues. Silverman (2000) argues that the relationship between the researcher and the subject during an interview needs to be considered in terms of the values of the researcher and cultural aspects. Therefore, appropriate steps should be taken to adhere to strict ethical guidelines in order to uphold participant's privacy, confidentiality, dignity, rights and anonymity.

In view of the forgoing discussions, the following section describes how ethical issues in the conduct of this study have been addressed:

- i) *Informed Consent* – The participants were informed by email of the purpose and nature of the study as well as information about the researcher and how the results would be communicated. During the interview, a consent form was handed to and signed by each interviewee prior to their participation, as well as an information letter which explained the objectives and procedures involved in the study (Lankshear and Knobel, 2004). During each stage of data collection, participants were provided with an information letter explaining the nature and the aim of the research. The letter also included an invitation to ask questions that may have been of concern to the participant. Once the participants indicated that they were satisfied with the

terms, they were asked to sign an agreement, deemed binding on the researcher.

- ii) *Harm and Risk* – The risks are minimal given the nature of the research. The risks taken into consideration included confidentiality of the information and opinions given by participants. They were also guaranteed that no participants would be put in a situation where they might be harmed as result of their participation, physically or psychologically.
- iii) *Honesty and trust* – Throughout the research, strict adherence to all the ethical guidelines which serve as standard about the honesty and trustworthiness of the data collected and the accompanying data analysis was maintained.
- iv) *Privacy, confidentiality and anonymity* - It was ensured that the confidentiality and anonymity would be maintained and the participants names would not be used for any other purposes, nor would information be shared that revealed their identity in any way. There was no probing into the personal life of any participants and the questions asked related only to the research in question and their pertinent experiences. Materials from the interviews were kept anonymous to ensure confidentiality.
- v) *Voluntary participation* - Despite all the above-mentioned precautions, it was made clear to the participants that the research was only for academic purpose and their participation in it was absolutely voluntary. No one was coerced into participating.

Hence, data collection was conducted throughout in a ‘non-stressful and non-threatening manner’ (Cohen et al. 2000) by allowing it to take place according to the participant’s preferences of time and location. Some weeks after the interview exercise, I also went through the responses with one of the interviewees to maintain the ‘ethical honesty’ of the qualitative reporting (Aspland, 2003).

3.14 Chapter Summary

This chapter has outlined the research paradigm, research methodologies, strategies and design used in the study, including selection of participants, data collection tools, data collection and analysis methods and data credibility issues.

Qualitative research design has been used in this study in order to understand the motivation and experiences of international students at UK private FE colleges in light of the immigration policy, Points Based System. Through the semi-structured interviews conducted, experiential implications of the immigration rules and how it affected their level of motivation has been the main focus of the study. The data was analysed using the thematic analysis which has been detailed in this chapter followed by the ethical considerations taken during this study. The next chapter will now present the findings and analysis of the interview data collected in light of the conceptual framework underpinning this study, which is the Self-Determination Theory and Organismic Integration Theory.

Chapter 4 - Data Analysis and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results and discussion from the analysis of data that has been gathered from the 33 semi-structured interviews conducted. The key themes that emerged from the thematic analysis are discussed first, followed by a detailed discussion of the key themes and their implications. The chapter then readdresses my conceptual framework which this study is based on which is Self-Determination Theory (STD) and relates the emerging key themes that have been identified with the different types of extrinsic motivation in international students studying in private FE colleges that were subsequently closed down by the Home Office.

In Self-Determination Theory, different types of motivation based on different reasons or goals give rise to an action. The most basic distinction is between the intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation refers to doing something because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable and the latter, extrinsic motivation, refers to doing something not out of interest but because it is believed to be instrumental to some separable consequence or separable outcome. Similarly, in this study the key emerging themes have been categorised as intrinsic and extrinsic motivation which the next section will discuss and address.

4.2 Key Themes

Following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six steps for conducting a thematic analysis, several themes and sub-themes were generated from the data collected and transcribed. There were four main emerging themes which are; (i) Aspiration (ii) Choice (iii) Status and (iv) Impact of Immigration Policy. These four main themes have been categorised as factors leading to intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as shown in the Figure 12 below:

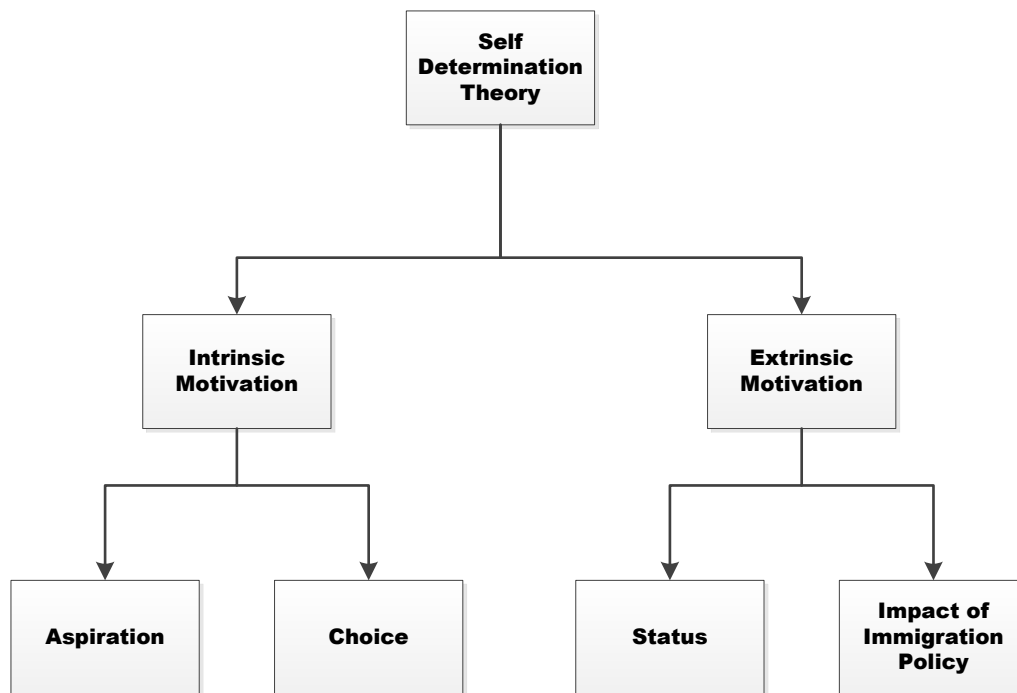


Figure 12: Final Themes as Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

The above main themes have been further divided into sub-themes which are explained in detail in the next section below.

4.2.1 Aspiration

During the course of the interview when students were asked why they chose the UK as their destination for further studies, all the 33 students interviewed were of the opinion that the UK has always been a favourite destination for them to come and study for various reasons. For some, quality of education was the most prominent reason, while for others career prospects and global prosperity were the determining factors. Their choice to come to the UK was mostly because of their own interest, family pressure and peer influence. As such, the first key theme that emerged was aspiration to come to the UK, since these international students were highly interested in pursuing their studies abroad merely for their own intrinsic goals, interest and benefits. This notion of aspiration is then broken into three parts – the UK’s reputation, global prosperity and family and peer influence as shown in the figure below –

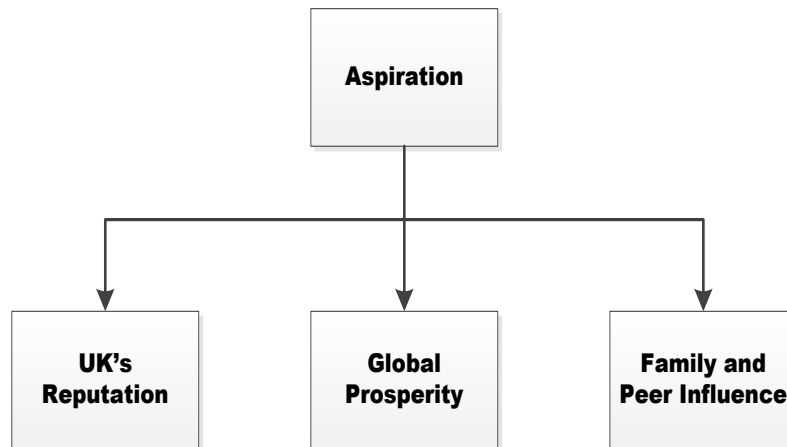


Figure 13: Aspiration: UK's Reputation, Global Prosperity and Family and Peer Influence

4.2.2 The UK's Reputation

The most significant reason for choosing the UK was the reputation of UK education. Universities such as Oxford and Cambridge have been renowned for providing excellent, world-class education. Students who were interviewed believed that coming to the UK not only gives them a worldwide-recognised degree and qualification but also provides them with exposure and a platform to compete in the global market. Students are attracted to the UK because they have a perception that after they complete their studies, they not only get a worldwide-approved qualification but also a platform for themselves to create a better future. Basically, it is the quality, reputation and the UK's worldwide recognition that attracts international students as one student points out:

There are a number of reasons why international students are attracted to the UK. First of all, people or students think of a big name. UK is a big name and is a big country. The UK economy is very strong, political power is big and it has more powerful hold and influence around the world. These are the things students think first about the UK and the other reason is about the reputation of education it has. Students will think about universities like Cambridge, Oxford and they have long history of providing best and quality education. (Shristi)

The students interviewed also expressed their view that they experience huge personal growth and development. They are confident that once they get a UK degree

and experience, they can develop their level of confidence and boost their morale as mentioned by Neha, a student below:

UK education is the worldwide recognised education. If you get UK education then you can go anywhere in any country and will get a very good job and opportunity... That's why we are confident if we get a good degree we will develop our level of confidence and because UK's education system is so good so we will gain some experience as well. (Neha)

Another student added that the UK was his first choice as it was geographically closer to his home country in comparison to other countries such as Australia, USA or Canada:

I think personally, first of all, because of the quality of study and the prestige of Oxford and Cambridge universities... I would rather be close to home and this is what maybe some students think and could be another reason. (Rafaqat)

Therefore, the UK's reputation and quality of education is indeed the most important factor that attracts these international students. The recognition and value of a UK degree helps these international students to get international exposure which leads to my second sub-theme, global prosperity.

4.2.3 Global Prosperity

For the international student there is no doubt that the benefits of studying in the UK are immense. They not only get academic benefits but also an opportunity to explore and experience the world. The UK is one of the top developed countries in the world and as such the opportunities for international students studying here are tremendous. They not only excel academically, experience personal growth and development but also gain experience in a multicultural environment with modern facilities which attracts them to come to the UK. They get a platform to expose themselves into this global world and also an easy access to the job market after they complete their studies. As one student said in the interview, the hope of leading a better life and also the fact that the UK economy is stronger and the value of British currency more valuable back home attracts them to the UK:

In my opinion, there are a number of factors that attract me towards the UK. Some people have a genuine interest towards study and they like to have a degree from a reputed world-class university and after getting a degree from there it means the world is an oyster to them. However, the vast number of people attracted, in my opinion, is due to the easy access towards the job market after graduating. The value of British currency is among one of the highest in the world so people from the developing countries also see this as an incentive. Another reason is the connections with the huge European market and easy access to Europe where they will have different opportunities to build their career further. Some people dream of having a free life and living in a carefree society. (Deepa)

Further, when students were asked in the interview about their learning experiences in the UK, they emphasised how enormously beneficial their experience was. It helped them to shape their approach and outlook towards their life by learning to adapt to a new environment, gain cultural knowledge and learn English which is their second language. They also had an opportunity to live in a multi-cultural environment with students coming from different countries and diverse backgrounds. This not only improved their cultural knowledge but also gave them a platform to celebrate cultural differences within the learning environment by becoming familiar with different values, beliefs, traditions and customs. The students interviewed also expressed how they got an opportunity to develop different learning strategies and study patterns from those they used in their home country, such as more practical thinking than theoretical learning as noted by one student:

Back home the lessons are very theoretical and book based whereas here it is more practical than theory-based type of learning. There is more knowledge and learning based on work experiences whereas back home it is only textual learning. The lessons and curriculum are more flexible here. Back home we have to go to college 6 days a week which gives us less time to focus or do other work whereas here you have to go 2 to 3 days a week which allows you more time to focus at your studies. (Sonia)

Similarly, another student also shared the same view:

We just read and memorise things here but in the UK, emphasis is more on practical learning. We do not have long hours of lectures here unlike back in Nepal. Also, back

home we are spoon fed by teachers but in the UK you have to do a lot of independent study and learning which is very beneficial. (Monica)

From the data analysis, it was revealed that these students not only get the opportunity for exposure in a global market but also get to interact with different people, world-class companies and learn many new things. They are exposed to a different culture as compared to where they come from and hence it helps them to shape and develop their personal skills such as independence, adaptability and flexibility which are highly valued and sought after by employers these days. As Iman said:

British qualifications are recognised internationally and valued by employers throughout the world. Apart from academic qualifications, we can choose from a wide range of vocational or career based courses too, many designed and awarded by recognised bodies and world-class companies. While studying in the UK, we will also have the opportunity to improve our CV by working and improving our English. Living on our own in a new country and experiencing a new culture will also help us to develop personal skills such as independence, flexibility and adaptability, all of which are highly valued by employers. So I think for all these factors and reasons, international students are attracted to the UK. (Iman)

However, social influences such as family and peer influence were also one of the determining factors for these international students to choose the UK for their studies which I will be discussing in the next section.

4.2.4 Family and Peer Influence

Besides the UK's reputation, global recognition and prosperity, it was interesting to learn that a few international students stated that they chose the UK due to parental and peer pressure. Students who were interviewed said that they were influenced by their parents who regarded the UK as the top destination for further studies and wanted their children to choose the UK. Some of the students' parents themselves had studied in the UK and gone back home so they wanted their children to do the same too. In addition, having relatives living here in the UK was another factor for choosing the UK as they would not feel home sick and would have family and moral support. As one student mentioned:

The first reason I chose UK is because I have relatives here to be honest. I am very comfortable staying here around with my family and the other thing why I wanted to be in the UK is because it is very secure. Also long ago, my dad was here and he told me that the UK is a very nice place and that I should consider it as an option to go and study there so I was influenced by him as well....(Rakesh)

Further, students stated that, in their own countries the demand for studying abroad was such that it was not seen as unusual. Consequently, having friends in the UK and learning about their experience influenced and motivated them to choose the UK, as is evident from one student's comments:

I did consider USA and applied for USA but I was refused visa as they thought that I did not fulfil or meet visa criteria they had asked for. So I applied for the UK as I was frustrated back home since all my friends were studying abroad and I was the only one left back, so I thought I could just go to some place and complete my studies, have a good job and have better life as all my friends had. So I applied to the UK... (Suman)

It is evident from the above data analysis that family and friends played a very vital role in their decision to choose the UK as their destination for studies as they perceived gaining a degree from abroad had better future prospects for them, not only in terms of education, but also a better standard of living. This leads to my second major theme, 'choice' which is discussed below.

4.3.1 Choice

The second key emerging theme that was identified was 'choice' or in other words, the factors that led these students who participated in the interview to choose private FE colleges rather than universities in the UK. The decision to study abroad often involves a number of factors such as personal, social and financial investments on the part of the student, their families and their employers. When students were asked in the interview their reasons for choosing private further education colleges over UK universities, almost all of the 33 students were of the opinion that private colleges were cheaper and easier to gain admission to than UK universities. Their choice of coming

to UK private further education colleges is further divided into three domains – accessibility, culture and recruitment pressure as seen in the figure below –

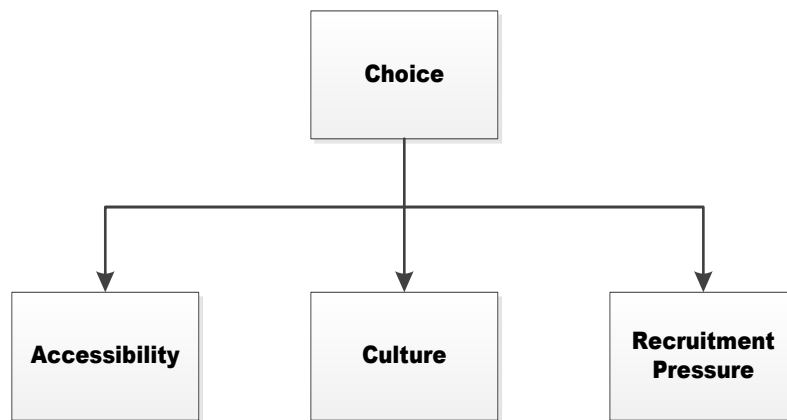


Figure 14: Choice: Accessibility, Culture and Recruitment Pressure

4.3.2 Accessibility

All the 33 students who were interviewed were of the opinion that the cost of tuition fees in private further education colleges was cheaper as compared to UK universities. Students coming from developing countries cannot afford to pay high tuition fees charged by universities, from £9000 to £12000 per annum for a course. Private colleges are cheaper and a student can complete a three year Bachelor's degree for about £10,000. Hence, the private further education colleges are more appealing to these students. They are comparatively affordable and easy to gain admission to unlike universities which have rigorous admission criteria and procedures. As one student said:

The majority of the international students from the developing countries like India, Nepal, Pakistan and Bangladesh want to get an internationally recognised degree and job experience. They want an international exposure as well as experience. They choose private colleges merely because of financial reasons. It cost them less money to come to private colleges than universities here and after few years then they can go to the university. So comparatively it is because of the money factor that they first choose private colleges as tuition fees are half of what they have to pay to the university. (Milan)

Similarly, another student was of the view that,

... I think that one of the main reasons in choosing a private college over a university is its lower tuition fees. Another valid reason I think international students prefer private colleges is because the application procedure is less hectic and the entry requirements are tailored for international students like us as mostly international students have a wide variety of previous educational qualifications that most UK universities won't accept as a basic entry requirement, whereas private institutions are aware of this fact and tailor their courses around this by offering extra modules in the course itself such as foundation levels, English language qualifications etc. to fill in the gaps they require as per entry requirements. (Anil)

Thus, cheap tuition fees and easy access to private colleges with lower admission criteria and less formality led most international students to come to study in UK private colleges rather than UK universities where they have strict admission criteria. However, besides low tuition fees and easy accessibility, the students found it comfortable to adjust to an environment where they had students from their home country already studying, which leads to my sub-theme, 'culture' as explained below.

4.3.3 Culture

Although all the 33 students expressed the view that cost was the main factor for them to choose private colleges over universities, there were some students who shared different opinions and views in addition to the cheap tuition fees. They were of the view that private colleges were more attractive to them because it was easy for them to adjust in private colleges because there were already students from their home country studying there who shared the same cultural background and language, unlike the situation in universities. This made it easier to adapt themselves to the new environment.

...When you are coming from the developing countries to the developed country like the UK, it takes time to adjust as we do not know the UK lifestyle and system. So if we come direct to UK private colleges then it will be easy for us to adjust to the UK environment as there are already many students from our country or from similar culture studying there. Once we finish our studies in private colleges then we can apply for our higher studies to universities as it will be easy for us to understand and adjust

to the UK education system and lifestyle. This way we will be more comfortable and develop our confidence level. (Neha)

Besides, these students found private colleges were very diverse places where international students could feel comfortable. They believe private colleges potentially are more supportive of students who come from different cultures and countries. They frequently have extensive social needs and support requirements which universities cannot provide for, another important factor in their choice as is evident from what a student had to say below:

The college I came to was owned and established by a Nepalese person who had been settled in the UK since decades ago so that convinced me more. Also there were other students from my own country and similar background studying there already so it was easy to adapt. (Sonia)

Another student had this to say:

Basically the weather and the environment are suitable for me. I think the people here are more tolerable to different culture, are more versatile in the UK as compared to other countries. So it is easy to live in here. For me, I had some friends already who were studying here so obviously I preferred the UK as I would be more comfortable here as I knew someone. (Deepak)

It was evident from the interviews conducted that these international students had come to the UK private FE colleges as they felt comfortable studying or being amongst students who belonged to same culture and country as them. At the same time, it helped them to improve their cultural knowledge by exposure to a multi-cultural environment where people from diverse countries live. Consequently, they become familiar or get a chance to interact and familiarise themselves with different values, beliefs, customs and traditions which do they not get to experience back home in their country.

4.3.4 Recruitment Pressure

From the data analysis, it was notable what factors played a very important part in the decision by international students to study in the UK. The role of 'third parties' or

agents was very obvious in their choice of private college for their further studies. The students stated that agents in their home countries had a very big role to play in their decision-making. Out of 33 students who were interviewed, 30 students relied on an agent's help in their UK visa application process. The other three students made direct applications to their colleges. The students stated that many universities and colleges recruit agents in different countries to represent their institutions and attract potential students. Huge commissions are payable to the agents if they succeed in recruiting students as per their targets. Consequently, agents are very active in recruiting and play a crucial role in the recruitment and decision of international students to choose private FE colleges over universities. As one student noted:

...Majority of international students get admissions into private colleges because back in developing countries agents play a very vital role. Most of the agents have an affiliation as a registered agency and they earn huge profit out of it so they advertise in such a way that these are the best colleges in the UK and you get quality education here. So that's the main reason I believe why vast the majority of international students come to private colleges. (Bimal)

The students were of the opinion that the private colleges paid higher commissions to the agents than the universities and therefore there is an incentive to disproportionately recruit for private colleges. Agents actively influence and persuade students to choose private colleges over universities. As Prashant notes,

..These agents don't care about good ranking but are only concerned with their commission, the higher commission they get from any particular college, they recruit more students for them irrespective of how the course and standard of the college would be. These agents also do not recruit for big universities but only for such private colleges, and hence they recruit more for them.

Similarly, Kamal stated:

I was trying for my student visa to come to the UK and the agent that I was seeking help from was only recruiting for private colleges and not any university. So they helped me to find a college, admission and the visa application process. The fees were also affordable so I trusted my agents and applied for my visa.

Further, students also expressed their view that they did not know the difference between private colleges and universities and thought that they were same. They also spoke about their perceptions of what they considered to be false advertising by private colleges and agents posted on their websites and in other media that reassured students they could trust their agents. As Anil stated:

...No one advised me at that time about the difference between private college and university otherwise I would have applied to universities. I thought they were the same. When I viewed the college website, it showed a large campus, good infrastructure and big name but when I came here it was not the case, the college was very small. I thought there will be many students studying there but when I attended the college, I found actually there were only a few students, poor infrastructure, few computers and few lecturers which was not what I had expected.

The role of a 'third party', or agents, has a profound effect on the decision making of these international students. A marketing strategy using agents, false advertisements and the prospect of low tuition fees, as compared to higher university fees, influenced these students' decision to choose private FE colleges over universities.

4.4.1 Status

Another key theme that emerged from the data analysis was the external and social factors that determined the extrinsic goals and ambitions of these international students while they pursued their learning. This theme was named as 'status', which underlined how in their process of learning and achieving their goals their behaviour and factors of motivation changed, not because of their interest, but because of some inseparable outcome such as the visa and immigration status of the international students while they lived here in the UK. The students were questioned in the interview about what they had to say concerning the Points Based System (PBS) introduced by the Home Office for international students and whether it was a right and effective approach to crack down on bogus colleges and students. On this subject, they had a lot of criticism and concern which affected them tremendously. These have been further broken down into two sub-themes – 'being bogus' and 'psychological and emotional conflict' as detailed below.

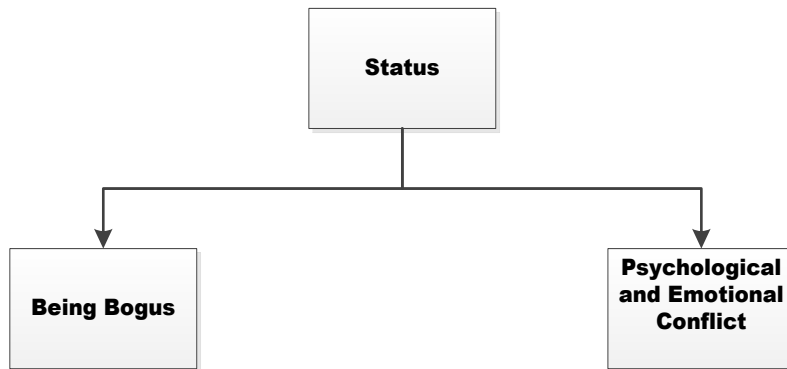


Figure 15: Status: Being Bogus and Psychological and Emotional Conflict

4.4.2 Being Bogus

The main aim of the Points Based System was to allow only genuine students into the country and to crackdown on bogus colleges and students. From the data collected, the students who were interviewed believed that the Points Based System was not successful in cracking down on only bogus students and colleges as the respondent students also became victims of this Points Based System which they expressed was a flawed system. The students were of the opinion that the criteria to meet up the 30 points from their sponsored education provider was very simple and anyone could have achieved it with the help of agents or applying themselves from any private colleges as long as they met the basic requirement for the course. However, a major drawback of the system as stated by students in the interview was meeting up the 10 points for their maintenance section that was very straightforward as no strict checks were made. Since no one would question them from where the funds had come, it was their view that anyone could arrange money and keep it in their account for 28 days, thus satisfying the 10 points criteria required for the maintenance section of the Points Based System, which was a huge advantage for fraudulent colleges and agents recruiting students. Further, the students also expressed in the interview how after the closure of their colleges they were issued with a 60 days' notice from the Home Office to find a new sponsor and if they failed to do so, they had to return home or become illegal immigrants. They mentioned how they risk all their money, time, future hopes and aspirations because of few fraudulent students and colleges who did wrong as mentioned by one student below:

UKVI just closes or shuts down some of the colleges. They suspend or revoke the license but most of the students have no fault of their own and at the end of the day they are issued with a 60 day notice and thus have to leave the country. They do not get their financial return of it, their investment is lost, their time is lost and everything is lost. But yeah, it has been or made a very big impact on genuine international students but you cannot say students are bogus. Hence, the Points Based System has not been that effective. (Bimal)

In contrast to above, however data collected from the interview responses also show that few students were of the view that the Points Based System to some extent is a very good system and transparent but the way the Home Office implemented it was not right approach and needed more stricter checks and vigilance:

Points Based System is a right way to qualify an individual to apply and remain in the UK but I don't think it is an effective approach in cracking down on bogus colleges. When students like me finish their studies in colleges, we are given a progress certificate but that certificate can easily be issued by bogus colleges now. This is evident recently, from the news where we came to know that many colleges are running and established only for visa purposes and to issue fake certificates. So I don't think it is an effective way to crack down on bogus colleges and there should be a different system to crack down on bogus colleges. (Tina)

Further, one student said that because of a few students who were bogus, many students who are genuine have become victims as there seems to be no proper mechanism to protect the genuine students after the crackdown on bogus colleges and students by the Home Office:

You know, when international students come to the UK to study, they don't have this idea about how many bogus colleges do exist in the United Kingdom. So when they come to the UK and they end up in bogus colleges which get closed in the middle of their semester or season then these students do not have any progress and ultimately these students also become bogus, you know, they don't want to be but circumstances become such like the colleges get closed and the students do not have progress, they do not get admission in any colleges. So yes, I think genuine students also face this problem of bogus colleges. (Sagar)

Furthermore the students also were of the opinion that the Home Office is 'unfit for purpose', and the consequences and dilemmas the genuine students are facing is mainly due to the Home Office and college's inability to handle the situation as Deepak says:

...You know it is very sad. I don't know why the immigration department or the government not taking this seriously because it is the matter of life. It is not a joke for genuine students. There must be some way. There is no issue that you must catch the bogus students but there are other ways to do so. I mean coming and closing down all the colleges is not good. And the same college before it was accredited A listed or Highly Trusted from the UKBA and that's what most students check and trust when they are going to any institution as it is stamped and approved by the government. So before approving such colleges, why don't they check whether it is genuine or bogus? After approval, students trust their verdict and then later on you say they are bogus and close them down, which is not practical. (Deepak)

Similarly, Sonia also expressed how she was treated as one of the bogus students when she approached one of the universities for her further studies:

The universities looked down on us because of the media rhetoric that all international students studying at private colleges were bogus so we were looked down and I was told so by one staff in one university that I was a bogus student which was very difficult for me to accept after working so hard and getting good grades. (Sonia)

Students expressed that they had pure intention and were genuinely interested to pursue their studies but were discouraged and felt demotivated as they were treated unfairly and labelled as fraudulent students.

4.4.3 Psychological and Emotional Conflict

All 33 students interviewed had poor impressions of the Points Based System, citing a number of factors that led to their negative experience. They considered the contemporary education system has become a means of maximising profit for some private colleges. This has given rise to serious consequences and implications for genuine students after the closure of their colleges by the Home Office. In the interviews, the students said the immigration rules kept changing and that these changes in policy and rules created a lot of confusion amongst them. No proper guidelines were available to them and they held the colleges responsible for their

predicament. These colleges showed no sympathy towards the affected students, but on the contrary, they sought to take advantage of the situation. As Kushal notes:

...most private colleges run only to make money in a short period of time and recruit students who are not genuine and make no progress. Because of them, genuine students whose intentions are to study and return back to their country with their qualification are affected as colleges are closing down and as such genuine students have to suffer. (Kushal)

Similarly, another student blamed the college and was surprised how anyone without qualifications or experience could open a college here in UK, recruit international students and make money. This was not the case in his home country. Moreover, what frustrated him was that no action was taken against those college owners other than closing down their business. Student were the ones who had to suffer most for no fault of their own:

Back home you have to be qualified and have certain level of good years of experience to start or open up a college. But here anybody could start up a college without any qualification and experience to make money and everybody was running the whole system. The thing was only the students were blamed for this and most of the owners who were running these private colleges were British nationality so the government did not take any step or action against them apart from shutting down their college but instead students were targeted and going through a tough time. (Milan)

Consequently, many students suffered considerable psychological and emotional impacts as they lost all hope after spending so much money on their fees. They left with no qualifications and still legally constrained by so many visa conditions and restrictions. They felt cheated by the college management as no protection or help was given to them when their colleges were shut down:

I have seen many students losing their hope and faith in this country. They regret spending so much money in the college and getting nothing in return.... It's stressful situation when student gets 60 days notice from the UKBA at such situation when bogus college had taken their all money and expect to find another college and pay tuition fees and visa fees.... Many of the colleges had gone into voluntary liquidation with no money back. It's really unfair with genuine studentsand as such international students are left in the lurch by colleges and the UKBA. (Mohammad)

Anil also added to this that,

One of the colleges I was enrolled with was in partnership with University of Wales and I paid around £4000 to them and they issued the CAS letter and then after that the HO again revoked their license and then the college went into administration. I lost my money which was never refunded (Appendix D).

Students also stated in the interviews that they had to endure psychological and emotional stress when the Home Office closed their colleges. They spoke of the anger and frustration they experienced when they were not allowed to complete their course for which they had paid their tuition fees. Students whose colleges were closed down by the HO experienced a sense of panic as this led to their detention and deportation.

Anil shared his experiences:

....I went for holiday to Nepal, my college was running smoothly, it was only when I came back at the airport that I learned that my college was revoked They took me to detention centre and were trying to deport me. I requested them that I had already paid £4000 to the college and was supposed to start my course in February. After one week my course was meant to start which was 14 February and I returned on 6 February I remember. But the HO did not listen to my request because my college license was revoked and it was no fault of mine (Appendix D).

Prashant stated they were not only under the pressure due to their colleges closing down but also from the fear that they would be deported if they were unable to find a new sponsor within the 60 days time frame allowed under HO rules:

There was a lot of negativity vibes and pressure from everywhere for no fault of mine. I had to ask financial help from home to pay fees again. No one gave right advice and information. Even if you had money, you had no time as there were no colleges left who could enrol me for the right course in that 60 period notice which was very short. So I had to keep myself legal in the country and extend my visa and not wait for HO to come and deport me. Such was the scenario and fear.

Some students found the problems and pressure on them were too much to cope with resulting in depression and a need for medication. As Preeti stated:

When I first came to UK, I was very excited as I came with a desire to build up my career... but suddenly my college closed down and all my dreams were shattered and I couldn't get admissions anywhere after that. It was very frustrating and mentally upset I could not focus on anything. My interest in studies has all gone in vain... I came to UK when I was 24 years old and I have wasted all these precious years waiting for my visa and passport. My career is ruined and I feel very frustrated. I was also under depression and had to take medicine and do some counselling which my GP had referred to.

Sneha, too expressed that she suffered from depression when her college was closed down:

I have had so many hurdles and have been so disappointed... I also went through few episodes of depression in 2015 when I could not get any sponsor or admission in any university when my 60 days' notice was issued to me because of the closure of my college. The reason I came to London was to get a Master's degree at any cost and I could not achieve my ambition then I was so depressed and was mentally unstable that time to move from one college to another.

Thus, the consequences for these students studying at private FE colleges have been a huge financial loss and a lot of psychological stress. After having their college closed or its licence suspended, the students not only lost their money which will not be refunded, they were also under tremendous stress which affected their mental health. Consequently, the main concern that most students articulated was the security of those who have been cheated by some greedy and ruthless private education providers. One student noted:

Because of these bogus students and colleges, students who are genuine whose intentions are purely to get their degree and go back are suffering the most in this case as they do not know how the situation of private colleges is in the UK. ...they first come here to study in private colleges and after six months or one year, the college is closed down. Then again they have to suffer because they have already paid their college fee and their expenses and they are not sure if their money will be refunded. Further, they have to apply to another college and arrange again for tuition fees and maintain their bank balance that is very depressing for the students and they are suffering a lot. Their main aim is to get higher education but if such problems like college closure, financial

difficulties and immigration rules exist then they will surely regret for being in the UK. So there is a lot of mental stress going on with genuine international students which is really affecting their time and studies here. (Kamal)

Besides the psychological and emotional repercussions that these international students experience, the change in immigration policy and the attitude of the government towards international students also causes another major challenge for them. This leads to my final theme that has emerged from the data analysis which is the 'impact of immigration policies' and is analysed below.

4.5.1 Impact of Immigration Policy

This was another major key theme that throws light on many issues that concern most international students in private FE colleges which have been closed down by the Home Office. The points based system was introduced to lighten and reduce record flows of immigration and so there is an enormous pressure on the new government to slash immigration as thousands of extra migrants have come into Britain under a supposed tough new points system. This inflow of extra migrants has been a concern not only for the government but also to international students as immigration has become a hot topic. Reforms and rules have been tightened to control immigration which has had a severe impact on international students here in the UK. This has been further broken down into three sub-themes as discussed below -

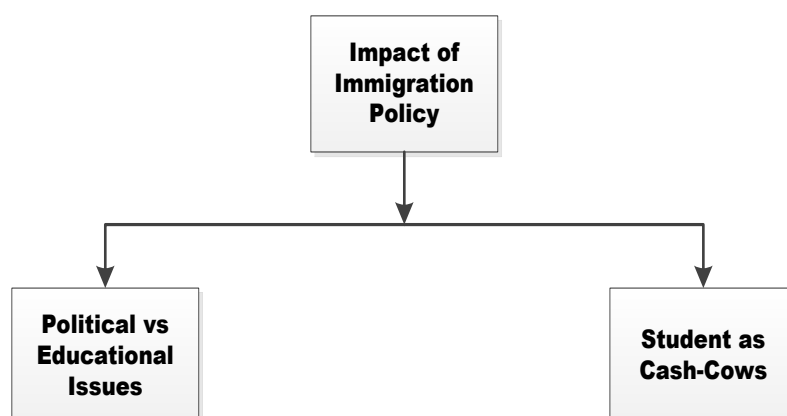


Figure 16: Impact of Immigration Policy: Political vs Educational Issues and Student as Cash-Cows

4.5.2 Political vs Educational Issues

All the 33 students interviewed were of the opinion that immigration has become more a political issue than an educational or social issue. They were strongly of the opinion that the lack of government support to genuine international students in private FE colleges which have been subsequently closed down by HO was due to the political factors as outlined in the election manifesto. The coalition government's pledge to reduce net migration to tens of thousands per year focussed attention on the contribution of international students to net migration. From the data collected, the students strongly believed that the present government will do anything to reduce net migration and as such international students have become the victims -

I cannot say how the UK sees its international students but I can say how political parties see international students because each and every political party has their own agenda and their policies are different. For example, the Conservatives are not so much friendly with immigration, Labour are good for immigrants while the Liberal Party is ok. So it is not the UK people who see us as immigrants but it is the political parties, their policies and the government who sees the international students as immigrants which is not good for us because as an international student I want to be seen by everyone in a very consistent way and not in a different or suspicious way or different perception. I just want them to see me as an international student who has come here to the UK to study, gain some knowledge and to make my future or career rather than seeing or treating me as an immigrant who has come to work and take away all the British people's rights , benefits, etc. (Rakesh)

Further, the students interviewed expressed their concern that in order to meet their election manifesto commitments, the Home Office and government policy have treated both genuine and bogus students as the same. Because of the illicit activity of a few bogus students who came to this country solely to work and with motives other than studying and getting a degree, many genuine international students, like them, have been treated as bogus students and no support or initiative has been offered by the government to support them. As one student said,

...with the crackdown on bogus colleges and students by the UKBA, all students have been included in the same bogus category. If you are an international student then everyone looks at us as though we are all bogus students. If there are few bogus

students then we are all categorised as bogus students. This is really not good for any of us, especially for genuine students. Apart from genuine students being categorised as bogus students, the government keeps changing immigration rules. It would be better if once they introduce any new rules to not change it for 2 to 3 years. They make rules for international students and give us only few months or less time to comply with the new rules which is really frustrating as rules keep changing so frequently that we are confused as to what should we do in order to comply with the visa rules and requirements. So as a genuine student I am not happy about it. (Suman)

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, rules also keep changing and as such many students interviewed said that it becomes very difficult for them to keep themselves updated and to focus on their studies:

...I came here in private institution and later change to some university. But if then I have to reflect upon that then it is really difficult like you have to renew your visa and everything to continue your studies and the rules keep changing. You are not a lawyer that you can keep track of all these things unless you are studying law. So yeah, I mean it becomes really difficult when it comes to extending your stay or continuing your education it becomes really difficult. (Sunil)

Another student also expressed his discontent and said:

Students invest money and time with a purpose in mind but the UK does not understand that. The harsh treatment of international students which does not truly reflect how much financial investment they contribute to the UK economy. They are bringing new rules against students so that they leave the UK as soon as possible. Closing colleges, giving limited time and bringing restriction is clear way to kick out students. International students are victimised and thrown like a tissue paper. Discriminatory politics from the government that make us feel unwelcome. International students are included in migration targets. All these are very disheartening and we don't feel that we are treated fairly. (Mohammad)

Therefore, under such circumstances, the students were very discouraged and felt that they were not welcome in the UK in spite of paying for tuitions fees and other facilities. Therefore, they were of the view that the UK government treated them just

like 'cash-cows' which constitutes my next sub-theme for this section of my major theme which is 'impact of immigration policy'.

Furthermore, from the data analysis, it was also explicit that none of the students who were interviewed had any intention to stay in the UK after they completed their course. They wanted to get a degree so that some could start up their own business or work for a better employer or utilise whatever knowledge and experience they had gathered in the UK productively back home. As Tina said:

I plan to go back to my country and will look for some job in the banking sector which has been my dream or will start my own business. I have a family business as well so maybe I will help in that.

Kamal too expressed similar thoughts:

After I complete my course, I will go back to my country and whatever I have learned here I will try to implement at my home country. Mostly I would like to share my good experiences here and hopefully implement whatever knowledge and skills that I have gained which will be beneficial to my country.

4.5.3 Student as 'cash-cows'

From the data analysis, the international students who were studying at private FE colleges expressed that they are not happy with the way the UK government has treated them after the closure of their colleges. They feel that they are just treated like 'cash cows' by the fraudulent colleges and agents in the form of tuition fees to the UK which contributes tremendously towards the UK economy but when it comes to the UK government responding to their concerns, they did not act promptly or in the interests of these students. As one student pointed out:

International students, I think are like cash cows.... they bring a lot of money, you know for short term. International students come to this country and pay like about 15 to 20 grand a year whereas the same, let's say the domestic students, pay like seven to eight grand and then you know as a result of which international students, I think so yes, British takes us as international students bring a lot of money to the British economy. So I think, they think they are like cash cows. (Sagar)

The students who were interviewed expressed that the recruitment of international students to the UK is a more like a business especially more in case of students who come to private colleges. The colleges is only interested in recruiting students so that they make money from the tuition fees that they pay. After their purpose is met, they treat them badly and they are faced with tough visa rules and policies and label them as bogus. One student adds;

In my view, the UK sees its international students as a business. They don't have any future plans or measures for them in place. They just are keen in bringing in international students to the country, since they pay tuition fees, spend more here which is a good source of revenue and after their purpose is met to send them back by imposing tough visa rules and calling them bogus.. (Kamal)

Many international students perceive the government to be passive when it comes to supporting them through legislation to address the problems they have experienced. On the one hand, international students are treated like 'cash cows' in order to boost the UK economy and on the other hand, the government policies are perceived as unfair and inflexible making it difficult for some students to enjoy a valuable learning experience. The students felt that they were not treated fairly despite making a significant contribution towards the UK economy:

At the moment, the UK government, um... I think because of the political situation they are very aggressive towards the international students and they are also saying that we are foreign criminals....Many statements have been released from the Home Office and Home Secretary Theresa May which proves that international students are no longer welcomed or treated fairly these days in the UK. (Milan)

Another student had to say with regards to this;

For international students in UK, honestly it is a worrying situation. The UK sees international students as a source of money to help in their economy. Students are an immigrant that is how this government thinks about us. They do not treat us very well. All they are concern is whether we paid home office fees or not and whether we paid our tuition fees. They think student visa is an easy way to get in the UK and once student comes they bring lots of money and pay taxes. And in return the UK treat students harshly by changing rules and want them to leave country by closing almost everything. (Jaffar)

The international students were also asked about their views and opinion on the growing concern over the number of migrants in the UK and its impact on international students. From the data analysis, a mixed response was derived. Some favoured the growing number of migrants as they felt that it adds to the diverse culture of UK when different people from different country come to live here. They also get to learn and share different cultures and experiences which help towards building a multicultural and integrated society. As one student notes:

UK has mix and diverse culture as different people from all over the world come here. There is respect for every culture and religion here. So I don't think immigration should be a problem if they welcome them because at least they will share and learn different culture and share experiences. There is cultural integration which is a good thing so I don't think migrants are affecting international students.”(Neha)

Further another student said:

I don't think it has personally affected me but obviously if you see the larger picture then there is growing competition and it might be in terms of jobs or may be in terms of getting places in the universities so the higher number of migrants, the higher the competition. But the government might be interested on other figures such as people claiming benefits, the government being able to deliver all the services that are in place to the growing immigrants and the growing students. I think those might be the concern but then it has not affected me personally or at least I cannot relate to anything like that.” (Sunil)

However, on the other hand the majority of the international students were against the growing number of migrants as they said it indirectly affected them. They said, that most migrants come to UK to live a better life by claiming benefits, not paying taxes and so on which adds to the misery of international students. The government's pledge to reduce net migration has certainly affected international students as the government has already proposed a new policy and strict visa rules against these students while the migrants from EU countries enjoy and benefit the most as compared to them. One student said:

Yeah, the growing number of migrants in the UK is affecting international students because many people are coming to the UK in different routes and they are just coming here to settle and want to take or claim the benefits that UK provides. Basically, they are just misusing the system. But the government is only concentrating on international students and targeting them when we have visa to study and stay here. Moreover we pay taxes and do not claim benefits or public funds unlike the other immigrants. But the government is interested in only troubling us and not those people who have no right to live and work here but are still claiming benefits and misusing the system and because of them we are being treated or looked down in a negative way (Milan)

Further another student had to say:

I am not sure whether it is this government or it is the present situation that is targeting the students because they are thinking that the students are part of immigrants....Students are not allowed to claim benefits. We also pay contribution to the National Insurance through the part time jobs we do, which is far greater than people who are clinging on to the benefits. They also have the benefits of paying fewer fees which is one third of what we pay and on top of that they also get government loans. So international students pay three times more fees than the home or EU students here and they are being targeted as if we are a burden to the government which is not fair. (Ravi)

Thus, there seems to be some kind of xenophobia concerning immigration. Next, we discuss the implications of each theme and how they support or challenge the literature review in the light of the Self-Determination Theory and Organismic Integration Theory.

4.6 Discussion and Implications of the Key Themes

This section of the chapter now presents the implications of each key theme followed by the final findings of the study in the next chapter. Firstly, it was necessary to understand what motivated students to want to come to study in the UK and what were the benefits and challenges they faced while they pursued their studies in UK private FE colleges. Using the Self-Determination Theory, I will differentiate the intrinsic and extrinsic factors of motivation of 33 international students who have been studying at various UK private FE colleges.

According to Deci & Ryan, people are motivated to act by very different types of factors with highly varied experiences and consequences which can either be because they value an activity, because there is a strong external coercion or may be urged into action by a bribe (Deci and Ryan, 2002). They can behave from a sense of personal commitment to excel or from fear of being subject to surveillance with the change in the circumstances and situations they encounter in their experience. The data suggest these international students studying at private FE colleges are also motivated to come to study in the UK for various social, economic, cultural and psychological factors. For past few decades the practice of going to a foreign country for further study has been very popular, especially among the younger generation, which is also evident from the data analysis. Though for the concept of studying abroad, education is supposed to be the primary component, there are many other forces shaping its facets and dimensions. All those aspects do not necessarily come into play in every case; however, they do create an impact on the way people become motivated for further studies outside their home country.

However, whatever the factors may be, it is very interesting to note that these international students have been very competent and highly motivated back in their home country from the beginning of their application process in order to come to a new country to pursue their goals and aims. The decision to apply and go through all the necessary arrangements such as financial arrangements, choosing and doing research to find out which colleges to apply to, which course or programme to study or in most cases to approach the agents who would help them in their application procedures and rigorous visa arrangements, is itself a very self-determining factor which these international students seem to have internalised even before they land here in the UK.

This is evident from what one student had to say in an interview, which emphasises the strong urge and motivational drive in international students to come to UK and pursue their goals and dreams:

When I was young, I had a dream of becoming an Electronic Engineer. I started studying towards it ... to pursue a career as an engineer. I wanted to be educated through an institution well known for their reputation and quality of teaching. The infrastructure and facilities at universities in the UK are known for their advanced

development ... I personally was attracted to the UK because of the facilities available and the quality teaching I would get..... I also saw bright future prospects after I graduated and with London considered to be one of the financial capitals of the world I think I have a lot more opportunities here to build my career than anywhere else (Salman).

However, it is interesting to note here that Salman imagines building a career in London rather than back home which gives us a shadow of doubt as to whether he has any plans of returning back after his studies or not. Also it is worth to reflect how he assumes that his student visa would automatically transfer to work visa considering the abolition of post study work visa which allowed any international student to gain work experience for two years after they graduated.

Another student stated:

Coming from Asian background, there is always a desire to go abroad and study so as to get new experience. I always wanted to go abroad for my studies and in 2009 there was a good opportunity and everyone was drifting towards the UK and I also applied for a student visa and was lucky to get one and came to the UK (Monica).

Even though these students were aware that coming to a new country, away from their home country, they had to face various challenges such as adaptability, culture shock, language barriers, emotional and psychological consequences to name a few, they still possess a strong determination to come out and experience in order to fulfil their dreams. There is a sense of connection and they try to relate themselves to the new environment and culture. This is evident in what Sneha said:

...UK provides a diverse study option that matches your goals and interest. UK is also known for different cultures and people from different parts of the world and the best way of finding out about another culture is by experiencing by oneself.

This desire to excel and achieve their goals comes from within themselves and is highly self-motivating in these international students who came to study at UK private FE colleges. In another interview, Bimal shared similar experiences as to how he first came to the UK with high hopes and dreams and with a determination to achieve a UK degree. The college he was studying at was closed by the Home Office and he was not allowed to continue his course and compelled to return back to his country in

the middle of his studies which was very depressing for him and his parents. But he was so determined and motivated that he did not give up and after few months applied for student visa again and he was granted a visa to come to the UK. Bimal is now pursuing his Master's degree in a very well reputed university:

Back in 2010, I came to the UK to study in a private college for my further education. The private college where I was enrolled suddenly closed down as it was not in UKVI list of sponsors and my visa was curtailed and I had to find another college or sponsor. I made a decision to go back home and I went back. After a couple of months, roughly say around 4 months, I did a research on the universities and I reapplied and came back to the UK again to fulfil my dream. So that was one of the negative consequences I had to go through in my learning experience (Bimal).

Similarly, another student, Anil shared his experience of how he was kept in a detention centre because his college closed down and despite all the difficulties, he did not give up and pursued his dream. Anil has recently successfully completed his Master's Degree, also from a reputable university in the UK:

The immigration officers at Heathrow airport did not allow me to enter UK. When I went for holiday to Nepal, my college was running smoothly, it was only when I came back at the airport that I learned that my college was revoked and Home Office took 14 months to decide. It was a very unfortunate incident. They took me to detention centre and were trying to deport me. They kept me for 110 days. But I did not give up hope and within three years, I completed my Bachelor's degree and finally passed in flying colours. After that I continued to pursue my Master's degree (Appendix D).

This indicates that these students who came to the UK for their further education are self-motivated and autonomous. Given the right support and learning atmosphere they can go the extra miles to achieve and fulfil their dreams. Besides being intrinsically and extrinsically motivated, these students, when coming to study in UK private FE colleges to pursue their goals, also had good motives as they intended to go back home after completing their course. This is in sharp contrast to the long debates where the government has tried to portray these international students as not having any intention of returning to their country but staying in the UK. The data further suggest that although these international students are motivated by a desire for an international career and gaining valuable experience, they see their time in UK only as a short-term

engagement and have a pure intention to return back to their home country. For example, this is evident in the case of two students who are now back home. They said;

I am working as an accountant here and also trying to finish my ACCA course modules which I could not finish in UK. I don't have to think about any visa issue here so I am determined to work hard and probably will plan my Master's degree soon (Prashant Appendix C).

Similarly, Kiran also said;

After returning back from UK I have started my own construction business from last year and I am very happy as it is doing well. My intention was when I went to UK to get my degree, learn and explore and return back home and utilise those experiences and knowledge that I had gained and I am exactly doing that now. .

This, therefore, raises policy questions about restrictive policies on international student visas and working entitlements and the longer-term impact it may have on the global reputation of Higher Education in the UK. However, this is in sharp contrast to what Salman had said above where he thinks he could stay back and build a career in UK.

Using the Self-Determination Theory as my framework I differentiate the key themes in this research as intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as detailed in Chapter 2 and further discuss the various conditions that fosters each in international students while they pursue their studies in UK private FE colleges. The first two main themes, 'aspiration' and 'choice' describes what leads to intrinsic motivation in international students followed by the other two main themes, 'status' and 'immigration policy' as the factors that leads to extrinsic motivation in these international students.

Earlier in my literature review in Chapter 2, I had incorporated Mazzarol & Soutar's (2002) Push and Pull factors (Figure 1.1) and discussed some of the major push-pull factors, which drove many international students to choose the UK for their studies. The data shows that the quality of education and reputation was the most prominent factor for these international students to choose UK, which involved a significant sacrifice and financial investment from them or their parents. This may be identified as

rewards for the student in relation to their own goals, rewards from parents, or gaining social approval and/or feeling that they 'should' or 'ought' to study abroad under the influence of intrinsic and extrinsic goals. Intrinsic goals are meaningful relationships and personal growth and societal contact, while extrinsic goals may be related to financial success, popularity, fame and physical health outcomes.

However, besides the positive aspects and benefits, the international students also had to face many challenges and problems such as culture shock, language barriers and a new environment. But the biggest challenge they faced, as the data suggests, was the immigration rules and the impact it had on their lives and motivation after the closure of their colleges by the Home Office. Students expressed how they were initially attracted by the new Points Based System introduced then by the Labour Government and the good future prospects of UK immigration policy such as the post study work visa which allowed international students to gain work experience for 2 years after the completion of their course. But when they applied and came to the UK they found just the opposite of what they perceived to be the case while they were back home in their country. The data suggest that these students were of the opinion that private FE colleges where they were enrolled were operating mainly for business purposes and were commercialised to such an extent that most of them were declared bogus and closed down by the Home Office.

The UK economy benefits significantly from the presence of international students. As such, education is regarded as an industry whereby the incoming funds from international students is capitalised towards the growth of the economy and has opened doors for competition and innovation which will be beneficial to both consumers and students. However, a significant revelation from the data was that, as a business, the commercialisation of private colleges was not only advantageous but also carried some disadvantages along with it. It created a negative impact on the overall quality of education and maintenance of education such that their provision led to serious doubts as institutions are becoming more commercially oriented. Education policies are now tied to economic gains and as such, liberalisation and marketisation of education has had, and continues to have profoundly damaging consequences for the British education system and society more generally (Beckman and Cooper, 2004).

The students studying at private FE colleges who were once highly motivated and aspired to come to the UK, have now different opinion and perception about UK. The data suggest that these students who were once intrinsically motivated to pursue their goals are now more extrinsically motivated because of their need for a separate or different outcome which will be discussed. This drift or shift in them is due to various factors which have been categorised as my other two key themes in this research namely, 'Status' and 'Immigration Policy' which are referred as to extrinsic motivation in this study.

The data suggest that the impact of the UK government's policy on non-EU international students studying in private FE colleges that were closed down has been very severe and as a result they are facing many barriers and social implications due to these new policies, as mentioned by the students who participated in this study. The closing of colleges during the middle of their studies has led to severe consequences for many students, as they were left with no support from the college as well as the UK government and were demotivated. But what is interesting to note from the data analysis is that almost all students who were interviewed for this study in one way or other blamed the UK government and colleges for not supporting them when their colleges closed down. However, none of the students spoke about the support or help that their own governments through consulates or embassies provided them. It is also not clear if they sought for any kind of support and help from their own government or associations that may have helped them in the situation they were in to some extent.

They expressed in the interview that the Points Based System (PBS) may be an effective way to crack down on bogus colleges, but it had severe, perhaps unintended consequences for genuine students who go through a lot of psychological and emotional conflict as they have lost all their hope and after spending so much of money for their fees. They are left at the end with no qualification, no degree and legally bound by so many visa conditions and restrictions. They feel let down by the UK government as no protection or help is given to them when their colleges are closed or shut down for no fault of theirs. One can argue that perhaps if had seek for help from their own government or any organisations than may be some kind of support could have been

expected which they clearly did not receive as is evident from the data analysis and the interviews conducted.

The data also suggested that these students expressed their strong dissatisfaction with regards to the government policy and immigration rules. They felt genuine students like them have been treated badly and not in a fair manner as they have to go through the same rules and restrictions implemented for those few bogus students whose intentions are not to study here but remain illegally. In their decision to come to study in the UK they experience various hardships, from coping with a different culture, a new learning environment, language problems to pressure from Government policy.

Furthermore, the data also suggested that after the closure of their colleges by the Home Office, the government made no distinction between genuine students and bogus students. As such, the term 'bogus' is debatable. Even in the case where bogus students or colleges are exposed genuine students become victims and have to go through the same vigorous visa restrictions and work restrictions that only the students who have done wrong should be facing. However, what was most interesting is that all the 33 students expressed that they did not get any support from UK government and their colleges. None of the participants suggested that they seek help or support from their own government or embassies in UK or national organizations that would have helped them to voice their dilemmas they were facing to the higher authorities. It therefore raises many questions and doubts when they only blame the UK government when they did not approach their government to help them once their colleges was closed down and they were struggling to live in UK.

Further due to media rhetoric with regards to strict immigration policy, closure of many private FE colleges and the fear that students at private FE colleges were left stranded led to the perception that UK was no longer welcoming international students. This demotivates a number of aspiring international students who still find the UK a favorite destination to study.

Earlier in my literature review, I had discussed how private colleges and students were termed bogus and the various measures brought in by the government to control immigration. Keeping that information as my background and from the data analysis,

it is evident private colleges were closed down by the Home Office because there was a fear that student status was used as 'backdoor' route to long-term immigration by non-bonafide students to enter the UK. However, the students interviewed also raised the issue that the Points Based System (PBS) is in itself flawed and raises questions and doubts about the term 'bogus' and its main purpose in the light of what the students have had to say from the data collected for this study.

The data further suggested how students were dissatisfied once the Home Office closed their colleges and the consequences they had to suffer in this whole period. They not only had the challenge to keep themselves motivated, but also find ways and alternatives to keep themselves legal in the country especially after they were issued with a 60 days notice, whereby they have to find a new sponsor.

Therefore, the data suggests that external factors like the PBS play a very vital role in determining the extrinsic goals and ambitions of these international students. The inappropriate system makes most international students look bogus when they have pure and genuine intention to study and pursue their dreams. In this process, they go through a lot of emotional stress. Hence, the data suggested that the government should be taking action against those who run these bogus private colleges and agents who assist these colleges to recruit students rather than penalising the international students studying at UK private FE colleges and not allowing them to complete their course through no fault of their own. This definitely discourages these students who were once highly motivated but now are left with nothing which indeed frustrates them to the extent that most students admitted that they had suffered from depression as they are caught in between their goals and immigration rules.

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that these international students do possess both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation which is evident from the themes that have been analysed and presented. Intrinsically motivated behaviours in these students represent the prototype of self-determination. That is, they emanate from the self and are fully endorsed and as such they aspire to come out of their country for quality education, better future prospects and exposure. Conversely, extrinsically motivated behaviours are instrumental in nature and not self-determined due to some inseparable consequences like the closure of their colleges, strict immigration rules

and hostile environment policy that makes them feel unwelcome and hinders their motivation and development.

4.7 Fusion of Self-Determination Theory and Organismic Integration Theory

In this section, I readdress my conceptual framework on which this study is based, which is a fusion of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Organismic Integration theory (OIT), a sub-theory within the SDT. Organismic Integration Theory (OIT) was propounded by Deci & Ryan (1985), to detail the different forms of extrinsic motivation and the contextual factors that either promote or hinder internalization and integration of the regulation for these behaviours. In this study, the concept of internalization describes how one's motivation for behaviour can range from amotivation or unwillingness, to passive compliance, or to active personal commitment. This can be related to these international students' experience of studying at private FE colleges and the various barriers and social consequences they had to face after the closure of their colleges by the Home Office, which affected their level of motivation.

According to Organismic Integration Theory (OIT), there are four different types of extrinsic motivation; external regulation, introjection, identification and integration. In this study, these four types of extrinsic motivation are further expanded and correlated to the behaviour and motivation of students studying at colleges that have been closed by the Home Office using the key themes that have emerged from the data using thematic analysis. Initially, I identified from the data different factors of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in these 33 students and correlated the extrinsic factors of motivation of these students with the key themes that have emerged in the study. I evaluate how, when a behaviour is self-determined, the regulatory process becomes choice, but when it is controlled, the regulatory process becomes compliance, or in some cases defiance. Using this framework, I also determine the intention of these students, whether their behaviour is regulated due to internal or external factors, which in the process, either promotes or hinders their personal growth and motivation.

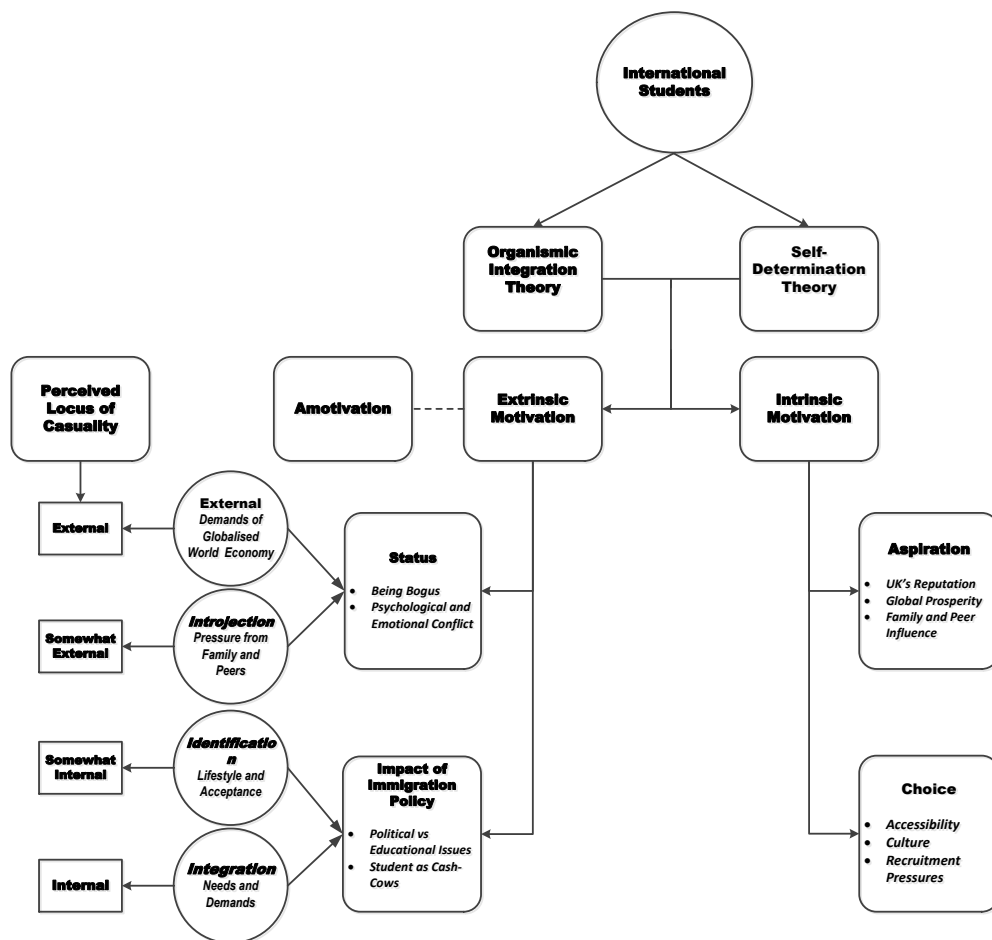


Figure 17: Final Model based on the Fusion of Self-Determination Theory and Organismic Integration Theory

In the figure above, we can see different types of motivation being described from left to right, detailing the extent to which the motivation for one's behaviour emanates from oneself, that is, self-determined. At the far left of the self-determined continuum is *amotivation*, the state of lacking the intention to act. When amotivated people either do not act at all, or act without intent, they just go through the motions. Since amotivation results from not valuing an activity or feeling competent enough to do it, or not expecting it to yield a desired outcome I will not focus on amotivation as these students are already highly motivated and self-determined prior to their arrival in the UK. Their determination, level of motivation and competence is evident from their decision to come to a foreign land to pursue their goals and dreams.

For the purpose of this study, I will only emphasise the four different types of extrinsic motivation: *external regulation*, *introjection*, *identification* and *integration*. At the far right of the continuum is the classic state of *intrinsic motivation*, which is defined as the doing of an activity for its inherent satisfaction. It is highly autonomous and represents the prototypic instance of self-determination. By contrast, extrinsically motivated behaviours cover the continuum between amotivation and intrinsic motivation, varying in the extent to which their regulation is autonomous, as is the case in this study with these students whose behaviour is determined by different factors or circumstances which can be due to internal or external contingency.

Based on the Organismic Integration Theory, the first type of extrinsic motivation is the *external regulation* where behaviours are performed to satisfy an external demand or reward contingency. This has been further identified and correlated with the first major theme that has emerged from the data analysis which is 'Status' and constitutes the extrinsic motivation of the students interviewed as shown in figure 17 above. These students assume that getting a UK degree will give them better future prospects and lifestyle. They are influenced by the demands of the job market and global economy to the extent that the requirement to be a graduate and universally employable puts a lot of pressure on them, either to choose to gain a foreign degree to get a good qualification and job or to be content with their home degree and lesser prospects. These students have an *external perceived locus of causality* and their behaviour is conditioned because of an external contingency as stated by Deepa:

...the vast number of people attracted, in my opinion, due to the easy access towards the job market after graduating. The value of British currency is among one of the highest in the world so people from the developing countries also see this as an incentive. Another reason is the connection to the huge European market and easy access to Europe where they will have different opportunities to build their career further. Some people dream of having a free life and living in a carefree society (Deepa).

The second type of extrinsic motivation is the *introjected regulation* where one takes in a regulation but does not accept it as one's own. It is quite controlling as people perform such actions with the feeling of pressure in order to avoid guilt or anxiety or to attain ego-enhancement or pride. This has been identified and correlated with the next major theme that emerged from the data analysis which is; '*psychological and*

emotional conflict'. International students at private FE colleges undergo this pressure and conflict after the closure of their colleges and consequently their hopes and dreams of achieving a UK degree are not fulfilled. They experience a lot of emotional and psychological conflict as they are confused and find it difficult to meet the expectations of their parents who have sacrificed their earnings for their child's better future. Additionally, they are frustrated by their inability to get the UK degree to which they had aspired and to compete in this globalised world, irrespective of what these students want or feel. Although this regulation is internal to the students, introjected behaviours are not experienced as fully part of the self and thus still have a *somewhat external perceived locus of causality*. In other words, although introjected regulation is internal to these students, it bears more resemblance to external control than to self-determined forms of regulation because it involves coercion or seduction from their parents and external factors such as closure of colleges and therefore does not entail their true choice. This is evident from what one student had to say:

I had to live in fear of being deported by the HO and other problems along with it when my college closed down. It was not my fault, but since my college lost their licence, all international students studying there were the victims. At that period, my intention and aim was to complete my studies and I was highly motivated to finish my course in couple of years' time....One problem after another cropped up, from changing college, to paying fees, change in immigration rules, etc. There was just no end to it. I was hoping it would end one day and was being positive, but each time I was very disappointed and I lost my interest in studies. I was very demotivated and I felt very helpless but I had to pick up myself, so I took a stand and decided that this was enough and I returned back home (Prashant, Appendix C).

Likewise, Sonia said she was in a dilemma as she could not decide what to do:

I did not get admission nor was I accepted anywhere. None of the colleges accepted me.... I had no choice but to apply to some colleges as my 60 days notice was running out, but still no college wanted to give me admission because of the visa curtailment letter issued to me by the Home Office. I had to keep myself legal in the country.

Similarly, another student said that his parents did not believe his college was closed down. The resultant guilt and shame he would have to face if he went back exemplified another source of conflict back home:

No one believed it back home when I told them colleges were closing down. They all thought I was not focussed on my studies and making excuses, but later they heard and learned from the media and news and my parents were worried about me. Also, it is a matter of reputation too when you go back home....If I go without any degree, people, society will talk about me and it is very embarrassing for me and my parents (Sheela, Appendix F).

Preeti also expressed a similar feeling when she told her family members about her situation:

Earlier, when I told people at home about my college closure, no one believed me, but now they know the scenario and are surprised as colleges don't get closed back home because of student issues (Appendix E)

The third type of extrinsic motivation is *regulation through identification* where a person comes to value the behaviour, identify with and accept the regulatory process they are going through. This has been identified and correlated with the next major theme that emerged from the data analysis which is *'lifestyle and acceptance'*, where in their process of learning, these students have not only accepted the differences of culture, lifestyle and language but also the various challenges they have faced due to changes in immigration policy, specifically the closure of their colleges. As a result, they have now identified and accepted these differences and challenges as a way of living in order to pursue their goals and ambitions. With such identification, their regulatory process has become more fully a part of the self and so they perform activities more willingly. Their behaviours, although regulated, are considered more autonomous or self-determined in contrast to earlier behaviour which was regulated by external factors or introjects. Identification allows them to feel a sense of choice or volition. Their motivation is now extrinsic because the activity they performed primarily because of its scope, usefulness or instrumentality to the goal of improving their living standards and accomplishing their ambitions has now become more interesting for them. Nonetheless, their behaviour is relatively self-determined because these students do it willingly for personal reasons rather than any external pressure and so they have a *somewhat internal perceived locus of causality*. As one student noted:

The reason I came to London was to get Master's degree at any cost and I could not achieve my ambition. I was so depressed and was mentally unstable at that time,

having to move from one college to another ...I have had so many hurdles and have been so disappointed that now I have just learnt to go with the flow and not worry much but to accept whatever comes my way (Rita)

Similarly, this is also reflected by another student who stated:

Sometimes I just want to leave it all and go, but if I have to go empty-handed I would have never come here. So I am trying my best till the last moment. I live with my two children and husband here and they are dependent on my visa so their passport is also in the possession of the Home Office so we cannot travel either. Also, even if I decide to go back home I will have to start from scratch and it will be difficult for me and my children to adapt (Preeti, Appendix E).

Finally, the last type of extrinsic motivation is *integrated regulation*, which occurs when identified regulations have been fully assimilated to the self. This has been identified and correlated with the final theme that emerged from the data analysis which is; *'needs and demands.'* This means these students under study have been evaluated and brought into congruence with their other values and needs, as evidenced by identifying and accepting their needs and regulation of behaviour then integrating and behaving as per the needs and demands of the immigration rules. What was pressure and shocking now becomes a means of living for them. They have accepted the various challenges imposed on them by the UK government's immigration policy and the numerous barriers encountered in their learning experience here in the UK and so they have *internal perceived locus of causality*. As Sneha notes:

The UK sees its international students as outsiders. Government has tightened the immigration rules and they have made our life tougher which makes us feel unwelcome. It's clear that the UK sees international students as a big problem so they are trying every possible thing to reduce international student numbers....despite them paying double the fees as compared to home students. ...sometimes I feel the UK sees its international students as opportunists.

Deepa also expressed a similar view:

In the current situation, the UK sees its international students as a problem. They don't want us. They are trying every possible way to close down colleges and other routes so that student return back home. The UK thinks all the immigrants who come to the

UK are here to claim benefits and to take advantages of all the facilities which absolutely are the wrong thoughts. The UK has real problems with immigration.

Therefore, from the above discussion, we can summarise that different forms of extrinsic motivation identified in these students does regulate their behaviour. This further compels or urges them to behave and regulate their life in such a way that it either promotes or hinders their personal growth and motivation. These factors, as based on OIT, can be either internal or external perceived loci of causality (as shown earlier in Figure 12 above), and due to a number of factors that ultimately makes them more self-determined to attain separable outcomes rather than for their inherent enjoyment. In addition, using the concept of Organismic Integration Theory to interpret the data, it can also be illustrated that the pressure and demands of the global world economy has a negative impact on these students who came to the UK to pursue their goals and fulfil the demands of the labour market, especially after their colleges were closed down. In their process of learning, they experience hardship due to the closure of colleges and the imposition of strict visa rules that make them look fraudulent through no fault of their own. Consequently, they endure a lot of emotional stress and conflict due to external factors such as closure of their college, strict immigration rules, no support from the UK government and their own governments that force them to regulate their behaviour. These factors compel them to accept a way of living that they must cope with. Thus, they try to integrate into a new way of living imposed on them by the needs and demands of society and the government. All these are internal but still they are self-determined and their motivations are highly extrinsic.

According to OIT, external and introjected regulations are said to be controlled and ill-internalised regulatory styles evident in these students whose behaviour and level of motivation are purely governed by external factors. These include meeting global demands, satisfying and meeting the expectations and norms imposed upon them by parents and society in contrast to identification and integration regulations which are said to be more autonomous and facilitate their performance and growth. These controlled forms of extrinsic motivation versus autonomous forms of extrinsic motivation can be identified with the different categories of students (Category A, B and C) that I distinguished earlier in Table 4: Category of students (pg. 86). From the data analysis it is evident that students who are still waiting for the outcome of their

visas and those who returned home (Category A and Category C respectively) can be identified as having controlled forms of extrinsic motivation. Those students who were motivated and moved on, in spite of the hardship, and realised their dreams and achieved their degrees (Category B) can be identified as having autonomous forms of motivation as shown below:

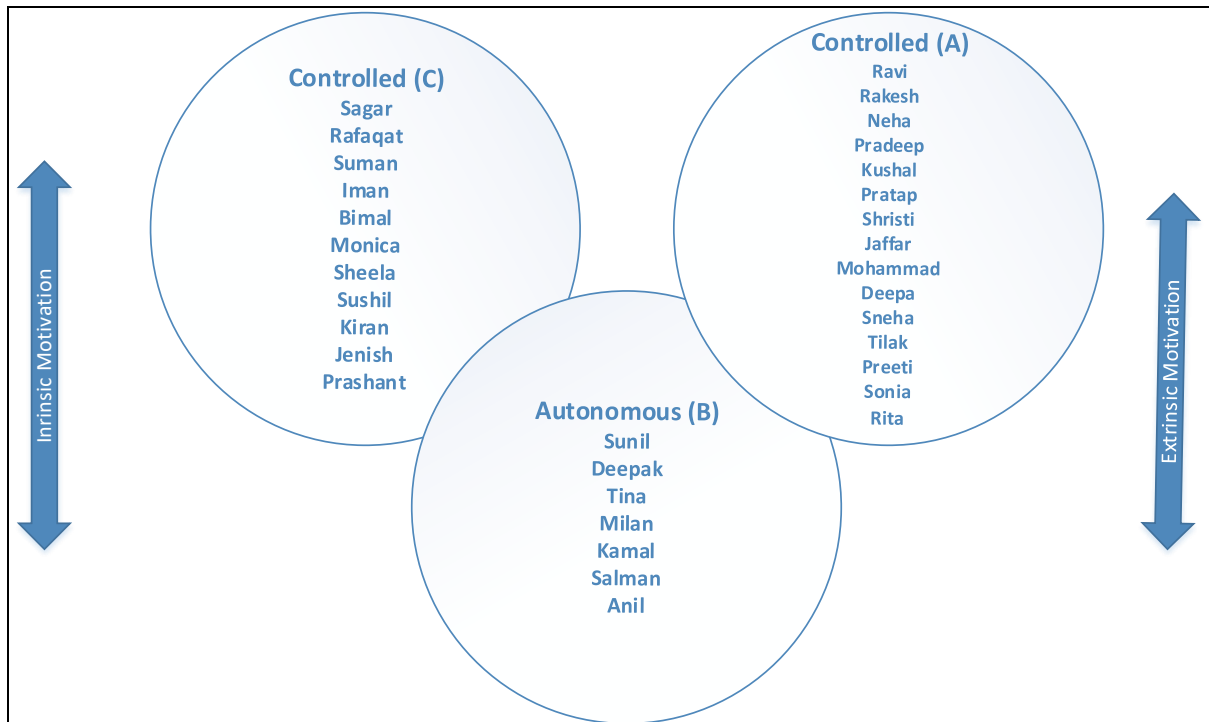


Figure 18: Categorisation of Student's Controlled and Autonomous forms of Motivation.

It is important to note, however, that although integrated regulation bears some resemblance to intrinsic motivation such as behaving willingly, being creative and displaying conceptual or intuitive understanding, they are still very different. Intrinsic motivation in the subject students is characterized by interest in the activity itself, whereas integrated regulation is characterized by the activity being personally important for a valued outcome, such as the UK qualification or degree or to ensure a legal right to be in the country.

Different studies, as mentioned in the literature review, have confirmed these findings concerning types of extrinsic motivation, showing for example that more autonomous extrinsic motivation is associated with greater engagement (Connell & Wellborn,

1990), better performance (Miserandino, 1996), less dropping out (Vallerand & Bissonnette, 1992), higher quality learning (Grolnick & Ryan, 1987) and greater psychological well-being (Sheldon & Kasser, 1995), among other outcomes. This is evident in the students in category B who in spite of various challenges still managed to find another sponsor/college and moved on, unlike the students in the other two categories.

No doubt greater internalization gives manifold adaptive advantages (Ryan, Kuhl, & Deci, 1997), including more behavioural effectiveness (due to lessened conflict and greater access to personal resources) and enhanced well-being. However, the issue now arises; how to promote the autonomous regulation of extrinsically motivated behaviours in these students to achieve psychological growth, integration, constructive social development and personal growth.

Since extrinsically motivated behaviours are not inherently interesting and must initially be externally prompted, the primary reason these students are likely to be willing to behave in a certain way is that they are valued by significant others to whom they feel (or would like to feel) connected, whether that be family, peer groups or society. This suggests that the catalyst for facilitating internalization is fostering a sense of belongingness and connectedness to the persons, group, or culture. In SDT it is referred to as a sense of *relatedness* where individuals need to experience a sense of belonging and attachment to other people. However, with the strict immigration rules and a hostile environment policy, it is extremely difficult for the students in categories A and B to experience a sense of belonging and attachment as they feel very unwelcome by the UK government and its approach to the closure of private FE colleges. This can be identified with 15 students from Category A (Waiting for visa/passport) that I mentioned above, who, in spite of being extrinsically motivated (controlled form of motivation), still do not feel a sense of belonging or 'relatedness'. This is due to the circumstances they experience after the closure of their colleges, not knowing which direction to take as they wait for their visa decision from the HO. Similarly, students in Category B, whilst showing a greater level of autonomous extrinsic motivation, still do not feel a sense of belongingness and relatedness to British people and culture. As Anil stated:

I was frustrated because I felt discriminated against for being an international student... They never gave chance to those who successfully completed their degrees in UK but instead there were many restrictions on opportunity to get into the work market.

A second issue concerns perceived *competence* where individuals need to gain mastery of tasks and learn different skills. Adopting as one's own an extrinsic goal requires that one feel efficacious with respect to it. These students will more likely adopt and internalize a goal if they understand it and have the relevant skills to succeed at it, which will facilitate internalization. This can again be identified with students from Categories A and B who were competent enough to face challenges such as closure of their colleges and immigration rules that were imposed upon them. Now they also face the challenge of rejection by the new culture and people as well as a lack of relevant skills required to compete in this globalised world. This can be related to what Anju said when she explained her dilemma as being unable to return home without any skills or qualification to compete in the job market and her legal status also in question while waiting for her visa decision after the college was closed down.

Further, a regulation or behaviour that has been internalized may be only introjected and that type of regulation could well leave people feeling they have satisfied their needs for competence and relatedness. However, to only introject a regulation and thus to be controlled by it will not leave people feeling self-determined. The theory, therefore, suggests that *autonomy* support, where students feel in control of their own behaviours and goals, also facilitates internalization. Controlling contexts may yield introjected regulation if they support competence and relatedness, but only autonomy supportive contexts will yield integrated self-regulation. To fully internalize a regulation and thus to become autonomous in respect to it, students must inwardly grasp its meaning and worth. This can be identified with students studying in private FE colleges from all three categories (A, B and C), who, although they were extrinsically motivated, did not feel in control of their own behaviour and goals in their life due to external factors specifically after the closure of their colleges by the HO. As such, they did not feel either connected, competent nor autonomous which according to Deci and Ryan (2000) are the three innate needs that individuals need to experience if they are to become self-determined and able to be intrinsically motivated to pursue the things that interest them.

In short, humans have an intrinsic desire to learn and this desire is fuelled by the basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness that are the tenets of SDT. If we want to engage international students from private FE colleges at all levels of our educational systems in meaningful growth and learning experiences, we need to design environments and systems that support these needs. Social support is the key. Through our relationships and interactions with others, we can either foster or thwart personal growth and motivation. It is these meanings that become internalized and integrated in environments that provide support for the needs for competence, relatedness and autonomy, which is the essence of SDT and OIT.

4.8 Chapter Summary

To conclude, three different categories of students studying at private FE colleges that were closed down by the HO (Category A, Category B and Category C respectively) have been linked based on their experiences and data collection. Further their types of extrinsic motivation (as proposed by OIT) have been interpreted in terms of the basic psychological needs of relatedness, competence and autonomy (as proposed by SDT). By doing this, I illustrate how, when behaviour in these international students studying in private FE colleges is self-determined (intrinsic motivation), the regulation or behaviour becomes choice, but when it is controlled (extrinsic motivation), the regulatory process or behaviour becomes compliance or in some cases even defiance.

To sum up, the socio-contextual conditions that support one's feelings of competence, autonomy and relatedness are the basis for one maintaining intrinsic motivation and becoming more self-determined with respect to extrinsic motivation. This can be directly related to international students' experience at UK private Further Education colleges. With this background, I will contextualize in Chapter 5 the final findings of this study by answering my research questions, the aims and objectives of this study, limitations and strengths followed by recommendations and future challenges.

Chapter 5 - Findings and Conclusions

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will conclude this study by discussing the key answers to my research questions as presented in Chapter One. This will be followed by discussion of the final findings derived from the qualitative data by first restating the purpose of this research, then restating the research questions, data used and a summary of the key findings followed by discussion related to the respective findings. In this chapter, I have attempted to connect the findings to related literature and also reflect on the findings based on my experiences. Discussion on how the findings relate to the initial theoretical framework of the study follows next, which is Self Determination Theory (SDT) and Organismic Integration Theory (OIT), and critically examines and evaluates the different types of motivation in international students who come to the UK to pursue their studies in private FE colleges.

Finally, in concluding the thesis, I will indicate the unique contributions to knowledge made by this study and this will be followed by recommendations that are related to policy and practice and possible future research.

5.2 Overview of the Research

The main purpose of this research has been to explore the motivations and experiences of international students studying at UK private FE colleges that were closed down by the Home Office in light of the immigration policy, the Points Based System, which was introduced in order to control and monitor so called fraudulent colleges and students.

A significant strength of this research lies in the fact that this is the first type of study on international students studying at private Further Education colleges which qualitatively investigates their experiences while they pursue their studies in UK which has been closed down by the Home Office. It also contributes to the existing literature because the impact of the Points Based System on international students motivation studying at private Further Education colleges that were closed down by the Home

Office has not been investigated to the extent it has in Higher Education universities and public funded colleges in the UK.

This research, through the themes that have emerged, aims to reflect and fill the gap in terms of understanding students' experiences with particular focus on international student's motivation studying at UK private FE colleges that were closed down by the Home Office and the hardships and sacrifices they make in order to promote and motivate them to foster their personal growth and motivation. I have used a model based on the fusion of two theoretical approaches, which are Self-Determination Theory and Organismic Integration Theory to understand the reasons for their motivation, and the experiential implications these international students faced due to the various extrinsic factors such as immigration policy as discussed in detail in my previous chapter.

By presenting this model, I succeed in critically examining the types of motivation in 33 international students specifically who came to UK private Further Education colleges in light of the immigration policy, the Points Based System. Deci and Ryan (2002) suggested that when individuals experience the three innate needs which are competence, connection or relatedness and autonomy then they become self-determined and can be intrinsically motivated to pursue the thing that interests them as is the case with the students who are motivated to go abroad and gain a degree which is internationally recognised and beneficial for them. But in their experience, they encounter various hardships and challenges and as a result there seems to be change in their motivation due to external factors which initially inspired them to pursue their goals and obtain a UK degree. This chapter, therefore, answers my main research question which is:

What are the experiences of international students at UK private FE colleges in light of the government policy related to immigration, the Points Based System?

The main research question has been further guided by the following research sub-questions:

- 1) What motivates international students in FE to come to study at private FE colleges and not public colleges or universities in UK?

- 2) What were the views of the international students studying in private FE colleges about the Points Based System in light of the policy change in 2014?
- 3) What were the experiential implications of the policy change on international students studying in private FE colleges after their colleges was closed down by the Home Office?

Based on two theoretical approaches Self-Determination Theory and Organismic Integration Theory and the findings derived, I correlate the different types of extrinsic factors of motivation (external, introjected, identification and integrated) to international students studying in private FE colleges that were closed down with the main key themes such as 'status' and 'impact of immigration policy' which constitutes the extrinsic factors of motivation in these international students from the themes that emerged. The study also investigates how this has affected their level of motivation and legal status in the UK and concludes that social environment play a major role in their need to satisfy their psychological needs which can either promote or thwart their personal growth and motivation.

Hence, in the next section, I first present my answers to the above-mentioned research sub-questions before I present my findings and conclusion relating to the main research question which I aimed to investigate in this study.

5.3 Sub - Research Question One

Reasons to choose UK private FE Colleges – In order to understand the motivations and experiences of international students at UK private FE colleges that were closed down by the Home Office, it was first essential to understand what factors motivated them to come to study in UK. The results from this study shows that students' decision to choose the UK as their destination for higher studies consisted of various push-pull factors which resonated with Mazzarol and Soutar's (2002) push and pull factors as discussed in my literature review chapter. The results from the data suggest that there were mainly five basic reasons that motivated these 33 international students to come to the UK private FE colleges to study from financial to social and personal reasons such as (i) the quality of education (ii) to gain cultural experience and knowledge (iii) improving English language (iv) career prospects (v) obtain global exposure with an international degree. However, the factor that dominated the choice for most

international students to come to the UK was the perceived quality of a British education and the global benefits of a UK degree. Consequently, they were attracted by the quality and reputation of education for which the UK is renowned.

It was also evident from the results that these students believed that there was a huge benefit to getting a UK degree compared to a domestic degree as there was a communal belief in their respective cultures that a degree gained from overseas was more valuable than one gained at home. This can be related to the literature where Chang (2012) argues that students believed that with a UK qualification they would be able to enhance their career options and acquire new skills that are more compatible with the international market. As such, international students who possessed a UK degree had more job opportunities and received more prestige or enhanced status back home. However, besides the above mentioned factors, and keeping in mind the main objective of this study, it was essential to understand what specifically motivated them to come to UK private FE colleges rather than UK universities or public funded colleges which are more renowned worldwide. Two important factors dominated their decision and choice making which were low tuition fees in compared to universities and public colleges and the role of agents who helped them in their visa application to UK.

Keeping this information as the background for this study, I now present my answer to the first research question. The findings from the data analysis shows that these international students were attracted to UK private FE colleges because they were affordable and less expensive when compared to the tuition fees charged by UK universities as well as to other universities located in the USA, Australia and Canada. Studying at a university for a degree course would cost them £9000 to £12000 per annum, whereas studying at a private college would cost them around £10,000 for three years for a complete degree course and around £4000 to £5000 for any Diploma or Foundation degree course.

Out of 33 students who were interviewed, 5 students said that they came to UK private colleges as they were advised by their family who were already residing here to study in colleges as it was cost effective. The remaining 28 students said that they were advised by agents who helped them to find a college and assisted them in their visa application process. The students admitted that it was due to the agents that they were influenced to come and study in private colleges. Agents, as related by students in

interviews, were given high commission rates by the owners of private colleges in the UK to recruit students for them when compared to universities who paid them less commission. As such, when the students approached the agents, they convinced them to enrol at private colleges irrespective of the college's reputation in terms of quality of teaching and infrastructure just to earn their commission. The students as mentioned in their interview were convinced by the agents and were ignorant about the real situation and existence of the fraudulent colleges and paid their tuition fees and came to the UK.

Hence, we can summarise that although there were five basic reasons to choose the UK, in particular private FE colleges, as their destination to study which included reputation, global prosperity, exposure and family pressure, the most dominant reason for them definitely was the low tuitions fees and the agents that determined their decision to choose UK private colleges rather than universities. The findings of the study further show that these students are not only intrinsically motivated but are also competent and feel connected to the demands of the globalised world by gaining a UK degree which constitutes the two basic innate needs: 'competence' and 'connection' or 'relatedness' required to be self-determined and intrinsically motivated according to SDT.

5.4 Sub - Research Question Two

Student's view about the Points Based System in light of the policy change in 2014- In order to answer my second research sub-question, it was first essential to find out what factors contributed to the implementation of the government's policy especially with regards to immigration, the Points Based System, and how this affected the international students. As discussed in my earlier chapter, there is no doubt that Britain benefits hugely from international students and immigration. The Coalition government under the leadership of David Cameron and Nick Clegg, promised to reduce overall numbers of immigrants in the UK. In the context of financial crisis, economic downturn and rising domestic unemployment and underemployment, the immigration of foreign workers and professionals had once again become an explosive and toxic political issue (Rogers, Anderson and Clark, 2009). This was because, in part, the government was legally unable to do anything about EU immigration to the UK and because international students had come to make up such a large proportion

of non-EU immigration to the UK. As a result, Theresa May, who was the Home Secretary, stated in her foreword to a consultation document on student visas released in December 2010, 'the Government's aim to reduce net migration will not be achieved without careful consideration and action on the non-economic (immigration) routes including students' (UK Border Agency, 2010,3). Therefore, in order to make progress towards this target, the government introduced the Points Based System in 2008 along with a series of new reforms and restrictions to substantially reduce the number of international students as discussed in detail in Chapter 2 which led to the closure of many private FE colleges in 2014.

Against this background, I now present my answer to my second research sub-question for this study. The results from the data show that the Points Based System to some extent was a good system. It was transparent but the implementation and the approach taken by the Home Office was seen to be wrong. The main aim of this system was to allow only bonafide students into the country and to control and monitor bogus colleges and students. But the results from the data analysis show that with the implementation of the PBS and the closing down of the colleges in 2014, these 33 students who were studying there were affected more than those fraudulent colleges owners or students. As a result, these students were of the view that the PBS was not a successful and appropriate system for the purpose it had been introduced. Many students studying at private FE colleges that were closed down by the Home Office believed they were just treated as 'cash-cows' and when their colleges were closed down they were not given any support whatsoever from the college or the government.

The findings of this research also indicate that generally international undergraduate students irrespective of whether studying at UK private FE colleges or universities usually pay almost one-third more than UK and EU undergraduates. As a result, it is no surprise that these high tuition fees have been controversial with international students feeling they are being treated as cash-cows. Moreover, immigration rules for students have been frequently changed and as such students in the interviews described how it has become very difficult for them to keep themselves legal and up to date. Thus, the overall impression about the Points Based System was not good and all the interviewees said there should be some sort of support for students specifically who have been affected by the closure of their colleges by the HO.

The students blamed the Home Office for not adopting and implementing a proper mechanism to control and monitor fraudulent colleges and students. As such, the consequences and dilemmas these international students are facing, they believe, are mainly due to the Home Office's inefficiency and college fault. The fact that the Home Office had suspended some genuine colleges from trading also casts a shadow of doubt on them. Some students expressed serious concerns on how their college was first temporarily suspended by the Home Office without any specific reason and justification given to the college authority and when their suspension was challenged in court, their colleges were back in the Tier 4 list of education providers and rated as A-rate colleges.

Students studying at these colleges were of the view that in the current scenario nothing can be taken for granted as one day the college is A-rated and an approved education provider by the Home Office and the next week, it is suspended and when challenged in the court their licence is reinstated. That is why the students were of the view that Home Office themselves did not know what they were doing and, surprisingly, students expressed a degree of sympathy for those who were running the Border Agency as they have an impossible task to undertake.

Further, the Home Office gave international students only 60 days to enrol in another college and for some students it was impossible to find an alternative education provider. There should be some system in place for these students's money to be refunded when the college closes down. Also if colleges are suspended or closed down the international students studying in such colleges should have their immigration status secured by the Home Office but that is not the case here. Their immigration status is limited to only 60 days and if they cannot enrol in another college within this 60-day time period then they have overstayed. Hence, these students were of the view that the PBS was not a fair system and that Home Office should set up some sort of mechanism to secure students' immigration status especially when their colleges are closed down.

These students expressed their view that because of no such support and initiatives either from the college or the government, ultimately these international students studying at UK private FE colleges suffer most who came to the UK to pursue their

goals and ambitions and whose parents have invested a huge amount of money in their children's future. The dilemmas they faced were very concerning and after their college licences were suspended, the students told how they lost all their money which was unlikely to be refunded. They have wasted crucial years of their life which they could have utilised into something fruitful and worth living for.

Hence, it can be concluded that although the intention of the government to introduce various immigration rules and changes was for a good purpose, but due to the wrong approach and hostile environment policy, international students who were studying at private FE colleges had to suffer than those fraudulent students for which the Points Based System was introduced. In short, these 33 international students at private FE colleges, due to their experiences after the closure of their colleges and change in government policy, are now more extrinsically motivated and their behaviour is more of force than choice. They no longer feel competent, connected and their behaviour is definitely no longer autonomous as their behaviour is now more controlled due to various immigration restrictions. This leads me now to answer my third and final research sub-question for this study.

5.5 Sub - Research Question Three

Experiential Implications of the Policy Change on International Students at Private FE Colleges after the closure of their colleges -

With regards to international student's experiences and implications that they faced at UK private FE colleges after their colleges was closed by the Home Office, the results from the data showed that these students expressed both positive as well as negative aspects from their UK experiences. All 33 students admitted that as far as their personal growth and development was concerned, their experiences in the UK were enormously helpful in terms of exposure to the global market and the opportunity to interact with different people from diverse backgrounds and cultures which eventually helped them to shape and develop their personal skills such as independence, adaptability and flexibility. Additionally, they also developed and improved their English language skills.

However, the main concern for all the students who participated in this study was the closure of their colleges by the Home Office and the implications that they had to face

after. From the results, it can be argued that these private colleges were operating mainly for business purposes and were commercialised to such an extent that most of them were running the college from just one room with little or no teaching and other infrastructural facilities as pointed out by students in the interview and which led to the closing down of such fraudulent colleges. Earlier, in Chapter 2, I gave a brief background about the existence of such fraudulent colleges which highlights the severity of the situation.

The closing down of such colleges undoubtedly was the right step taken by the Home Office with which all students agreed, but in this process these students were of the view that students like them who were studying at one of those colleges that the Home Office had closed down were affected more. The closing down of their colleges in the middle of their course led to severe, perhaps unintended, consequences for genuine students who were studying there. They had to go through considerable emotional and psychological stress as they had lost all their hopes. Even after paying money for their fees, they were now left at the end with no qualification and degree. Instead they were legally bound by so many visa conditions and restrictions that they felt let down by the college management and also UK government as no protection or help was given to them after their college closed down through no fault of theirs.

The students expressed strong dissatisfaction after coming to the UK, as international students like them have been treated badly and not in a fair manner as they have to go through the same rules and restrictions implemented for those few fraudulent students whose intentions are not to study here but to remain illegally. Anil described the trauma he went through when he was in a detention centre for 3 months through no fault of his own. The fact that, in spite of this, he completed his Master's degree is an achievement for him and he is very proud of it. However, some of his friends could not cope with it and suffered from depression as mentioned in the data analysis. Thus, it was just not the closure of their colleges but the consequences they faced afterwards which created a tremendous impact in their lives and motivation. The fact that there was no distinction made between bonafide and fraudulent students was the biggest implications for them studying at private FE colleges. As such they regret coming to study in the UK private FE colleges and blamed the agents whose advice and suggestions they took before coming to UK to pursue their studies at private FE colleges. They said if they knew the difference between private FE colleges and

universities back home then they would have never chosen private colleges over universities as the agents convinced them that they were same and offered similar degree at low tuition fees.

To sum up, these students who were once highly intrinsically motivated now seemed to be doing or pursuing an interest not out of their choice but by force. Although they still seem to be competent by learning new skills, language and adapting to the new culture, they do not seem to be connected or feel a sense of belonging as they go through various hardships and challenges after the closure of their colleges and not getting any support. As a result, they are therefore not in control of their own behaviour and goals. They are now extrinsically motivated though not fully than intrinsically due to the various changes in immigration rules and closure of their colleges.

By answering all the above three research sub-questions, I now present my final key findings as an answer to my main research question and relate it with SDT and OIT, the conceptual theoretical framework of this study and support my argument within the literature that this study underpins.

5.6 Main Research Question

What are the experiences of international students at UK private FE colleges in light of the government policy related to immigration, the Points Based System?

By presenting the answers to my research sub-questions which this study is guided by, there is no doubt that FE international students are attracted to private FE colleges for various push-pull factors where low tuition fees and the role of agents play an important aspect. From personal growth and development to building up their confidence level, language skills and an opportunity to mix in a diverse culture, to name a few, are the benefits that the students experienced studying at private FE colleges. However, with the change in immigration policy these students faced many challenges and obstacles in the face of the new Points Based System which led to the closure of their colleges. Since then they have not only had to keep themselves motivated but also remain legal within the country which was the biggest challenge they had to face studying at private FE colleges with the implications of the government policy and the 60 days' notice issued by the Home Office whereby they have to find a new sponsor after their colleges were closed down.

The results from the data analysis can be argued that the 60 days' notice itself raises a lot of questions and doubts because if a student's college closes down in the month of February, then they have a 60 days letter from the Home Office asking them to find a new sponsor within that 60 days period which looks very unlikely. First, no universities or public funded colleges have intakes in the month of April (that is when the 60 days period ends for this student) as most universities and colleges recruit students in September or October. So these students now faced a challenge in finding a university or college approved by the Home Office to sponsor them. Second, let us assume that they found a sponsor within that 60 day period wishing to recruit them. They still need to show academic progression in order for their sponsor to issue Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) letter to them. But since their college closed down permanently in the middle of their course and they were not allowed to complete their course they obviously do not have any academic progress. This means, they will not be given admissions or granted a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) letter from any universities or colleges as they fail to provide any academic progression which is one of the main conditions of the Points Based System (PBS) to gain points. From the 33 sample collected, it is evident that 11 students returned back to their home country with no qualification whatsoever; 15 students are still waiting for their visa and their outcome and the other 7 students however have managed to move on and are either studying for Master's degree or have switched to some other immigration category. This is just a scenario of the 33 students narrated here but there are many international students studying at UK private FE colleges who were facing similar problems after the closure of their colleges and have been affected by the government's policy. Since, there is no firm data on the number of international students in private FE colleges as no statistics are routinely collected (HESA, 2011) it is difficult to say what the impact of this change in policy could have on other international students who were studying at these UK private FE colleges and which this study has not been able to capture.

Further, there has been huge debate around international students both in private and public colleges and universities being treated as 'cash-cows'. The results from the data analysis indicates that international undergraduate students pay almost one-third more than UK and EU undergraduates, whilst international post graduates pay nearly double the fees charged to UK and EU students. As a result, it is no surprise that these

high tuition fees have been controversial and especially under the circumstances when their colleges are closed down by the Home Office these international students studying at UK private FE colleges do have a perception that they are being treated as cash-cows as there seems to be no mechanism to refund the tuition fees for these students when their colleges are closed down as was done by the Australian government by introducing Tuition Protection Service (TPS) in 2012. The TPS assist international students whose education providers are unable to fully deliver their course of study by ensuring that international students are able to either complete their studies in another course or with another education provider or receive a refund of their unspent tuition fees (ESOS Act 2000). Similar schemes could be looked into in UK too so that international students at UK private FE colleges are protected when their colleges are closed down.

Therefore, from the results and the above discussion, it can be concluded for this study that the immigration policy and its approach to control and monitor the fraudulent colleges makes these international students studying at private FE colleges which has been closed down by the Home Office look bogus when they argue that they had a pure and genuine intention to study and pursue their dreams when they came to UK. In this process, the psychological and emotional conflict that they go through is indeed very crucial and should be considered seriously as it affects their motivation and the course of their whole life. Almost all the 33 students admitted that they had at some point in their experience at UK suffered from depression and frustration due to the closure of their colleges which they said was very 'traumatising' for them. They suggested that the government should be taking action against those who run these bogus private colleges and agents recruiting students for them rather than punishing these international students at private FE colleges by not allowing them to complete their course through no fault of their own. This definitely discourages these students who since coming to UK were highly intrinsically motivated and self-determined to pursue their goals but now, due to the unfavourable circumstances and no support given either from their college or government they are more extrinsically motivated which is likely the outcome of force and pressure rather than choice or interest on their part.

As a result, it can be summarized from the results and data findings that the introduction of Points Based System (PBS) to control so called fraudulent students and colleges is not appropriate when it makes no distinction in their treatment in practice towards the so called 'brightest of the best' (a phrase Theresa May, former Home Office Secretary and current Prime Minister of the UK, uses regularly in speeches and conferences with the intent of proving that the UK still welcomes and is open for brightest of the best international students) and fraudulent students when same rules are applied for both, irrespective of who has or has not complied with the immigration rules.

Further, in order to understand the motivations of these international students at private FE colleges by integrating two theoretical approaches which were SDT and OIT as shown in Figure 17 (page 144) concluded that when motivation in an international student at private FE college is self-determined, the regulatory process becomes choice but when it is controlled, the regulatory process becomes compliance or in some cases even defiance. By doing this, I was able to identify from the data analysis controlled forms of extrinsic motivation versus autonomous forms of extrinsic motivation with the different categories of students (Category A, B and C respectively) that I distinguished and discussed earlier in Chapter 4. Students who are still waiting for the outcome of their visa (Category A) and those who returned home (Category C) can be identified as having controlled forms of extrinsic motivation. Whereas those students who were able to face and moved on in spite of the different challenges and realised their dreams by achieving their degree (Category B) can be identified as having autonomous forms of motivation.

Going back to my literature review I had stated that all individuals, according to Self-Determination Theory have natural innate and constructive tendencies to develop an ever more elaborated and unified sense of self. That is, people have a primary tendency to forge interconnections among aspects of their own psyches as well as with other individuals and groups in their social worlds (Deci and Ryan, 2002). The theory therefore identifies that people need to feel the following three key psychological needs which are competent, connected and autonomous in order to achieve psychological growth and integration as well as for constructive social development and personal wellbeing. Socio contextual conditions that support one's

feelings of competence, autonomy and relatedness are the basis for one maintaining intrinsic motivation and becoming more self-determined with respect to extrinsic motivation which can also be related to these 33 international students at UK private FE colleges which has been closed down by the Home Office.

From the data analysis and discussion it can be concluded that 15 students from Category A (Waiting for visa/passport) although being extrinsically motivated (controlled form of motivation) do not feel a sense of belonging or 'relatedness' due to the circumstances that they are going through after their colleges were closed down and not knowing which direction to go as they are still waiting for their visa decision or legal status from the HO. This can also be illustrated with 7 students in Category B who although have shown greater level of autonomous form of extrinsic motivation still do not feel completely a sense of belongingness and relate themselves to British culture and environment as they don't feel welcome due to the hostile environment policy. Similarly, about being competent, students from Category A and B also feel that they are not competent enough to compete in the job market due to the restrictions on their visa and other lack of skill required. Hence, all the 33 international students from Category A, B and C who although were extrinsically motivated do not feel in control of their own behaviour and goals in their life due to external factors. As a result, they do not feel either connected, competent nor autonomous which according to Deci & Ryan (2000) are the three innate needs that people or individual need to experience if they are to become self-determined and able to be intrinsically motivated to pursue the thing that interest them.

Hence, a distinction can be made between these 3 different categories of international student's motivation studying at UK private FE colleges that are volitional and accompanied by the experience of freedom and autonomy – those that develop from one's sense of self as in Category C students who left the country (intrinsic motivation) and with the other two, Category A and Category B, who are still in UK. Their motivation is therefore accompanied by the experience of pressure and control and is not representative of one's self (extrinsic motivation) which has been interpreted in terms of the basic psychological needs of relatedness, competence and autonomy in this study.

In short, it is important to realise that the psychological growth in international students pursuing their studies in UK private Further Education colleges, described by Self-Determination Theory, does not happen automatically and requires continuous sustenance. According to Deci and Ryan (2000), social support is the key. Through our relationships and interactions with others, we can either foster or thwart their personal growth and motivation. Further, giving people extrinsic rewards for already intrinsically motivated behaviour can undermine autonomy. As the motivation becomes increasingly controlled by external rewards, individuals begin to feel less in control of their own behaviour and intrinsic motivation is diminished. As such, “social environments can, according to this perspective, either facilitate and enable the growth and integration propensities with which the human psyche is endowed, or they can disrupt, forestall and fragment these processes resulting in behaviours and inner experiences that represent the darker side of humanity” (Deci and Ryan, 2002).

It is important to highlight that the UK education sector is a global market with tough competition from other exporting countries such as Germany, USA, France and Australia. In a job market, which is highly globalised and where workers are increasingly mobile, having a degree from a reputable university like from the UK can significantly improve a student’s career prospects as evident from what the students said in the interviews. This explains why these international students also understand and appreciate the value they would obtain from a UK degree.

According to economic theory, a market is “a set of arrangements by which buyers and sellers exchange goods and services” (Begg et al, 2008, p.37). In a market, the relationship between supply and demand is balanced by price mechanisms where it is believed that markets “provide both greater ‘static efficiency’ sustaining a higher rate of growth over time through product and process innovation and better management of resources than any alternative” (Brown, 2011, p.11). Therefore, marketisation has been a trend in almost every field and education is no exception to this, especially the private Further Education colleges in the UK where these international students too entered the market place (private FE colleges) where some were defrauded by the colleges while some caught out by changes in immigration regulations. However, in their journey or experience some students as evident from the data analysis and

discussion persevered high and autonomous motivation whereas other students did not due to controlled or poor motivation.

The interviews showed that agents also played a very important role in a student's decision to choose a private FE college. The students interviewed mentioned how they were influenced by the agents of private Further Education colleges back home to come and study in the UK by giving them an option to pay low tuition fees. However, when they came to the UK and faced many hurdles and restrictions due to Home Office policy and closure of their colleges they were discouraged as they did not have systems or measures in place to protect their rights and wellbeing from neither their college nor the government. Instead of making their life easier after closing down the colleges and the financial and emotional stress they went through, the government was adamant in imposing new rules and regulations not beneficial to the students. The UK government therefore, needs to address the issues and grievances of international students studying in private FE colleges especially for those who have been affected by the closure of colleges and reflect on the provision of services and quality of education they offer to the international students who contribute heavily towards the UK economy and come to the country with high motivations and aspirations. But in their experience they encountered a number of hardships and challenges, and their reactions can be seen through their different levels of motivation (external, introjected, identification and integrated) which has been identified and co-related to the key themes such as 'status' and 'impact of immigration policy' which constitutes the extrinsic factors of these 33 international students studying at UK private FE colleges that were closed down by the HO from the themes that emerged. The students expressed that they feel very unwelcome and their perception about UK changes due to the various hardships they have to go through for no fault of theirs that has severe consequences on their levels of motivation and legal status in the UK, which affects their future course. The study, therefore, argues that we need to create a positive and supporting environment for these students so that they feel motivated as social environment play a major role in their need to satisfy these student's psychological needs which can either promote (as seen in Category B students) or thwart (as seen in Category A and C students) their personal growth and motivation.

5.7 Some Limitations

There are of course some limitations to the research I have reported here; for instance, why only 33 international students were sampled and interviewed. There were three clear reasons for this. First due to the change in immigration policy, many private FE colleges were closed down by the Home Office including those where I had initially planned to collect data. As a result of this, it became very difficult for me to contact any students to interview them. The closure of colleges affected a number of international students studying there and since they were going through a lot of difficulties, it became very difficult for me as a researcher to approach them as they did not trust me and refused to participate. I therefore had to resort to alternative methods such as social contacts as mentioned in Chapter 3 so as to gain their trust and confidence and was able to interview 33 students.

Secondly, while designing the size and sample for this study, I had planned to interview students from developing countries such as India, Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nigeria who are non-EU international students and had initially come to UK private further education colleges for their studies rather than attend universities in their country of origin. As stated earlier, students from different developing countries could not be interviewed due to the change in immigration policy and closure of many private colleges. So, it became very difficult to contact students as many had to return home while others had to struggle to maintain their legal visa and immigration status in the country. Students who were interviewed therefore were limited and were only confined to countries such as Nepal, India, Uzbekistan and Pakistan. The majority of students interviewed were from Nepal, that is 26 students, three students from India, one student from Uzbekistan and three students from Pakistan. This was my second limitation as I could not collect a diverse sample of international students belonging to different developing countries and was restricted to students with whom I could get in contact. Hence, the ratio of nationalities for this research is not balanced and does not represent the views of all international students coming from developing countries.

Thirdly, the purpose behind conducting the research was to identify the motivations and experiences of the international students studying at UK private FE colleges in light of the immigration rules, Points Based System. But as the data collection took

place, I realized that just as in the way it affected students, the closure of colleges may have affected college owners too, at least the bonafide ones. I decided to interview college owners/registrars so that I could give more insight to my research and was successful in interviewing one registrar at a private college in Reading. However, due to the change in policy, the colleges closed down and it was difficult to arrange interviews with the others meaning the whole study was limited to the views and opinions of only international students studying at private FE colleges and not the providers and registrars which could have had a greater impact on the findings of this research.

Besides the above limitations, I also recognised that there was weakness in data collection as the interview questions had to be revised again to capture their personal experiences unlike the first interview exercise which was more general and did not reflect their true personal experiences at private FE colleges. Further, it would have been more ideal if face-to-face interview could have been conducted with all 33 participants with the revised interview schedule so that as a researcher it would have allowed me to gather in depth understanding of the issues that they were facing after the closure of their colleges by the Home Office. It would also give me an opportunity to capture their body language and movements which I was not able to capture while doing the Skype interview. Therefore, I do recognise that this is a limitation for my study since face to face interviews would have allowed me to obtain depth of understanding, insights and meanings of these international students studying at private FE colleges that were close down by the Home Office and enabled me to provide more control and foster accuracy, in terms of better, reliable, immediate data and present immediate opportunities to explain any questions (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001) which was not possible with the skype interviews that I had conducted due to the disadvantages that I had explained in Chapter 3.

5.8 Unique Contribution to the Field of Knowledge

This research makes a contribution to the field of knowledge by understanding how external or extrinsic factors such as the immigration rules or Government policy can determine the motivations of international students who come to pursue their studies in UK private Further Education colleges away from their own country with a dream to obtain a universally recognized degree. Most international students are highly

intrinsically and extrinsically motivated to pursue their goals and obtain a UK degree for the enormous benefits they get from getting an opportunity to mix in a diverse culture, to increasing their confidence level, to becoming employable global graduates and shaping their outlook for the rest of their lives. But in their experience, they encounter various hardships and challenges and as a result there seems to be a change in the motivation factors which initially spurred them to pursue their goals and obtain a UK degree. This change is due to various extrinsic factors or levels of motivation (external, introjected, identification and integrated regulation) as highlighted in the discussion chapter which affects them and as such they are extrinsically motivated to meet their needs and demands imposed upon them by the globalised world and economy. Further, the study also concluded that social environment plays a major role in their need to satisfy their psychological needs which can either promote or thwart their personal growth and motivation if circumstances are made favorable for them.

I therefore aim to contribute to the knowledge by understanding the motivations in international students at UK private Further Education colleges that has been closed down by HO. A significant strength of this research lies in the fact that this is the first type of study on international students studying at private Further Education colleges which qualitatively investigates their experiences while they pursue their studies in UK. It also contributes to the existing literature whereby, the implications of the Points Based System on international students studying at private Further Education colleges has not been investigated to the extent as in Higher Education universities and public funded colleges in the UK by presenting a model based on the fusion of two theoretical approaches - Self-Determination Theory and Organismic Integration Theory - which evaluates different types of students' extrinsic motivation due to various external factors.

5.9 Recommendations for Policy and Practice

The main purpose of this study was to understand the motivations of international students studying at UK private FE colleges and the implications they have faced in light of the immigration policy, the Points Based System, which was introduced in order to control and monitor so called fraudulent colleges and students. This study was meant not only to contribute to theory but also the need to reconsider policy and

practices associated with international students coming to study at private Further Education colleges in the UK and the impact of the obstacles and challenges they face due to the current immigration system. Although the current government is actively enacting policies to control immigration in UK higher education and colleges with the introduction of various measures to control immigration and a Points Based System, more attention needs to be given to the experiences of genuine international students studying at private Further Education colleges who have been affected most by the government's tough approach to monitor and control fraudulent colleges and students. The following are some of the recommendations of the research towards policy and practice:

- This study has pointed to the need for developing and implementing a policy to safeguard and protect all international students in UK or safeguarding the victims of fraud. In particular, emphasis and urgent attention needs to be given to those students (Category A) in this study who are still waiting for their passport and visa so that they can find direction as to what they can do with their future.
- Students should also protect themselves by doing a better research about the college and institution that they wish to come, study, and not just take the agents word for granted. They should also ensure that they seek help from those agents who are registered with the British Council and are authentic agents. Further initiatives and policy should also be in place and taken by the international student's own government in case of such situations arises where their colleges are closed down. Some safeguarding mechanisms should be put in place to support students, families and friends.
- A fair and effective mechanism should be implemented rather than the existing Points Based System where students face tough scrutiny when they apply initially for their visa to the UK to check whether their intentions are genuine or not rather than asking them to fulfil certain points and then afterwards declaring them bogus in the middle of their studies. Under the current system, it is easy for agents and students to manipulate the criteria required for the Points Based System.
- The policy should focus on improving academic and quality standards of private education providers. A stricter scrutiny must be undertaken before assigning any

private college the Highly Trusted Status which means it has been approved by the Home Office as a registered education provider. The standard of private Further Education colleges should also be increased both physically and academically and they should not be permitted to recruit students more than their physical and academic capacity just to make more money from students.

- An organisation or government approved body should be set up for these international students so as to secure their immigration status in any unavoidable cases and if possible to refund their money in the event of the closure or suspension of their college just like the Tuition Protection Service (TPS) in Australia introduced in 2012 (Parliament of Australia Briefing, 2017)
- The Home Office should initiate that the universities and colleges recruiting international students partake in a deposit system to secure the student's status. If the licence is withdrawn, then they can use the deposit and pay the fees to the students and in this way international student's future will be secured as long as they stay in UK.
- The existence and purpose of private FE colleges should be reconsidered. If there is a need for their existence in the UK education system then their role and status should be scrutinised very closely otherwise there is no meaning for their existence which allows them only to be misused by a few owners and mislead international students coming to study here with high hopes and aspirations.

5.10 Recommendations for Future Research

This study has raised several ideas for future research. Based on the research findings and considering the limitations, I have identified areas where further research should be taken. Firstly, a large-scale research project should be conducted covering a great number of international students studying at UK private Further Education colleges and the education providers which will help in understanding their experiences and widespread impact of the immigration policy. It will also give insight to what the education providers have to say about the immigration policy and how it has affected them.

Secondly, a comparative research project should be conducted between the international students' motivations for studying at UK universities compared with those

studying at private Further Education colleges. This would help to understand the implications of the Points Based System on students' motivation studying at both Higher Education and Further Education levels. The outcome from this research will be a huge benefit for policy makers and the government.

Lastly, a survey study should be conducted, especially after Brexit, on international students coming from EEA and non-EEA countries and developing countries which will enable students to understand the implications of post-Brexit on their learning engagement and immigration experiences where a comparative study can give more insights into the experiences and motivations of international students coming to UK in the wake of the immigration policy.

5.11 Concluding Remarks

This study embarked with the purpose of exploring the impact of the closure of private FE colleges on the international students studying there who are significant stakeholders in the UK education system, despite their relatively smaller proportion compared to those studying at publicly funded FE colleges and HE institutions (Mughal, 2016). The problems and challenges they face in comparison to those international students studying in universities and public colleges are immense.

Based on the results, the study attempted to assess the several distinct types of extrinsic motivation in international students at private Further Education colleges, each of which has specifiable consequences for learning, performance, personal experience and motivation. A major focus of Self-Determination Theory because of the functional and experiential differences between self-motivation and external regulation has been to supply a more differentiated approach to motivation, by asking what kind of motivation is being exhibited at any given time. Also, by articulating a set of principles concerning how each type of motivation is developed and sustained, or forestalled and undermined, Self-Determination Theory at once recognizes a positive thrust to human nature.

This research investigated how international students from developing countries perceive their experiences and the challenges while studying at UK private Further Education colleges who were affected most by the closure of their colleges by the Home Office and strict immigration approach taken by the government towards them.

They expressed discontentment that they choose private Further Education colleges and not universities in the UK which affected their level of motivation and their future. This has therefore led to a negative perception to people outside the UK that the UK government does not treat international students fairly which demotivates a number of aspiring international students who still look to the UK as a favorite destination to study.

Despite the huge contribution these international students bring to UK economy, its culture and society, it is evident from this research that immigration policy such as the Points Based System has created severe consequences for them especially those who have been studying at private Further Education colleges which has created an impact on their level of motivation too. The attitude and unwelcome approach from the government is also very disheartening. The government's stringent and damaging visa policies are making Britain a difficult and unattractive place to study for international students (Chartered Association of Business Schools, 2016). Robust steps should therefore be taken so as to create a positive and encouraging environment for these international students so that they can gain valuable and positive experience when they return back home to their country.

To conclude, the UK government needs to adopt a more efficient and sensitive approach to international students studying at private FE colleges if it wants to maintain the prestige of a UK education since good governance of the immigration system is vital if the public are to trust government action (Somerville, 2011). They should make reforms and adopt correct mechanisms to gain the confidence of the general public as well as international students whose contribution and support is vital and crucial for the UK economy. Ideally, the government should review the long-term impact of the current immigration regime on international student recruitment to the UK and the purpose of the existence of private FE colleges, as there is a need to work together to provide positive reinforcement for each other (Smith and Demjanenko, 2011). This, in turn, will encourage larger numbers of international students to study in the United Kingdom, which will not only help to boost the UK economy, but will also help to introduce their own diverse cultures and knowledge which in turn benefits home students with an enhanced understanding of the wider world (Malik, 2014).

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Appendix A: Information Sheet and Consent form

Information leaflet: 10 points about the research

Topic: Motivations and Experiences of International Students at UK Private Further Education Colleges that were closed down by the Home Office: Implications of the Points Based System

Contact for this project:

Mrs Sushma Basnet

Sushma.Basnet@brunel.ac.uk

07838478884

Supervisor:

Prof Mike Watts

mike.watts@brunel.ac.uk

Brunel University

1) What is the purpose of the study?

- The purpose of the study is to critically examine and evaluate the different types of international students motivations and experiences who come to the UK for their studies at UK private FE colleges in light with the immigration policy, the Points Based System.

2) Why am I taking part?

- I want to find out your views and opinion about the role of further education colleges in the UK and what implications and impact does it have on international students in line with the new immigration policy.

3) Do I have to take part?

- No. If you have any reservations, you can tell me that you no longer wish to participate.

4) What will happen if I take part?

- If you decide to take part then you will be interviewed and able to express your opinion on your experiences at private further education colleges in the UK and what implications and impact does it have on international students in line with the new immigration policy.

5) What are the benefits of taking part?

- The study will assist me to gather data which will be useful in writing my PhD thesis.

6) What are the risks of taking part?

- There are no specific risks in taking part as far as my knowledge is concerned.

7) What if there is a problem or I have a complaint?

- If you have a problem or complaint, you can either let me know or contact my supervisor Prof Mike Watts (contact details are given above).

8) What will happen to the results? Will my participation be kept confidential?

- The results and findings will only be used in writing my PhD thesis and all responses will be kept anonymous and confidential.

9) What happens if I don't want to participate in the study?

- At any point, you can tell me that you no longer wish to participate.

10) Who is organising and funding the research?

- The research is organised by myself and is unfunded.

If you would like to participate, then please read the consent form below:

This consent means that you voluntarily agree to be interviewed for this research undertaken and also you may withdraw your participation from the research at any point. You are welcome to have a copy of the interview transcript (if it is transcribed) or notes taken during the interview.

CONSENT FORM

1) Do you have any questions about participating in this research?

Please ask and discuss now with Sushma Basnet.

2) If your questions have been answered satisfactorily, do you consent to being interviewed about your views and opinions by Sushma Basnet?

3)

Signed: Date:

Witnessed: Date:

4) If you would like to receive information about the findings, then please leave your contact details below.

If you have chosen to participate, you will be given a photocopy of this form.

Thank You.

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Appendix B: Revised Interview Questions

- 1) Why did you decide to come to UK for your studies?
- 2) Are your parents paying towards your tuition fees?
- 3) What difference did you find between studying in UK and back home? Give some examples.
- 4) Why did you choose private further education colleges over universities?
- 5) How good is the Points Based System a right and effective approach to crack down bogus colleges and students by the UKBA? If so, give examples?
- 6) What problems or consequences did you face after the recent stringent immigration rules and crack down of bogus colleges?
- 7) What do you think about your experience of learning in UK private FE College? Can you give some examples of the advantages and disadvantages you experienced?
- 8) What recommendations would you give to friends and relatives to come and study to UK?
- 9) How have your experiences in UK helped to promote or hinder your overall growth and development? Give examples to support your answer.
- 10) What do you intend to do after you complete your studies in the UK?

Appendix C: Example of Interview Transcript 1(*Prashant*)

I: Brief Background:

S: I can't remember exact date I arrived in London but it was in March 2009 on student visa. It was 8 years ago. I came to study accounting course in Kaplan College which is in London Bridge. I studied there for one and half years for accounting course Diploma in accounting which is CAT (Certified Accountant Technician) course. After that the college got revoked and could not issue any sponsorship to any international students. So my visa was due to expire and I had to switch to another college which was BPP University for the same course. I am 29 years now but was 21 years when I first arrived in London.

I: Why did you decide to come to UK for your studies?

S: At that time I chose ACCA to study since it is a UK Certified Accountancy course so that was the first and primary reason to come to UK to study ACCA. I also had family and friends there so that attracted me to come to UK. Also since UK is known for excellent higher education and is reputed so that was another reason.

I: Are your parents paying towards your tuition fees?

S: Initially, my parents paid but later on it was as you know UK is very expensive country so I started working part time which is 20 hours per week which I am allowed and so I paid half and my parents half.

I: What difference did you find between studying in UK and back home? Give some examples.

S: Umm there is a vast difference. The college I studied in London had a very good and friendly environment whereas here back home teachers are strict. Infrastructure wise it was better but not as expected as but better than back home. As we know UK is renowned for higher education and system so keeping that background in mind. The standard of education and very easy to get access to teaching who were very helpful so that was the College was good.

I: Why did you choose private further education colleges over universities?

S: Firstly, I chose accounting subject which was more, you know, limited colleges were offering. I also did not have good academic contact so I had to rely on agents who recommend me to this college. So that was one big reason which I now think was a wrong step I took as these agents don't care about good ranking but are only concerned with their commission., the higher commission they get from any particular college, they recruit more students for them irrespective of how the course and standard of the college would be. These agents also do not recruit for big universities but only for such private colleges, and hence they recruit more for them. Secondly, universities are very expensive in comparison to these colleges and they already have many students coming from different countries so private colleges I guess attract Asian students more as they are very cheap and affordable to universities when comparing the tuition fees. Students from developing countries to be honest cannot afford University fees so these agents know this and therefore try to attract international students to private colleges. For example, I paid £6000 for an 18 months course which is cheaper compared to university.

I: How good is the Points Based System a right and effective approach to crack down bogus colleges and students by the UKBA? If so, give examples?

S: The last college I attended was Bedford College which was in Luton and it got revoked and even Kaplan was blacklisted in the beginning. I am not sure about the effectiveness of Points Based System. All I know is that I lost my money that I had paid for which I never was taught or delivered a lesson. After my college got revoked, I was not allowed to continue my course and received a 60 days letter notice from Home Office to find another sponsorship which was very difficult time.

I: What problems or consequences did you face after the recent stringent immigration rules and crack down of bogus colleges?

S: Personally, it was the most difficult situation that one can be in when you are alone and away from home. The saddest and bitter truth is there is no one to help you. When you go to the college and enquire any help they have no answers as to what we as students should do now. Why this happened and what steps should be taken? Everyone was clueless and blank. In that scenario and circumstances, you know your college is blacklisted or revoked and your mental balance or state of mind is hugely

affected. You panic and don't know what to do. We are all aware international students face many problem once away from home. But here I was in a situation where I was facing not just basic problems like culture shock, language barrier, homesick etc. but along with this a new problem that I don't have a college to go and study as it was revoked so it was very stressful. I was in a very confused state and all I was told was that HO will sent you a letter and you have to find another sponsor. I was told I will get a notice of certain period, 60 days and if we failed we will be deported or sent back home which I felt very threatening from HO. So as students, we went through a lot. Pressure about finance is also another thing, how to manage. Even in media, newspapers everywhere you read that if you are an international student studying in private college than you are bogus and you must leave to your country. So there was a lot of negativity vibes and pressure from everywhere for no fault of mine. I had to ask financial help from home to pay fees again. No one gave right advice and information. Even if you had money, you had no time as there were no colleges left who could enrol me for the right course in that 60 period notice which was very short. So I had to just enrol in any college for any course just to keep myself legal in the country and extend my visa and not wait for HO to come and deport me. Such was the scenario and fear. I have seen many of my friend who have suffered more than I did. Particularly one friend who had to arrange finance from back home which he did and the college was supposed to issue the CAS letter but the college did not issue him and his 60days notice was due to expire next day so he had to return back home losing money for the second time with no fault of his.

My other friend was deported by the UKBA from his house as his college was blacklisted. It was a very embarrassing situation for him. No students wants to be treated that way and go to detention centre. We all had good intention to come to study here but after being landed in detention centre after 60 days for no fault is like going through hell and depression. Many of my friends including myself went to depression and few friends of mine were so bad that they had to take medicines. They are back home now luckily and they have been affected tremendously by this.

I: What do you think about your experience of learning in UK private FE College? Can you give some examples of the advantages and disadvantages you experienced?

S: I have just shared to you my experiences of studying in blacklisted colleges and what I had to go through. The advantages if the college is not revoked or suspended is many. It's not that bad. Learning environment is very good. Teachers are very friendly and help you at any time. They are very active and respond to your emails and queries immediately and effectively unlike back home where it is very difficult to approach teachers and communicate with them. Also, the courses are more practical and taught in a very practical and realistic way.

I: How have your experiences in UK helped to promote or hinder your overall growth and development? Give examples to support your answer.

S: In some way, it has discourage me. Right now I am in Nepal and if I have to think of doing my Masters abroad then I will think twice and carefully. My visa was rejected as the College I was studying was blacklisted and it was only later after I had paid all my fees I came to know that so my visa was rejected and my passport was in HO. I withdrew my application and returned back home. As far as my personal wellbeing is concerned, yes certainly it has caused an impact on me after coming and facing so many problems here in UK as an international student. As I mentioned earlier, I had to face forget about the common problems such as language barrier, culture shock but I had to face more than what was needed. I had to live in fear of being deported from HO and other problems along with it when my college closed down. Even when it was not my fault but since my college lost their license all international students studying there were the victims. At that period, my intention and aim was to complete my studies and was highly motivated to finish my course in couple of years' time. But once I started facing this sort of problems, it never ended. One problem after another cropped up from changing college to paying fees, change in immigration rules, etc. So there was just no end to it. I was hoping it would end one day and was being positive but each time I was very disappointed and I lost my interest in studies. I was very demotivated with whatever was going on. I was doing part time (20 hours) work but my employers started to ask y visa and passport details and soon I was unemployed as I had no valid visa even though my application was pending in HO. This let me more down and I felt very helpless but I had to pick up myself so I took up a stand and decided that this was enough and I returned back. I had to choose one and I chose to come back after waiting or 2 years for my passport and visa from HO which was still pending when I left the country. But I think I made a right decision when I reflect back

and feel positive. Overall, I think my experiences has taught me immensely. I don't want to take it negatively but if I ever decide to go abroad for my Masters I will think twice.

I: What recommendations would you give to friends and relatives to come and study to UK?

S: Honestly speaking, I just don't blame the colleges and government policy as I found few students whose intentions was not genuine and they just wanted to say in UK without studying. But you need to do good research and come to universities rather than seeking help from agents. I would recommend as long as they chose right institution and have pure intention.

I: What do you intend to do after you complete your studies in the UK?

S: I am working as an accountant here and also trying to finish my ACCA course modules which I could not finish in UK. I don't have to think about any visa issue here so I am determined to work hard and probably will plan my Master's degree soon.

Appendix D: Example of Interview Transcript 2 (*Anil*)

I: Hello, how are you?

S: I am fine, thank you.

I: To begin with, can you give me a brief background about yourself?

S: I am an international student from Nepal. I arrived here in UK in 2006 at a private college to study accounting course combined with Information Technology initially when I applied for visa. Recently, I just finished my Master's degree from Kingston University.

I: Why did you decide to come to UK?

S: (Laughs...) you know everyone was saying UK is the best place to study and there was a media rhetoric as well that UK is the best place in the world for foreign students. Best in terms of prospective working opportunities too. I was attracted by the working opportunities as well as its reputation so I came to UK.

I: Are your parents paying your tuition fees?

S: Well, my parents are from working class background and they could not afford. But I persuaded them and they contributed little amount. So it was a combined contribution from myself and my parents. I had a small business back home and saved some so I just had to convince the British Embassy that I had sufficient funds in order to make them believe that I could afford tuition fees. So I showed my business and other source of income and met the criteria that the visa application required.

I: What difference did you find between studying in UK and back home? Give some examples.

S: Ah... yeah it was a big difference. In UK obviously, there are many, I mean a lot of learning resources. But when I first came to private colleges there was not enough learning resources and learning support. Besides, there was a lot of difference the way lessons are taught and delivered here. I studied in Government College in Nepal. It was more texts based learning and verbal lectures unlike here where all resources

can be found via internet due to advanced technology and internet facilities. The library facilities are excellent here and we can access other university library which we cannot do in private colleges.

I: Why did you choose private further education colleges over universities?

Also, private colleges were cheaper in tuition fees as compared to universities. So I chose private college as no one advised me to come to university back home.

I: When you say, 'nobody advised you' then who suggested you private colleges?

S: Actually, I had a friend in UK who had enrolled himself in private college. I did not consult and agent or education consultant that time. I did my application process all by myself. Only my friend assisted me while issuing my visa letter from the College as he was already studying in that same college. He helped me in providing the necessary documents and I applied for the visa. It was a smooth process. Everyone that time relied on some sort of education consultant but I did not. So it was because of my friend and low tuition fees I chose private college. No one advised me at that time about the difference between private college and University otherwise I would have applied to universities. I thought they were same. In media, when I saw the college website it had big campus, good infrastructure and big name but when I came here it was very opposite. The college was very small. I was there will be many students studying there but I found actually when I went to college, there were only few students, not good infrastructure, few computers and few lecturers which was not what I had expected. My expectation was big since it was a college in UK. In comparison to private colleges in Nepal, I found colleges back home infrastructure wise they were better than here.

I: How good is the Points Based System a right and effective approach to crack down bogus colleges and students by the UKBA? If so, give examples?

S: Um...actually, Points Based System in some way it was good because there was no burden of going for interviews while applying visa which was the case before the introduction of this system. I assumed they were in trial period as I had attended the interview myself in 2006 but later on under the previous system. The Points Based System was introduced in 2008/2009. But I think this was some kind of agenda set up by Home Office to track students because they were in the beginning of recession in

2008 and they needed some upfront cash in the UK and that's why they introduced this system so that anyone can easily apply. In the PBS, they focus on the bank statements, I thought it would be genuine bank statements like we have in UK but there were dodgy statements. They knew they needed some cash flow or upfront money so when students applied for visa they would bring some cash to UK in the form of pocket money, travel cheques, etc.

I: So how would that help UK?

S: That flow of money vitally supported UK billions of pounds towards the economy. If you read Liberal Democrat paper published in 2014, their manifesto clearly states that international students brought to UK 7 billion pounds per year and 3.5 billion indirectly. Another benefit was international students brought multi-cultural environment to UK students so home students could experience different cultures in their home country. There was also huge benefit and massive support in terms of economy.

In terms of bogus colleges (laughs...) it was all I believe Home Office Agenda to set this up. They knew about the existence of these so called bogus colleges who could attract international students easily say hundreds and thousands came to UK as they needed cheap labour and flexible labour to suit the UK economy. At least international students played and paid an important part in UK's 2008 recession in the form of tuition fees which they paid and contributed towards the UK economy until 2014 I would say.

S: So do you think Home Office succeeded in their approach to crack down bogus college?

I: Yes, they did because you know they were deploying UKBA and now after 2014 they are no more Border Agency so that Border Agency was in fact agenda setting to implement the Points Based System in 2008. This is all about to manage the migration. Once the Right Wing party such as the UKIP party led by Nigel Farage there was some anti-migration rhetoric and then you know finally his party won. And they were against migration and before the general election in 2015 I would say was purely a plot by UKBA.

S: What do you mean by agenda setting? Can you elaborate on that?

I: Agenda setting like the government manifesto main target to attack the migration when they need it and again their agenda setting to cut down net migration when they

are enough and I would say that when they needed money in recession they attracted Points Based System so that they could come. You need 40 points to meet the criteria in PBS, 30 points can be from the CAS letter and 10 points would be the money maintenance. So money was the major thing to decide. Whoever had money, CAS letter would be easily issued. Only the motive was to attract the flow of money. They used the so called bogus colleges who worked as a man power agency to supply cheap labour and to avoid the criticism from others again Home Office they just took some action to them but it was the Home Office themselves who granted them the license to bring in students to UK. At that time, students were attracted to private colleges rather than universities because there was huge difference in fees and it was easy to get admission to private colleges if you had money and met the criteria which was easy to some extent.

I: What problems or consequences did you face after the recent stringent immigration rules and crack down of bogus colleges?

S: Yes, of course, you know like what happened was Home Office started to revoke the licenses of the college and then they knew already when they issued the number of students allocation or CAS to colleges and they should have checked the capacity whether they have the infrastructure or not and after considering that they allowed them to recruit the maximum number of students into a college as per their suitability and needs. They could have controlled the number of students in first place but they didn't. They gave the number of license to bogus colleges like thousands of numbers even when the College has only 25 student's capacity and they had infrastructure to teach only 25 students may be but they issued thousands of license to them. It is again Home Office to control the immigration but they again started to take action against them and they revoked their license. When they revoked the license, the student have to find another sponsor. Even myself I had to change many colleges due to the rule of the HO that kept changing every 2 or 3 months. Every time they change rules and when I enrol in one college, their license would be revoked and some colleges they kept changing the courses and it was frustrating. For instance, one of the college I was enrolled with was in partnership with University of Wales and I paid around £4000 to them and they issued the CAS letter and then after that HO again revoked their license of that college and then the college went into administration. I lost my money which was never refunded and in the meantime I had to gone to Nepal for holiday to meet

my family. When I came back the immigration officers at Heathrow airport did not allow me to enter UK. When I went for holiday to Nepal, my college was running smoothly, it was only when I came back at the airport that I learned that my college was revoked and HO took 14 months to decide. It was a very unfortunate incident. They took me to detention centre and were trying to deport me. I requested them that I had already paid £4000 to the college and was supposed to start my course in February. After one week my course was meant to start which was 14 February and I returned on 6 February I remember. But HO did not listen to my request because my college license was revoked and it was no fault of mine.

I had valid visa for 22 months nearly 2 years. I had to wait for 14 months to get that visa and so one year visa was still left. They kept me for 110 days which is three and half months in detention centre while my appeal process was taking long. Even while my appeal process taking place, HO officials would frequently come and tell me to leave the country and I would tell them my case is under appeal and they would humiliate me. Actually, I had appealed myself through a fax machine that was in the detention centre so I had a copy of the receipt that I had sent and I would show that to them as an evidence. Finally, I got the decision after three and half months and I was allowed to enter UK. When I came out of the detention centre, immediately I went to the college next day. The college was locked and the door was sealed and had a notice on the door saying that they had gone to administration. I did not understand then what administration meant but later understood its meaning. Through my experience, students who genuinely studied and paid their fees like myself had to spent inn detention centre but no owner of the bogus colleges were put to detention centre or action taken against them apart from closing down their college. So it seems like it is an agenda setting by the government as they protected their agents or owner of the bogus colleges. I would say these bogus colleges were agencies of HO to collect the money because they were protected and not punished.

I: What was the name of the college?

S: The name of the college was College of Technology London which was in East London. Also I was never issued by the HO a 60 days' notice to find another sponsor when my college was revoked. So I was totally ignorant about it. I paid £4000 for a course and I did not even attend a single class and lecture. After that I struggled a lot

to find new sponsor or college as HO was really trying students to get enrolled in university course than private colleges. I was happy to go to university but you know I had to struggle a lot as I could not get any progress letter from the Colleges I studied as some colleges kept changing the course and then one college I got enrolled to was revoked and the other college I was enrolled to was also revoked. So I was very frustrated as I ruined my time and money. But finally I applied for a course in St Mary's University and fortunately I was working part time there and one of the Programme Director kindly heard my story and voice and my overall situation and as a colleague I told him that I wanted to pursue my studies which I could not complete earlier and finally he took me to the registry department and International Office and got the application form for BA Media Arts and was also offered a scholarship of 40% being an international student and I struggled a lot and I was allowed to apply 60% from my salary.

I: How was your experience on visa process? Did you face any problem?

S: No, it was easy as I applied from university and the university was highly trusted and well recognised public funded university. Within three years, I completed my Bachelor's degree and finally passed in flying colours. After that I continued to pursue my Master's degree.

I: How have your experiences in UK helped to promote or hinder your overall growth and development? Give examples to support your answer.

S: I was frustrated because I felt was discriminated for being international or foreign students. Obviously, some people and even HO pledged me as bogus student when I was not and I have proved it finally. There was definitely frustration but I am proud of myself that I was very resilient and finally I succeeded. In terms of wellbeing, I was very stressed suffered from depression but I was very determined. It was not necessary for someone to study, it is not a right thing. Learning/studying should take place in a free environment and should not be intervened or forced. Whenever I wanted to study, I was always troubled by HO and finally when I succeeded the rules kept changing. I am aware of many international students who have committed suicide because of this pressure but I challenged myself to this problem and I finally I overcome it. But it was not easy from the government side, always they undermined

us. In some way they exploited the foreign students and in a very bad way. They never gave chance to those who successfully completed their degrees in UK but instead there were many restriction instead for opportunity to get into work market. It is a good practice to encourage foreign students to go back home after their studies but on the other hand students have invested huge amount of money for their studies like £5000 but people like us from poor country/background than we have no point f going back as we have no work experience. When you complete a course in any country, you look and expect for some work opportunity /experience here.

I: What do you think about your experience of learning in UK private FE College? Can you give some examples of the advantages and disadvantages you experienced?

S: In terms of advantages, there is no advantages studying in private colleges. But if you are a genuine student then studying at college will be no good as there are University and public funded colleges. Also, it is a multicultural environment here as students from different countries and background come to study so you get to know and interact with different people.

I: What recommendations would you give to friends and relatives to come and study to UK?

S: Actually I would not. These days there are many online courses which you can learn from your country. So I would not advice and rather do more research online and do such courses. I think from my experience, I would not recommend them to UK but to other countries as there are no work opportunity for graduates such as Post Study Work visa which in the past allowed graduates to have some work experience which would be helpful.

I: What do you intend to do after you complete your studies?

S: I have been applying for jobs and also looking for work opportunity so I want to gain experience here so that I can have better future prospects back home.

Thank you.

Appendix E: Example of Interview Transcript 3 (Preeti)

Brief Background:

I am from Nepal and came to London in 2008 in North West College London to study Business course. I had completed my Bachelor's degree back home and wanted to do Masters but the education system was bit different in UK compared to my country so I applied for Diploma in Business Management thinking that this would allow me to adapt to the new teaching environment and would be easy for me when later I moved to do my Masters.

I: Why did you decide to come to UK for your studies?

S: Initially I wanted to go to Australia but after doing some research I found that UK is the best country for education so I came to get my higher education in a well renowned country which UK is famous for.

I: Are your parents paying towards your tuition fees?

S: My parents paid my tuition fees when I first came to London and then later I also started to contribute little as I was doing part time job.

I: What difference did you find between studying in UK and back home? Give some examples.

S: Back home the lessons are very theoretical and book based whereas here it is more practical than theory based type of learning. There is more knowledge and learning based on work experiences whereas back home it is only textual learning. The lessons and curriculum is more flexible here. Back home we have to go to college 6 days in a week which gives us less time to focus or do other work whereas here you have to go 2 to 3 days a week which allows you more time to focus at your studies.

I: Why did you choose private further education colleges over universities?

S: Ah... there was no such reason but I think that time it was not easy to get admission in UK universities or even to come to UK. So the college I came to was owned and established by a Nepalese person who had been settled in UK since decades ago so that convinced me more. Since it was very difficult to get admission into university directly so I took some agent's help to get into private college as it was easy to get admission to private colleges than in universities. Universities are also very expensive

and competitive as well. It is generally very tough and expensive compared to private colleges.

I: How good is the Points Based System a right and effective approach to crack down bogus colleges and students by the UKBA? If so, give examples?

S: It was a good system as you are required to gain certain points and then you are given visa. It was a good system and I really liked it but what I did not like was they took all the students both genuine and bogus students and colleges in the same way. They did not think or give a second choice to those genuine students like myself after they closed down the colleges so that way they did not act fairly in spite of introducing good system.

I: What problems or consequences did you face after the recent stringent immigration rules and crack down of bogus colleges?

S: I am definitely one of the victims of this system. I was a genuine student and was studying well. I completed my MBA from School of Business in London awarded by University of Gloucestershire. After that I choose one of the old and renowned college called St Patrick to do some professional course CIMA (Chartered Institute of Management Accountants) since I wanted to be an accountant when I go back home. But unfortunately I came to know that the Home Office had curtailed the college license and student's visa who were studying there. The college management did not give any specific reason for this and there were many international students like me studying there. I came to know later that the college was suspended because of the English Test TOEIC scandal. But like myself, most of the students studying there had done IELTS and not TOEIC. Few of the students had TOEIC test which the Home Office said were achieved by students falsely and so the English certificate they possess was fake and as a result of that reason all of us had to suffer even the ones who had never given any TOEIC test like me.

Home office issued 60 days' notice to us but no good colleges or universities wanted to accept or enrolled us as our visa was curtailed and the colleges were instructed by Home Office not to accept any students with curtailment letter as we were considered bogus. Even though I was a genuine student, I did not get admissions nor was accepted anywhere. None of the colleges accepted me. I had even applied for my PhD

as I had a Master's degree here but I was refused from two renowned universities. I had no choice but to apply to some colleges as my 60 days' notice was running out but still no college wanted to give me admission because of the visa curtailment letter issued to me by the Home Office. I had to keep myself legal in the country and to switch to another category Tier 2 work permit which I could not do either as it was very expensive or I did not get suitable work for myself. My 60 days notice expired and I had no option than to apply for my FLRO application which is still pending in Home Office. It is nearly 2 years now and since I don't have my passport with me I cannot travel. I had valid visa from 2015 to 2017 but since they curtailed that visa it was no longer valid.

I: How have your experiences in UK helped to promote or hinder your overall growth and development? Give examples to support your answer

S: When I first came to UK, I was very excited as I came with a desire to build up my career. When I completed my MBA I was very happy and full of positivity and that I was working hard towards building my career and to add value to my education. Since I completed my Masters here I wanted some more practical knowledge and so I joined CIMA course which was a professional qualification. I had completed level 1 and was about to begin level 2 of the course but suddenly my college closed down and all my dreams were shattered and I couldn't get admissions anywhere after that. It was very frustrating and mentally upset I could not focus on anything. My interest in studies has all gone in vain. Whatever I have achieved now I have forgotten and I cannot go back home because there is such a long gap now in my education that I don't think I am confident enough to compete and get a good job. I have lost interest. Sometimes I just want to leave all and go but if I have to go empty handed I would have never come here. So I am trying my best till the last moment. I live with my two children and husband here and they are dependent on my visa so their passport is also in Home Office we cannot travel either. Also even if I decide to go back home I will have to start from scratch and now since it's been so long gap that even if I go there have been so many changes and it will be difficult for me to adapt. I came to UK when I was 24 years old and I have wasted all these precious years waiting for my visa and passport. My career is ruined and feel very frustrated. I was also under depression and had to take medicine and do some counselling which my GP had referred to.

I: What do you think about your experience of learning in UK private FE College? Can you give some examples of the advantages and disadvantages you experienced?

S: I am an international student from another country and background so advantages of studying in UK are immense. First of all, it was easy to get admission in private colleges which had similar education system like in universities and it was cheaper too. Also there were other students from my own country and similar background studying there already so it was easy to adapt.

Disadvantages - When I look back now and reflect the only disadvantage is that had there been only few or good private colleges than this would have never happened. Many colleges brought in recruited students out of which few were bogus. There have been cases where colleges had only one classroom and they were running as a result I am today in this situation.

I: What recommendations would you give to friends and relatives to come and study to UK?

S: No, I would never recommend my friends or family to come to UK as there is no future here. They give education and what I came to know recently is that if you take UK degree and go back home, company or recruiters doubt on your certificates if they are genuine or not and because of the news and media hype about bogus colleges and students here they don't trust and that's why I would not recommend anyone. Instead I would suggest them to go to Australia or Canada as there are no issues of bogus colleges or students. Honestly, I have never heard anywhere about this issue only here in UK and curtailing visas for no fault of us. UK is a very developed country and its education system is renowned all over and having problems such as bogus colleges and students is a flaw in their system and should be looked into carefully. Earlier, when I told at home about my closure of college no one believed me but now they know the scenario and are surprised as colleges don't get close back home because of student issues.

I: What do you intend to do after you complete your studies in the UK?

S: I will try to continue and finish my CIMA course once I get my visa and build up my career so that my children can be proud of their mum that I did not give up or lose hope. Until then I will wait for my visa as I am stuck here. My children are very small.

My first child is 5 years and my second one is only 8 months old so it will be difficult for them even to adjust back home.

Appendix F: Example of Interview Transcript 4 (Sheela)

I: Brief Background:

S: I came from Nepal to UK in June 2010 on a student visa. I was working as a Manager in a Tourism company, Travel Agency in Kathmandu, Nepal and I came here hoping to complete my ACCA course which is Accounting course at Anglian College which was in Woolwich. I had completed my Bachelor's Degree in Business Studies from home.

I: Why did you decide to come to UK for your studies?

S: Because in Nepal we have few chartered Accounting bodies and ACCA is one of the reputed awarding body which is from UK .So I thought if I come to UK then I can get better education, better knowledge rather than studying in Nepal.

I: Are your parents paying towards your tuition fees?

S: I was working at that time back home as a Manager in Travel Agency and my parents were also very supportive. My father helped me in providing extra financial support which was beneficial for me. So my parents helped me to pay my fees.

I: What difference did you find between studying in UK and back home? Give some examples.

S: Ah... I would say it is a bit of tragedy. I did not have a good experience when I came to UK. When I came they had just introduced the Tier 4 system and many students were coming in and lots of private colleges were mushrooming and there plenty of private colleges everywhere in London. You go anywhere you will find a college. I did not expect that it would be so regularised and chaos here. When I first came to college I was expecting my course to be starting as soon as I enrolled there but nothing happened that way. In couple of months, say six seven months' time I joined the college and it got suspended and closed down eventually.

I: Why did you choose private further education colleges over universities?

S: I chose private college because of ACCA course. Even in Nepal though we have many institutions which do accounting courses we are required to do some paper exams and the rest of the course we are required to gain some practical experience in an accounting firm to get practical knowledge. Just to get theory knowledge we need assistance from the institution. Only few universities in UK provide ACCA or degree courses which are slightly different in context than the ones approved and provided by the awarding body ACCA itself. I mean it would not be recognised as a proper qualification as it is not awarded by ACCA but by some other university. Also the universities tuition fees were very expensive compared to private colleges so cost was another factor. Before coming to UK, I also attended few seminars and open days back home which UK institutions do run time to time so I did not take any agents help but I met the college representative and contacted him directly and chose the college.

I: How good is the Points Based System a right and effective approach to crack down bogus colleges and students by the UKBA? If so, give examples?

S: Ah, Points Based System in my opinion I thought would be a good system but I did not imagine that it would be so inappropriate. Back home you have to be qualified and have certain level of good years of experience to start or open up a college. But here anybody could start up a college without any qualification and experience to make money and everybody was running the whole system. The thing was only the students were blamed for this and most of the owners who were running these private colleges were British nationality so the government did not take any step or action against them apart from shutting down their college but instead students were targeted and going through a tough time. I came to this college, paid my full tuition fees and suddenly the college closed down without even allowing me to finish my course and I had to change to another college and that college too closed down and I have been paying money for visa fees and all that but not getting any support or whatsoever in return.

I: What problems or consequences did you face after the recent stringent immigration rules and crack down of bogus colleges?

S: I mean it was very traumatising because I mean I did not get or achieve what I came for since I did not get to complete my ACCA course. So basically it ruin my career. It was not a good experience at all.

I: Can you tell me more about your experience when your college closed down?

S: When my college closed down I did not get any notice, 60 days' notice like other as there was no proper source of information as everybody was trying to catch and deport students. It was very easy for people here to cheat students and take their money as students were desperate due to sudden change of immigration and closure of colleges. So I decided to change college instead of waiting to receive the notice in order to avoid these tensions and hassles. But after some time, it was unfortunate that the new college I got enrolled which was London School of Business and Finance (LSBF) also closed down. Then again I changed to another college and managed to get a Master's Degree in another subject not in accounting which I hoped for from Anglia Ruskin University. So I have now Master's degree in Business Marketing and I have now applied for Tier 2 work permit and I am still waiting for my work permit. It has been a year now and I have not heard from the Home Office since I have applied and I am quite worried.

I: What do you think about your experience of learning in UK private FE College? Can you give some examples of the advantages and disadvantages you experienced?

S: *If the owners of the private college were bit responsible and also if there should be some criteria set up so that only qualified and experienced people can open or run the college and not everybody. It is not only about business. It is related to future of many students and such bitter experiences can ruin someone's future too. So even the government should be very careful before considering the licenses of the colleges and they should not give everybody an opportunity to earn or make money at the cost of student's future.* They should stop this practice. Even when college closes down, students don't get their fees refunded and there is no compensation for student and every time students have to change college and have to pay more money for tuition fees and visa fees. Everybody is just blaming student coming to UK. If they would have not given visa easily no one would have come here and they call themselves first world country and if this is how the system is in first world country then I don't know what it would be in other countries.

I: Advantages of learning

S: Nothing in particular but I just hope that I could have had not wasted my time and opportunity as I spend so much of money here and with that amount of money had I

gone to Australia or other countries I would have had some tuition fee protection and would have been beneficial for me. I would have been able to complete my accounting course which I had aspired to achieve.

I: What recommendations would you give to friends and relatives to come and study to UK?

S: No, I don't think so because with my experience, I will never be able to suggest anyone to come to UK. Until and unless there is proper mechanism in place I would never recommend any friends or relatives to come to UK for their studies. However, this may not be the case in universities but even few universities were also suspended so unless there is any stable rules and regulations I don't think any student should come to UK unless they are very rich and want to waste their money.

I: How have your experiences in UK helped to promote or hinder your overall growth and development? Give examples to support your answer.

S: Mostly, I would say it has a negative impact. I mean, I am not a sort of person who is negative all the time but it did not do any good to me. I felt couple of times to give up everything and go back home but the only thing is if I go back without any qualification achieved after spending so much of money here already then I have to go back and start from the lowest position again from where I had started years back when I came to UK. It would be a lot of struggle and you know I have reached a certain age now so being in a low position would be frustrating. Besides, no one believed back home when I told them colleges were closing down. They all thought I was not focussed on my studies and making excuses but later they heard and learned from the media and news and my parents were worried about me. Also it is a matter of reputation too now when you go back home. If I go without any degree people, society will talk about me and it is very embarrassing for me and my parents. It is very depressing when I really try to recall my past experiences here. It has really demotivated me. As a person, I think this experience has changed and shaken me a lot. Still I cannot believe what I went through and I am still fighting for my right to education. I am just trying my best to keep myself positive and stay focused.

I: What do you intend to do after you complete your studies in the UK?

S: I am still waiting for my passport and visa and try to get some work experience and start my business back home in couple of years' time.

Appendix G: List of private FE colleges that have lost Tier 4 licences

The full list of the 65 private colleges that lost their Highly Trusted Status enabling them to recruit Tier 4 international students following an [investigation](#) into testing and visa fraud that began in June 2014.

1. Alpha College – Revoked
2. Alpha Meridian College – Revoked
3. APS Computer Solutions Ltd Trading as Pitman Training Centre Peterborough – Revoked
4. Birmingham Informatics College Ltd – Revoked
5. Birmingham Institute of Education Training and Technology – Revoked
6. Blake Hall College – Revoked
7. Bradford College of Management – Surrendered
8. Bradford Metropolitan College – Revoked
9. Bradford Regional College – Revoked
10. Bristol College of Accountancy – Revoked
11. Britain College – Surrendered
12. CAHRO Academy Ltd – Revoked
13. Central College London (a division of Huawei Institute) – Revoked
14. Central College of Studies (CCS) – Revoked
15. Central Cranbrook College – Revoked
16. Citizen 2000 Education Institute – Revoked
17. City College Nottingham – Revoked
18. City of London Academy – Revoked
19. College of Advanced Studies – Revoked
20. College of East London – Revoked
21. College of Excellence Limited – Revoked
22. Docklands College – Revoked
23. Empress College – Surrendered
24. Essex College Ltd – Revoked
25. Eynsford College – Revoked
26. Forbes Graduate School – Revoked
27. Hammersmith Management College – Revoked

28. Helios International College – Revoked
29. IIM Bedford – Revoked
30. Interlink College of Technology and Business Studies – Revoked
31. Katherine and King’s College of London – Revoked
32. Kinnaird College – Revoked
33. LIT LON Ltd – Revoked
34. London Academy of Management and Business (LAMB) – Surrendered
35. London Churchill College – Surrendered
36. London College of Finance and Accounting – Revoked
37. London College of Business Management and Computing Studies –
Surrendered
38. London Corporate College – Revoked
39. London Educators Limited – Revoked
40. London Empire Academy – Surrendered
41. London Metropolitan College – Revoked
42. London Premier College Limited – Revoked
43. London Regal College – Revoked
44. London School of Advanced Studies – Revoked
45. London School of Marketing Trading as LS Business School – Revoked
46. London School of Technology – Revoked
47. London St. Andrew’s College – Revoked
48. Manchester College of Management Sciences Limited – Revoked
49. Manchester International College – Revoked
50. Manchester Trinity College Limited – Revoked
51. Midlands Academy of Business and Technology – Revoked
52. North West College Reading – Revoked
53. Pharez UK Ltd Trading as Pharez College – Revoked
54. Queensbury College – Revoked
55. Radcliffe College – Revoked
56. Sanjari International College – Revoked
57. Shakespeare College – Revoked
58. Stanfords College UK Limited – Revoked
59. South London College – Revoked
60. Superior College London – Revoked

61. UK Business Academy – Revoked
62. UK Vocational Training College Trading as UK College of Arts and Technology
– Revoked
63. Vernon Community College – Revoked
64. West George College – Revoked
65. West London Business College Ltd – Revoked