International student mobility from China and India – the influence of Australian immigration policy, and institutional and family factors on post-graduation destination outcomes

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Abstract

Developed nations around the world are investing heavily in higher education, to develop their knowledge economy and their highly skilled labour force. International student mobility has experienced phenomenal growth over the past two decades, with these students considered the future of highly skilled migrants that are trained in the host country. Many developed nations are keen to attract and retain these international students.

The main purpose of this research is to examine the main factors influencing Chinese and Indian students in selecting Australia as the destination for their study and the intentions post-graduation. It addresses the literature gap of the influence of meso-level factors, for example parents on such student migration, as well as the difference in impact of micro, macro and meso factors on various student nationalities, and aims to understand their decisions from the lens of migration theories.

This study’s results show that Chinese and Indian students are motivated differently, and that the meso-level factors significantly influence their decision-making. They also suggest the role of Australian migration policy has diminished, especially in the case of Chinese students; although Indian students remain influenced by the availability of post-study work options in Australia. This research also investigated Chinese and Indian students’ decision-making post-completion of their studies in Australia. These results reveal that while most Chinese students remain intent on returning home post-studies, many Indian students change their intentions, largely influenced by meso-level factors and the availability of post-study work rights.

The study’s overall findings contribute to the understanding of the complex reasons behind Chinese and Indian students’ decision towards studying in Australia and their intentions post-graduation. In particular, the research offers insights into the international student mobility from the lens of migration theories.

This research also has direct implications on policy setting at the national, state and institutional levels in Australia. These include a growing focus on the reputation and global rankings of Australian institutions, the employability of their graduates, labour market access, better engagement with meso-level factors like parents, and transnational education.
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Declaration

This is to certify that:

- This thesis contains no material that has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at any other university,
- To the best of my knowledge, contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text,
- The thesis is fewer than 100,000 words in length, exclusive of tables, maps, bibliographies and appendices.

Signed: __________________________

Dated: 15/10/19
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Introduction

1.1 Thesis statement

In the pursuit of a global knowledge economy, factors such as education and skills have become the key drivers of economic productivity. Higher education is playing an essential role in building economic development by imparting knowledge and skills, leading many nations to invest heavily in this area.

International student mobility has emerged as core to internationalisation of higher education. There has been phenomenal growth in international higher education, with 5 million international students choosing to study internationally in 2016 (OECD, 2018). There are various push and pull factors affecting these students’ choice of destination country. While many developing nations view international higher education as an opportunity to meet their unmet education demand in country and also in a way to acquire foreign skills, developed nations are actively involved in attracting, training and up-skilling foreign students and then retaining them to offset their ageing populations and to support their knowledge economies. Recruiting international students, especially at tertiary level, is now pursued by many developed nations, with higher education prioritised on many national policy agendas.

One of the primary objectives of this research was to examine the push and pull factors affecting international student mobility into Australia, including cultural, educational, economic and social factors. This research considered Australian migration policy as a primary pull factor for international students, including the interconnections between international education, migration of students and government policy, as well as the influence of diaspora or family on migration decisions.

This chapter provides an overview of this research. This first section 1.1 covers the thesis statement, and section 1.2 then provides the background to this study. Section 1.3 next discusses the research questions used in this study, followed by the significance of this research in section 1.4, following by section 1.5 that details the structure of this thesis document.

1.2 Background of this study

Globalisation is commonly perceived as “the flow of technology, knowledge, people, values, ideas, capital, goods and services across national borders” (Knight & de Wit, 1997, p.6), distinctly affecting each country based on individual histories, traditions, cultures and priorities (Knight, 2004; Hudzik, 2011) – see Section 2.2 of the Chapter 2 for further detail. In today’s post-industrialisation era, global knowledge economy and technology have become the key drivers of economic productivity, ahead of more traditional factors such as capital and goods (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 1996; 2008; Zajda,
As suggested by OECD (2000, p. 178), “the trend towards free movement of capital, goods and people between countries, coupled with changes in the openness of labour markets, has increased the demand for new kinds of skills and knowledge in OECD countries”. Governments around the world are prioritising higher education to broaden the horizons of students, including thorough understanding of foreign languages and cultures. Most developed countries now promote higher education opportunities to attract international students, to acquire highly skilled labour to better support their economies, with many universities focused on the economic benefits including additional revenue generated from full-fee-paying international students (Wihlborg & Robson, 2018).

International student mobility is part of globalisation, and has been defined as students that travel to a country other than their home country for the purpose of study at the tertiary level (Balaz & Williams, 2004). The demand for international education opportunities has significantly grown over the past decade (OECD, 2018), largely because the demand for tertiary education has been outstripping domestic supply capabilities in many developing countries (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002). Students in developing countries often have less access to domestic tertiary education, which is a push factor for choosing to study overseas in developed countries. Another primary pull factor is the opportunity to permanently migrate and settle in the host country following the completion of their studies (de Wit, 2008; Han & Appelbaum, 2016).

Over the last two decades, the number of internationally mobile students has significantly grown from 1.9 million in 1998 to 5 million in 2016 (OECD, 2018; United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Institute for Statistics, 2018), which has mirrored the globalisation of economies in the same period.

As at 2016, the United States of America (USA), the United Kingdom (UK), Australia, Germany and France were recorded as the primary host education destinations, receiving close to 45% of foreign students worldwide (OECD, 2018; UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2018) – see Section 3.2 of Chapter 3 for further detail. In particular, the USA, UK and Australia are deemed key destinations in the international education market based on their active involvement in recruiting foreign students, having recognised the advantages of ‘export education’.

In many destination countries, international students have become a sizeable proportion of overall enrolments within the university sector. In 2016, they made up 10% or more of tertiary education enrolments in Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Switzerland and the UK, and were much higher at the doctoral level in OECD countries (OECD Education at a Glance, 2018). Furthermore, they accounted for more than 30% of enrolments in advanced research programs in Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland,
the UK and the USA in 2016. Compared to 2013, the number of foreign students enrolled in tertiary education more than doubled in 2016 in Estonia, Latvia and Poland (OECD Education at a Glance, 2018).

It is considered important for host education countries to not only increase international student market share, but to monitor the education attainment rates. It is the primary data index used to assess the skills available in each country’s population including its labour force – it is a key indicator of the skills and knowledge valued in the labour market based on a knowledge economy. Tertiary education attainment rates among 25-64 year-olds in OECD countries have dramatically increased over the past decade, from 28% in 2008 to 36% in 2016 – an increase of 2.8% across OECD countries (OECD Education at a Glance, 2018). There also appears to be a correlation between education attainment and higher employment rates. The OECD (2018) reported that 85% of these 25-64 year-olds were able to gain employment after completing tertiary qualifications in 2017 compared with 75% and 58% of those that completed upper secondary and lower-level qualifications respectively. Furthermore, those 25-64 year-olds with a tertiary qualification generally earned 54% and 22% more than those with only upper secondary or lower-level qualifications respectively (OECD Education at a Glance, 2018).

Many developed nations are intensely competing for highly skilled labour and are subsequently developing migration policies based on this demand. In 2017, more than 5 million people permanently migrated into OECD countries, while more than 4 million temporary foreign workers, filling skills shortages, were recorded in these countries in 2016 – an increase of 11% from 2015 (OECD International Migration Outlook, 2018).

Global mobility of highly skilled workers has been occurring for many decades now. The advancement of technology, as well as the globalisation and liberalisation of economies, has made it even more possible for highly skilled migrants to relocate to where they can fully achieve their potential (OECD, 2008). In response, most OECD countries’ migration policies incorporate three main objectives: to fuel their own labour market shortage; to increase their own population; and to facilitate innovation and the expansion of knowledge via highly skilled labour (OECD 2002; 2016). Such host countries prefer a demand- over supply-driven approach towards such migration, with an emphasis on selective skilled labour requirements that are also applied to foreign students viewed as potential future skilled workers (Suter & Jandl, 2008).

Such intense competition for global skilled labour including via students has resulted in several OECD countries introducing more favourable migration policies at the national level to encourage such temporary or permanent migration among international students (Boeri et al., 2012). Since the 1990s, many of these countries have been using ‘quality selective’ policies that include points-based system and selective skilled occupation tools. For example, Australia’s migration policy has favoured skilled workers since 1984, with applicants selected according to their potential input to the country’s labour market (Chiou, 2017). In 1991,
New Zealand’s migration policy moved towards a points-based arrangement similar to that of Australia (Bellamy, 2008). It has been reported that Canada’s similar points-based migration policy has led to an increased share of highly educated immigrants (Gopal, 2016). In the USA, the American Competitiveness and Workforce Improvement Act of 1998 following the 1990’s Immigration Act placed prioritised the selection of immigrants via a quota system that favoured candidates with tertiary education and/or specific professional skills (Gesing, 2017).

In Australia, China and India are the major source countries for both international students and skilled migrant workers (Department of Education and Training, 2018). In 2017, China accounted for 29% of all international enrolments, followed by India at 11% (Department of Education and Training, 2018) – see Appendix 16 for further detail. Furthermore, Indian nationals accounted for 20.5% of skilled migrant visa grants in 2017-18, followed by Chinese at 15.5% – see Appendix 18 for further detail. In the same period, Indians made up 25% of all temporary work (skilled) subclass 457 visas, followed by the Chinese at 5.3% – see Appendix 21 for further detail.

It should be noted that China’s one child policy that was introduced in 1979 could prevent some of this country’s international students from permanently settling in Australia – they are more likely to be pressured to return home to care for and support their parents. In contrast, some Indian students may be pushed in the opposite direction, to earn money in countries like Australia to support their younger siblings and other family back in India.

There are a few themes that have emerged from the study so far. In summary, global student mobility is at an all-time high and is likely to continue to grow. In addition to the main host countries such as the USA, UK and Australia, others are emerging and starting to compete for international student market share. Several OECD countries are introducing favourable permanent migration policies to retain international students, which consequently influences their chose of study destination. Factors such as revenue and skills generation need to be factored into such policymaking, as well as a balance between international education and highly skilled migration. Diaspora networks developed in the host country, as well as family and friends back in the home country, might influence international students’ decisions on choosing the country to study and further migration.

1.3 Research questions

With the above background, to understand the influence of various factors on student decisions, further information needs to be gathered on international student mobility including the different factors that drive it, via deeper examination of the nexus between migration policies and international education as well as the
influence of families on international students’ migration decisions. This research therefore asked the following questions:

- What is the role of the Australian migration policy in attracting Chinese and Indian students to study in Australia?
- What role do meso-level factors play in Chinese and Indian students’ decision on initiation of migration to Australia?
- Which primary factors impact the decision-making of Chinese and Indian students in relation to whether they return to their home country or stay in Australia after completing their studies, and do these factors vary by nationality?
- How relevant are current theoretical migration approaches (e.g. Push-Pull Theory, Dual Labour Market Theory, Neo Economics of Labour Migration Theory, Historical Structuralist Theory, Network Theory and Institutional Theory) for explaining the movements of Chinese and Indian students to Australia?
- How could the migration theory be refined in the light of recent empirical evidence relating to initiation and continuation of migration decisions of Chinese and Indian students?

1.4 Significance of study

Previous international student mobility and skilled migration studies have often focused on the general trends in student flows across borders and the corresponding changes in migration policies across various host education countries (e.g. OECD, 2001; Gera & Songsakul, 2007; OECD, 2018). This includes the factors influencing these students’ choice of host country in general (e.g. Agarwal & Winkler, 1985; McMohan, 1992; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; Verbik & Lasanowski, 2007; de Wit, 2008; Macready & Tucker, 2011; OECD, 2011), where they are treated as one group without considering that students from different countries can have different motivation factors or intentions. Furthermore, minimal research exists on how governments and tertiary institutions could make their higher education more appealing for international students (e.g. Verbik & Lasanowski, 2007). Some other studies have not been able to fully explore the deeper motives of student mobility and migration and lack the cross-country data (e.g. Suter & Jandl, 2006).

In particular, there are literature gaps on understanding the influence of meso-level factors, influence of migration policy changes, and the relevance of migration theories to the international student mobility. This research therefore investigates the interconnection of international education and migration policy, specifically around Indian and Chinese students in Australia; it drills down into the factors that influence Indian and Chinese students’ decisions to study abroad, as well as their migratory intentions post-graduation in Australia. Primary factors such as Australian migration policy are examined in detail, as well as the influence of other stakeholders (or actors) such as education agents, parents and other family members, friends, Austrade, and Australia’s Department of Immigration and Border Protection.
From a theoretical perspective, this study’s findings extend the understanding of international student mobility in the context of migration. While most previous studies have referred to the Push-Pull Theory, this research delves into international student mobility from the perspective of Network Theory and Institutional Theory, along with the New Economics of Labour Migration Theory. It will subsequently help universities engaged in foreign student recruitment understand the motivational factors behind international student mobility and will also assist host education nations in understanding policy implications in relation to attracting and retaining international students. These findings will also help in understanding the nexus between study and migration, to help achieve a balance of the two from a policy development perspective.

1.5 Structure of thesis
The thesis document has been structured into nine chapters. This first chapter introduces this research, while Chapter 2 is an overview of the globalisation and internationalisation of higher education, with Australia as the case study, and Chapter 3 covers the demand for highly skilled and international student mobility.

Chapter 4 is then a review of former research in this area, to identify and understand gaps in the literature. It also examines international student mobility through the migration theory lens, and consequently proposes a conceptual framework. Chapter 5 next focuses on the research design and methodology of this study, while Chapter 6 and Chapter 7 relate to the data that was gathered and analysed and presents the corresponding findings. An overall summary of this research is then provided in Chapter 8, followed by the concluding Chapter 9 that discusses the implications of this research including for policymakers, as well as potential directions for future research.

1.6 Summary
The higher education landscape is changing and has largely been influenced by globalisation and internationalisation. Corresponding technological revolutions such as in transport and communications have transformed the former ‘industrial society’ into a ‘knowledge society’, leading to a global knowledge economy characterised by the importance of higher education and a skilled workforce (Knight, 2004; OECD, 2016). Knowledge and skills are considered the primary drivers of economic productivity (Zajda, 2015), with higher education now prioritised within the policies of both developed and developing countries due to its widely accepted interconnection with knowledge-based economics and export income generation (Wihlborg & Robson, 2018). Many nations are now competing to attract and retain highly skilled migrants and international students to fill the labour shortages, compensate the ageing population, and further grow their knowledge economies (Boeri et al., 2012).
International student mobility is rapidly growing and is influenced by a number of push and pull factors e.g. limited domestic education supply, quality of education etc. (OECD, 2018). Many developed countries are now striving to attract and host these international students, for economic gains and to potentially retain this skilled labour force in pursuit of a knowledge economy. In the context of this study, Australia targets highly skilled migrants via a selective points-based scheme, which factors in the attraction and retention of international students. China and India are the major source countries for Australia for both international students and skilled migrants. China accounted for 29% of all enrolments, followed by India at 11% of all international enrolments in Australia in 2017 (see Appendix 16). Indian nationals accounted for 20.5 per cent of the total skilled migration visa grants in 2017-18 and Chinese nationals accounted for 15.5 per cent of the total (see Appendix 18).

There is existing research on studying the general trends in international student flows across borders and the changes in migration policies in various host countries (e.g. OECD, 2001; Gera & Songsakul, 2007; OECD, 2018) but the literature gap exists in understanding the influence of meso-level factors e.g. parents, friends, international agents; influence of migration policy changes, and the relevance of migration theories to international student mobility. This research investigates the interconnection of international education and migration policy, specifically around Indian and Chinese students studying in Australia. The factors that contribute to Indian and Chinese students’ decision to study in Australia and also their post-graduation intentions are examined in detail.

In summary, the findings from this research will deepen understanding of international student mobility in the context of migration theories and contribute towards the literature on mobility and migration patterns of the international students.
2 Overview

2.1 Introduction

Globalisation and internationalisation are in the spotlight in the modern world of higher education and are connected – internationalisation reacts to the force of globalisation and is also considered an agent of globalisation. Higher education has been associated with both globalisation and internationalisation. Many of the innovations in information, communication and technology have helped form global knowledge and skills economy, founded on higher education and a corresponding skilled workforce (Knight, 2004; OECD, 2008; Hudzik, 2011). Higher education imparts knowledge and skills that contribute to economic growth, which is why it rates highly on national policy plans of many countries (Zajda & Rust, 2016).

Student mobility is central to the internationalisation of higher education. There is an increasing unfilled demand for tertiary education in many countries, the need for new programs and also lifelong learning, contributing to the increased movement of students and the global ‘race’ to acquire such talent among major host countries. In 2016, there were 5 million students studying internationally (UNESCO 2018; OECD 2018). In 2002, the International Development Program (IDP) of Education Australia projected that international higher education would reach 7.6 million students by 2025 (Bohm, 2002). In addition to growth in international student mobility, there has been an expansion in education providers along with the emergence of new education delivery methods like online education. More universities across the globe are now engaging in internationalisation and cross-border education, to leverage economic benefits. Higher education has become a tradeable commodity and has even been included in the General Agreement on Trade and Services (GATS) by World Trade Organisation (WTO) (Knight, 2008). International higher education is now a major trade industry driven by economic rationale, with international student mobility generating billions of revenue each year (OECD, 2004).

The purpose of this chapter is to understand the interconnections between globalisation, internationalisation and higher education in the wider context of economic development and skills formation. Section 2.2 further discusses the meaning of globalisation and internationalisation, as well as the development of internationalisation in the context of higher education. Sections 2.3 and 2.4 next examine the rationales and approaches towards the internationalisation of higher education. Section 2.5 then discusses this research’s case study of Australia’s international higher education market, and is followed by an overall summary of this chapter in section 2.6.

2.2 Globalisation and internationalisation of higher education

The landscape of higher education, especially at the international level has been rapidly changing over the last few decades and is largely influenced by both globalisation and internationalisation, which have frequently
been examined (Scott, 2006, Knight 2008; de Wit, 2013; Zajda & Rust, 2016). The term ‘globalisation’ has been in use since the late 1960s and has mostly replaced the term ‘postmodernism’ (Giddens, 1990) which relates more to a period where social development was within the confines of national rather than international spaces, as a framework for analysing social issues (Zajda, 2015).

In general economic terms, globalisation refers to the process of growing interdependence of global economies and to the deregulation of businesses and markets (Friedman & Ramonet, 1999; Hoareau, 2011). Bergh and Nilsson (2010) concluded that it typically relates to the integration of economies and societies as part of worldwide globalisation. Hudzik (2011) further added that it often changes and softens political & economic boundaries, intensifying cross-border flows including of knowledge, ideas and learning. Knight and de Wit (1997, p.6) perceived globalisation as “the flow of technology, economy, knowledge, people, values, ideas across national borders, which affect each country differently based on its history, traditions, culture and priorities”. As per Altbach and Knight (2007), in the context of higher education, globalisation can either be defined as the economic, technological, political and societal forces that have provided access to higher education previously only available to the upper and some middle classes of the developed world, or it can be determined as relating to the growing interest of traditional learners to international experiences. The first definition refers to the ‘massification’ of higher education, and the other on enhancing understanding and connection (Altbach & Knight, 2007). Within this realm of globalisation, the internationalisation of higher education has emerged as a key trend.

The technological revolution in transport and communications has helped transform the industrial society into a knowledge society, with a focus on higher education and a skilled workforce (OECD, 2008). Porter (1990) predicted that the availability of abundant natural resources and cheap local labour alone can no longer assure national competitiveness, and that nations need to invest in technical innovations and the creative use of knowledge.

Most developed nations view international higher education as an opportunity to showcase their knowledge advancement in addition to the other political and cultural motives that increase their influence on other nations. In line with this, developing countries look at increasing higher education development as a key to their transition to developed nation level. Higher education or knowledge advancement, once seen as a non-tradeable commodity confined within national borders, has transformed into a tradeable commodity across the globe (Knight, 2008). It would be fair to say that today’s globalised society is more dependent on higher education or knowledge advancement than it ever has been.

Internationalisation is often confused with globalisation in relation to higher education (Altbach, 2004). Teichler (2004, p.22-23) explained that “globalisation seems to be used for any supra-regional phenomenon
related to higher education and/or anything on a global scale related to higher education characterised by market and competition whereas internationalisation is the totality of substantial changes in the context and inner life of higher education relative to an increasing frequency of border-crossing activities amidst a persistence of national systems, even though some sign of denationalisation might be observed”. In contrast, Internationalisation relates more to specific higher education policies developed and programs implemented by various governments and institutions to deal with globalisation (Altbach, 2006).

Knight & de Wit (1999) referred to the internationalisation of higher education as a way for a nation to respond to the impact of globalisation, while still respecting its own individuality. While most researchers have separately defined globalisation and internationalisation, it has often been acknowledged that there is a clear link between the two (Teichler, 2004; Altbach, 2004; Knight, 2008). Scott (2006, p.14) observed that internationalisation and globalisation are both complex phenomena, concluding that “the distinction between internationalisation and globalisation, although suggestive, cannot be regarded as categorical. They overlap and are intertwined in all kinds of ways”. Knight (2008, p.1) further contended that “internationalisation is changing the world of higher education, and globalisation is changing the world of internationalisation”.

National Association of Foreign Student Advisers (NAFSA) (2011, p.1) proposed the working definition of internationalisation as “the conscious effort to integrate and infuse international, intercultural and global dimensions into the ethos and outcomes of postsecondary education. To be fully successful, it must involve active and responsible engagement of the academic community in global networks and partnerships”.

In the context of higher education, Internationalisation is seen as a strategic approach by nations and its universities to acknowledge the demands stemming from globalisation, including as a way to prepare their people to engage in a globalised world (Altbach et al., 2009). Internationalisation has become significant to many higher education institutions around the world (Wihlborg & Robson, 2018). In addition to the international mobility of students, academics, programs and institutions, such internationalisation is also characterised by the interconnectedness of higher education based on collaborative research and development. Many countries’ institutions are rapidly changing in response to the growing importance of higher education (Robson, 2016), with the various rationales on this push for internationalisation further discussed in the next section.

Within the past decade, international engagement in relation to higher education has clearly become more of a priority in the national and institutional strategies all over the world (Rumbley, 2007). Such internationalisation is now as important for governments as it is for institutions – they are increasingly aware of the importance of universities in supporting global and regional competitiveness (Wilson, 2013). Both the Bologna process and Lisbon strategy promoting student mobility in Europe are strong examples of this international engagement in higher education. Joint degree and twinning programs and research collaborations
also highlight how universities are forming international alliances to address the growing education needs and expand capacity building in under-resourced institutions and countries. In many nations, international student mobility, global rankings, and the corresponding internationalisation of institutions have emerged as some of the main policy themes in addition to knowledge development agendas (Zajda & Rust, 2016).

Knight (2004, p.11) redefined internationalisation of higher education as “the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education”. The term ‘process’ was intentionally added to highlight the continuous, ever-evolving nature of internationalisation of higher education. Hudzik (2011, p.6) further defined internationalisation as “a commitment, confirmed through action, to infuse international and comparative perspectives throughout the teaching, research and service missions of higher education. It shapes institutional ethos and values and touches the entire HE enterprise. It is essential that it be embraced by institutional leadership, governance, faculty, students, and all academic service and support units”.

For a more definitive understanding of internationalisation in the context of higher education, it is important to highlight its developments so far as covered in the following paragraphs, and to better understand how globalisation, internationalisation and higher education are interlinked.

Many of today’s higher education institutions are perceived as objects or agents of globalisation and internalization (Scott, 1998). That is, for nations to adequately participate in global markets, they need their higher education institutions to extend beyond their borders. Thus, the internationalisation of higher education institutions has become a key policy at the national government level rather than just at the state and/or institutional level (Svetlik & Lalić, 2016). Internationalisation has long been a key theme in higher education institutions, with many of their researchers considering themselves part of an international community of scholars, in terms of referring to others work and collaborating with others outside of their home country as well as participating in international seminars/conferences (Blok, 1995).

Since medieval times, students and teachers have crossed national borders for academic purposes (Knight, 2006). The more recent advancement in communications and transport has further diminished these boundaries, and the international mobility of both students and scholars has grown exponentially. According to UNESCO (2018), 220 million students worldwide participated in formal tertiary education in 2016, compared with 198 million in 2012 – an 11% increase (see Appendix 10 further detail). During the same period, the number of foreign students increased from 3.9 to 5 million – a growth rate of 28% (as shown in Figure 3.1 in Chapter three). In 2002, the IDP Education Australia forecasted that international higher education would involve 7.6 million foreign students by 2025, (Bohm, 2002), with the British Council
similarly projecting in its Vision 2020: Global Student Mobility study in 2004 that it would affect 5.8 million foreign students by 2020 (Bohm et al., 2004).

In pursuit of the globalised knowledge economy, developed nations such as the USA, UK and Australia with higher ageing populations are already heavily involved in importing or absorbing students from developing nations for skills training and/or higher education. Furthermore, there is increasing demand for lifelong learning or continuous education that goes beyond obtaining the first degree, to keep pace with globalisation via the continual development of knowledge economies.

Another global development in response to the internationalisation is the expansion of various providers of higher education. Public or not-for-profit universities previously dominated the higher education sector, and now there are an growing number of private and for-profit higher education institutions entering the landscape at an international level. This is because in many countries, the expansion of access to higher education has resulted in lower per capita funding for it, which has often resulted in mixed (public-private) funding arrangements. That is, the traditional sources of public funding for higher education in form of government grants have not kept pace with its growing demand and increasing costs in higher education have further aggravated this. For example, many institutions in the UK have had to deal with public funding cuts since the 1980s, and the Australian Government has continued to reduce its same funding since the 1990s. Universities and other post-secondary education institutions are now expected to generate more of their own funding, which has led to the commercialisation of higher education. With technical revolutions in information, communication and transport fuelling the demand for international higher education, many universities across the world have embraced this as an additional source of funding, with much higher tuition fees charged for foreign students.

While many countries have taken a competitive approach towards the internationalisation of higher education, Europe appears to have taken a more cooperative approach, with many of the region’s institutions believing that student mobility is the best way to internationalise higher education institutions (Lemke, 2012). The European Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students (Erasmus) was established by the European Union and implemented by European countries in 1987 has been one of the most successful student mobility programs to connect most European countries. This scheme and its bilateral agreements brought universities across Europe much closer in terms of encouraging cross-border students to complete at least part of their degree in another European country without paying additional tuition fees. The internationalisation of higher education in the European region was then further developed via the Bologna declaration in 1999, aimed at establishing a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) by 2010. In addition, Erasmus was later expanded to include student mobility for neighbouring countries outside Europe, including a global program with Tempus (Trans European Mobility Program for University Studies) and Erasmus-Mundus programs respectively.
Erasmus further impacted on higher education policymaking at regional, national and institutional level in the form of the development of the Bologna declaration. As at 2014, Erasmus had supported 3.3 million European students and 470,000 staff since its launch 27 years ago (European Commission, 2015); in 2016 alone, 725,000 European students spent an Erasmus period abroad (European Commission, 2017). Such policy and program reforms were mainly aimed at increasing the attractiveness of higher education in European countries for students from both inside and outside the region.

One of the major worldwide development in relation to international higher education has been the emergence of innovative delivery methods of higher education and the rise of transnational or cross-border higher education. While student mobility has been the traditional form of cross-border higher education, international mobility of corresponding programs and institutions has also increased. The advancement of information, communication and technology has helped universities to develop new modes of international education including offshore campuses, distance and online delivery options, as well as partnerships with overseas institutions. Higher education is now included in the GATS by WTO, signalling its commercialisation or commodification, with four modes identified based on the GATS demand and supply principles by Knight (2002) (see Table 4.1): consumption abroad (students crossing borders for education); commercial presence (institutions establishing an offshore commercial presence); cross-border supply (delivery of education via distance and/or online modes); and natural persons presence (academics teaching overseas). Knight (2006) further noted that the introduction of GATS has served as a stimulus for the university sector to investigate the influence of trade rules on relevant policies and determine the existence of national, regional and international education frameworks to accommodate increased cross-border education, including commercial trade. These developments have led to the evolution of the international education sector into one of the largest and dynamic service industries.

As reported by the OECD (2004), international student mobility on its own generated export revenue of US$30 billion in 1998 (or 3% of global service exports). This is why the attainment of a share of this revenue by expanding the international higher education sector has become a priority for many countries. As per the Institute of International Education (2018), international education generated US$42.4 billion of revenue in the USA in 2017/18. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2018) similarly reported revenue generation of AUD$30.3 billion in 2017 from the international higher education sector (see Appendix 14 for further detail). In the similar time period of 2014/15 in the UK, on- and off-campus spending by international students and their visitors generated £25.8 billion in gross output for the local economy (Universities UK, 2017). In Canada, international student spending amounted to CA$15.5 billion in 2016 (Roslyn, K & Associates Inc., 2017). International higher education has clearly become a multibillion-dollar industry, which is demand-driven and characterised by intense competition between host education countries.
Such developments in international higher education highlight the importance of economic incentives for institutions and host nations, including the case study of Australia which is discussed further in section 2.5 of this chapter. Knight (2006) highlighted the need to continually update the definition of internationalisation of higher education based on two primary components. The first is internationalisation of higher education at home, involving activities assisting students to develop understanding of international cultures and skills. This approach is primarily syllabus-focused, with the goal of preparing students for a more global world. The second is internationalisation of higher education abroad, relating to all modes of education across national boundaries and/or the mobility of students, academics and programs. Knight (2006) summarised internationalisation of higher education abroad having three main forms of cross-border education: a person going abroad for educational purposes (mobility of individuals); a course delivered abroad (program mobility); and an institution or higher education provider going or investing abroad for educational purposes (institutional mobility).

While this is the generic definition covering the different contexts and developments in international higher education, not all institutions or countries have the same rationales or motivations for engaging in international higher education, as discussed in the next section below.

### 2.3 Rationales for internationalisation of higher education

Examining the primary rationales for institutions and/or nations driving internationalisation of higher education is central to understanding it. The main reason for the cross-border movement of scholars in earlier times was for enrichment of ideas via Europe’s emerging universities; today’s reasons for such movement of scholars and students are far more complex (Hudzik, 2011). Knight and de Wit (1997; 1999) produced a comprehensive framework of universities’ primary rationales for driving the internationalisation of higher education, which was classified into four categories – political, economic, academic and cultural/social – and did not differentiate between national and institutional contexts. However, these categories all have distinct meanings in the higher education space based on different contexts globally (Chankseliani & Wells, 2019)

Political rationale of internationalisation aims to strengthen foreign policy, national security, and mutual understanding (Svetlik & Lalić, 2016). Knight (2004) contended that political rationales for internationalisation have been historically based on the premise that it is beneficial to foreign policy, particularly for national security and regional peace. Technical assistance and/or regional cooperation is also relevant to the political rationale for internationalisation and was particularly prevalent immediately after World War II and during the cold war when such assistance for developing countries was critical to foreign policy. Other examples of political rationale of internationalisation from the mutual understanding premise include Full Bright scholarships by the USA and participation in the Colombo Plan by Australia and New Zealand. Although, it has been pointed out that while the political rationale is still relevant, it is not as
important as it once was (Knight & de Wit, 1997); international higher education is now seen as investment in the diplomatic relations. For example, scholarships may be offered to international students who may be prospective future leaders as an investment to develop their closeness with the sponsoring country and the future diplomatic or business relations. Cultural, scientific and educational exchanges have also commonly been seen as a way to boost diplomatic relationships. Although the shift from foreign aid to trade in the context of international higher education has meant a stronger focus on it as an export commodity or service within many countries’ foreign policies. This shift in the market has led to the development of economic rationale of the internationalisation of higher education.

The economic rationale relating to the internationalisation of higher education is most often linked with growth and competitiveness, national education demands, the labour market and financial incentives. As noted earlier in section 2.2 of this chapter, the globalisation of economies has led to an increased demand for knowledge and skills. Many countries are now engaged in the ‘skills race’ to enhance their knowledge economy and maintain a competitive edge in the global arena, which has led to many of them investing heavily in international higher education (Rumbley & Altbach, 2015).

Such economic rationale has also gained momentum at an institutional level. Due to reduced government funding and a growing demand for higher education, many institutions are seeking alternative financial sources, such as foreign students paying higher tuition fees as well as cross-border supply of education (Svetlik & Lalić, 2016). Such economic rationale is well represented in developed countries like the UK, Australia and New Zealand, which are actively involved in marketing themselves as English-speaking educational destinations or host countries for foreign students and are now primary competitors to traditional education hosts like the USA.

The academic rationale mostly relates to the international and/or intercultural aspect within research, teaching and other relevant services, as well as the reputation and status of institutions, quality improvements and implementation of international academic standards (Svetlik & Lalić, 2016). That is, an institution’s strategy or mission to remain academically relevant in the globalised context (Khalid et al., 2017). Since medieval times, there has been existence of international mobility of both students and scholars, highlighting the global dimension of research and education among many institutions. Today, many universities around the world are engaged in strategic international alliances and research projects, as well as international degree offerings and the cross-border exchange of academic staff and students. It has been generally assumed that the value gets added to the quality of the higher education by investing in the international dimension of teaching, research and other related services (Knight & de Wit, 1999). The latest trends in higher education including a focus on international academic standards for both teaching and research, which is now one of the leading reasons cited by researchers for internationalisation of higher education. In addition to improving quality of higher
education, such internationalisation positively contributes to institutions through further development of individuals, technical and management framework (Knight & de Wit, 1997; 1999).

The social/cultural rationale is often associated with the advancement of national or cultural character, intercultural understanding and competence, as well as social inclusion on the international scale. It primarily focuses on the role of a nation’s language and culture, along with understanding foreign languages and cultures. It is also more about the development of the individual rather than the institution or the nation (Chankseliani, 2018). Furthermore, it appeals more to those countries that want to preserve their own culture and counterbalance the potential homogenising effects of globalisation (Hawawini, 2011). The acknowledgement of cultural and ethnic diversity within and between countries has been determined as a strong rationale for the internationalisation of a nation’s education system (Knight & de Wit, 1997).

It should be noted that while these four main rationales differ, they are not distinct or exclusive; they are closely linked to each other. While their level of importance may differ across countries, they can still be multi-faceted and continue to mature in response to varying needs and trends. For example, in the period immediately after World War II, political and social/cultural rationales were more dominant stemming from the focus on mutual understanding among countries. In contrast, greater emphasis is now placed on international competitiveness stemming from globalisation, which means that economic rationale is now more prominent, as well as the academic rationale due to the corresponding focus on international teaching, quality, rankings and reputation.

Knight (2004) later expanded on these four main rationales of internationalisation by separating them at the national and institutional levels, and by adding other rationales as the emerging ones based on emerging globalisation trends (see Table 2.1 below). While these rationales remain similar at both levels, they often have distinct roles. For example, human resources development acting at the national level now appeals to many developed nations because of their ageing populations and the growing need for highly skilled labour. Corresponding changes in immigration policies and new incentives are some of the ways for these nations to recruit and retain international students and researchers in country to build on their knowledge economy.

Table 2.1 Rationales driving internationalisation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rationales</th>
<th>Existing – national and institutional levels combined</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social/cultural</td>
<td>National cultural identity</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Citizenship development</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intercultural understanding</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social and community development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>Foreign policy</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Technical assistance</td>
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<td></td>
<td>National security</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peace and mutual understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional identity</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economic</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic growth and competitiveness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour market</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial incentives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International dimension to research and teaching</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Institution building</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Extension of academic horizon</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Profile and status</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>International academic standards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancement of quality</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Emerging – national and institutional levels separated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>National</strong></td>
<td>Human resources development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Commercial trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strategic alliances</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social/cultural development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nation building</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Institutional</strong></td>
<td>International branding and profile</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student and staff development</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Income generation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knowledge production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strategic alliances</td>
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At the national level, the strategic alliances rationale relates to the collaborative research and education initiatives that develop closer geopolitical and economic ties across borders. It has also been defined as a situation where two institutions agree to share resources for a mutually-beneficial project for academic, economic, political and/or cultural reasons (Khalid et al, 2017). Such political and economic alliances can also help to gain a competitive edge in the region (Knight, 2004). The commercial trade rationale is similar to the economic rationale, with a focus on economic and income-generating activities, such as offshore campuses, online education, joint ventures, transnational education and the proactive recruitment of foreign students. Many nations are vying for more foreign students each year, with international education now a leading export industry for many of them.

The nation building rationale relates more to developing countries, in the context of them importing foreign education programs and institutions to help develop their nation, including their academic institutions and workforce. Such internationalisation has been determined as pivotal to the improvement of domestic universities in developing countries to align with economic development and the increasing demand for skilled labour (Lane, 2015). The social/cultural development rationale refers more to intercultural understanding and social awareness, and is not rated as highly in terms of importance as the others at the national level.

At the institutional level, Knight and de Wit’s (1999) four key rationales are still relevant, while the emerging rationales are also gaining in importance. Many institutions around the world are driven to achieve a worldwide reputation and international recognition, causing them to push for higher international rankings,
invest in high-quality research and strive to recruit the brightest students and scholars including from overseas. In this context the academic rationale is still relevant to institutions, but the quality aspect has been added (Knight, 2004).

The income generation rationale is highly relevant at the institutional level, due to decreasing levels of government funding while operational costs are rising. That is, international higher education is seen by many institutions as an alternative source of revenue. This is also leading to the development of for-profit or commercial education establishments such as private institutions, and online and transnational education. There is also renewed emphasis on such internationalisation at home with development of student and staff through deeper intercultural understanding.

While academic collaboration has been occurring for long, the steady increase in institutional linkages or strategic alliances is more recent. The strategic alliances rationale relates to student and international staff mobility, education and research collaborations, joint conferences and program development, and results in academic networks with a collective push towards achieving joint academic, scientific and economic objectives (Knight, 2004). It has been further highlighted that international and interdisciplinary collaboration are essential to address global challenges, and that the creation of research-based knowledge through such collaboration has become a priority (Knight, 2004).

Lastly, it should be pointed out that the above-listed rationales driving internationalisation of higher education are not mutually exclusive and they can be differentiated via countries, regions, institutions and/or the diversity of stakeholders within a country. The next section discusses how various nations are using these rationales in their internationalisation of higher education approaches, and what new corresponding trends have emerged.

### 2.4 Approaches to internationalisation of higher education

While rationales covered in the last section of this chapter are the reasons, approaches are the methods used to achieve internationalisation of higher education at the national and/or university level, including how it is conceptualised and implemented (Zhou, 2016). The OECD (2004) defined the following four main approaches that countries take to achieve internationalisation of higher education: mutual understanding; skilled migration; revenue generation; and capacity building. As with the corresponding rationales, these approaches have distinctive features but are also interrelated.

The most common, mutual understanding approach relates to international business and political networks that strengthen multiple nations’ ties, including in the context of academic and development assistance project partnerships (Chan, 2013). This approach is often driven by political, cultural, social and academic rationales, and key examples include the USA and the Soviet Union offering assistance to developing countries after
World War II (see further detail in the section 2.3 of this chapter). Such levels of international assistance have deteriorated in more recent times. For example, Australia and New Zealand used a mutual understanding approach towards internationalisation of higher education until the 1980s when this was largely replaced by the revenue generation approach. Such countries still have aid and development assistance projects with other developed and developing countries, but the approach has changed over recent times.

Europe presents another example where mutual understanding remains a core approach, with an increased push towards internationalisation via Erasmus in the 1980s and the Bologna process in the 1990s (see section 2.2 of this chapter for details). While most European countries have maintained a harmonisation process that led to the establishment of the EHEA (de Wit, 2013), another aim has been to make the region more competitive in the international higher education sector, which links in with the next approach of skilled migration.

The skilled migration approach towards internationalisation of higher education is primarily driven by economic rationale and some cultural/social rationale. International higher education is being used by developed nations with ageing populations to stimulate economic growth, including offering a skilled migration pathway to retain ‘trained brains’. The points-based systems and selective skilled occupation lists countries like Australia, Canada and New Zealand now rely on to select immigrants, with special provisions for international students (Boeri et al., 2012), are spurring on competitiveness within international higher education as a way to stimulate economic growth (OECD, 2008). Furthermore, while most European countries are still approaching internationalisation of higher education via mutual understanding, they are also implementing policies to be globally competitive including targeting offshore skills for a long-term impact on the knowledge economy (de Wit, 2013).

The revenue generation approach towards internationalisation of higher education is wholly driven by economic rationale and has been gaining momentum since the 1980s. For example, declines in government funding across the same period in Australia, New Zealand and the UK have shifted these countries from the mutual understanding approach towards this one, including charging full tuition fees to international students. In addition to creating additional revenue streams, such an approach has also leveraged competitiveness among such nations and their institutions with regards to attracting foreign students to further boost the economy and their skilled labour pools. International higher education is now a major service export in such countries as discussed earlier in section 2.2 of this chapter.

The final capacity building approach towards the internationalisation of higher education is more prevalent in developing countries including in Asia, Africa and Eastern Europe, where such opportunities are limited due to fast-growing populations, and has led to many importing higher education from developed countries (Chan,
Capacity building is subsequently linked in with the mutual understanding approach, but is more relevant to countries involved in higher education importations. Furthermore, its commercially oriented facilitation of both domestic students going abroad for higher education and the establishment of foreign institutions in the home country connects it with the revenue generation as well as skilled migration approaches. While the importation of higher education and the provision of offshore study can mean a loss of local knowledge and skilled labour, capacity building advantages include the gaining of professional networks and additional revenue in the form of remittances from students settled in other countries (Boeri et al., 2012).

While different mixes of these approaches towards the internationalisation of higher education are often used across the global, there remains a common goal of creating a knowledge economy and corresponding labour skills. Some nations also continue to adapt their core approach to accommodate the changing demands of internationalisation of higher education (de Wit, 2013). The next section examines Australia in the context of the approach it uses in relation to the internationalisation of higher education.

2.5 Internationalisation of higher education in Australia

Australia has a long history of providing education for international students, and has a quality assurance framework that covers all education levels from the English language to higher education. International higher education is now Australia’s third largest export sector – it generated AU$30.3 billion in 2017, which has almost doubled since 2008 (ABS, 2018 – see Appendix 14) and has supported more than 240,000 full time equivalent jobs in Australia in 2017 (Department of Education & Training, 2018 – see Appendix 25). These international students have helped to supplement and diversify the Australian labour force and address the country’s ageing population. Australia’s position as a high education exporter has been shaped by policies at the national level including economic reforms. For example, Asian students have been coming to Australia for higher education since 1904 when they were first allowed to study there as full-fee paying students, which was a flow-on effect from the student exchange agreements Australia had entered into with some of its Asian neighbours.

Before World War II, the total annual number of international students studying in Australia rarely exceeded 500 (Stundal, 1999), mainly due to the limited capacity for postgraduate studies across the country’s universities. Since that war ended, its universities have focused more on their quality and capacity, and have attracted large amounts of Asian students especially from Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong and Indonesia where demand for higher education exceeds supply in their home country (Williams, 1989). Furthermore, Australia joined the Colombo Plan in 1950 as part of broader national policy to increase ties and trade with other countries in the Asian region (Cuthbert et al., 2008). The Colombo plan included supporting international students via subsidised tuition fees, but there were limited quotas for each Asian country. These students were often relatively affluent and/or from relatively prosperous nations, thus limiting the effectiveness of the aid
program. It also attracted some private students that were admitted to the universities with the same entry requirements and tuition fee levels as the domestic students (Adams, Banks & Olsen, 2011).

In 1979, the Australian national government introduced an Overseas Student Charge (OSC) that was 10% of the full tuition fee of a university placement in Australia and was increased in subsequent years until it reached 55% of the average cost (Harris & Jarret, 1990; Adams, Banks & Olsen, 2011). This meant that international students continued to be subsidised by the Australian Government, with education still a component of the country’s aid program. There were no restrictions imposed on foreign students at that stage and problems arose with students staying back in Australia after the completion of their courses (Williams, 1989).

Australia’s policy on international students was reviewed in 1984, with Jackson’s committee (Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, 1985) consequently recommending that education should be regarded as an export industry and institutions be encouraged to compete for international students and associated funding. A new policy in relation to international students was subsequently launched in 1985, where institutions were encouraged to charge fees that covered the full costs of these students’ education (Beazley, 1992). This signalled a shift from educational aid to educational trade in Australia, with no set limits on the number of international students if they were paying full tuition fees, based on the understanding that this would not displace domestic students. Under the same policy, Australia’s federal government provided grants of up to AU$200,000 for universities to develop marketing strategies and promotional materials to attract international students, which further ignited competition and large-scale recruiting among them, particularly as they also needed to find alternative funding sources (Baas, 2010).

As a result of this activity, full-fee paying international students continued to increase in Australia. In 1986, the major international student cohort present in Australia was 20,000 foreign ‘aid’ students with Australian Government subsidising their tuition fee and only 2,000 full tuition fee paying foreign ‘trade’ students; by 1991, the former had decreased to 6,000 and the later had increased to 48,000 (Beazley, 1992). During this same time period, the revenue from international higher education tuition fees and other associated payments increased from a negligible base in 1986 to over AU$1 billion annually in 1991 (Beazley, 1992). Despite such economic rewards, there has been widespread international criticism of Australia’s approach towards commercialisation of education that damaged Australian reputation and quality of education (Baas, 2010; Hawthorne, 2010).

From the 1980s until the early 1990s Australia had been fully focused on the commercial aspect of exporting higher education, but in 1992 there was another shift from trade to the internalisation of higher education, with the federal government recognising this as spanning the cultural, economic and interpersonal dimensions of international relations (Beazley, 1992). This was when the term ‘international student’ was formally adopted
in Australia (Adams, Banks & Olsen, 2011). The subsequent governments have supported the internationalisation of higher education and Australia has been aiming to enhance its global position as the host education country, including by contributing to skills supply for the global economy, sharing its expertise with developing countries, and advancing international research (Kemp, 2001). As part of that, in 1998, AU$21 million were made available by the Australian Government over the following four years to globally market and promote education and training industry of Australia (Spinks, 2016).

Despite the shift of focus on economic and international relations gains, foreign aid continued to be part of Australia’s international higher education policies in the form of a targeted approach. For example, in 2006, the Australian Government doubled its scholarships for Asia-Pacific students, and developed the Australian Scholarships program which enhanced its political ties in the region and strengthened its position as an exporter of higher education. Then in 2008, the Australian Development Scholarships (ADS) scheme was introduced to provide higher education scholarships for individuals from developing countries around the globe (Adams, Banks & Olsen, 2011).

As shown in the figure 2.1 below, international student numbers have exploded across the past two decades in Australia. The 47,000 international student enrolments registered in 1990 had risen to 188,277 by 2000, and more recently in 2017 the amount was at 452,642 (Department of Education & Training, 2018). Australia is now regarded as the third biggest exporter of international higher education, have received 7% of the worldwide intake in 2016. It also has one of the largest proportions of international students (17%) among its national tertiary enrolments (OECD Education at a Glance, 2018) (see Chapter 3 for further detail).

Figure 2.1 International student numbers in Australia
The escalation in international student numbers has also led to dramatic shifts in preferred education levels. For example, in 2005 52% of international students were enrolled in higher education and 15% in vocational education; by 2009, the higher education share had decreased to 36% and vocational had jumped to 33%. However, by 2017 these shares had flipped again to 44% of international students enrolling in higher education and 27% in vocational education (see Appendix 15 for further detail). The Australian Government has also been committed to supporting the outbound mobility of its own students to engage in offshore studies. Outbound mobility is seen as offering an intercultural experience to students as well as a chance to learn unique skills and knowledge they can bring back to their home country to improve its global competitiveness.

All the four modes of commercial supply of education services as identified under GATS have been utilised by Australian education providers. Consumption abroad is the most prominent one in Australia, while the other three are often grouped as part of transnational education, primarily in the form of partnerships with institutions abroad. Such partnerships have mainly been small-scale ‘twinning’ arrangements (i.e. part of the program done overseas and part of it done in Australia), with some in the form of full-campus operations (e.g. Curtin University in Malaysia and Singapore, James Cook University in Singapore, Monash University in Malaysia, RMIT University in Vietnam, Swinburne University of Technology in Malaysia, and the University of Wollongong in Dubai). International student enrolments for this type of transnational education continue to grow in Australia. For example, the IDP of Education Australia reported that in semester 2 of 2008, 59,950 international students were enrolled in transnational education programs at Australian universities, 50,830 at offshore campuses, and 8,760 within distance education or online programs (Banks & Kevat, 2009). Furthermore, in 2017 Australia’s Department of Education & Training (2018) reported that almost 28% of total international higher education students enrolled at Australian institutions were studying offshore. Of these, 39,262 were enrolled in programs at offshore Australian university campuses, 72,697 in programs
delivered via partnerships between Australian and foreign institutions, and a further 7,392 were enrolled in online (distance) education (see Appendix 17 for further detail).

Australian Government policy and the corresponding quality assurance framework are core drivers of the country’s significant and successful growth in international education. For example, the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) and the National Code of Practice have been framed with the objective of protecting international students in Australia, including via standards focused on provision of student support services while also providing consumer protection, specifying education providers obligations and assuring tuition fee payments.

International higher education is now an essential element of the Australian Government’s strategy to compete in the globalised world. The economic rationale has been the driving force for internationalisation of higher education in Australia, focused on generating revenue for Australian institutions and stimulating national economy. Australia is now positioned as a premier destination for international higher education, which is contributing to the country’s skills development within the context of a knowledge economy while also providing cross-border supply to meet the unmet demand of worldwide skills shortages.

2.6 Summary

Today’s post-industrialisation era of global knowledge economies is based on production, distribution and the application of knowledge and technology (OECD, 1996; 2008; Zajda & Rust, 2016). Wealth creation in most countries is now largely dependent on the creation and application of knowledge via the development of strong tertiary education.

Innovations in information, communication and technology have helped develop the global knowledge society and a global knowledge economy, characterised by the prioritisation of higher education and a corresponding skilled workforce (OECD, 2016). Higher education now rates highly in the national policies of both developed and developing countries because of its widely accepted interconnection with knowledge-based economy, skills and knowledge development, and export income generation (Wihlborg & Robson, 2018).

The landscape of higher education has been evolving over the past few decades and is largely influenced by globalisation and internationalisation. ‘Globalisation’ and ‘internationalisation’ are common terms in relation to higher education, and are closely related (Teichler, 2004; Altbach 2004; Scott, 2006; Knight, 2008).

International higher education in the context of a knowledge economy is relevant and complementary to both developed and developing nations (Rumbley, 2007). Many developing nations are overwhelmed by the local demand for higher education, resulting in human capital or students choosing to study abroad. Developed
nations often have to deal with public funding issues largely affected by ageing populations, which is forcing their universities to seek other revenue generation streams, such as international tuition fees. Most developed nations also have a need for lifelong learning and the upgrading of skills to further support their knowledge economies (Wilson, 2013). Many traditional universities previously focused on regional education demands are now evolving in response to globalisation and internationalisation and corresponding demographic changes and technological revolutions, including striving to meet the growing demand for international higher education (Robson, 2016).

International student mobility is a primary component within the internationalisation of higher education process. While students and teachers have been crossing national boundaries for academic purposes since medieval times in some parts of the world, such mobility has grown exponentially in recent times. The OECD (2018) recently estimated that 5 million students were enrolled outside their home country in 2016. The world’s fast-growing population and the greater demand for formal tertiary education, which most developing nations is unable to meet, means that international student mobility is going to continue to increase.

In addition to the growth in international student mobility, there has been growth in the amount and type of international education providers, along with an emergence of new education delivery methods like online education. Public and not-for-profit universities traditionally dominated the higher education sector, but there has been an increase in private and for-profit institutions, particularly at an international level. Once regarded as local knowledge producers and education providers, many universities are now global corporations involved in ‘for-profit’ education, as well as selling the skills both offshore and onshore.

Higher education has become an active player of internationalisation rather than inertly responding to globalisation. Official recognition as a service provider under the WTO, GATS has served as a stimulus for international higher education. Its connection to trade policy is now often at the forefront of researcher debates about internationalisation of higher education (Knight, 2002). As a result, the past decade has seen a general worldwide shift from a cooperative to more competitive model in the context of internationalisation of higher education for example in countries like Australia and New Zealand, although Europe still appears to have a more cooperative approach (de Wit, 2013). Knight and de Wit (1999) identified the following four interrelated rationales as key drivers of the internationalisation of higher education: political; economic; social/cultural; and academic. In more recent times, the economic rationale appears to have become the main driving force of the internationalisation of higher education (Rumbley & Altbach, 2015). Knight (2004) revised the original rationales framework by adding further rationales at the national (human resource development and commercial trade), and the institutional level (international branding and profile, and income generation). The author acknowledged that these rationales can differ based on the countries, regions, institutions as well as the diversity of stakeholders within a country, and that they can also evolve based on latest market trends.
In addition to rationales, four approaches have been identified as those most commonly used by countries involved in the internationalisation of higher education (OECD, 2004; Chen, 2013). The mutual understanding approach based on the political, academic and social/cultural rationales is used by most of these countries, while the skilled migration approach is directly linked with economic competitiveness including attracting and retaining skills to boost a nation’s knowledge economy. The revenue generation approach that emerged in the 1980s is fully driven by the economic rationale, and is influencing international student mobility and other forms of cross-border education including transnational and online and distance delivery modes, as well as institutional partnerships. The capacity building approach is more prevalent among developing countries with limited higher education opportunities that can meet the growing demand. These countries often import international higher education via the offshore education of domestic students or by allowing foreign institutions to operate for-profit programs within their borders.

Australia is a particularly strong example of how economic rationale and corresponding government policies can drive the internationalisation of higher education. Prior to the mid-1980s, international higher education in Australia was based more on a cooperative model of aid to other regional nations, with relevant universities largely driven by political rationale (Cuthbert et al., 2008). Since then, Australia has adopted a more competitive, market-based approach towards international higher education based on a shift in national policies. Australian universities now actively recruit international students as part of this shift from aid to trade, with a greater focus on the economic benefits of international higher education (Spinks, 2016).

In Australia, international student numbers have grown exponentially in the past two decades – Austrade (2018) reported 452,642 international student enrolments in 2017. As reported earlier in this chapter, Australia is now regarded as the third biggest exporter of higher education, receiving 7% of international students worldwide (OECD, 2018). Most of Australia’s higher education institutions are now using the four modes of supply within GATS, with consumption abroad the most prominent and economic rationale.

The next chapter discusses one of the most integral parts of the internationalisation of higher education, which is international student mobility founded on the consumption abroad approach, related key host and source countries along with the key push and pull factors contributing towards international student mobility.
3 International student mobility

3.1 Introduction

Knowledge and technology have become the key drivers of productivity in today’s globalised knowledge economy, with many governments around the world investing in higher education to acquire relevant new skills to be competitive. There have subsequently been vast developments in the internationalisation of higher education, with international student mobility now the primary focus of many governments.

The demand for international education and student mobility numbers have grown phenomenally over the past decade, as will be further discussed in this chapter. The USA, UK, Australia, Germany and France are the main or traditional international higher education host countries, with developing nations like China and India the main sources for these students. Although as the number of international students continues to increase, so does the emergence of new host education countries. There are various factors such as academic, cultural, social, political and economic that act as push and pull factors in relation to a student’s choice of destination country to study abroad, for example, quality of teaching in host country, limited education opportunities at home. These are covered in detail in section 4.2 of Chapter 4.

This section has provided an introduction to this chapter and section 3.2 will next discuss international student mobility trends based on a comprehensive examination of both host and source education countries. A summary of this chapter is then provided in section 3.3.

3.2 Trends in international student mobility

Globalisation and internationalisation has meant that international student mobility has taken precedence as a way for many nations to respond to these forces. Richters and Teichler (2006, p83) defined the international mobile student as “a student having crossed a national border in order to study or to undertake other study-related activities for at least a certain unit of a study program or a certain period of time in the country they have moved to”. However, this definition does not factor in more recent developments in international higher education such as transnational education involving mobility of study programs and institutions or even internationally-oriented study programs ‘at home’ defined as internationalisation at home by Knight (2006).

The growth in international student mobility is increasing at a phenomenal rate, with 5 million students recorded in 2016, which is an increase of 22% from 3.9 million recorded in 2012 (OECD, 2018). Over the past decade, the growth has been more remarkable at 79%, with student enrolments rising from 2.8 million in 2006 to 5 million in 2016 as per OECD and UNESCO data 2018 (see Figure 3.1 below). However, it should be highlighted that both the OECD and UNESCO studies only related to international students enrolled in higher education courses of more than one-year duration.
While its rapid escalation is relatively recent, the phenomenon of student mobility has been prevalent as early as 600 BC in places like India, China and Europe. For example, Hindu and Buddhist universities in India, such as the University of Taxila and the University of Nalanda, hosted a number of foreign scholars and students between sixth century BC and sixth century AD (Kumari & Shi, 2018). European universities such as Bologna, Cordova and Paris have also taken on international students and scholars since 1150s (Altekar, 1965; Dedijer, 1968; Hess, 1982 cited in Chen, 2007). Many US students travelled to Europe for higher education studies in 19th century due to their own country’s underdeveloped academic system (Altbach & Lulat, 1985).

The significant escalation of international student mobility has largely been linked to a general increase in formal tertiary education enrolments worldwide. For example, 220 million international students participated in formal tertiary education in 2016, compared with 198 million in 2012 – this equates to 11% growth (UNESCO (2018), see Appendix 10 for further detail). Although the amount of tertiary students leaving their home country to study has remained stable at about 2% since 1999 (UNESCO, 2018). Students from developing countries make up a large amount of those leaving home given the limited opportunities they have at home and developed nations have a growing capacity to absorb more of these international students for training.

Developed nations in North America, Europe and Oceania have dominated the international student mobility landscape since the beginning of the 21st century. Europe was the primary destination until World War II, due to its network of long-established universities, but then the political rationale of the internationalisation of higher education, stemming from mutually beneficial foreign policy missions after the war, led to countries and regions like USA and the Soviet Union offering higher education scholarships. By the 1950s, the USA became the top destination for international education, and has remained so ever since.
In more recent times, governments of other developed countries such as the UK, Australia, Germany, France and New Zealand, in line with policy shift from aid to trade, have been fuelling international student mobility via supportive marketing and expedited visa policies, as well as tuition fee scholarships and other annual grants. For example, in 1999 the UK launched the £5 million Prime Minister Initiative (PMI) as a five-year strategy to strengthen its position in international higher education, which was then updated to PMI2 in 2006. This strategy towards growth in international higher education comprised of five interconnected projects: marketing and communications; higher education partnerships; foreign education partnerships; student experience; and employability. As a result of this strategy in 2006 the UK was rated as the second most popular destination for international higher education – it hosted 318,399 international students (12.3% of world share) – rising from its fourth ranking in 1995 with 128,550 international students (9% of world share).

Another example is the international student mobility that has been stimulated within Europe by regional policies such as the Erasmus established by the European Union in the late 1980s, as well as the signing of the Bologna Declaration in 1999 that was aimed at increasing the attractiveness of higher education in European countries. By 2014, the Erasmus had supported 3.3 million European students and 470,000 staff (European Commission, 2015).

Furthermore, some other nations that have formerly been regarded as ‘source’ countries, such as China, Singapore, Malaysia and South Korea, have been developing their own internationalisation strategies to attract international higher education students, which is affecting the market share of traditional host education countries. The above-mentioned, recently emerged education destinations hosted 9% of international students between them in 2016 (UNESCO, 2018).

Another international student mobility trend is the advancement of education beyond national borders, which has been defined as ‘internationalisation abroad’ and relates to the movement of education across geographical borders (Knight, 2006). Cross-border education includes distance learning, joint degrees, branch campuses, and transnational and online education, and has primarily been from North to South with the USA, the UK and Australia leading in this area. Primary countries acting as hosts for their overseas campuses are Singapore, China, Malaysia and Vietnam in Asia, and Dubai and Qatar in the Middle East.

From the perspective of source countries, their students gain international skills and are likely to build social, cultural, political and professional networks within the host education country, which will strengthen its economic development after they return. In addition, those that do not return to their home country still contribute in the form of repatriation of funds. Evidence of this is the overall global remittance value of US$613 billion recorded in 2017, including for India (US$69 billion), China (US$64 billion), the Philippines
(US$33 billion), Mexico (US$31 billion), Nigeria, (US$22 billion) and Egypt (US$20 billion) (World Bank, 2018).

Furthermore, the demand for international higher education is predicted to continue to increase as projected by IDP and British Council (Bohm, 2002; Bohm et al., 2004). The next section covers the recent trends and market shares of different regions at a global level.

**3.2.1 Recent trends in source and destination regions**

In 2012, as reported by UNESCO Institute of Statistics (2014), North America and Western Europe were the leading host regions in attracting 53.3% of all international higher education students, followed by East Asia and the Pacific (15.1%), Central and Eastern Europe (9%), Arab States (3.9%), Latin America and Caribbean (3.1%), Sub-Saharan Africa (2.2%), and Central Asia and South and West Asia at 0.8% each (see Figure 3.2 below). In the same period (as shown in Figure 3.3 below), the top three source regions of internationally mobile students were East Asia and the Pacific (28%), North America and Western Europe (15.4%), and Central and Eastern Europe (10.4%). Interestingly, more than 70% of those students hosted in East Asia and the Pacific were sourced from that same region, as were 24% of those hosted in North America and Western Europe (UNESCO, 2014).

It would appear that the traditional pattern of mobility of international students from developing to more developed regions, particularly Western Europe and North America, has been affected by the development of new host regions, including more inter-regional movements such as within East Asia and the Pacific. That is, while the North to South mobility trends remain prevalent, North to North and South to South international student mobility is occurring more often with intra-regional character. By 2016, these patterns remained similar to the above-mentioned relating to 2012 (as shown in figures 3.2 and 3.3).

**Figure 3.2 Top host international higher education regions (2012 vs. 2016)**
As the above figure shows, North America and Western Europe continue to be the top host regions for all international students except those from Central Asia where Central and Eastern Europe is preferred. North America and Western Europe attracted 49% of overall international students in 2016, which was a 4.3% decrease from 2012. East Asia and the Pacific was the top source region for North America and Western Europe in 2016, accounting for 32% of all international students, followed by students from the North America and Western Europe regions (22.6% opted for intra-regional destinations). Out of the 695,835 international higher education students that originated from North America and Western Europe in 2016, 82% opted to stay in the same region, while 8% studied in Central and Eastern Europe, and 3% in Latin America and the Caribbean (as shown in Figure 3.3 below). These results clearly signal an intra-regional international student mobility trend that is taking over inter-region mobility in this particular region.

After North America and Western Europe, East Asia and the Pacific was the next largest host region for international students in 2016, at 14% which was a slight decline (1%) from 2012. It was also the top source region in 2016, with 27% of all internationally mobile students originating from East Asia and the Pacific. Further highlighting the intra-regional mobility trend, 59% of all international students from East Asia and the Pacific preferred North America and Western Europe as their higher education destination, 38% of those students from East Asia and the Pacific region chose to remain in that region, while Central and Eastern Europe was rated a distant third at 2% (see Figure 3.3 below).
Central and Eastern Europe was the third biggest host region, recording 12% of all international higher education students in 2016. This included sourcing 36% from Central Asia, followed by Central and Eastern Europe, North America and Western Europe, and the Arab States at 32%, 9% and 8% respectively. Among the Central and Eastern European international students, 53% selected North America and Western Europe as their host destination, while another 42% remained in their region in 2016. In 2012, these results were 57% and 38% respectively (as shown in Figure 3.3), which further highlights the increasing trend of intra-region international student mobility, possibly fuelled by Europe’s Bologna process and Erasmus program.

The Arab States was the fourth largest host region in 2016, consisting of 5% of all internationally mobile students (up from 4% in 2012) (see Figure 3.2), while North America and Western Europe were the primary destinations for 49% of this region’s internationally mobile students (see Figure 3.3 below). In Latin America and the Caribbean, 3% of internationally mobile students were hosted there in 2016 (as in 2012), and the region encountered the same intra-region mobility trend, with 77% of its international students were sourced from the region itself (Figure 3.2). Other international higher education students from that region chose North America and Western Europe with 57% going there. A bigger proportion of 38% stayed in the region in 2016, compared with 37% in 2012. There were very few international higher education students from Latin America and Caribbean that selected any other region (see Figure 3.3 below).

In both 2012 and 2016, Sub-Saharan Africa had only 2% of all internationally mobile students, with most of its international higher education students (90%) coming from the same region (see figures 3.2 and 3.3). South and West Asia slightly improved its even smaller share of internationally mobile students, from 0.8% in 2012 to 1.3% in 2016, with 55% of these students coming from the same region and 19% from the Arab States in 2016. A similar proportion of the South and West Asia region’s students preferred to go to North America and Western Europe (50% in 2016, down from 65% in 2012), and East Asia and the Pacific was the next popular destination at 36% in 2016 (see Figure 3.3 below).

The Central Asia region had the smallest share of internationally mobile students in 2016 at 1%, which was a slight increase from 0.8% in 2012. Furthermore, while it marginally increased its share of internationally mobile students from other regions in 2016, it lost some of its own region’s international higher education students (47% in 2012, down to 43% in 2016) (see Figure 3.2). Central Asia region students mainly opted to go to Central and Eastern Europe for international higher education (80%, up from 70% in 2012), while another 8% chose North America and Western Europe in 2016 (down from 14% in 2012) and 8% chose to stay in the region itself (see Figure 3.3 below).

As also shown in figure 3.2, UNESCO (2018) reported that East Asia and the Pacific was the largest source region, with 27% of internationally mobile students originating from there, followed by North America and
Western Europe at 14%, South and West Asia at 11%, Central and Eastern Europe and Arab States at 9% each, Sub-Saharan Africa at 7%, Latin America and the Caribbean at 6%, and Central Asia at 5%. Across these regions, there are some countries that are regarded as major host countries of international higher education, as will be further discussed in the next section.

Figure 3.3 Top source international higher education regions (2012 vs. 2016)

3.2.2 Major host countries of international students

The USA, UK, Australia, Germany and France have long attracted significant numbers of international students, and are therefore commonly regarded as traditional host countries. This has generally related to South to North flows of international students; that is from developing to developed countries. While this trend continues, South to South and even North to South flows have increased, which has led to the emergence of non-traditional higher education destinations. Developing countries have been internationalising their higher
education based on the economic rationale, and are now involved in the global competition for international students, against the more traditional host nations.

In 2016, almost one out of two international students enrolled in one of the four English-speaking host countries (USA, UK, Australia and Canada) (OECD (2018), see Appendix 7 for further detail). As shown in Figure 3.4 below, the USA received the most international higher education students in absolute terms with 19% of all international students, followed by the UK (9%), Australia (7%), Germany (5%) and France (5%). The next three most popular international higher education destinations were Russia (5%), Canada (4%) and then Japan and China (3% each).

Figure 3.4 Market share in international higher education (2012 vs. 2016)

![Market share in international higher education](chart)

Source: OECD 2018, *Education at a glance OECD Indicators*

The USA has a long history of hosting international students since the 1950s, and remains the primary destination. Yet despite it hosting 971,000 international students in 2016, it has not been able to grow its market share over the years. As per OECD data reports from 2006 to 2016, the US market share in international higher education fell from 20% to 19%. International higher education generated US$42.4 billion revenue in the USA in 2017/18 (Institute of International Education, 2018). Major source countries for the USA in 2016 were China, India, South Korea and Saudi Arabia, contributing 58% of all international higher education students (OECD, 2018). The economic, cultural and political importance of the USA, as well as its reputation for high-quality teaching, advanced technological facilities and extensive support for basic and applied research are primary reasons why so many international students continue to study there (Verbik and Lasanowski, 2007). Although the in-flow of international students remains highest in the USA, Figure 3.5 below shows that this only accounts for 5% of overall tertiary education students in the country (OECD, 2018).
The next biggest host country for international higher education is the UK, which had a 9% share in 2016 based on 432,000 international students (see Figure 3.4 above). However, this was 4% lower than in 2012 (OECD, 2018). While the use of English from both a teaching and research perspective is a key reason for international students choosing the UK, recent national visa policy changes has led to some students feeling unwelcome and impacted on overall numbers. The UK started focussing on becoming a primary international higher education destination in the 1990s with the introduction of full-cost tuition fees for international students, followed by the launch of the PMI2 in 2006 that was specifically focused on international student recruitment. International students accounted for 18% of overall tertiary education students in the UK in 2016 (as shown above in Figure 3.5). China and India were the biggest source countries for the UK, contributing 21% and 4% respectively towards the overall numbers (OECD, 2018).

After the USA and UK, Australia has the highest international higher education student market share, which at 7% in 2016 was an increase of 1% from 2012 (see Figure 3.4 above). Austrade (2018) reported record 452,675 international student enrolments in 2017. Australia’s development as a higher education exporter has been shaped by policies at the national level as well as economic reforms. Since shifting its focus from aid to trade in the 1980s, Australia has become one of the major providers of international higher education and has one of the biggest proportions of international students (17%) among its tertiary enrolments in 2016 (see Figure 3.5 above), with main source countries China, India, Indonesia and South Korea contributing 52% of the country’s international students (OECD, 2018). International education is now Australia’s third largest...
export industry behind iron ore and coal, and is the country’s leading service export sector overall (ABS, 2018).

In Europe, Germany and France are the regional leaders in the international higher education market, with both having around 5% market share each in 2016, equating to 245,000 international students (see Figure 3.4 above). The Erasmus scheme and the Bologna declaration have helped Germany and France to attract good number of students from other European countries. Both Germany and France lost 1% of international student share between 2012 and 2016, which was likely due to some students preferring to study in English-speaking countries. Despite this, France is particularly popular with students from countries where French is the first or second language, example Canada. Furthermore, both Germany and France’s low-cost, high-quality international higher education offerings continue to make them attractive destinations. Both countries adhere to the aid rationale involving tuition-fee scholarships and grants for international students through national government and education bodies such as the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and Campus France.

Within the European region, Russia is the next popular destination for international higher education, hosting 250,000 international students and/or 5% of global market share in 2016 (see Figure 3.4 above). In comparison, its market share has slightly increased from 4% in 2012 (OECD, 2014). However, minimal additional growth is expected in international higher education student numbers given the universities’ reliance on Russian as the primary medium of instruction. Russia has mostly been dependent on its neighbouring countries for international students, with two-thirds of total international higher education student numbers coming from the following countries: Azerbaijan (6%); Belarus (6%); Kazakhstan (28%); Turkmenistan (7%); Ukraine (9%); and Uzbekistan (8%). International students accounted for 4% of overall tertiary education students in Russia in 2016 (see Figure 3.5 above).

Similar to Russia, Canada hosted 189,000 international students in 2016, which was 4% of the global market share of international higher education (see Figure 3.4 above). Despite Canada being one of the top four English speaking destination countries, its market share continues to be smaller in comparison with other English-speaking countries like USA, UK and Australia. One of the main reasons for its smaller share is that Canada has been focused on only a few traditional source countries, and has also been in the regional shadow of its larger and more high-profile neighbour the USA (Lasanowski, 2009). However, this is likely to change with Canada transforming itself as a better international student destination via relaxed student visa policies to promote the attractiveness to international students and open up to more source countries (CIC 2010; Gopal, 2016). The main source markets for Canada are China, India, France, USA, Korea and Saudi Arabia, which contributed 61% of its international student share in 2016. Figure 3.5 shows that international students accounted for 12% of its overall tertiary education students in 2016.
Within the Asian region, Japan is one of the most attractive international higher education destinations, hosting 143,457 students and with 3% of the global student market share in 2016 (see Figure 3.4 above). In addition, 4% of Japan’s overall tertiary education students were international students in 2016 (see Figure 3.5 above). Despite its share remaining relatively stagnant as compared to 2012 due to its dependence on China and Korea, it has recently started gaining students from Vietnam, Thailand and Malaysia since 2015, which is likely to boost its global market share.

China is one example of Asian destination that has been growing its share steadily – it hosted 137,527 students in 2016 (Figure 3.4), and has improved its global market share to 3% of all international students in 2016 from 2% in 2012. Furthermore, while China is still one of the biggest source countries for international students, it has been trying to transform itself into a primary host country globally. Many universities in China now offer courses in English, and the government also provides scholarships to foreign students (Ministry of Education, China, 2010). More than 50% of China’s inbound international students currently come from neighbouring countries including South Korea, Thailand and Russia. (Ministry of Education, China, 2018)

Similar to Canada, New Zealand is another international higher education destination that has been in the shadows of its larger and more popular neighbour Australia. Despite this, New Zealand is an established exporter of higher education, hosting 53,854 students in 2016 (OECD, 2018). Although while its international student numbers have grown in absolute terms, its market share dropped from 2% in 2012 to 1% in 2016 (Figure 3.4). Similar to Australia, New Zealand has a big international student population, representing 20% of its overall tertiary students in 2016 (Figure 3.5). The main source countries for New Zealand are China, India, Australia USA and Korea (UNESCO, 2018), and international education was recorded as New Zealand’s fourth biggest service export, based on contributions of NZ$5.1 billion in 2017 (Education New Zealand, 2018).

Other Asian countries including Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea and Thailand are now hosting more international students. Formerly traditional importers of higher education, they are now becoming exporters, largely based on government policies and marketing initiatives that have encouraged foreign investment in education in their countries, as well as the establishment of education hubs. Other contributing factors include the increased capacity of higher education in many of these developing countries for both domestic and international students, a positive shift in internationalisation policies, and the increase in non-traditional education methods such as e-learning and transnational education. Such changes have driven lower market share for some major host countries such as the USA and UK, it certainly is a major development with more countries emerging as host countries and changing the dynamics of sending and receiving countries. The international student mobility trend that was once unidirectional, with developing the source countries and
developed the host countries – also known as ‘brain drain’ – is now more of a mutual exchange or brain circulation context.

### 3.2.3 Major source countries of international students

On a global scale, Asia is the largest source region for international students, with 2.6 million international students (51% overall) enrolled worldwide in tertiary education programs at all education levels in 2016 (UNESCO, 2018). The increase in tertiary education enrolments is often correlated with growth in gross domestic product (GDP) per person in the country (British Council, 2013). Thus, given the high GDP and economic growth in Asia, it is not surprising that it is the largest source region for internationally mobile students. In absolute terms or overall numbers, most of the international students are from China, India, Germany and Korea in 2016 (UNESCO, 2018; see Appendix 6).

China has traditionally been a source country and has been investing heavily in higher education since the adoption of its Open Door Policy around 30 years ago, which has helped in the growth of student mobility and internationalisation of higher education in China (Jokila, 2015). Domestically, the gross enrolments ratio (GER) of tertiary students in China grew from 28% in 2012 to 48% in 2016 (UNESCO, 2018; see Appendix 11), which is also contributing to the demand for higher education overseas. The Chinese Government has also been encouraging study abroad by offering higher education scholarships via the China Scholarships Council (CSC). According to UNESCO (2018), more than 860,000 Chinese students undertook higher education overseas in 2016, representing 18% of overall international students, which made China the largest source country (see Appendix 6).

In 2016, the primary destination of choice for Chinese higher education students was the USA (39%), followed by 14% choosing Australia, 11% the UK, 10% Japan, and 7% Canada (UNESCO, 2018; see Appendix 12), and these students represented the largest cohort of international students across the top three destination countries. That is, 32% of all international students in the USA were from China, 21% in the UK, and 33% in Australia (OECD, 2018; see Appendix 9).

China has been further investing in academic infrastructure at home to expand its higher education capacity over the past few years since 2010 to be a knowledge-based economy (Ministry of Education, China, 2010). It is subsequently progressing towards a major destination country for international students, acquiring 3% of the global market share in 2016, mainly from the Asia-Pacific (OECD Education at a Glance, 2018).

After China, India has the next largest group of mobile international students on a global scale. Since India’s independence in 1947, it has been a common tradition for its students to travel abroad for higher education. More than half of India’s fast-growing population are under 25 years – there were 244 million 15-24 year-
olds in 2015 (United Nations, 2017) – and it also has one of the fastest growing economies in the world with a middle class expansion that has increased the demand and capacity to pay for higher education (Baas, 2010). While there has been growth in public and private institutions, domestic capacity is still inadequate enough to meet India’s rising demand for higher education. In 2016, India had 32.4 million students enrolled in tertiary education in country and had the third largest higher education system in the world, yet its GER was relatively low at 27% compared to rest of the world (UNESCO, 2018; see Appendix 11 for further detail).

Inadequate infrastructure and resource constraints within India’s public sector are two main reasons why it is struggling to meet internal escalating higher education demands. The limitation of higher education places in its public universities has driven many students overseas. In 2016, 301,406 of India’s students went abroad, which was 5.6% of all international higher education students. Of these students, 45% went to the USA, 15% chose Australia, 7% went to Canada, followed by 6% to the UK, 5% to New Zealand and 4% to United Arab Emirates (UNESCO 2018; see Appendix 13). Despite some concerns about these students leaving India (e.g. the brain-drain effect), there are some economic returns including inward remittances from Indian diaspora. Such remittances were valued at US$69 billion in 2017, amounting to 11.3% of global remittances which made India the world’s leading receiver (World Bank, 2018).

While the Asian region has the largest share of source countries, there are also some in Europe and Americas region, such as established host destination Germany which is the third leading exporter (UNESCO, 2018). In 2016, Germany represented 2.3% of all internationally mobile students, with most of them going to other countries in Europe including Austria, the Netherlands, the UK and Switzerland, followed by the USA (OECD Education at Glance, 2018).

Students from South Korea form the fourth largest group of internationally mobile students in 2016, which has been relatively consistent since 2013. There has been a relatively high tuition fee for domestic students in South Korea, which prompts them to consider the option of studying abroad. In 2016, South Korean students made up 2% of the global share of international students, with 58% choosing to go to the USA, 12% to Japan, 6% to Australia, and 5% to the UK (OECD, 2018).

In 2016, the African nation of Nigeria was ranked fifth as a source country, with 1.9% of all internationally mobile students (UNESCO 2018; see Appendix 6). Seeking higher education abroad due to limited opportunities at home, most Nigerian students preferred to go to the UK (25%), followed by Malaysia (15%) and Ghana (12.5%) (OECD, 2018; see Appendix 9). The next ranked source country of France, at 1.8% of all internationally mobile students, was level with both Kazakhstan and Saudi Arabia, followed by Vietnam at 1.6%, which completed the list of top 10 source countries in 2016 (UNESCO, 2018; see Appendix 6).
The above results highlight how more countries are now competing for international students among similar source countries. It would appear that the distinction between destination and source countries is blurring, with traditional source countries like China hosting an increasing amount of international students each year, while more traditional destination countries are now also source countries.

3.3 Summary

As reported by both UNESCO and OECD, 5 million students were enrolled internationally in 2016, representing a 79% increase from the 2.8 million recorded in 2006 (UNESCO, 2018; OECD, 2018). This phenomenal growth in international student mobility has been linked to an overall increase in formal tertiary enrolments worldwide. In 2016, 220 million students participated in formal tertiary education compared with 198 million in 2012 – growth of 11% (UNESCO, 2018; see Appendix 10). Fast-growing populations and limited access to higher education in some developing countries means their students are left with no choice but to seek higher education overseas. At the same time, many developed nations are dealing with ageing populations while in pursuit of a knowledge economy, which is leading them to increase their capacity to absorb international students.

Developed nations in North America, Europe and Oceania have dominated the global mobility landscape since the early 21st century. The traditional pattern of mobility of international students is from developing to the more developed world, in specific to Western Europe and North America regions. However, the expansion of host regions including in developing countries, means that new intra-regional patterns are emerging, along with inter-regional. That is, while the North to South international student mobility trend remains prevalent, North to North and South to South movements are increasing, with more of an intra-regional character.

North America and Western Europe continue to be the main host region for international higher education students, attracting 49% of all international students in 2016 (UNESCO, 2018). East Asia and the Pacific was the biggest source region, producing 32% of all internationally mobile students in 2016 (see Figure 3.3 in this chapter).

As per UNESCO (2018), in North America and Western Europe, 82% of these students remained in the same region for study purposes. Similarly, 38% of the internationally mobile students from East Asia and Pacific chose to remain in the same region, as well as 32% in Central and Eastern Europe. This international study mobility trend was also duplicated in other regions, such as 90% of Sub-Saharan African, 37% of Latin America and the Caribbean, and 8% of Central Asian students. These results clearly indicate the growing trend of intra-regional mobility in the world.
The USA, UK, Australia and Canada are regarded as the key English-speaking destination countries, with almost one out of two international higher education students overall going to one of these four countries. In 2016, the USA received the most internationally mobile students in absolute terms, at 19%, followed by the UK (9%), Australia (7%), Germany (5%) and France (5%) (OECD, Education at a glance, 2018).

In 2016, Asian students represented 51% of foreign students enrolled worldwide. More than 860,000 Chinese students studied abroad in 2016, which represented 18% of overall internationally mobile students, and made China the largest source country (UNESCO, 2018; see Appendix 6). After China, India had the next largest amount of internationally mobile students in 2016, at almost 5.6% overall (UNESCO, 2018).

The distinction between destination and source countries is clearly blurring, with many countries that were once traditional importers of higher education (e.g. Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand and more recently China) increasingly becoming exporters. Many such countries have introduced national policies and marketing initiatives to encourage foreign investment in education in home country, including the establishment of education hubs. The international student mobility trend that was once unidirectional with developing the sending countries and developed the receiving countries is now more of a mutual exchange (brain circulation), with both developing and developed countries acting as sending and receiving countries.
4 Literature review

4.1 Introduction

Internationalisation has become a primary theme within higher education, with international student mobility a common way for nations to respond to globalisation. Many researchers have studied globalisation and internationalisation and offered their own definitions (Teichler, 2004; Knight, 2004; Scott, 2006; Bergh & Nilsson, 2010; Hudzik, 2011; Wihlborg & Robson, 2018).

Higher education is now considered critical to a nation’s economic development within the knowledge economy as part of its knowledge production (Chiswick, 2005). Many nations are subsequently involved in a ‘talent war’, competing with each other to fill labour shortages, compensate for ageing populations and further grow their knowledge economies. Their universities have assumed a central role, involved in knowledge production that is also likely to produce highly skilled people that foster innovation and research (European Commission, 2006), and has led to many governments investing heavily in education and training (Chiswick, 2005).

Apart from attracting the international students to their country, many governments are actively adopting migration policies in an effort to retain them post-graduation and contribute to the knowledge economy (Chiswick, 2005). Researchers like Tremblay (2005) and Suter and Jandl (2008) have studied government policies of different nations in regard to attraction and retention of international students.

This section is an introduction to this chapter, followed by a review of previous relevant research in section 4.2. Next, section 4.3 reviews international student mobility in the context of existing migration theories that helped to build this research’s theoretical framework as discussed in section 4.4. The final section 4.5 is a summary of this chapter.

4.2 Review of previous literature

The previous chapter discussed the exceptional growth of international student mobility. As per OECD (2018), in 2016, there were 5 million international students, which was a 22% increase from 2012. In the longer time span of 2006 to 2016, international student enrolments have risen by 79%, from 2.8 million to 5 million (UNESCO 2018; OECD, 2018). This
remarkable growth aligns with what IDP Education Australia projected in 2002, that by 2025 international students would be at 7.6 million (Bohm, 2002).

International student mobility is now a common focus for nations reacting to the demands of globalisation and internationalisation (Suter and Jandl, 2008). Various scholars have examined globalisation and internationalisation in the context of international higher education, with the most common definitions of these two global phenomena previously discussed in Section 2.2 of Chapter 2 (e.g. Teichler, 2004; Knight, 2004; Scott, 2006; Bergh & Nilsson, 2010; Hudzik, 2011; NAFSA, 2011; Wihlborg & Robson, 2018).

For several decades, internationalisation in higher education has mainly been discussed in terms of mobility of both students and academics (Teichler, 2017). Globalisation has caused a revolution in communications, transport and ease of access that has enabled greater mobility in the context of international higher education. This helps both developing countries with their larger populations that are increasingly demanding higher education, as well as developed countries with ageing populations that need to be compensated for.

One of the most recent dramatic developments within international higher education has been the rapid expansion of global trade in education services (Robinson, 2015). It is now included in the WTO’s GATS, with four primary modes of supply of commercialising services (Knight 2002; see Table 4.1 below). Such advancement of the higher education industry in a global context has led to greater interest from governments, policymakers as well as scholars.

### Table 4.1 Modes of supply in GATS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode of supply</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Higher education examples</th>
<th>Size/potential of market</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Cross-border</td>
<td>· The provision of a service across the borders (excludes physical movement)</td>
<td>· Distance education</td>
<td>· Relatively small market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>supply</td>
<td></td>
<td>· e-learning</td>
<td>· Great potential but quality management is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>difficult</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


## Table: Modes of Supply in Higher Education Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode of supply</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Higher education examples</th>
<th>Size/potential of market</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Consumption abroad</td>
<td>Movement of the consumer to the supplier country to access provision of service</td>
<td>Students moving to another country for study purposes</td>
<td>Largest share of the global education market services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Commercial presence</td>
<td>Establishment or physical presence in another country for provision of service</td>
<td>In country branch campuses, Twinning or articulation, Franchising arrangements</td>
<td>Growing interest and strong potential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Presence of natural persons</td>
<td>People travelling to another country to provide service</td>
<td>Academics, and/or researchers working abroad</td>
<td>Potential strong market</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Globalisation and internationalisation have transformed the former industrial society into a knowledge society, including a knowledge economy where higher education and skilled labour are prioritised. It has subsequently been recognised that rather than natural resources, knowledge, skills and creativity, are the keys to economic development in the context of a knowledge economy (Williams, 2009). Highly skilled workers are therefore often regarded as the driving force for innovation (Chiswick, 2005), which has led to them becoming a critical policy objective in many developed countries (Cerna, 2016b). In 2017, global migrants were estimated at 258 million, compared to 173 million in 2000 (United Nations, 2017), and 37% of all migrants in OECD countries were tertiary educated compared with 34% in 2014 (OECD, Education at a Glance, 2018).

The global war for skilled migrant talent has sparked much debate on the effects of both sending and receiving countries, with skilled migration mostly involving the movement from developing to developed countries. It was previously believed that the migration of skilled workers negatively impacted on sending countries, as per the term ‘brain drain’ from the 1960s (Brock & Blake, 2016). Receiving countries were believed to mostly benefit from the skilled migrants they took in, commonly known as ‘brain gain’ (Chiswick, 2005). However, the increasingly globalised economy demands a need of circulation of the brain and knowledge...
Skilled workers are important for both developed and developing countries (Williams, 2009). Developing countries are able to counteract brain drain via diaspora with emigrants residing abroad enhance trade links and/or facilitate additional mutually beneficial opportunities that would be unlikely to arise otherwise (Brock, 2016). It is therefore not surprising that international students now attract the attention of policymakers at both the national and regional level in both developing and developed countries (Suter and Jandl, 2008; Beine, Noël & Ragot, 2014).

Universities are no longer just providers of quality education, but are largely seen as primary suppliers of highly skilled labour and/or as a stepping stone for such immigration (Martin, 2004 sighted in Suter & Jandl, 2008). Many of the worlds’ Higher education institutions are believed to be now producing highly skilled students that foster innovation and research, which are key elements within a globalisation influenced knowledge economy (European Commission, 2006).

International higher education was previously most often associated with foreign aid, with developed countries supporting students from developing countries via scholarships, but overall numbers were small as evidenced from the Colombo plan in the 1950s (Adams, Banks & Olsen, 2011). Influenced by globalisation, this aid rationale has largely been replaced with the trade or commercialisation approach, and the direct economic benefits from attracting international students have upped the global competition to host them. International education as an export is now a major service industry in many developed countries. For example, it was the USA’s seventh largest service export in 2017/18 (Institute of International Education, 2018), and third largest in Australia in 2017 (ABS, 2018). In the UK and Canada, it generated £25.8 billion in 2014/15 and CA$15.5 billion in 2016 respectively (Universities UK, 2017; Roslyn, K & Associates Inc., 2017).

In addition to the economic benefits, it has also been suggested that a host country’s quality of higher education often improves from attracting international students, via their active contributions to knowledge creation and transfer. Most higher education institutions are forced to provide high-quality services including a diverse range of courses to compete (UNSECO 2003; OECD, 2005b, Akareem & Hossain, 2016). Governments in developed countries like the UK, Australia, Germany, France and New Zealand have been fuelling international student
mobility via supportive marketing and expedited visa policies, along with the allocation of tuition fee scholarships and other annual grants (Geddie, 2015).

As discussed in the Section 3.2.2 of the last chapter, the USA, UK, Australia, Germany and France, which have long attracted large amounts of international students, are commonly regarded as traditional host countries. However, the continual increase of international students has led to an emergence of additional host countries, such as China, Singapore and Malaysia, that source from both developing and some developed countries (UNESCO, 2018). This is resulting in more of brain circulation (Bhandari & Blumenthal, 2011; Lindberg, Thieme & Chakrabarti, 2014). Thus, the common flow of international students from South to North or from developing to developed countries is changing, and now includes North to South and South to South flows as well (de Wit, 2008; Lindberg, Thieme & Chakrabarti, 2014).

While personal characteristics often influence international student mobility, there are many other variables in both sending and receiving countries that affect their host country choices. These have been broadly described as the push and pull factors that encourage students to study abroad (Choudaha & de Wit, 2014). Push factors work from within the home country and can initiate a student’s decision to consider studying abroad, while pull factors are those that host countries use to try and make themselves attractive to these students (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002). A number of scholars have researched on these factors (Agarwal & Winkler, 1985; McMohan, 1992; Mazzarol & Soutar, 1995; 2002; de Wit, 2008; Lee & Kim 2010; Mcready & Tucker, 2011; OECD, 2012; Han & Appelbaum, 2016; Gesing 2017).

An early example of a push and pull framework was proposed by Agarwal & Winkler (1985) who studied the demand for international education in the USA among students from 15 developing countries. Their study suggested that the drivers of international study mobility were student’s ability to pay, cost of education, education opportunities in the home country, and perceived benefits of studying abroad. However, a weakness of this study was that it only focused on these four variables, and did not consider any other factors such as political or cultural connections between the host and source countries.

Similarly, McMahon’s (1992) study used a push and pull model to examine the international student mobility from developing to developed countries via analysis of aggregated national data on student flows between the 1960s and 1970s. Economic and political factors such as
government policies largely influenced this push and pull model, with push relating to variables such as economic wealth of home country, the degree of involvement of the home country in the world economy and its priority of education, and pull covering the host nation’s economy size, economic, political and cultural links between home and host nations, and the scholarships or other assistance available in a host nation. Furthermore, while there was a negative correlation in this model between economic prosperity in sending countries and the volume of students going abroad, this did not account for the costs associated with studying abroad, nor did it factor in the student’s perceived benefits from studying abroad.

In Mazzarol and Soutar’s (2002) study, the decision process of internationally mobile students was presented in three distinct stages within their push and pull framework. Stage one is where a student first decides to study abroad, fully influenced by push factors in the home country, while the second stage involves the selection of a host country where pull factors also come into play, followed by the third stage where an institution is selected, which is largely influenced by more education specific additional pull factors. The four main push factors in this study were: 1) desire for a better understanding of another culture and/or country that the home country cannot provide; 2) lack of job opportunities in the home country; 3) availability of scholarships in the home country that enable international student mobility; and 4) discontent with home country institutions including high tuition fees and uninteresting and/or non-availability of specific courses. The six main pull factors were: 1) overall level of knowledge and awareness of the host country, including its reputation for education quality and recognition of its qualifications in the home country; 2) personal recommendations from family and friends; 3) cost issues such as the cost of tuition fees, living expenses and travel costs, as well as social costs such as safety, crime, discrimination, presence of students from the home country, and availability of part-time work; 4) environmental including the political and economic stability of the host country, as well as the physical climate; 5) geographical proximity of the host to the home country; and 6) social links based on whether the student has family or friends in the host country. The additional four main pull factors from the host institution were: 1) reputation of the host institution; 2) international recognition of its qualifications; 3) attractiveness of its tuition fees; and 4) the international learning environment it offered.

De Wit (2008) examined the former research on push and pull factors in relation to international student mobility, including the above examples, and surmised that they primarily analysed the
flow between main sending and receiving countries, based on South to North and North to North flows. This author subsequently factored in South to South flows in his study, and concluded that some push and pull factors previously identified had become dormant or had disappeared, while new ones had emerged. He consequently produced a framework where three main push and pull factor categories were put forward: 1) educational; 2) political/social/cultural; and 3) economic. This was an extensive framework, with many indicators or variables under each category and were used to identify which indicator pushes a student out and which pulls them into a certain country (see Table 4.2 below).

### Table 4.2 Push and pull factors for international student mobility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>push factors</th>
<th>Pull factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Educational</strong></td>
<td><strong>Educational</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher education availability</td>
<td>Higher education opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher education status</td>
<td>System compatibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human resource capacity</td>
<td>Enhanced value of foreign degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selectiveness of domestic higher education</td>
<td>Ranking/ status higher education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower value of local degree</td>
<td>Active recruitment policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience with international mobility</td>
<td>Diversity of higher education system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of distance education</td>
<td>Absorptive capacity of higher education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing presence of private providers</td>
<td>Existing stock of national students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing presence of foreign providers</td>
<td>Cost of study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic alliance with foreign partners</td>
<td>Strategic alliances with home partners</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Political/Social/Cultural</strong></th>
<th><strong>Political/Social/Cultural</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Linguistic isolation</td>
<td>Language factor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political instability</td>
<td>Lure of life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonial ties</td>
<td>Colonial ties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural disposition</td>
<td>Cultural ties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Push factors</td>
<td>Pull factors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional unity</td>
<td>Regional unity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic alliances</td>
<td>Strategic alliances with home country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emigration policies</td>
<td>Immigration policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information isolation</td>
<td>Stock of citizens of country of origin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic freedom</td>
<td>Academic freedom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Economic**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Push factors</th>
<th>Pull factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dependence on world economy</td>
<td>Import/export levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment opportunities on return</td>
<td>Employment opportunities during and after study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human development index factor</td>
<td>Human resource development factor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial capacity</td>
<td>Level of assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographical distance</td>
<td>Geographical distance</td>
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</table>


The OECD (Education at a glance, 2012) has also identified underlying factors in relation to an international student’s choice of destination, which are primarily pull factors. In this OECD list, the language of instruction in the destination country has been defined as the primary pull factor. It is therefore not surprising to see the dominance of English-speaking developed countries including the USA, UK, Australia, New Zealand and Canada as destination countries for international student mobility, based on English being the primary global language. The quality of a host country’s higher education programs is another major pull factor, including how its institutions are ranked internationally. Cost consideration is another significant pull factor, especially for students from developing countries, such as tuition fees and general cost of living. Immigration policy is another that has come to the forefront, with favourable national policies making a destination country more appealing to international students, for example in Australia, New Zealand and Canada). Other OECD-recognised pull factors are similar to previous studies (e.g. McMohan, 1992; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; de Wit, 2008), including the academic reputation of host institution, the international recognition of foreign degrees, the
geographical, trade and/or historical links between countries, and future job opportunities. In contrast, the Eurobarometer report identified some anti-push factors contributing to the non-mobility of students, such as lack of personal funds, language barriers, difficulty to get international recognition of the degree, and limited information (European Commission, 2011).

Macready and Tucker’s (2011) research into why international student move and their choice of destination was a more comprehensive review of established push and pull factors affecting student mobility. They uncovered that the main push factor for international students is the lack of education opportunities at home, particularly in those countries not able to meet the demand for higher education based on fast-growing populations. The next largest push factor is the prospect of international students broadening their cultural and intellectual horizons, and improving their career opportunities globally. This was supported by the earlier study that highlighted multinational firms’ demand for internationally competent workers that speak foreign languages and have intercultural skills (OECD, 2013). Several governments already have policies to promote international study mobility as a way of fostering intercultural connections, such as Europe’s Bologna process. The third primary push factor is that students seeking to study abroad want to adequately prepare themselves for future life stages, whether it is education or work, which is a relatively new factor relating to lifelong learning that also incorporates non-tertiary mobility.

Macready and Tucker’s (2011) study also identified additional anti-push factors that could deter students from going abroad for their higher education, that were financial impediments, travel or visa difficulties, and personal or family constraints. The study also uncovered the following main pull factors that are helping students choose their destination country:

- niche or specialised study opportunities
- cost affordability
- high-quality study opportunities
- appealing language of instruction to international students
- recognition of qualifications at international level
- perceived employment returns following graduation
- cultural links and existence of diaspora
- post-graduation employment opportunities in country of study
- timely completion of course
- effective marketing by destination country/institution
• study abroad supported by home country
• supporting visa policies and conditions for studying and working.

With respect to the primary destination for internationally mobile students, Han and Appelbaum (2016) conducted a study on international Science, Engineering, Technology and Mathematics (STEM) students in the USA and found major pull factors at both the macro and micro level. These included international student perceptions of higher quality of education, greater future career opportunities and more opportunities to work with specific faculties, as well as the desire to experience living abroad and in particular to live in the USA.

Gesing (2017) also examined the push and pull factors influencing internationally mobile STEM students’ choice of the USA, with consideration of the political, economic and social/cultural variables. This author found that these students were more often driven by economic reasons along with better and high quality of education and future career opportunities. While many of the push and pull factors are similar across these studies, some new ones have been identified relating to the changing international student mobility flows, and some existing ones have gained in importance. For example, post-study career opportunities are now at the forefront as a major pull factor for internationally mobile students choosing a destination.

In addition to attracting international students to their country for higher education, governments are actively adopting migration policies in an effort to retain them post-graduation (Chiswick, 2005; Bedford & Spoonley, 2014; Chiou, 2017). These students are often considered highly skilled workers and ‘perfect/designer immigrants’ as they are already integrated into the society and have background knowledge of the country. They are often encouraged to permanently relocate in the host country to fill domestic labour gaps, and to contribute to the nation’s research capability and capacity (OECD, 2004). Such student retention is usually measured via ‘stay rates’, which has been defined as the proportion of international students changing to a status other than the student to the number of students not renewing their student permits in the same year (OECD, 2011).

The OECD (2011) reported that the average stay rate among international students that did not renew their student permit in 2008/09 was 25%. These stay rates were highest in Canada at
33%, and was above the average of 25% in countries that included Australia, the Czech Republic, France, Germany and the Netherlands. While there was a limitation in this OECD data in that some countries did not report on stay rates, the stay rate was higher than 17% among those that provided this data.

While many host nations now use retention policies to support the temporary or permanent migration of international students, there are some scholars that believe this is likely to bring down the wages in high-skill professions and may diminish the rewards for domestic students intending to study further (Borjas & Doran, 2012). It has also been argued that the presence of international students does not guarantee the quality of education as insufficient language skills of such students may slow down the pace of instruction in the class (Borjas, 2012). Furthermore, there is potential for the student visa to be used as a ‘ticket’ to immigration as the agencies issuing such visas may not have national interest at heart leading to the abuse of the system (Borjas, 2002). Australia is a primary example of such student visa abuse, with many international students between 2005 and 2009 recorded as opting for qualifications or courses directly linked with permanent migration rather than their career plans or meeting the skills demand of the host country (Baas, 2010; Hawthorne, 2010). Provision of an option to stay on in country post-graduation has been a long-standing practice in some developed countries including the USA, Canada and Australia, which has more recently been taken up by some European countries including the UK, Germany and France (Suter & Jandl, 2006; Suter & Jandl, 2008; Bedford & Spoonley, 2014). Points-based systems and selective skilled occupation lists as per job market demand are the tools that most countries (Australia, Canada and New Zealand) use to select immigrants, with special provisions for international students including extra points, the waiver of the work experience requirement, and/or the availability of specific skilled worker categories for graduates of a particular host country (Suter & Jandl, 2008).

Many of these host countries provide post-graduation foreign students with the opportunity to remain and look for work, including Australia’s 2-4 year PSW rights, New Zealand’s 1-2 years and Canada’s 3 years, while the USA has a special quota of temporary H1-B visa category for such applicants (Geddie, 2015). The following section examines Australia, New Zealand and Canada as examples of countries with specific policies aimed at retaining international students following the completion of their higher education within their host destination.
4.2.1 Australia

Australia has had its selective policy focusing on skilled migration since the 1970s, where certain eligibility criteria need to be met, such as competency to align with Australian work standard for specific occupations (Cully et al., 2011; Chiou, 2017). Australia’s migration policies have changed a lot since the 1970s with key shifts in the focus from family to skilled migrants in the 1990s, resulting in a dramatic increase in the latter. For example, the Australian General Skilled Migration (GSM) points system for migration was introduced in 1989, directly targeting highly skilled workers, which has been highly successful over the years allowing Australia to source highly skilled migrants from around the world every year since its introduction.

Australia has a long history of providing higher education for international students, and is a primary destination country with 7% of its market share in 2016 (OECD, 2018). International student recruitment is now a core component of the Australia Government’s strategy to remain competitive in a globalised world. This is based on the perception that international students benefit the national economy including revenue generation for institutions, while also addressing the country’s labour demands and/or skills shortages that are partly due to its ageing population (Chiou, 2017). International education’s economic contribution to Australia was AUS$30.3 billion in 2017 (ABS, 2018; see Appendix 14). Furthermore, it has been recognised that international students who remain in Australia for work purposes post-graduation perform better in the country’s labour market compared to other skilled migrants that applied offshore under the GSM category (Hawthorne, 2010).

In the late 1990s, the Australian Government committed towards retaining international students with in-demand skills through key policy changes in 1998, encouraging them to transition from temporary to permanent residency through the skilled migration program (Spinks, 2016). That is, the GSM program was amended to award additional five points to applicants who acquired their qualification from an Australian institution, involving at least 12 months of study, while the three-year work experience requirement in nominated occupations was waived (Chiou, 2017). Furthermore, in 1999 the Australian Government introduced the Migration Occupations in Demand List (MODL) – a list of occupations believed to be in shortage of skilled workers at the national level. Applicants that matched this MODL were awarded bonus points and priority processing of their applications (Hawthorne, 2010). Another
migration policy update followed in 2001, where international students were able to make a permanent residency application without leaving Australia’s shores within six months of completion of their studies (Cully et al., 2011). Such policy reforms have attracted a lot more internationally mobile students, with Australia’s market share notably increasing by 27% between 2001 and 2003 (UNESCO, 2010). In 2000/01, the visas under skills stream granted to previously graduated students were at zero; this had rapidly risen to 8,000 by 2002/03 (Spinks, 2016). They have also led to a lot more former international students applying for permanent residency from their home countries, outside Australia.

To support the growth of international education industry, in 2002/03, the Australian Government introduced further changes to the student visa program and offered greater flexibility on financial and English language requirements. This was followed by adding additional trades and engineering-related occupations to the MODL in 2005, to make Australia’s skilled migration program more globally competitive (Productivity Commission, 2015). In 2008, student visas were further reformed to automatically grant international students the right to work up to 20 hours a week while attending their course, rather than applying for the permission to work (Productivity Commission, 2015).

In 2007/08, approximately 40% of the visas granted in Australia’s skilled migration program were to people already residing in the country, which further highlights the success of its retention policies focused on international students. There was also a 30% increase in 457 visa holders that became permanent residents in the same time period (Spinks, 2016). Then in late 2008, major policy reforms were announced with introduction of 485 visa that highlighted a progressive shift to a ‘demand driven’ skilled migration program, focused on government- and employer-sponsored migration to obtain specific, in-demand skills; international students were eligible to apply under this new category as long as they had relevant qualifications and work experience (Cully et al., 2011).

As a result of this, all international students had access to a 485 visa subclass offering them a period of 18 months to remain in Australia post-graduation to find work in their field of education, prior to applying for permanent migration under GSM. Following the Bruce Baird review in 2009 that highlighted the need to attract and retain only those students gaining high skills relating to targeted occupations, in 2010, further migration policy reforms including the ceasing of MODL and the tightening of the Skilled Occupation List (SOL), plus a review of
the points test occurred in Australia. Such reforms limited opportunities for graduating international students to apply for permanent migration in Australia, but were deemed necessary by the federal government to limit the access of international students to permanent visas (Productivity Commission, 2015).

Based on recommendations from the Knight review (Knight, 2011), a Genuine Temporary Entrant (GTE) requirement was introduced in Australia for the assessment of all student visa applications in 2011, followed by Streamlined Visa Processing (SVP) in 2012 to promote sustainable growth in relation to genuine international students seeking study opportunities (Spinks, 2016). There was then an overhaul of the migration points system from July 2012 for international students, and the subsequent beginning of Post-Study Work (PSW) rights in 2013. These PSW rights are offered to all international students completing two years of study in Australia that met the minimum English language criteria, and entitled them to remain in the country for 2-4 years (depending on their education course) and look for work in any field. Those students that are able to find work in their own field of education may then become eligible for permanent migration (Productivity Commission, 2015). As a result of such rights and reforms, in 2016/17 there were 17,102 permanent migration places granted to former international students (Department of Home Affairs, 2018; see Appendix 20).

It is also apparent that such migrant policy changes in relation to Australian student visas have acted as pull factors to attract international students to the country. Australia regards international students as a key skills resource and has shown commitment to retaining them via opportunities to stay post-education and transition through from temporary to permanent residence.

4.2.2 New Zealand

Similar to Australia, skilled immigration has become important to New Zealand. In addition to economic gains, it is now recognised as bringing in the skills and knowledge to further enhance the country’s knowledge economy (Wilkinson, 2010). Since the 1990s, New Zealand has tried to address labour and skill shortages by focussing on temporary and permanent migration via a selective skills migration policy or General Skills Category (GSC) (Bedford & Spoonley, 2014). Its government recognises international education as one of the ways to improve the
teaching and research quality, build human capital, strengthen partnerships with other nations, and grow educational services trade (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2007).

International education is one of New Zealand’s top five export industries, having generated NZ$5.1 billion revenue in 2017 (Education New Zealand, 2018). Along with Australia, New Zealand is regarded as a traditional destination for international students (OECD Education at a Glance, 2018). As in Australia, international students are perceived as playing an important role in the labour market via post-graduation employment, including in skill shortage areas. The New Zealand Government has consequently introduced a number of policy changes since 2003, strengthening the link between study and work, while focusing on both attracting and retaining international students post-graduation (Merwood, 2007; Bedford et al., 2010b; Chiou, 2017).

Since 1999, New Zealand has awarded international students with extra points for qualification under the GSC (Merwood, 2007). Major policy changes were then introduced in 2003 via the introduction of the Skilled Migrant Category (SMC), which included awarding 10 bonus points for completion of New Zealand tertiary qualifications, and a waiver of a job offer requirements for students that have completed a minimum two years of Masters or PhD studies, or another course relating to occupations in a skills shortage area (Wilkinson, 2010; Chiou, 2017).

Another significant policy change was then introduced in 2005 to make New Zealand a more competitively appealing host destination, largely based on opportunities for international students to remain in New Zealand post-graduation (Chiou, 2017). This consisted of the Graduate Job Search permit with a duration period of six months, which provided new way for students to undertake higher education in New Zealand as well as opportunities to enter the country’s job market post-graduation. It also included introduction of a two-year Post-Study Work permit to acquire work experience related to the qualification of international students (Merwood, 2007; Bedford & Spoonley, 2014). There were then further immigration policy refinements in 2007 in relation to international students, which included increasing the Graduate Job Search permit duration from six months to one year, and the duration of the Post-Study Work permit from two to three years for graduates with work experience requirement to register with professional bodies (Wilkinson, 2010).
In mid-2011, there were further immigration policy changes relating to international students, with the New Zealand Government clearly signalling a preference for skills contributions from higher education students. In line with this, students needed to study in New Zealand for at least two years (up from one year) to qualify for Study to Work visas, with a shorter study period requirement for those with postgraduate qualifications. Furthermore, international students that obtained a second qualification at bachelors or postgraduate level were eligible for an additional Graduate Job Search visa, while the Post-Study Work permit was renamed to Graduate Work Experience visa (Immigration, New Zealand, 2011; Bedford & Spoonley, 2014).

Similar to Australia, New Zealand is an example of a country that has successfully developed international student retention policies that offer them a career pathway post-graduation. As a result of student visa and migration policy changes, in 2012/13, 14,882 international students were issued with New Zealand’s Study to Work visa, which had increased to 27,922 by 2016/17 (88% growth). Furthermore, 95% of those that transitioned from the Study to Work visa scheme to permanent residency in New Zealand in 2016/17 did so under the SMC, while 43% of all primary applicants approved under the SMC from 2014/15 to 2016/17 went through the ‘student-worker-resident’ pathway. Between 2006 and 2012, 25% of international full-fee paying students transitioned through to permanent residency in New Zealand, which took an average of three years after receiving their first study permit (Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), 2018).

4.2.3 Canada

Canada has a long immigration history that stems back to the 1900s. Its introduction of a points system in 1967 emphasised the needs of the country’s labour market and moved the country towards becoming a knowledge economy. Canada faces similar issues to Australia and New Zealand like declining young population and increasing need for skilled labour to remain competitive as a knowledge economy (Gopal, 2016). There have subsequently been a number of changes in its immigration policies since 1967, with Canada consistently showing its commitment to attracting and retaining more international students and their corresponding skillsets (CIC, 2010).
In 2016, Canada hosted 189,000 international students, which was 4% of the global market share and defines it as a highly regarded destination country for international higher education (OECD, 2018). In alignment with the Canadian Government Department of Finance’s earlier economic plan that outlined its overall policy objectives relating to the recruitment of foreign students, international study expenditures were valued at over CA$15.5 billion in 2016 (Roslyn & Associates, 2017). The Department of Finance Canada’s (2006) economic plan clearly forecasted that attraction and retention of the brightest international students would create a knowledge advantage involving the best educated, most skilled and most flexible workforce in the world.

As part of the Canadian Government, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) has over the years introduced a number of policy changes to immigration framework to streamline study and work options for international students (Gopal, 2014). For example, the Off-campus Work Permit program was piloted in 2005, which enabled international students in public post-secondary institutions to seek off-campus employment for the duration of their education, and remained valid up to 90 days post-graduation (CIC, 2010).

Another pilot initiative from the same time period was the Post-Graduate Work permit that was available to all international students. This meant that international students that had completed two years of study and received a job offer in Canada were now allowed to apply for a two-year Post-Graduate Work permit (Wang, 2018). In 2008, the immigration policy was again revised with the duration of the Post-Graduate Work permit increased to three years with no job offer requirement, while the Off-campus Work Permit program opened up to students studying at private post-secondary institutions (Gopal, 2016). In the same year, the new Canadian Experience Class immigration category was introduced, enabling temporary foreign workers and/or graduates from Canadian post-secondary institutions with minimum one year of skilled work experience to transition to permanent residence (CIC, 2010). This was followed by the Canada Express Entry system in 2016, which awarded extra points towards permanent residency for international students who attended Canadian universities (Wang, 2018).

By 2008, the number of international students participating in Canada’s Off-campus Work Permit program had increased to 24,437 from 652 in 2004. Furthermore, the number of grants for Canadian Post-Graduate Work permit had increased from 3,004 in 2003 to 12,671 in 2008. In the same year, 11,760 international students transferred from student to foreign worker
visa status (compared to only 3,454 in 2003) with 66% of them moving to a Post-Graduate Work permit. Another 10,357 transitioned to permanent residence in Canada in 2008 (compared to 5,486 in 2003) with a little over half of those (55%) holding a skilled worker status or their spouse or a dependant. 55% of these international students who transitioned to permanent residence had previously studied at the tertiary level, and 11% at the diploma level (CIC, 2008).

Similar to its competitors like Australia and New Zealand, Canada’s had consistent policies permitting international students to work on- and off-campus, including allowing them to apply for up to a three-year work permit after graduation (Wang, 2018). Such temporary work permits, as well as long-term and permanent residence permits upon graduation in Canada are different categories recognised as pathways for retention of international students in host countries on a temporary or permanent basis (Tremblay, 2005; Chiou, 2017).

### 4.2.4 Previous study references

The above literature review in relation to Australia, New Zealand and Canada’s immigration policies for international students shows there are many scholars that have concentrated on the globalisation and internationalisation of higher education (e.g. Knight, 2004; Altbach and Knight, 2007; Rumbley, 2007; de Wit, 2008; Bergh & Nilsson, 2010; Hudzik, 2011; NAFSA, 2011; Wihlborg & Robson, 2018) as well as the growth in international student mobility along with factors affecting the study abroad choice of students (e.g. Agarwal & Winkler, 1985; McMohan, 1992; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; Verbik & Lasanowski, 2007; de Wit, 2008; Macready & Tucker, 2011; OECD, 2012; Choudaha & de Wit, 2014; Han & Appelbaum, 2016; Gesing 2017). The reliance of the knowledge economy on skilled labour and relevance of international students has also been well-documented (e.g. OECD, 1996; Brown, 1999; OECD, 2001; Bauer & Kunze, 2004; Chiswick, 2005; Lindberg, Thieme & Chakrabarti, 2014; Chaloff & Lemaître, 2009; Brock, 2016), along with government migration policies aimed at international students (e.g. Stundal, 1999; Docquier & Marfouk, 2006; Suter & Jandl, 2006; Ziguras & Law, 2006; Suter & Jandl, 2008; Beine, Noël & Ragot, 2014; Akareem & Hossain, 2016; Chiou, 2017).

However, while some generalisations have been made in relation to the focus on international students as prospective migrants, little research has been done to understand the differences in
motives of international students from one source country to another. There is also a literature gap in relation to understanding how international student motives and decisions can change from when they are first choosing a destination country to when they have completed their studies and are choosing where to pursue their career. There is also very little literature examining the influence of meso-level factors such as family, friends, diaspora as well as education agents on international student decisions in relation to staying in the host country post-graduation or returning to the home country.

The next section of this chapter examines international student mobility through the lens of existing migration theories, to understand its influence, and to also form a conceptual framework for this research.

4.3 International student mobility through the lens of migration theories

International student mobility is often viewed as temporary migration, involving a student moving from their home country to another to undertake higher education. It is therefore important to consider migration theories within the literature, to bring into perspective and establish relevance to international student mobility. Such migration theories are classified into macro, micro and meso levels, where the macro level emphasises broader economic, social and political circumstances, the micro level focuses on individual decisions, and the meso level sits between macro and micro with consideration of family/household decisions.

Massey et al. (1998) distinguished the international migration theories into two broad categories: 1) the initiation of migration linked to study abroad decision of international students; and 2) the continuation of migration linked to an international student’s decision to either return home or remain in the host country post-graduation. In line with this categorisation, Neoclassical Economic Theory, Dual Labour Market Theory and Neo Economies of Labour Migration Theory are examples of the initiation of migration, while World Systems Theory and Network Theory are examples of the continuation of migration.

Push-Pull Theory is the earliest known migration theory that was put forward by Ravenstein in 1885, and hypothesised that migration is regulated by push and pull factors. In this context, push factors are unfavourable circumstances in one region causing an individual to be
discontended and consider moving to another region (e.g. unemployment, political repression, low social status), while pull factors are the favourable or appealing conditions that pull an individual towards that other place (e.g. better education, income and job prospects). However, this theory does not factor in the micro level and is unable to describe disparities in the size and direction of migration flows. That is, it cannot describe why different individuals with similar socioeconomic segments from same region make differing migration decisions. Lee (1966) consequently revised the Push-Pull Theory and proposed a new migration framework where the decision to migrate was determined by both macro and micro factors, such as association with the country of origin, with the destination area (e.g. distance, physical barriers, immigration laws), and with personal factors (e.g. age, sex, race, education). Lee (1966) contended that most migration occurs within clearly-defined channels or to specific destination places from specific origin places, not just because of localised migration opportunities at destination, but also because of knowledge flowing back from destination facilitating the paths of other aspiring migrants from the same source country.

In more recent times, the most discussed theoretical approach in relation to migration is the Neoclassical Economic Theory that factors in both the macro and micro levels. It was first put forward by Hicks (1932) and was later revised by Lewis (1954) and, Harris and Todaro (1970). At the macro level, this theory explains flows of migrants because of wage and employment dissimilarities among various countries (Gurieva & Dzhioev, 2015). Such differences lead to labour migration flows to high-wage from low-wage countries (Massey et al., 1993). At the micro level, Neoclassical Economic theory suggests migration is an individual decision aimed at maximising earnings (Gurieva & Dzhioev, 2015). However, while improved income opportunities can influence migration, this aspect of the theory does not take into account any non-economic factors, such as host nation policies, return migration or increased migration to developed countries from developing countries. The theory also assumes that migration would lead to elimination of the wage differentials and finally the labour movement itself (Harris & Todaro, 1970).

The Dual Labour Market Theory by Piore (1979) links migration to the structured changes in the economy and proposes that the main reason behind international migration is the demand for high- and low-skilled labour in the developed countries. This theory operates at a macro level, and explains that migration is triggered by the pull factors explained as labour demands of destination countries (Massey et al., 1993). Piore (1979) suggested the existence of dual
labor markets within the advanced economies with the availability of high and low-skilled jobs. The theory argues that migration is driven by the conditions of labour demand as the low-skilled jobs are not taken up by the domestic labour due to the consideration of social status or low wages, and are filled by the foreign workers. This creates a structured demand for both high and low skilled workers in the economy. The theory however does not explain the different migration rates to the nations with similar advanced economies. Many countries now perceive international students as potential high-skilled labour. Availability of part-time work while studying or full-time work post-graduation also fit into this framework of Piore’s theory, but it does not take into account any push factors within home country or other macro- and micro-level factors that might impact the potential migrant’s decision.

The Neo Economies of Labour Migration Theory, introduced by Stark (1991) builds on the Neoclassical Economic Theory and explains that choosing to move cannot be one person’s choice and is possibly a collective household strategy with the aim of not just growing the income but to manage in risk in case of labour market failure (Massey et al. 1993; Taylor, 1999; Sagynbekova, 2018). This theory fully operates at the meso level and suggests that households send a family member abroad to improve their household income, via remittances sent back home and compensate for the deteriorating local income. De Haas (2010) suggested that these remittances are one of the primary motives for migration. In the context of international students, it is argued that the decision to study abroad is influenced by the family or household – an investment in their training and education to increase their earning capacity.

In contrast to the above theories, Historical Structuralist Theory suggests that international migration is influenced by the uneven split of political and economic influence in the world (Castles & Miller, 2009), leading to the development of Wallerstein’s (1974) World Systems Theory. In line with the Historical Structuralist Theory, it fully operates at the macro level and stresses that the world should be the unit of social analysis rather than nation-states. This theory distinguishes countries in terms of capitalism, with core countries being those that are capital-intensive exploiting countries at the periphery for labour and raw materials, and peripheral countries being those with abundance of labour depending on core countries for development of capital due to their less developed industrial sector (Wallerstein, 1974). There are also semi-peripheral countries that share some of the characteristics of both core and peripheral countries (Gurieva & Dzhioev, 2015). Capital is seen as the key factor by the world system theorists with the argument that capital and labor mobility are interconnected (Kurekova, 2011). The
individual migrants are considered not having a free choice on decisions around migration but influenced by the structured demand and processes (de Haas, 2010). In the context of international students, developed nations are core countries that supply education, developing countries are peripheral countries that demand education, and the capital is defined as education, skills and knowledge.

The above-mentioned theories offer a simplistic explanation of migration and does not take into account the relationship between society and individual. Network Theory, pioneered by Mabogunje (1970), fully operates at the meso level and looks at what prolongs migration from the perspective of space and time (Massey et al., 1993). This theory focuses on migrant networks and has consequently been described as ‘chain migration’ (de Haas, 2010). It suggests that the existence of a network of migrants or the diaspora can potentially impact migration destination choices, and provides some explanation on why migration patterns may not spread evenly across regions (Faist, 2000). The Network Theory also implies that existing ties, such as trade or investment flows and colonial linkages can result in development of migratory movements (Massey et al., 1993; Castles & Miller, 2009; de Haas, 2010).

In contrast to above mentioned theories, the Institutional Theory comes into effect once migration has already begun and relates to the continuation of migration. It talks about the emergence of private or for-profit institutions to cater to the demand of services generated by an imbalance between the number of places on offer in the destination country and the number of people seeking entry (Massey, et al., 1993). For example, the for-profit organisations may offer assistance with transport, work agreements, relevant documents, accommodation and/ or legal advice on migration for individuals, whereas the non-profit organisations may address the humanitarian aspect of migration by offering counselling, social services or legal advice. The theory assumes that such support of international migration has meant that migration flows are free from the original factors that influenced them and are rather much more structured or formal (Massey, et al., 1993). In the context of international students, the Institutional Theory mostly relates to the increase in education agents facilitating visas and admissions for them.

The above-mentioned theories help understand the initiation and continuation of migration. While they take into account different variables and operate at different levels, they are not necessarily contradictory or independent of each other. Potential migrants are possibly influenced by different factors at the same time as they look to increase their wages after discussions
within the household and make their decision considering the structured demand for labour in the advanced economies. These theories of migration do have their shortcomings as well as they focus on one level and ignore the other. For example, the Neoclassical Economic Theory and Dual Market Labour Theory have been too focused on the economic factors and disregard the social or cultural context. A number of researchers have called upon considering interconnection between different migration theories to better explain migration and advance the understanding (Skeldon, 1997; Massey et al. 1998; de Hass, 2010).

It would appear that in the context of international students, there is no applicable universal migration theory. There is a need to integrate a range of relevant migration theories to build on the theoretical framework for explaining the movement of students. In line with this, the next section focuses on this theoretical framework developed for this research.

4.4 Theoretical framework

As reviewed in the previous section, there are existing divergent migration theories based on the integration of macro, micro and/or meso factors. In the context of international student mobility, micro-level factors relate more to individual student decisions towards the choice of destination country, macro-level factors to economic, social and political circumstances in both the host and home countries, while meso-level factors relate more to households, families, diaspora and other major agents influencing the student’s decision.

This study’s literature review indicates that the Push-Pull Theory is most commonly used to explain international student mobility from the perspective of their decision making process (Altbach et. al., 1985; McMohan, 1992; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; de Wit, 2008; Macready & Tucker, 2011; Han & Appelbaum 2016; Gesing, 2017). Most relevant studies have essentially been qualitative involving questionnaires and interviews with the students, with a quantitative component. Altbach et al. (1985) suggested that the decision to move to another country for study stems from three main viewpoints – of the student themselves, the country of origin, and the destination country – each driven by their own preferences and incentives, and their study focused on macro-level factors with consideration for micro-level factors. In contrast, McMohan (1992) analysed data on international student mobility in the 1960s to 1970s from developing to developed countries, and the corresponding model was largely based on
economic strengths of developed and weaknesses of developing countries and lacked any consideration of other micro or macro-level factors.

Another example that highlights such differences is the study by Mazzarol & Soutar (2002) who used surveys to determine the push and pull factors relevant to international students across four countries, with a distinction made between undergraduate and postgraduate students. De Wit (2008) built on the study by Mazzarol & Soutar (2002) and through their case studies of degree-seeking international students from four source countries into the two host countries, they identified push and pull factors under educational, political/social/cultural and economic rationale influencing the south-south flows of international students. Macready and Tucker (2011) added another dimension to the previous studies by adding some anti-push factors in relation to difficult visa processes and by identifying post-study career opportunities as one of the major pull factors.

As a result of such studies, the original Push-Pull Theory has been significantly broadened to include a larger range of push and pull factors as well as relationships between them. Furthermore, some factors have gained in importance, as shown in the studies by de Wit (2008) and Macready and Tucker (2011) that highlight the importance of education and visa policies and the scope for post-study career opportunities in the host country. In more recent times, Han and Appelbaum (2016) have explored pull factors at the macro and micro level affecting STEM students going to the USA, while Gesing (2017) examined those influencing international student mobility to the USA based on political, economic and social/cultural variables again highlighting the relevance of education and visa policies of host country.

Despite such extensions of the original theory, few studies have considered the shift of push and pull factors influencing international students as they move from one decision phase to another, including identifying the causes or actors behind these decisions. Most studies have centered on the initial decision-making phase of international students, including their choice of host country as well as the influence of its education and migration policies on their temporary migration choices, but have considered how these policies affect the student’s decision of continuing migration, likely bringing in Network and Institutional theories to the conversation.
The theoretical framework produced in this research further builds on previous research around Push-Pull Theory, identifying different push and pull factors that affect the student’s choice of host country. In particular, it factored in the influence of the host country’s education and migration policies on international student mobility from particular source countries. The reason behind choosing the particular source and host country has been covered in detail in Section 5.5 of Chapter 5. As highlighted in Figure 4.1, it has subsequently hypothesised that push and pull factors affect international students from different source countries in different ways. It also proposes there can be different push and pull factors affecting students at different study levels or regions within one source country, and highlights the bigger role that meso-level factors such as diaspora, family networks and education agents play in influencing international student decision-making on whether to stay on or return home post-graduation.
Figure 4.1 Theoretical framework

Micro-level factors
Career aspirations, Perceptions of host country, Perceptions of quality of education, institution

Macro-level factors
Economic considerations in host country, Higher education opportunities in host country, Education and migration policies of host country, Opportunities to work or stay on post-graduation

Meso-level factors
Family/friends Education agents Institutions

Students from one source country
Initiation of migration
Interest in education and migration
Varying interest from different source countries
Continuation of migration
Return to home country
Interest in education
Interest in migration
Varying interest from different levels in same country

Micro-level factors
Career opportunities

Macro-level factors
Economic considerations Migration policies in host country Opportunities to work or stay on post-graduation

Meso-level factors
Family Diaspora Education agents

Source: Author
This research used surveys and interviews as commonly done in other studies, and involved two different international student cohorts at different decision-making stages – those in the home country who are considering higher education abroad, and those who have completed their higher education in host country and are deciding on their next step – to better understand what stage they consider or place more importance on the migration policies of a host country. This was also done to examine how their decisions change from one stage to another, and to help identify the meso-level factors in the form of diaspora linkages, families and/or education and migration networks that affect the decision to stay on post-graduation.

4.5 Summary

Internationalisation has been a well-researched topic in international higher education and its meaning has changed over the years through various developments. International student mobility has been the most common way for nations to respond to the forces of globalisation and internationalisation (Suter & Jandl, 2008), with various scholars having researched on both globalisation and internationalisation (e.g. Teichler, 2004; Knight, 2004; Scott, 2006; Bergh & Nilsson, 2010; Hudzik, 2011; NAFSA, 2011; Wihlborg & Robson, 2018). Scholars seem to agree that both globalisation and internationalisation are interlinked but have their own definitions (Altbach, 2005; Knight 2008; Altbach et al., 2009).

Nations view internationalisation as a way to respond to globalisation and it has been referred to as an ever-evolving process (Knight, 2004; de Wit, 2008; Wihlborg & Robson, 2018), and its definition has continued to change. For several decades, internationalisation of higher education mainly related to student and academic mobility (Kehm & Teichler, 2007; Teichler, 2017), but in the past two decades there has been an emergence of for-profit providers of higher education as well as rise of transnational and online higher education. Furthermore, now that higher education is included in GATS and identified as a dynamic service industry, governments and policymakers around the world are more interested in international higher education and international student mobility.

With the deeper focus on knowledge society and the knowledge economy, it has been recognised that instead of natural resources, skilled labour and knowledge are essential for global economic development (Williams, 2009). Highly skilled workers have subsequently been regarded as the driving force for economic innovation (Chiswick, 2005; Cerna, 2016b).
With the escalating talent war between countries, the demand for skilled migration continues to increase and has shifting effects on both sending and receiving countries involved in it. Receiving countries benefit directly from the skills received and sending countries have been able to counteract as they gain diaspora who develop social, political, organisation and technical links and contribute further via remittances to their home country.

Higher education and training are crucial for developing nations that want to move up the global value chain toward innovation and creativity (Porter, 1990). Thus, universities are not only perceived as providers of quality education, but are increasingly viewed as producers of highly skilled labour for their economies, and as a stepping-stone to permanent residency from the international student’s perspective (Martin, 2004 sighted in Suter & Jandl, 2008).

There were 5 million higher education students enrolled internationally in 2016, with education regarded as one of the main service industries in many host countries like the USA, UK, Australia and New Zealand (OECD, 2018). In addition to the economic benefits of these international students, the host country’s quality of higher education often improves from a focus on international study mobility (UNESCO, 2003; OECD, 2005b; Akareem & Hossain, 2016). Among the extensive research focused on the escalation of international student mobility, including the factors influencing their choice of host country, most have been primarily qualitative with smaller quantitative components (e.g. Agarwal & Winkler, 1985; McMohan, 1992; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; Verbik & Lasanowski, 2007; de Wit, 2008; Lee & Kim, 2010; Macready & Tucker, 2011; OECD, 2012; Han & Appelbaum, 2016; Gesing, 2017). The most common push factor identified relates to the lack of opportunities at home, followed by the desire to study abroad to widen their academic and cultural horizons and improve their employment opportunities globally. Some of the most common anti-push factors include financial impediments and travel or visa difficulties, as well as personal or family constraints.

Furthermore, the most common pull factors that have been identified include high-quality and specialised study opportunities, the language of instruction, traditional links between home and destination countries, affordable costs, international recognition of qualifications, and better career prospects, effective marketing by destination country factors as well other favourable visa conditions for study and for work during the study. One of the important pull factors for
international students is the post-graduation career opportunities provided in the destination country.

Regularly viewed as future highly skilled workers and ideal immigrants because they are already incorporated in the host country community, it has been implied that the international higher education students significantly contribute to an international labour market (Suter & Jandl, 2008). Countries like Australia, New Zealand and Canada actively involved in attracting and retaining international students, have special migration provisions for them including the allocation of extra points for studying in their country, the waiver of work experience requirements, post study work rights and a specific skilled workers category for postgraduates (Suter & Jandl, 2008; Bedford & Spoonley, 2014; Geddie, 2015; Chiou, 2017).

Despite such common enthusiasm to attract and retain international students for skilled labour purposes, there are some critics. For example, Borjas and Doran (2012) argued that foreign graduates are likely to bring down the wages in high-skill professions and may diminish the rewards for domestic students intending to study further. Borjas (2012) further argued that the presence of international students does not guarantee the quality of education as insufficient language skills of such students may slow down the pace of instruction in the class. Another issue he identified was potential abuse of student visa to be used as a ticket to immigration is quite high (Borjas, 2002).

Irrespective of such critics, most countries’ governments associate international students with economic benefits including a highly skilled workforce, and therefore use policies and education branding initiatives to promote them as primary host destinations (e.g. Austrade, Australia; Immigration, New Zealand; CIC, Canada), including specific provisions in their national migration policies. Skeldon (2009) noted that the strategies and migration policy provisions adopted in different jurisdictions (countries) bear strong resemblance to one another.

While international students are commonly recognised as potential skilled labour, little research has been done to differentiate the motives of international students from one source country to another. Another gap exists in relation to their motives and decisions changing over time, from when they are in their home country considering the destination country to study in, to when they have completed their studies in their destination country. There is also minimal literature that has examined the influence of meso-level factors such as family, friends, diaspora
and international education agents on their decisions to remain in the host country or return to their home country post-graduation.

Often viewed as temporary migration, international student mobility demands more consideration from the perspective of existing migration theories classified into macro, micro and meso levels. The macro level relates to economic, social and political circumstances, the micro to the individual, and the meso sits between the former two and also factors in family or household decisions.

Massey et al. (1998) distinguished international migration theories into two categories: initiation of migration, which can be linked to study abroad decision of international students; and 2) the continuation of migration linked to an international student’s decision to either return home or remain in the host country post-graduation. Neoclassical Economic Theory, Dual Labour Market Theory and Neo Economies of Labour Migration Theory relate to the initiation category, and World Systems Theory and Network Theory to the continuation category.

Push-Pull Theory outlines a number of factors at the macro and micro level that contribute towards the decision to migrate. These include the distance, immigration laws and personal factors (Massey et al., 1993). Similar to Push-Pull Theory, the Neoclassical Economic Theory and Dual Labour Market Theory operates at the macro and micro level as well to explain migration flows from one country to another (Gurieva & Dzhioev, 2015; Sagynbekova, 2018). In contrast, New Economics of Labour Migration Theory, Network Theory and Institutional theory prioritises meso level factors and talks about their influence on the decisions around migration (Massey et al., 1993; de Haas, 2010).

While, there does not appear to be any migration theory that is commonly accepted by researchers of international student mobility, the literature review shows that the Push-Pull Theory has been most widely used in the context of international student mobility (e.g. Altbach et. al., 1985; McMohan, 1992; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; de Wit, 2008; Mcready & Tucker, 2011; Han & Appelbaum 2016; Gesing, 2017). Most of the scholars have focussed on qualitative studies including questionnaires and interviews with a quantitative component.

The theoretical framework in this study has been built on the Push-Pull Theory, in the context of factors affecting the international student’s choice of destination, including host country
policies. This research hypothesis that not all push and pull factors affect the students from different source countries the same way and that the meso level factors such as diaspora and/or family networks play a larger role in influencing student’s decision on whether to stay on or return home after completion of the studies.

This study’s research design and methodology, as well as the reasons for choosing particular host and source countries for the case study, are further discussed in the next chapter.
5 Research Methodology

5.1 Introduction
Research is recognised as the scientific method applied formally or systematically towards analysing the identified problems including in the context of educational research (Ary et al., 2013). The goal of educational research is essentially the same as the goal of all science: to describe, explain, predict or control phenomena – in this case, educational phenomena. The steps of research including education research involve selecting and defining a problem, executing a procedure, analysing the data, and then drawing conclusions (Gay et al., 2009).

This chapter discusses the research strategy used in this study, including the methodological issues. This study has used a mixed-methods design to build on the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative research, which was separated into three different phases. While the first phase was a pilot study used to validate the research questionnaire; the second adhered to the explanatory research design, with both quantitative and qualitative components (quantitative data collection via online questionnaire and qualitative via semi-structured interviews), and the third phase was based on the triangulation design convergent model’s mixed-methods approach. This chapter discusses these research phases in detail, including the procedures as well as the research instruments, data collection processes and data analysis techniques that were used.

This section introduces the chapter, while section 5.2 discusses the formulation of the research design. The main research questions are summarised in section 5.3, followed by a discussion of the data sources in section 5.4, and the research methodology in section 5.5. The final section 5.6 is a summary of this chapter.

5.2 Research design
The research on international education is vast, relating to various countries and published in a range of languages. Hence, this study involved an extensive literature review in the context of international student mobility, including the push and pull factors and government policies in regard to retention of students post-graduation, to further develop the research questions and methods. Although it should be noted that a limitation of the literature review conducted in this study is that it only involved English language publications, with a focus on post-cold war era and main English-speaking destination countries.
Historically, researchers in the field of education have used clearly-defined, broadly recognised approaches to define the topic of their research, conduct the research process, analyse the collected data, and offer their conclusions (Gay, et al, 2009). These studies have typically been classified into two categories: quantitative and qualitative. There are different philosophical assumptions that drive both quantitative and qualitative research and shape the way researchers approach different problems to collect, analyse and report on data (Ary et al., 2010).

Quantitative research uses numerical data that is collected and analysed to control, describe or explain the phenomena of interest under study. Quantitative researchers define the hypothesis to examine and use to specify the research approach (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The contextual factors are controlled by the quantitative researchers through identification of large sample of participants and provision of statistically meaningful data (Gay, et al, 2009; Richards & Morse, 2013). Quantitative research has its origins in positivism, where it is believed that social world, just like the physical world is governed by the general principles or laws that can be implied to understand human behaviour (Alakwe, 2017). Positivism is deemed as the conventional scientific approach involving testing the hypothesis and gathering objective data to suggest on the systemised and generalised findings that may be open to duplication by other researchers (Ary, et al., 2010; Alakwe, 2017).

Qualitative research involves collecting narrative and visual (or non-numeric) data that is analysed and interpreted to understand the phenomenon under study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Creswell, 2014). The deeper understanding of the research context and its relevant participants leads to further expansion of qualitative research problems and methods (Suter, 2012). Qualitative researchers refrain from stating the hypothesis before they collect the data and tend to examine the phenomenon under study without any guiding statement. That is, they avoid controlling or manipulating the context, and the researchers generally interact extensively and intimately with participants by collecting data through interviews, surveys and observations (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Poth, 2018). This generally involves a small sample size of participants for collection of data that is categorised and organised into patterns to produce a descriptive or narrative report at the analysis stage (Gay, et al, 2009). Qualitative research is based on a different philosophical approach to that of quantitative research, where the individual and their world are determined to be interconnected and dependent on each other for their existence (Creswell, 2014). Each individual participant is perceived to have their own
view of social reality and the researchers are only able to comprehend the human behaviour by understanding the individual impact of events on the participants involved (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). The narrative report generated through the data analysis under qualitative research study is considered detailed and extensive to easily explain the social reality as experienced by the participants (Ary, et al., 2010; Creswell, 2014).

The research methodology serves as a bridge between metatheory – higher-level assumptions underlining the research – the method and the specific procedures they use in collecting, analysing and interpreting data (Lor, 2012). Previous research on international student mobility has often involved different methodical approaches, often involving both quantitative and qualitative components. The quantitative methods have been used to collect larger, more measurable data for statistical comparisons of trends in international student mobility and migration policies (e.g. Beine, M, et al., 2001; Docquier & Marfouk, 2004; OECD, 2007; Han & Appelbaum, 2016), while qualitative methods have included case studies and in-depth interviews to understand the experiences and movements of international students (e.g. Balaz & William, 2004; Rizvi, 2005; Tung & Lazarova, 2006; Süoğlu 2012; Gesing 2017). For example, Balaz and William’s (2004) approach involved a qualitative analysis of in-depth questionnaires and interviews in their study of international students from Slovakia, while Rizvi (2005) also used in-depth student interviews for his study on brain drain. Süoğlu (2012) used similar methods to analyse student mobility trends from Turkey to Germany.

Such qualitative methods can be limited by the focus on smaller sample sizes that do not allow for broader generalisations, which is why this research has used a mixed-methods design involving both quantitative and qualitative components. It has been recognised that the combining the quantitative and qualitative methodologies offers a more comprehensive grasp of the identified problem (Creswell, 2009; Shorten & Smith, 2017). It can reduce the limitations associated with quantitative and qualitative as single approaches, and capitalises on the strengths of both (Creswell & Clark, 2011). Another reason for choosing the mixed-methods approach is that it allows researchers to extend the results from one phase of the study to inform procedures in another phase. For example, qualitative in-depth interviews can be used to support and extend the results of a quantitative survey done earlier. Mixed-methods research also shares the same research questions under different approaches, to conduct parallel analyses following the collection of complementary data, which helps researchers to answer difficult research questions through diverse and detailed results (Yin, 2012).
The design of a mixed-methods study generally factors in three main considerations: 1) timing; 2) prioritisation; and 3) approach to mixing (as shown in Figure 5.1 below):

**Figure 5.1 Mixed-methods design decision tree**

(a) What will be the timing of the quantitative and qualitative methods?

- Concurrent timing
- Sequential timing

(b) What will be the weighting of the quantitative and qualitative methods?

- Equal weight
- Unequal weight

(c) How will the quantitative and qualitative methods be mixed?

- Merge the data
  - Merging results during interpretation
  - Merging results during analysis
- Embed the data
  - Embed qualitative data in a quantitative design
  - Embed quantitative data in a qualitative design
- Connect the data
  - Quantitative leads to qualitative
  - Qualitative leads to quantitative

As shown in the above decision tree, the timing consideration, also known as implementation or sequence, relates to whether the quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis are done in sequence or concurrently, one following another. Priority, or weighting, refers to which method, either quantitative or qualitative, is given more emphasis in the design. The approach to mixing, or the integration, relates to how the quantitative and qualitative methods will be mixed – either merged (i.e. embedded within one another) or connected.

There were four main types of mixed-methods research designs identified by Creswell & Clark (2007): triangulation, embedded, explanatory and exploratory (refer to Figure 5.2 below). The triangulation method is the most commonly used, where the purpose is to acquire separate but complementary data to more clearly understand the research problem (Creswell & Clark, 2011). It is normally used to validate or broaden the quantitative results with qualitative data allowing the researchers to compare and differentiate quantitative statistical outcomes from qualitative results (Almalki, 2016).

Triangulation is single phase design, where quantitative and qualitative methods are implemented by researchers at the same time and given same importance. The two datasets are then merged together, either by interpreting the results from two datasets at the same time or by converting data to assist with integration of data at the time of analysis. Researchers use the triangulation model to either compare quantitative and qualitative results or to validate quantitative findings with qualitative outcomes (Creswell & Clark, 2011).

Embedded is another mixed-methods design where the study is based primarily on one data type and the other dataset only offers a supporting role (Almalki, 2016). Either the qualitative strand is inserted within a quantitative design (e.g. an experiment), or a quantitative strand may be included within the qualitative design (e.g. a case study), by the researcher to strengthen the overall research design (Creswell & Clark, 2007).

Explanatory, or the explanatory sequential design, is a two-phase mixed-methods design. The first phase involves collecting and analysing the quantitative data with the focus to address the main research questions. Following the results from the first quantitative phase, the second qualitative phase is conducted, with the researcher interpreting how the qualitative results will assist in explaining the initial quantitative results (Creswell & Clark, 2007).
Exploratory, or the exploratory sequential design, is also a two-phase mixed-methods design that uses sequential timing. However, it instead prioritises the qualitative data collection and its analysis, followed by quantitative data that is used to test or generalise the initial findings (Creswell & Clark, 2011).

**Figure 5.2 Four main types of mixed-methods designs**

(a) Triangulation

![Triangulation design: convergence model](image)

(b) Embedded

![Embedded designs](image)
This study builds on the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative research, which was divided into three phases. The first phase was a pilot study used to validate the research questionnaire; the second adhered to the explanatory research design, with both quantitative and qualitative components (quantitative data collection in the form of online questionnaire and qualitative through semi-structured interviews), and the third phase was in line with the triangulation design convergent model’s mixed-methods approach. These are covered in detail in Section 5.5 of this chapter. This research began with existing the underlying themes and phenomena that are globalisation and internationalisation, to better understand the trends in international higher education including student mobility and the push and pull factors affecting it. This led into the literature review to better understand the topic. While the introductory chapters help in conceptualising the issues to be addressed, the literature review assisted in analysing them in their respective contexts. The literature review further assisted in understanding the gaps in studies done so far, identifying the research questions as covered in Section 5.3 and decide on the appropriate research design.

5.3 Research questions

The specific questions that guided this research were as follows:

- What is the role of the Australian migration policy in attracting Chinese and Indian students to study in Australia?
• What role do meso-level factors play in Chinese and Indian students’ decision on initiation of migration to Australia?
• Which primary factors impact the decision-making of Chinese and Indian students in relation to whether they return to their home country or stay in Australia after completing their studies, and do these factors vary by nationality?
• How relevant are current theoretical migration approaches (e.g. Push-Pull Theory, Dual Labour Market Theory, Neo Economics of Labour Migration Theory, Historical Structuralist Theory, Network Theory and Institutional Theory) for explaining the movements of Chinese and Indian students to Australia?
• How could the migration theory be refined in the light of recent empirical evidence relating to initiation and continuation of migration decisions of Chinese and Indian students?

5.4 Data sources

Most research data collection involves both primary and secondary sources. In this study, the literature review on globalisation and internationalisation helped to understand the trends in international higher education, including student mobility and the push and pull factors affecting it. This included collection and review of secondary data sourced from UNESCO, OECD and other published research in the form of statistics, journals, articles and books. Comparative country data was also sourced via international education and research bodies like the Institute of International Education (IIE).

For example, OECD’s annual publication *Education at a Glance* reviews who participates in education, what is spent on it, how education systems operate, and the results achieved, by collecting comparing and analysing education data from various countries. The UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) is the United Nations (UN) depository for global data statistics in the fields of education, science and technology, culture, and communication, which annually publishes the *Global Education Digest* that compares education statistics around the world. Other data archives in relation to international education and student migration across different countries, for example, IIE were also sourced in this study.

Primary data was sourced in the form of surveys and interviews with internationally mobile students, education agents and other key stakeholders including government education and
immigration departments, education counsellors, education marketing organisations, education agents, professional education bodies like the International Education Association of Australia (IEAA), as well as academic researchers in the field of international education and skilled migration that were identified as individuals with knowledge of international education and skilled migration, and who are most influential in shaping relevant policies in their country.

5.5 Research methodology

As this research involved three separate countries – Australia, China and India – the case study method was judged the most appropriate approach. It enabled the selection of multiple ‘cases’ – two source countries and one host country – that experience high levels of international student mobility, for an in-depth investigation on the cause of this mobility. This research is therefore considered a multiple-case study based on Yin’s approach (1993, 2003, 2018), involving the choice of three countries (each one treated as a single-case study) treated equally with respect to the sub-units of analysis (quantitative and qualitative).

Section 2.5 of Chapter 2 has covered in detail that Australia is regarded as one of the main host countries for international students. As per Australian Education International (AEI) and Austrade 2018 reports, Australia welcomed around 35,000 international students in 1989 that have grown to 788,483 full-fee paying international student enrolments in 2017. Australia has one of the biggest proportion of international students (17%) among its tertiary enrolments (OECD, 2018) with the major source countries as China and India.

Australia has had a migration policy focusing on skilled migration since the 1970s as covered in Section 4.2.1 of Chapter 4. Australia introduced government policy reforms in the late 1990s committing to retain international students in country post-graduation, who had their skills in the shortage list, thereby supporting them to convert to permanent status from the temporary one using skilled migration approach (Chiou, 2017). In 2010, further policy reforms produced a demand-driven, government- and employer-sponsored skilled migration program, which international students were eligible for as long if they had relevant qualifications and work experience.

Section 4.2.1 of Chapter 4 also detailed that almost half of the skilled migration visas granted after the 2008 policy reforms were for people already living in Australia, which highlighted
ability to retain international students. 30% growth was recorded for 457 visa holders who applied for permanent residency in 2007-08 (Spinks, 2016). Post Study Work (PSW) rights were further introduced in 2013 that mainly targeted retention of international students and allowed them to remain in Australia for 2-4 years (depending on the course or sector of study they would complete) and look for work in any field. (Productivity Commission, 2015).

Former research has shown that China and India are primary source countries for international students. Chinese students represented 18% of total mobile international students in 2016 and Indian students representing second biggest cohort at 5.6% (OECD, 2018). In China’s case, the home government implemented the ‘open door policy’ in 1978 pushing students to go abroad for study and since then the students seeking education abroad has been growing (Jokila, 2015). Interestingly, China and India have been the major source countries for Australia, not just for International education but also skilled migration. China accounted for 29% of all enrolments, followed by India with a further 11% of all enrolments in 2017 (Appendix 16). Indian nationals accounted for 34% of the total skilled migration visa grants in 2016-17 and Chinese nationals accounted for 12% of the total (Appendix 18). In 2017-18, 14,026 Indian nationals (27% of the total) were granted the Temporary Graduate subclass 485 visa, an increase of 40% over the year before. The comparative figure for Chinese nationals was 11,978 (23% of the total) in 2017-18 with an increase of 10% over the year before (Appendix 19).

As part of internationalisation plan, China has been investing a lot in education, attracting overseas universities to set up branch campuses and also attracting international students to come to China. They have set themselves an ambitious target of attracting 500,000 international students by 2020 (China’s National Plan for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development 2010-2020). Over the last couple of years, China has made fair progress on this plan by attracting 137,527 international students in 2016 (Appendix 9), which makes this ‘case’ fascinating. China is the World’s second largest economy and the local companies in China are competing with the international competitors or multinational companies established in China, to attract the best talent (Hudson, 2013). In other words, the demand for talent seems to be more than the supply creating greater opportunities and better salaries for skilled workers in China.

China has been the top source country of international students for Australia since early 2000s. As reported by Department of Education and Training, Australia (2018), Chinese students
represented 18% of the total enrolments in Australia in 2002 growing to 29% of the total enrolments in 2017 (Appendix 16). Chinese students have always preferred studying higher education courses in Australia. In 2002, the share of Chinese students choosing higher education in Australia was 36% of the total, which increased to 55% in 2005 peaking at 64% in 2012 before dropping down to 58% of the total Chinese students share in Australia in 2017. The VET sector share was 8% of the total in 2002 that rose to 14% in 2009 before dropping back again to 8% the total Chinese enrolments in 2017 (Appendix 16).

In comparison, India somewhat presents a different picture and seems fit to be chosen as the second source country for this research. India represents one of the world’s fastest growing economies with expanding middle-class leading to growing demand and financial capacity to pay for higher education. While there has been growth in public and private higher education, the rising demand of higher education is still outstripping the education capacity in country. India has currently got 32.4 million students enrolled in higher education and is third largest higher education system in the world. However, the gross enrolment ratio (GER) is quite low for India standing at 27% in 2016 (Appendix 11). India is in dire need of educated and skilled people and has set itself the goals to achieve GER of 30% by 2020-21 and skill 500 million people by 2022 or 15 million training places per year (Ministry of human resource and development of India (MHRD), 2011).

There has been substantial growth in the number of higher education institutions and universities in India over the past five years, but the country is still expected to witness a shortfall of 600,000 undergraduates over the next five years. Limited places with public universities are pushing a number of students into substandard education or studying overseas. Indian students spend around $6-7 billion annually earning degrees in other countries (The Associated Chambers of Commerce & Industry of India (ASSOCHAM), 2015). India is a traditional source country with 301,406 Indian students going abroad for study in 2016 (Appendix 6) and only 44,766 foreign students coming to India for further study (Appendix 9).

Indian students started to choose Australia in early 1990s with dramatic increase in demand for Australian qualifications after the changes in migration policies in the year 2002 and onward. There were only just over 11,000 Indian students in Australia in 2002 but rose to over 27,000 in 2005 and then further shot up to over 120,000 by 2009. The share of higher education student numbers from India grew from 80% of total Indian enrolments in 2002 to 87% in 2004 before
drastically dropping to 23% in 2009. The higher education share has since grown again to 62% of the total Indian enrolments in 2017. The share of Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector numbers from India dropped initially from just 18% in 2002 to 7% in 2004 but then grew spectacularly to 65% in 2009 and peaked at 76% in 2011. Since then, the share has gone down to 31% in 2017 (Appendix 16). Much of this growth in VET sector in the mid-2000s was linked to two-step migration where certain VET courses coupled with migration policy at the time allowed international students to study and apply for migration straight after graduation (Hawthorne, 2011). In fact, much of generalisations have been made associating Indian students with primary motive of migration when coming to Australia (Baas, 2006; Hawthorne, 2013). Since 2009, a number of education and migration policy changes were introduced by Australian government with the motive of breaking the student migration pathway. International students are not able to directly apply for migration after completion of Australia studies and only have access to post-study work rights. This resulted in drop in overall student numbers from India to just close to 87,000 in 2017, down from over 120,000 in 2009 (Appendix 16), indicating the influence of government policies on the international student mobility from India.

From the above comparisons and available secondary data, there appear to be different macro- and micro-level factors influencing Chinese and Indian students’ decisions to study abroad, which this research has explored in further detail in Chapter six and seven, along with the influence of the meso-level factors such as diaspora, families or probably the education agents. The meso level factors have been considered because China has been practising its one-child policy since 1979, which probably impacts on its international students’ decision continuation of migration, due to the likely pressure from their parents to return home to care for and support them. In contrast, India’s international students are likely to be pushed to remain in the host country post-graduation, to earn and support their family at home. This consideration ties in with the Network Theory and Institutional Theory, and is largely why these source countries were chosen for this study.

This research methodology is a combination of both quantitative and qualitative based on a mixed-methods approach, and was split into three distinct phases as shown in Figure 5.3 below.
Figure 5.3 Research methodology and three phase design

Phase one – pilot study

- Cross-sectional quantitative design
- English version of questionnaire instrument
- Data collection – convenience sampling with offshore Chinese and Indian students

Phase two

- Explanatory design mixed-methods approach
  - QUAN method
    - Cross-sectional design
  - Web-based questionnaire
  - QUAN data collection – convenience sampling with offshore Chinese and Indian students
  - QUAN data analysis
  - Cases selection – maximum variation sampling
  - Qual method – semi-structured interviews
  - Qual data analysis to assist in explaining QUAN results

Phase three

- Convergent design mixed-methods approach
  - QUAN method
    - Cross-sectional design
  - Qual method
    - Case study design
  - Desk-based research
  - Web-based questionnaire
  - Statistical data collection
  - Data collection – convenience sampling with onshore Chinese and Indian students
  - QUAN data analysis
  - QUAN data analysis
  - QUAL data analysis
  - Integration of results

Source: Author
Phase one was the pilot study that was used to develop and refine the questions for the survey, which was written in English to cater to both Indian and Chinese students. The participants of the pilot study were Chinese and Indian international students that were planning on studying abroad in Australia. The cross-sectional quantitative design was used to administer the questionnaire and participants were selected via convenience sampling through education agents.

The second phase was focused on identifying the push and pull factors that influence Chinese and Indian students’ choice of Australia as their host destination. This phase used an explanatory design mixed-methods approach, with quantitative leading to qualitative data collection. In the quantitative stage, the primary data was collected through the online questionnaire sent to Chinese and Indian students planning on studying abroad as well as international education agents, to discover motivations and intentions. These were students who were still offshore in China and India, planning on studying in Australia for higher education. Convenience sampling was used to select the participants via international education agents. The sample size target was 100 and 150 students in China and India respectively, and the results were analysed via maximum variation to select the participants for qualitative phase or the semi structured interviews to gain a better insight on the views of participants, understand the context and phenomenon and to explain the initial quantitative results. This second phase helped to answer the following primary research questions:

- What is the role of the Australian migration policy in attracting Chinese and Indian students to study in Australia?
- What role do meso-level factors play in Chinese and Indian students’ decision on initiation of migration to Australia?

The third phase focused on understanding education and migration policy setting in Australia including the role of meso-level factors and how they influence post-graduation decisions among international students from China and India. This phase followed the convergent model of the triangulation design mixed-methods approach, with a collection of quantitative and qualitative data concurrently. The quantitative data was collected from both primary and secondary sources in relation to international student mobility including education and post-graduation retention policies used in Australia. The primary sources included documents like
annual reports, statistics, government and media reports, and the secondary sources included published articles, journals, books, conference papers, dissertations and other publications (Lor, 2012).

The qualitative data for phase three of this research was drawn from varied sources including Australian Government agencies such as the AEI, Austrade and Department of Home Affairs. Most of these documents are publicly accessible, including the government policies and statistics, and are available in the form of publications, reports, speeches, ministerial briefings, papers and media releases. Examination of these documents assisted in understanding the different education and migration policy changes and decisions – the what, why, when and how they were made, and how they impacted other policy actors including future policy development. Quantitative data was also collected through online survey of Chinese and Indian international students in Australia that are in their final year of higher education studies or have just completed them. Convenience sampling was used to select these respondents, with target sample sizes of 100 students.

The qualitative data for the phase three was obtained via semi-structured interviews with relevant individuals, including education and immigration government departments, education counsellors, education marketing organisations, international education agents, professional education bodies like IEAA, along with academic researchers practicing in international education and skilled migration occupations. Maximum variation sampling was used to select these participants, to yield a broad range of cases for deviation in extent of their interest (Patton, 2002).

Data results from the quantitative and qualitative research methodologies were then analysed as well as compared in this third phase to examine variances in how international students react to different policy settings. The phase assisted in answering the following primary research questions:

- Which primary factors impact the decision-making of Chinese and Indian students in relation to whether they return to their home country or stay in Australia after completing their studies, and do these factors vary by nationality?
- How relevant are current theoretical migration approaches (e.g. Push-Pull Theory, Dual Labour Market Theory, Neo Economics of Labour Migration Theory, Historical
Structuralist Theory, Network Theory and Institutional Theory) for explaining the movements of Chinese and Indian students to Australia?

- How could the migration theory be refined in the light of recent empirical evidence relating to initiation and continuation of migration decisions of Chinese and Indian students?

The next two chapters six and seven of this research provide the detailed data analysis from the data collected in phases two and three followed by interpretations of results to help answer the research questions.

5.6 Summary

Historically, researchers in the field of education have used clearly-defined, broadly recognised approaches categorised into quantitative and qualitative research (Gay, et al, 2009). Quantitative research uses numerical data that is collected and analysed to control, describe or explain the phenomena of interest under study (Richards & Morse, 2013; Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Whereas, qualitative research involves collecting narrative and visual (or non-numeric) data that is analysed and interpreted to understand the phenomenon of interest (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Previous research involving international student mobility have varied in methodical approaches and involved both quantitative and qualitative methods to collect measurable data and explain experiences and movements of international students (e.g. Beine, M, et al., 2001; Balaz & William, 2004; Docquier & Marfouk, 2004; Tung & Lazarova, 2006; OECD, 2007; Süoğlu 2012; Han & Appelbaum, 2016; Gesing, 2017). Quantitative research has been criticised to not take into account the interpretation and real life experiences whereas qualitative research has been criticised for relying on individual experiences, lacking scientific rigour and focussing on smaller sample sizes that do not allow for broader generalisations (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

This research has utilised a mixed-methods (qualitative and quantitative) case study approach, focused on Australia, China and India (one host and two source countries respectively), countries significantly involved in international student mobility. The literature review on globalisation and internationalisation helped to understand the major trends in international
higher education, including student mobility, the general push and pull factors affecting it and the major destination and source countries. Furthermore, the previous studies have helped in the selection of the relevant ‘cases’ for this research.

It has been well established through the literature review in Chapter three and four that Australia is regarded as one of main host countries globally that has focussed on retention of international students in Australia post-graduation. It has also been evident through literature review that China and India are regarded as traditional source countries for international students and are top two countries representing internationally mobile students with 18% and 5.6% market share respectively (OECD, 2018). China and India have been the major source countries for Australia, not just for International education but also for skilled migration (Department of Education & Training, 2018; see Appendix 16, 18 and 19). Chinese students have always preferred studying higher education courses in Australia. This is evident from the 58% of the share that higher education sector holds of all the student enrolments across all sectors in 2017 (Department of Education & Training, 2018; see Appendix 16). In contrast, Indian students have preferred the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector with student enrolments growing spectacularly from just under 2,000 in 2002 to 78,000 in 2009 (Department of Education & Training, 2018; see Appendix 16), with several scholars associating the growth in Indian student enrolments with prime motive of migration (Baas, 2006; Hawthorne, 2011; 2013).

China has been focusing on internationalisation at home under the National Plan for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development 2010-2020 (Ministry of Education China, 2010) and hosted 137,527 international students in 2016 (UNESCO, 2018; see Appendix 9). In comparison, India presents somewhat a different picture and seems fit to be chosen as the second source country for this research with its limited higher education capacity at home unable to meet the growing demand and capacity to pay for higher education.

This research followed a mixed methods approach to take advantage of both quantitative and qualitative research methods and was split in three separate phases: 1) pilot study to test and refine the questionnaire for the survey of Chinese and Indian offshore students planning on studying in Australia; 2) explanatory design mixed methods approach to collect primary data from Chinese and Indian students planning to studying in Australia in the form of survey responses and semi-structured interviews to discover their motivations and intentions; 3)
convergent model of triangulation design mixed methods approach aimed at collection of primary data from Chinese and Indian students in Australia along with interviews of international education industry stakeholders, and the secondary data from varied government and statistical agencies, for example, Austrade, Department of Home Affairs, OECD and others. The detailed analysis of the collected data is covered in the Chapter six and seven.
6 Analysis of data

6.1 Introduction

As discussed in Section 4.2 of Chapter 4, there are numerous push and pull factors influencing international student choices with regards to studying abroad and their intentions post-graduation. This chapter analyses the data collected in this study in relation to such decisions made by Chinese and Indian students undertaking higher education in Australia. This will help to determine the relevance of student movements in relation to the existing migration theories via the micro, macro and meso level factors affecting these decisions.

From this data analysis, the findings test the hypotheses of different push and pull factors influencing international student decisions based on their home country, particularly the influence of meso-level factors. In addition to highlighting international student mobility trends towards Australia from China and India, these research findings help to unravel the nexus between education and migration by differentiating initiation of migration from further continuation of migration as identified under the theoretical framework, and subsequently answer the primary research questions.

Section 6.1 has provided an introduction to this chapter, and is followed by section 6.2 that covers the general demographics of this study’s respondents. Section 6.3 then examines the main push and pull factors that influence the decision-making processes of international students, followed by a summary of this chapter in section 6.5.

6.2 General demographics of respondents

The Chinese and Indian student respondents were invited to complete the online survey via international education and migration agent offices registered with Australian universities and/or with the Association of Australian Education in India. As this research was focused on China and India as the source countries for international student mobility, data captured those outside these parameters was disregarded. These authorised agents were accessed via the publicly available Australian Department of Home Affairs website. Some students registered with the Swinburne PhD Student Club, the international student clubs and the Council of International Students Australia (CISA) were also invited to participate. To promote this study, A5-sized flyers were produced and distributed to various agent offices as well as international offices and reception offices of main universities in Melbourne, as well as among existing international
students at Glenferrie and Melbourne CBD train stations and prospective international students attending events via the China Scholarship Council.

International student interviewees were selected based on the interest expressed in the survey. There were initially 58 students that volunteered for the interviews and left their contact details, but most of them were either unavailable upon contact or had provided incorrect contact details. Overall, eight international students were interviewed, consisting of three from China and five from India.

Semi-structured interviews were also held with nine international education agents, one staff member each from the Australian High Commission and Austrade, a staff member from the student mobility division within the international office of a Chinese university, Beijing Institute of Technology, and a representative from the international office of Swinburne University of Technology in Australia.

There were 327 respondents who completed the two online surveys, made up of 216 responses from offshore international students and 111 responses from onshore international students. 52% of these respondents were from India and 48% from China (refer to Table 6.1).

Table 6.1 Total number, gender and location of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>China</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offshore international students</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onshore international students</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s analysis of survey responses of Chinese and Indian students

Amongst all the online survey respondents, 47% were female and 53% were males. At the country level, female response rates from China were higher than for India at 51% and 43% respectively. As shown below in Figure 6.1, 44% of the respondents were aged 19-24 years, 40% were aged 25-32 years, followed by 11% in the 33-39 years age group.
Across the interviews with international education agents from both China and India, there was a similar viewpoint with regards to young students in the age group of 19 to 24 years old going abroad. Most observed that the proportion of young students going abroad has been steadily increasing as a result of the economic growth and corresponding rise of middle class with disposable income in both India and China. Furthermore, as young students represent the majority of international students that were surveyed for this research, it is not a surprise that 78% of them were single and only 18% were married (see Figure 6.2 below).
The 72% of all Chinese student respondents coming from single-child families, which aligned with the country’s one-child, was polarised against the high amount of Indian student respondents (84%) that had at least one sibling (see Figure 6.3 below).

**Figure 6.3 Single or multi child families**

![Figure 6.3 Single or multi child families](image)

Among these Indian students, 50% of their siblings were at home with their parents in India, 25% of them were married and/or living in India, while 12% were living overseas. Of those Indian students with siblings living overseas, 11% were already living in Australia before the student moved to the same country (see Figure 6.4 below).

**Figure 6.4 Siblings of Indian respondents**

![Figure 6.4 Siblings of Indian respondents](image)

Source: Author’s analysis of survey responses of Chinese and Indian students
With regards to home country qualifications prior to undertaking international higher education, Figure 6.5 below shows that most student respondents had an undergraduate or bachelor’s degree (49%). Another 25% held a postgraduate or master’s degree qualification, closely followed by 22% that had completed the final year of high school. The high amount of students that had completed an undergraduate or bachelor’s degree correlates with 79% of all Indian higher education students enrolled in an undergraduate program in 2015/16 (Ministry of Human Resources & Development, India, 2018), and 93% of all same-level students in China enrolled in undergraduate degrees in 2017 (Ministry of Education, 2018).

**Figure 6.5 Qualification completed at home**

![Figure 6.5 Qualification completed at home]

Source: Author’s analysis of survey responses of Chinese and Indian students

As shown in Figure 6.6 below, most student respondents from both China and India are enrolled in or plan to enrol in a postgraduate program (49%), followed by 29% for undergraduate or bachelor’s degree programs, and 18% for research degree or a PhD program. This aligned with interview feedback from an Indian education agent: “Higher Education courses especially the Masters level is preferred by the students”.

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In addition, the top four preferred education fields among Chinese student respondents were engineering (23%), business or commerce (19%), science (16%) and information technology (10%). In contrast, information technology was the most preferred education field among Indian student respondents (25%), followed by business or commerce (20%), engineering (19%) and accountancy (18%) (see Table 6.2 below).

### Table 6.2 Preferred fields of study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field of study</th>
<th>China</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business or commerce</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information technology</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social sciences</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountancy</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s analysis of survey responses of Chinese and Indian students
These preferred fields of study were also reflected among the responses of the education agents and other international education industry stakeholders during the interviews:

“Courses that have more numbers than written or spoken English, as English is not their main language.” (Chinese education agent)

“Most Chinese students tend to choose business or commerce as their major, [and] the main reason behind it is that most families are running their own business, and the graduates are expected to follow up their parents. Some elite students, especially those whose English is excellent, will opt for medicine because of privilege seen by the public.” (Chinese education agent)

“Engineering, law, medical, agriculture due to the world-class recognition.” (Chinese education agent)

“Most of the students in my organisation going abroad choose business, management, engineering and IT courses.” (University representative)

“Engineering and IT – the male students are interested in this kind of course. Business – it is quite popular and it also helps the student to look for a job in China. Arts and Design – some students who are not interested in maths will choose this kind [of] course.” (Chinese education agent)

“As for the streams, students do prefer engineering, information technology, accounting and other specialised courses that are not available in their home country.” (Indian education agent)

“Migration outcome related programs.” (Indian education agent)

“STEM courses drive the demand, along with the accounting courses.” (Australian government representative)

“Engineering and IT courses seem to be preferred by international students.” (Australian government representative)
“Courses that meet the requirements of PSW rights are preferred.” (University representative)

“Engineering, IT and technology courses because there is more demand for jobs in these areas, and also linked with occupations in demand in Australia.” (Indian education agent)

As shown in Table 6.3 below, the female student respondents from China opted for science (22%), followed by business or commerce (16%) and engineering (13%) as their top three education field preferences. The same cohort from India prioritised business or commerce (27%), followed by accountancy (23%) and information technology (19%).

Table 6.3 Preferred fields of study for female respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field of study</th>
<th>China</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business or commerce</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social sciences</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information technology</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountancy</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s analysis of survey responses of Chinese and Indian students

Among male student respondents, engineering (34%) was the preferred field of study for those from China, followed by business and commerce (22%), and science and information technology (both at 10%). Those from India shared the similar preferences of engineering (31%), information technology (30%), and business and commerce (15%).

6.3 Initiation of migration

As highlighted in Section 4.1 of Chapter 4, there are number of push and pull factors that influence a student’s decision to study abroad. This section examines this study’s quantitative
and qualitative results to test this research’s hypothesis that there are also meso-level factors that influence the student’s decision, and how they are influenced differently based on their distinctive nationalities.

6.3.1 Factors influencing student decisions to study abroad

One of this study’s most relevant questions for both onshore and offshore students was why they chose or were considering Australia as their study destination. This was used to help understand the initiation of migration and its relevance to different theories of migration. This was one of main survey question answered by all survey respondents (see Table 6.4 below).

Table 6.4 Reasons for choosing Australia as the study destination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>China</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>female (n=79)</td>
<td>male (n=77)</td>
<td>total (n=156)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching quality/academic reputation of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>institution in Australia</td>
<td>70% 74% 70%</td>
<td>56% 44% 49%</td>
<td>63% 55% 59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better career prospects in Australia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>post-graduation</td>
<td>58% 49% 53%</td>
<td>68% 57% 62%</td>
<td>63% 53% 57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better career prospects in home country</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>post-graduation</td>
<td>63% 68% 64%</td>
<td>36% 38% 37%</td>
<td>50% 50% 50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent decision</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>51% 34% 42%</td>
<td>32% 26% 28%</td>
<td>41% 29% 35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommended by family or friends in</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>home country</td>
<td>46% 52% 47%</td>
<td>37% 34% 35%</td>
<td>41% 41% 41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommended by family or friends in</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>22% 25% 22%</td>
<td>41% 36% 38%</td>
<td>31% 30% 31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommended by education agent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18% 19% 18%</td>
<td>51% 47% 49%</td>
<td>34% 34% 34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ease of obtaining a student visa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18% 12% 15%</td>
<td>8% 13% 11%</td>
<td>13% 13% 13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option of PSW visa or permanent residency post-graduation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18% 15% 16%</td>
<td>40% 43% 42%</td>
<td>28% 30% 29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course not available in home country</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8% 7% 7%</td>
<td>1% 6% 4%</td>
<td>5% 6% 6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s analysis of survey responses of Chinese and Indian students
The above tabled results show that the top three reasons student respondents nominated for choosing Australia as their study destination were teaching quality/academic reputation of institutions in Australia (59%), better career prospects in Australia post-graduation (57%) and better career prospects in home country post-graduation (50%). These qualify as macro- and micro-level factors, and as identified in the conceptual framework are consistent with previous literature, as well as the Push-Pull Theory where teaching quality and academic reputation is considered a significant pull factor. The lowest recorded reason of the course not being available in the home country (6%) is considered a push factor as per the Push-Pull Theory.

From the perspective of World Systems Theory, studying abroad is seen as a way to gain the capital defined as education, skills and knowledge. In this study’s context, Australia is acting as a core country supplying or generating the capital, while China and India are peripheral countries with demand for this capital that supply the international students defined as labour and raw materials.

The two highly rated factors relating to better career prospects in Australia or in the home country post-graduation, which also influence a student’s decision to study abroad, can be linked to the Neoclassical Economic Theory. This study’s literature review identified a positive correlation between education attainment and participation in the labour market (OECD, 2010), and the Neoclassical Economic Theory highlights the importance of economic factors and labour flow migration toward higher wages (Massey et al., 1993). From this theoretical perspective and in the context of this study, at the micro level the initiation of student migration can be seen as the economic decision of Chinese and Indian students to improve their career prospects and wages following the completion of their studies in Australia.

These findings from Table 6.4 also show that the student respondents are influenced differently on why they chose Australia as their study destination, based on their country of origin (i.e. China vs. India). Among the Chinese student respondents, teaching quality and academic reputation was the primary reason (70%), followed by better career prospects in home country post-graduation (64%), and then better career prospects in Australia post-graduation (53%). This aligns with China’s Ministry of Education (2018) reporting 12% annual growth in 2017 with regards to its students returning home to China after studying abroad (480,900) to take up jobs in China. This was also reflected in the interview responses of the students, education agents and other international education industry stakeholders.
“Academic level is the most important factor.” (Chinese student)

“Most students regard Australia as a country with world-class universities and high-quality education, especially at undergraduate level.” (University representative)

“... if I get a PhD from Australia, I will get a good job when I [get] back [to] my home country.” (Chinese student)

“We find there are more and more Chinese student would like to come back to China for looking for job after completion of studies [sic], because they also think they will have more opportunities if they will come back to China.” (Chinese education agent)

“G8 universities are priorities for students to seek higher-level degrees as PhD and to get good job opportunities when they go back to the home country, since the employers consider about the ranking. Universities of science and technology which have good teaching quality and strong links with industry are good destinations for students who want to work in local companies.” (University representative)

“There is ever-increasing number of students who are keen to come back after study, as economy of their own country is performing much better and there are plenty of jobs available.” (Australian Government representative)

In contrast with the Chinese student respondents, those from India placed more emphasis on better career prospects in Australia post-graduation (62%), with it being the leading reason for making the decision to study in Australia. Furthermore, better career prospects in home country post-graduation was ranked fifth as a reason for undertaking study abroad (37%). These differences in reasons indicate that most Indian students were considering post-graduation career opportunities in Australia before commencing studies abroad, while Chinese students were prioritising likely career prospects in their home country post-graduation as supported by the following interviewees:
“Majority of the students are primarily interested in the studying abroad, but they would want to know their options after the study in relation to staying further and working in that country.” (Indian education agent)

“Australia has good reputation for its universities and courses. Most universities are highly ranked.” (Indian student)

“Most of the students consider the options on staying further to work in the country after completion of study.” (Indian education agent)

“Quality of the education and availability of relevant course are the major factors.” (Indian education agent)

Furthermore, it would appear that the meso-level factors had a greater influence on Indian compared with Chinese student respondents. Among the Indian student respondents, almost half (49%) were influenced by education agents in choosing Australia as their study destination, with 41% of them aged 25 to 32 years, and slightly more of them being female compared with males (51% and 47% respectively). In comparison, only 18% of the Chinese student respondents were influenced by education agents. These results align with one of the university representatives in Australia noting that his institution heavily relied on education agents in India for the recruitment of international students.

“78% of the students that come to my university from India are from the agent channel. Overall, the agents help in the promotion of our university, specific courses, enrolment applications of the students and the visa applications in country. The reliance on agents has gone up since the introduction of GTE [Genuine Temporary Entrant] criteria by the Australian Government, as they help verify on the education documents and the intentions of students coming to Australia.” (University representative)

Education agents play a pivotal role in the International higher education industry in Australian context. These agents are highly valued by Australian education institutions other than international students who they help to enrol and study in Australia. Education agents act as mediators in the international education industry by providing course advice, career counselling, administration assistance in relation to admissions and the visa process. Education agents can therefore mold and influence the expectations of students about possible destination
countries for study abroad (Productivity Commission, 2015). Education agents are generally paid commissions (a percentage of the student’s tuition fee paid to the institution) by the institution they represent, while some are also paid by the student directly (Coffey and Perry, 2013).

The reliance of both students and institutions on education agents has direct relevance to the Institutional Theory of migration that discusses the rise of private organisations to cater to the demand for education in developing countries and the supply of education in developed countries. The Institutional Theory further suggests that the development of these organisations and the active role they play in supporting, sustaining and promoting migration, the flow of migrants, or students in this context, has become more structured and established (Massey et al., 1993).

In Australia, one of the largest education agencies, IDP Education, was initially established by the country’s universities in 1969 as an international education aid organisation to build skills and resources among South-East Asian universities (Harman, 2004; Deardorff et al., 2012). IDP began recruiting international students for Australian universities in the mid-1980s (Harman, 2004). The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students was enacted in Australia in 2018 as a legislative instrument that set national standards to support providers to deliver quality education and training to international students, including for institutions to work with education agents.

Subsequently, most of the Australian institutions have well-developed contractual arrangements with education agents to support promotion of their courses to prospective international students via commissions or a percentage fee once the student has enrolled (Productivity Commission, 2015). As a result of Australian institutions and relevant government bodies such as Austrade and Australian Education International advocating and promoting education agents, the Federal Government’s Productivity Commission (2015) reported that 53% of international students enrolled in Australian institutions in 2012 were recruited via this channel.

Despite the increased uptake of such assistance in Australia’s international higher education industry, there have been some concerns raised about the reported cases of unethical behaviour among education agents (Joint Standing Committee on Migration, 2019). Some of them have
either provided false information to students or promoted institutions where they have personal financial interest, while others have provided fraudulent documentation for admissions and visa purposes or charged students a large amount of money as a service fee (Productivity Commission, 2015). Australia’s Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 has subsequently been reviewed to regulate the engagement of education agents with students and institutions, and to reduce the over-reliance of institutions on education agents (Joint Standing Committee on Migration, 2019).

Other meso-level factors uncovered in this study as influential on international study mobility decisions were parental influence and recommendations from family or friends in either the home country or in Australia. The results showed that 35% of all of the student respondents were influenced by their parents at some stage during the decision-making process. From a demographics perspective, the percentage was higher among the female compared with male student respondents (41% vs. 29% respectively). Furthermore, 42% of the Chinese student respondents were influenced by their parents, 51% of whom were females, compared with only 28% of the total Indian student respondents.

Among the students and education agents that were also interviewed (corresponding quotes below), many noted that their parents were influential on their study decisions, primarily due to financial reasons. This is because choosing to study overseas can be costly and depends on the financial capacity of the family. This aligned with 68% of all students that were surveyed noting that the main source of their funding for the tuition fee was their parents. While studying abroad, 63% of the surveyed students heavily relied on their parents for living expenses. This financial dependency on parents was slightly higher among Chinese compared with Indian student respondents (66% vs. 60% respectively).

“My parents are paying for the study abroad and choosing the right country and university for me.” (Chinese student)

“... they pay my fees.” (Chinese student)

“I wanted to go to University of Melbourne, but it was too costly for my parents so they suggested to choose a mid-range university.” (Indian student)
“Parents are still in a way the decision-makers, as they are the ones paying for the study.” (Indian education agent)

“Parents decide with the student as they fund the program.” (Indian education agent)

In addition to parents emerging in this study as key influencers of the decision on where to study abroad, some were also responsible for initiating the idea. According to the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation’s (HSBC) Value of Education 2017: Higher and Higher report, 42% of all parents surveyed agreed they would consider an international university education for their child, which was an increase from 35% in 2016. In the context of this study, the number of Indian parents surveyed in HSBC report considering study abroad for their children increased from 47% in 2016 to 62% in 2017. The key perceived benefits of children studying abroad included developing foreign language skills as well as exposure to new experiences, ideas and cultures (HSBC, 2017). In line with this, some of the students interviewed for this study cited their parents as key initiators of their plans to study abroad, largely based on the associated prestige, quality and better employability. That is, many of their parents were keen to expose them to different cultures and offer them the opportunity to improve their English language skills, while reputation was a key attribute when considering universities for their children based on the perspective that studying at a well-reputed university might prepare them better for employment prospects. Some of these sentiments were reflected in the interview responses as well:

"I could have studied in China, but my parents wanted me to experience a different culture and study in an English-speaking country.” (Chinese student)

"There are a number of engineering colleges in India, but my dad wanted to send me to a university that is highly reputed ... he thinks it will be easy to find a job after graduating from a good university." (Indian student)

“They [parents] wanted me to go to Australia and do same course as my brother and settle there.” (Indian student)
“Indian parents’ global ambitions for their children are a well-established driver of inbound student numbers to Australia.” (Australian government representative)

The education agents that were interviewed in this study agreed that parents play a major role in the decision-making process, based on observing their influence in relation to the selection of country, institution and course. Some parents had been observed at education fairs organised by the education agents, where they took a lead role in discussing various international education options with the university representatives and education agents. They noted that this parent involvement also continued during the application and visa processes, largely due to them being the main source of funding.

“In most of the study abroad cases, parents have been involved throughout the process of applications and decision-making.” (University representative)

“I think [in] most of [the] families in China, the parents make the decision which country the kid will study in. The parents may have their friend or relatives in Australia.” (Chinese education agent)

“Parents are still in a way the decision-makers as they are the ones paying for the study.” (Chinese education agent)

“The parents play an important role in the students’ decisions. In most of the study abroad cases, parents have been involved throughout the process of applications and decision-making. Safety is the most important factor the parents consider, following with financial issues and opportunities for the future career.” (University representative)

“Many parents have their own preference when they plan for their children’s overseas study.” (Indian education agent)

In addition to the cost and perceived quality, the education agents interviewed in this study shared some other factors that parents consider when choosing the study destination, including reputation and ranking of institution, safety, and family and friends in the host country. Although some Indian parents consider studying abroad as a financial investment and therefore
prioritise the opportunity to work in the host country post-graduation over the ranking of the institution and/or the intellectual and cultural growth of their children.

“Parents – they are the ones compare the quality of the institute and tuition”. (Chinese education agent)

“Parents invest a lot in education. They want their kids to settle down, earn money and later on help their siblings and parents.” (Indian education agent)

The influence of parents directly relates to the Neo Economies of Labour Migration theory that suggests the decision to migrate is based on a collective household strategy that sends a family member abroad to improve on the household income. In the contexts of this study, the migrants are the international students that travel to another country based on the decision made by the household, with the motive of gaining skills that result in better employability and higher earning capacity.

In addition to parents, recommendations from family and friends both in the home country and Australia are recognised in this study as meso-level factors influencing the choice of destination country. Among this study’s student respondents, 41% were influenced by their family and friends in the home country, and 31% by the same cohort in Australia (see Table 6.4 earlier in this section). When separated by the two home countries, the Chinese students were more influenced by family and friends in the home country (47%) than those in Australia (22%), while a higher number of Indian students were influenced by recommendations from family and friends in Australia (38%) compared with this in their home country (35%).

With respect to this study’s assessment of how many of the student respondents’ family members or friends had studied and/or lived and worked in Australia (see figures 6.7 and 6.8 below), 70% of the Chinese students had at least one friend or family member that had studied there, and 33% knew of at least 2-3. But when asked how many of their friends or family members permanently lived or currently worked in Australia, 54% of Chinese students responded positively. Among the Indian student respondents, 69% had at least one of their friends or family members that had studied in Australia, and 75% were confident that at least one of their friends or family members permanently lived or currently worked in Australia.
These results provide support towards the assumption that Indian students are more likely to be influenced by family and friends to study in Australia.

**Figure 6.7 Friends or family members studied in Australia**

![Pie chart showing the distribution of friends or family members studied in Australia for Chinese and Indian students.]

Source: Author’s analysis of survey responses of Chinese and Indian students

**Figure 6.8 Friends or family members permanently living or currently working in Australia**

![Pie chart showing the distribution of friends or family members permanently living or currently working in Australia for Chinese and Indian students.]

Source: Author’s analysis of survey responses of Chinese and Indian students

The family members and friends of the students living and/or working in Australia can be considered social networks that students turn to for recommendations. Their first-hand experience can be influential on the international education decision-making process. As confirmed in this study’s interview phase, advice or recommendations from these social networks is widely accepted by students, especially if the networks have had a positive
experience in Australia and are successfully working or living there. This meso-level factor has relevance to the Network Theory of Migration that highlights the likelihood of diaspora or social networks influencing the decision to migrate.

“My brother has done an IT course already and now settled in Australia.” (Indian student)

“They [students] trust their relatives and friends more than advertisements and agents.” (Chinese education agent)

“My friend from school went to Sydney for study and really had a good time there. She sent me so many photos from there. I really want to go to Sydney and experience myself.” (Chinese student)

“Family and friends are important as they share their experiences and act as support network for students in [the host] country.” (Indian education agent)

“... growing diaspora are fuelling the [education] demand.” (Australian government representative)

“Family and friends in Australia provide the confident [sic] to parents that someone will be able to provide emergency assistance to the student.” (Chinese education agent)

“It helps having friends in Australia as that provides support to the student who is new in foreign country.” (Indian education agent)

In the context of this study’s focus on the influence of social networks (i.e. friends or family members already settled in Australia), 6.9% of the overall population of New South Wales was Chinese and 2.8% was Indian in 2016 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018; see Appendix 23). In the same time period in Victoria, the Chinese constituted 6.3% of the overall population while Indians accounted for 3.5% (see Appendix 24). Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018 shows that New South Wales and Victoria had the highest shares of international students in Australia in 2017, at 38% and 32% respectively, followed by Queensland (15%), Western
Australia (6%) and South Australia (5%) (see Appendix 22). As per the Network Theory of Migration, the presence of these large ethnic communities (diaspora) in the Australian states of New South Wales and Victoria act as a support mechanism for new migrants and international students even though it leads to uneven distribution of international student numbers across Australia. With pull factors such as post-colonial ties, language and similar culture assisting with migration flows, it has previously been contended that an established migrant network in the host country can act as a pull factor for prospective migrants from same country of origin (Gheasi & Nijkamp, 2017).

In addition to this meso-level factor, the host country’s government policies also play a significant role in influencing international student mobility as a macro-level factor. In the context of this study, Australia’s PSW or permanent residency visa appears to have different degrees of influence on international students based on where they originate from. For example, 42% of this study’s Indian student respondents were influenced by this factor, which was their fourth highest, in comparison with only 16% of the Chinese student respondents. This far stronger response from the Indian students suggests they are more likely to be considering staying in Australia post-graduation rather than looking at it as just a study destination.

The provision of ongoing stay option for international students post-graduation has been a long-standing practice in Australia (Suter and Jandl, 2008). This aligns with the Dual Labour Market Migration Theory which highlights the demand for both high- and low-skilled labour within developed economies, and the argument that international students are often desired as high-skilled workers that have been trained in and integrated into the host country (Suter and Jandl, 2008). The post-study work rights visa introduced in Australia in 2013 allows international students to stay in Australia for certain period of time depending on the level of their study and work in any field. Australian student visa also allows students to work part-time while studying that helps students in supporting themselves acting as a subfactor influencing students’ decision to choose Australia as a study destination.

This macro factor also emerged within this study’s interview phase, when participants were asked about the influence of migration policy or PSW rights on choosing a country for international education. Although the responses suggest that while it is an influential factor, it is often a collective decision made by the parents and/or family rather than just the student in isolation.
“… Australia is known as a good study destination that offers post-study work options for interested students … It [migration policy or PSW rights] certainly is a major factor and one of the key reasons for popularity of Australia as study destination.” (Indian education agent)

“The migration policy or Post-Study Work rights plays a fairly important role in students choosing a country for study abroad, especially in the developed countries such as the USA, the UK, Australia, etc. Most of the students would like to continue to work for about two years after getting the degree.” (University representative)

“It [Migration policy] plays a major role and helps a student decide to choose because it’s a big financial commitment.” (Indian education agent)

“… some families tend to consider the migration policy, which may give them an option when their children graduate, which will so benefit the families in the future accordingly.” (Chinese education agent)

“The migration policy is not providing the advantage, but the PSW provides students the opportunity to stay and work in Australia after completion … it is a good advantage when parents considering the study designation [sic] …” (Chinese education agent)

“I think this factor is diminishing as opportunities grow for students in their own country. There is ever-increasing number of students who are keen to come back [to their home country] after study as economy of their own country is performing much better and there are plenty of jobs available.” (Australian government representative)

“Australia is one of the most popular study destinations and post-study migration. We promote it as a package as study options and migration.” (Chinese education agent)

“No, according to the migration policy, less and less students could actually migrate after their studies.” (Chinese education agent)
“I believe students are now more driven by post-study work and employment options as opposed to migration.” (Australian government representative)

This study’s interview participants, excluding international students were also asked to gauge whether international students consider post-graduation intentions while deciding where to study abroad, and the mix of responses indicates that students from different countries are influenced differently. It would appear that there is some early consideration of potential job opportunities in both the home country and the host country, which indicates that not all international students are considering staying in the host country following graduation.

“It is not just the students but also parents who are spending a fair bit of money on education. Most of the students consider the options on staying further to work in the country after completion of study.” (Indian education agent)

“Yes, the students will consider their intentions such as find a job at the host country, continue for further studies abroad or come back to home country, etc. Because going abroad is a big decision or investment to the student and their family, they have clear goals for what to do after completion of studies. There might be changes during their study, but absolutely they will consider on that.” (University representative)

“We find there are more and more Chinese students would like to come back to China for looking for job after completion of studies. Because they also think they will have more [job or career] opportunities if they come back to China.” (Chinese education agent)

“... most of them will choose working in China because it is believed to provide more job opportunities while they will continue having a dynamic modern life. Some of them will find and obtain work experience in Australia before they return to the homeland.” (Chinese education agent)

“... they wish to work [for] a couple of years [in Australia and] then go back to their home countries.” (Indian education agent)
“Most of the students are planning to go back home in the very initial [early stage of deciding on studying in Australia] ...” (Chinese education agent)

“They do [students do consider staying back in Australia post-graduation], and it is not surprising given the time and resources they are investing in their study.” (Australian Government representative)

As part of their pre-decision considerations, this study’s student respondents were also questioned on whether the ease of obtaining a student visa was influential on where they chose to study. In combination, 13% of these students agreed that this factor contributed to their decision, which was slightly higher among the Chinese compared with Indian students (15% and 13% respectively). In the context of this study’s focus on Australia as the host destination, this was likely influenced by the streamlined visa processing the country introduced in 2011, which was further refined to a Simplified Streamlined Visa Framework (SSVF) in 2016 that reduced the eight visa subclasses to one and made it simpler for international students to apply. The ease of obtaining a visa, which is another macro factor within the realm of government policy, no doubt makes a host country more attractive to international students, and is probably why Australia is a host destination for their higher education.

6.3.2 Alternative host destinations

As discussed in Section 3.2.2 of Chapter 3, there are many destinations around the world vying for a larger share of the international student market. While Australia is commonly regarded as a primary destination for international education, the student respondents in this research indicated that other countries were also considered (see Figure 6.9 below). Overall, 61% of those students had thought of studying in a country other than Australia, with the Chinese more open to alternative destinations than the Indians (65% and 57% respectively).
As shown above, the age of these student respondents also appears to impact on their openness to considering more than one destination for their international higher education. 53% of the younger age group (19 to 24 years) considered studying in another country, compared with 68% of 25 to 32 year-olds and 69% of 33 to 39 year-olds. This is probably because older-aged students typically have larger networks of family and friends, usually better access to technology, while some have already travelled overseas which shapes their decision on study abroad destination.

As shown below in Figure 6.10, the USA, Canada, UK and New Zealand were the main alternative study destinations considered by the Chinese student respondents, with 46% of them preferring the USA over Australia, which aligns with historical data that has highlighted the prioritisation of the USA among Chinese students (see Appendix 7). At 29%, Canada was the next alternative destination considered by the Chinese student, followed by the UK (28%) and New Zealand (21%). There were also more notable preferences among these Chinese students for Germany and Singapore.
Alternative study destinations were similar among this study’s Indian student respondents (see Figure 6.10 above), except that Canada was ranked marginally ahead of the USA (36% and 35% respectively). New Zealand was surprisingly next at 33% even though it is a much smaller country with few universities, which rated it ahead of the UK at a much lower 13%. Germany was almost as popular as the UK among these Indian students at 10%.

In addition to the above survey results, some references to alternative destinations were made during the interview phase:

“... in respect of the prestige of universities, industry and research strength especially in the high-tech areas, Australia is less attractive than the USA; in respect of the expense such as tuition fees, Australia is less attractive than some European countries such as Germany, France.” (University representative)

“Comparing UK and USA, students regard Australia as a safe and cost-effective destination of education.” (Chinese education agent)
“Safe living and study environment [in Australia], but lower academic requirements than USA and UK.” (Chinese education agent)

“[Australia is] amongst top three, with USA as first, Canada as second and Australia as third.” (Indian education agent)

“Australia is currently seen [by students] as second most popular option behind USA.” (Australian Government representative)

“Australia is one of the top three destination countries. It is seen as open and welcoming country with well-defined education and visa policy.” (Australian government representative)

As discussed in Section 3.2.2 of Chapter 3, the USA, Canada, UK and New Zealand as well as Australia are the primary English-speaking destinations for international students, with China and India their main source countries (OECD, 2018). The decline in international students in the USA, which has mostly been associated with its changing political climate including stricter visa regulations, has been of benefit to neighbouring Canada. The Canadian Government subsequently introduced its International Education Strategy in 2014 with the goal of attracting 450,000 international students to Canada by 2022, to establish it as a leading destination (Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development, 2014). As confirmation of this phenomena that Canada has leveraged to its own benefit, the ICEF-igraduate Agent Barometer survey conducted in 2017, involving 1,456 education agent respondents across 100 countries, ranked Canada as the most appealing destination for international students ahead of all other English-speaking destinations (ICEF Monitor, 2017). The report is in line with the findings of the survey of this research about attractiveness of Canada. Provision of PSW options as well as a pathway to immigration is potentially another reason for Canada’s attraction, especially among Indian students. As reported in the findings in Table 6.4 earlier in this chapter, 42% of Indian students were influenced by the option of post-study work visa or permanent residency post-graduation.

Similar to the USA, the decline in the attractiveness of the UK as a study destination has been associated with the clampdown of PSW visas and the tightening of student visas in 2012
Between 2012/13 and 2016/17, Indian student enrolments in the UK declined by 26% (Higher Education Student Statistics (HESA), 2018). This was also evident from this research’s Indian survey respondents with only 13% considering the UK as an alternate destination (see Figure 6.10).

In addition to Canada, New Zealand is an English-speaking country that is attracting a larger share of international students globally reporting 6 percent increase in international student enrolments in 2016 over the year before as per the annual report released by Education New Zealand in 2018. Furthermore, the primary source countries of China and India accounted for 50% of all of New Zealand’s international student enrolments in 2016. Now its fifth largest export industry, it has been recorded as supporting more than 30,000 jobs within New Zealand (Education New Zealand, 2018) and the New Zealand Government further aims to grow this export value to NZ$5 billion by 2025 (Ministry of Education New Zealand, 2018).

In the context of the primary source countries of China and India, Germany generated some interest (14% and 10% respectively). Traditionally, Germany and neighbouring France attract most students from within their own European region, founded on the intra-region student mobility trend.

Along with Germany, Singapore also attracts some interest from Chinese and Indian students as a host destination for higher education (8% and 3% respectively, see Figure 6.10). Singapore is well-regarded for its quality of education provided by top-ranking universities, yet its self-imposed cap on international student numbers that was introduced in 2011 appears to be nullifying its demand.

In the context of this study, there were a number of reasons why the Chinese and Indian student respondents did not choose alternative destinations over Australia. These micro-, macro- and meso-level factors are outlined below in Table 6.5.
Table 6.5 Reasons for not choosing alternative destinations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>China</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>female (n=79)</td>
<td>male (n=77)</td>
<td>total (n=156)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor academic quality or reputation of universities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preferred course was not available</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents decision</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student visa was not granted</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No or limited options of post-study work rights or to apply for permanent residency post-graduation</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not have any friends or family in these countries</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More expensive to study in these countries</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s analysis of survey responses of Chinese and Indian students

As shown above, the primary reason why another study destination was not chosen over Australia was that they did not have any friends or family member in those countries (43%). Among the female respondents, the Chinese students were more influenced by this than the Indian students (52% and 37% respectively). This consideration of friends or family member brings the Network Theory of Migration to the forefront, and further compounds the anecdotal evidence collected in this research from the interview phase.

“No friends in other countries.” (Chinese student)
“My brother is already here [in Australia] and can support my study.” (Indian student)

“It helps having friends ... as that provides support to the student who is new to foreign country.” (Chinese education agent)

“Relatives in Australia [is the reason for not choosing another country].” (Indian student)

“Natural beauty, course options, friends in country [are factors that help choose a country for study abroad].” (Chinese student)

In addition to diaspora, parents was another meso-level factor that influenced this study’s Chinese female respondents’ choice of study destination in particular (58%). Such parental influence and consent was a primary factor in choosing Australia as their study destination among all female students from both China and India (46%), which was also evidenced in the interview phase:

“My parents are paying for the study abroad and choosing the right country and university for me.” (Chinese student)

“They [parents] wanted me to go to Australia and do same course as my brother and settle here.” (Indian student)

“I think [among] most of the families in China, the parents make the decision which country the kid will study in.” (Chinese education agent)

“Indian parents’ global ambitions for their children are a well-established driver of [student mobility].” (Australian Government representative)

“According to our own research, alma mater of parent/sibling/relatives remains a compelling driver of destination choices.” (Australian Government representative)
In addition to the above meso-level factors, cost was another primary reason for students to consider when studying in Australia. They found studying in countries other than Australia more expensive. While cost is mostly a micro-level factor, the commonality of student dependence on their parents for funding means that it is also a meso-level factor based on parental influence. In this study, 67% of the student respondents acknowledged dependence on their parents’ funding for their tuition fees (see Figure 6.11 below) and 61% for their living expenses while studying abroad (see Figure 6.12 below). Cost is mostly seen through the lens of the Neo Economies of Labour Migration Theory, based on parents collectively investing money to send their child abroad, which is more of a household rather than individual student decision.

**Figure 6.11 Source of funding for tuition fees**

As shown above, a scholarship was the next most common source of funding for tuition fees among the Chinese student respondents (35%), which was far higher than for the Indian students (9%). This is likely due to the Chinese Government’s offering of full and part scholarships to fund students to study abroad (Ministry of Education China, 2018). Among this study’s Indian student respondents, a bank loan was most commonly cited after parent funding as a source to pay for tuition fees (63%). This aligns with the finding from 2016 that Indian students had borrowed AU$1,409 million from different banks in India (Reserve Bank of India, 2018).
2017). After banks, a loan from family or friends was another common funding source among this study’s Chinese and Indian student respondents (both at 29%), while another 16% of the Indian students also cited part-time work as an option.

With respect to funding for living expenses while studying in Australia, the main option was part-time work at 67% (see Figure 6.12 below), although this was more common among Indian than Chinese student respondents (79% and 58% respectively). Australia allows part-time work opportunities for students undertaking coursework degrees and vocational education courses, while those pursuing doctoral studies can work full-time as part of the government’s macro-level, pull factor focus. Most international students view part-time work as a way to support themselves and also potentially support their family in the home country and/or to pay off their education loan. In some of the other developed countries the opportunities to undertake work while studying are more limiting, such as in the USA where such work is limited to on-campus, and in New Zealand where the small country size and corresponding lack of job opportunities is coupled with low hourly rates.

**Figure 6.12 Source of funding for living expenses**

![Source of funding for living expenses](image)

Source: Author’s analysis of survey responses of Chinese and Indian students

As shown above, in addition to part-time work, 68% of this study’s Chinese student respondents were dependent on parental funding for their living expenses and 28% on
scholarships, while 60% of the Indian students depended on their parents, 15% on a loan from family and friends, and 13% on bank loans. A small amount of the Indian (9%) and Chinese students (6%) nominated self-funding as their primary source for living expenses, which mostly related to the more mature-age students (aged 33+ years).

Furthermore, as shown in Table 6.5 above, another main reason why this study’s students did not select an alternative country to Australia to undertake their international higher education was the absence of sufficient PSW rights and/or limited options to apply for permanent residency post-graduation (31%). This macro factor was more prevalent among the Indian than Chinese student respondents (41% and 21% respectively), which aligns with the results from the Section 6.3.1 on 42% of Indian students choosing Australia because of availability of PSW rights as compared to only 16% of Chinese students.

The other micro-level factors were lowest ranked on the question of reasons for not choosing the particular destination (see Table 6.5). Only 24% of all students responded that their preferred course was not available in the destination country. The highest response rates for this factor came from Chinese female students (33%) and Chinese male students (27%). Indian female students (16%) were more influenced by another micro level factor of not getting visa granted by one of the alternate destination countries to Australia. The poor academic quality or reputation of universities was the lowest ranked micro factor with overall response rate of 6%.

6.4 Summary

This chapter has focused on the analysis of data collected via surveys and interviews in this research study. This was aimed at assisting in determining the relevance of student movements and migration approaches in relation to existing migration theories through the lens of micro-, macro- and meso-level factors that affect international student decisions.

In this study, potential student respondents were selected and invited to complete the online survey via a multi-channel promotion, including Australian-registered international education and migration agent offices, university offices, Melbourne-based train stations, the CSC, as well as via students’ clubs. The student interviewees were then selected based on the interest expressed in their survey responses. Semi-structured interviews were also held among international education agents, as well as relevant government and university staff members.
In total, 327 respondents completed the online surveys, including 216 offshore and 111 onshore students, with 52% from India and 48% from China (see Table 6.1 above). Demographically, 47% of these respondents were female and 53% male, and 44% of them were aged 19-24 years, 40% were aged 25-32 years, and 11% were aged 33-39 years (see Figure 6.1 above). Most of these respondents had an undergraduate or bachelor’s degree qualification from their home country (49%), and most were enrolled in or planned to enrol in a postgraduate program (49%), followed by 29% in undergraduate or bachelor programs, and 18% in research degree or PhD programs in Australia (see figures 6.5 and 6.6 above). The top four preferred fields of study among all the students were Engineering (21%), Business or commerce (20 per cent), Information Technology (18%) and Accountancy (12%) (refer to Table 6.2).

The data analysis revealed the various push and pull factors that influence Chinese and Indian students’ decision to study in Australia. As highlighted in Table 6.4, ‘Teaching quality/ Academic reputation of institutions in Australia’ (59%), ‘Better career prospects in Australia after graduation’ (57%) and ‘Better career prospects in home country after graduation’ (50%) were the top three reasons for all student respondents to choose Australia as a study destination. These qualify as the macro and micro level factors as identified in the conceptual framework and are consistent with the previous literature and research.

The findings do suggest that respondents from China and India place different emphasis on different factors while choosing Australia as a study abroad destination. 64% of Chinese students preferred ‘better career prospects in home country after graduation’ wherein case of Indian students, 62% of them preferred ‘better career prospects in Australia after graduation’, making it their top choice and implying that Indian students were already thinking about a career in Australia before they started their studies (see Table 6.4).

The education agents, who act as mediators in the international education industry by providing course advice, career counselling, and assistance with admission matter & visa process to prospective international students (Productivity Commission, 2015), seem to influence Indian students much more as compared to students from China. 49% of total Indian students were influenced by this meso level factor as compared to only 18% of the total Chinese students (see Table 6.4).
Parental influence was another sizable meso level factor. Considering all the respondents, the percentage response was higher in the case of female students (41%) as compared to male students (29%). At the national level, Chinese students (42%) were more influenced by their parents in choosing Australia for study abroad in comparison to only 28% of Indian students (see Table 6.4). From some of the interview responses, it also emerged that in some cases rather than students, the parents initiate the idea of study abroad and then reputation is a key attribute considered by parents when considering the universities for further studies. Parents are also seen as important influencer from financial perspective as majority of the survey respondents mentioned about the dependence on the parents for paying the tuition fee and their cost of living (see Figures 6.11 and 6.12).

The recommendations by family and friends both in home country and Australia act at the meso level in influencing the students’ choice of the destination country and are considered as social networks that students turn to for support and recommendations. Both Chinese (47%) and Indian (38%) students were impacted by this factor (see Table 6.4).

In addition to the micro and meso level factors, host country government policies on providing the option of post-study work visa or permanent residence play a significant role in influencing international student mobility at the macro level, although this has varying level of influence on students from different source countries. The response from the Indian students (42%) was much stronger than the Chinese (16%) suggesting that the Indian students were likely considering staying in Australia post-graduation rather than looking at it as just a study destination.

While Australia is considered a primary destination for international education, this research’s student respondents (61%) did consider other countries for study abroad as well as part of their pre-decision thought process. The USA, Canada, the UK and New Zealand the top four alternate destinations considered by the Chinese students. As for the Indian students, Canada was the first choice that was marginally ahead of the USA and New Zealand (see Figure 6.10). There were several reasons why Chinese and Indian student respondents did not choose the alternate destinations over Australia, which can be classified into micro, macro and meso level factors (see Table 6.5).
The primary reason at the meso-level was the absence of friends or family members in alternate countries. The Chinese female students with 52% were more influenced by this meso factor as compared to the Indian female students with 37%. Other than diaspora or family ties, parents were another meso-level factor that influenced this study’s female respondents (46%) in particular (see Table 6.5).

Other than the meso-level, cost was a major reason for students to consider when studying in Australia, operating at the micro-level. Students are quite dependent on their parents for the funding of their tuition fee and living expenses with 67% of all survey respondents acknowledging dependence on their parent’s funding for financing their tuition fees along with 61% for financing their living expenses while studying abroad (see Figures 6.11 and 6.12).

Furthermore, the absence of or limited options of post-study work rights or to apply for permanent residency in host country impacted the students’ choice as well (31%). This macro factor was more prevalent among the Indian students (41%) than the Chinese (21%) (see Table 6.5).

The next chapter relates to the Chinese and Indian students’ decision-making process at the post-graduation stage defined as continuation of migration.
7 Continuation of Migration

7.1 Introduction

The previous chapter identified some of the micro-, macro- and meso-level factors influencing a student’s decision to study abroad including choosing the destination which is related to the initiation of migration. Following completion of their studies, these students often have the choice of either returning to their home country or remaining in the host country for work and/or to seek permanent residence, which is classified as the continuation of migration. This chapter will further analyse and discuss the data collected in this study, to identify factors influencing this continuation of migration and at what time students make this choice.

7.2 Intentions of offshore students in China and India

As discussed in Sections 6.3.1 and 6.3.2, many of the offshore and onshore students surveyed in this research were influenced by the availability of PSW visas and/or the option of permanent residency in Australia. As shown in Tables 6.4 and 6.5, these factors applied to 42% of the Indian students, with 41% of them not considering an alternative destination based on these opportunities.

To explore the influence of PSW and option of permanent residence further, there were a set of questions focused on the offshore students’ future intentions after completing their studies in Australia. The top response, as shown below in Table 7.1, was to return to the home country (37%), which was primarily driven by Chinese students (53%). Further analysis based on age revealed that this intention to return home was driven by the younger Chinese students (27% for 19 to 24 year-olds, and 23% for 25 to 32 year-olds). These results dovetail nicely into this study’s previous finding that teaching quality and better career prospects in the home country were the two main reasons for consideration of Australia as a study destination by the offshore and onshore Chinese student respondents (see Chapter 6, section 6.3.1). In contrast, only 19% of the Indian student respondents were keen to return to their home country post-graduation again verifying the previous findings from Table 6.4 about majority of Indian students influenced by better career prospects in Australia post-graduation.
Table 7.1 Post-graduation intentions of offshore students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>意向</th>
<th>China</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apply for permanent residency to Australia</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 or older</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply for PSW rights in Australia</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 or older</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply to study another course in Australia</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move to a third country, other than Australia and your home country</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return to home country</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided at the moment</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This also aligns with the record amount (432,500) of Chinese students that were recorded in 2016 as returning to their home country post-graduation (Ministry of Education of China, 2017). This bumped the outbound-to-return ratio of the country’s students to an all-time high of 82.23% in 2016, which was an increase from 55% in 2011.

Application for Australia’s PSW rights was the next most prevalent intention among this study’s offshore students (29%), which was notably higher among Indian (41%) than Chinese (17%) students. When further analysed, 26% of those Indian students were male and within the youngest age group (19 to 24 years). This aligns with the affinity to PSW rights shown by Indian students as a reason to choose Australia as their destination country (see Chapter 6, section 6.3.1).

Overall, only 3% of these offshore students were interested in pursuing further studies post-completion of their preliminary course in Australia, which mainly consisted of younger Indian students (aged 19 to 24 years). In addition, there were around 20% offshore students that were undecided on their post-graduation intentions, which was evenly split between male and females, and mostly applied to the 19 to 24 years age group.

After completion of their studies in Australia, 10% of all the offshore students intended on applying for permanent migration. Around 14% of these were Indian students, with a higher proportion of females than males (64%), while only 7% of the Chinese students shared these intentions.
The results for importance of PSW were similar when the offshore students were asked about the importance of the opportunity to obtain permanent residency of Australia (see Table 7.2 below). That is, 38% of all these students did not consider permanent residency to be an important factor when deciding on their study destination, with a further 20% noting this as unimportant, which was primarily driven by the Chinese student cohort. In line with the above results about their intention to return home post-graduation, only 7% of the Chinese offshore students perceived permanent residency as very important, while 23% considered it important. A far higher 39% perceived this factor as not so important to them, while another 31% noted it as unimportant. When further analyzing these results by age, the primary response among the younger Chinese offshore students (19 to 24 and 25 to 32 years) was that permanent residency was not so important to them (19% and 17% respectively).

Table 7.2 Importance of permanent residency to offshore students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>China</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Important</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 or older</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not so important</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unimportant</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As shown in the above results, the level of importance of permanent residency was strikingly different among the offshore Indian student respondents, where 22% considered it very important and 34% deemed it important. Furthermore, only 7% of these Indian students said that permanent residency was unimportant to them, and another 36% that it was not so important, largely made up of 19 to 24 year-olds. Further analysis of those offshore Indian students that considered permanent residency not so important showed that 19% of them considered PSW rights important and another 4% considered this very important.

Australian migration policy was reformed in 2009 limiting the opportunities for international students to directly apply for permanent residence post-graduation. Based on the above results that show the offshore Indian student respondents placed relative importance on PSW rights, this more recent change in policy is possibly one of the reasons why many of these and the Chinese students rated permanent residency as not so important. As show in Table 7.3 below, between July and December 2017 there were only 4,727 skilled visas associated with permanent residency grants where the last visa held was a student visa. This was only 5.2% of all skilled visa grants where the last visa held was a student visa, and was a 26.2% decline from the same time period in the previous year (Department of Home Affairs, 2018).
Despite this decline in permanent residence visa grants, the results in Table 7.4 below show that in the same six-month period there was 21.6% growth in Temporary Graduate 485 visa grants where the last visa held was a student visa, with a change of 30% over the same period the year before. This change is possibly due to more international students in Australia being eligible for the PSW rights and applied under Temporary Graduate 485 visa subclass. (Department of Home Affairs, 2018).

Table 7.4 New visa grant subclass where last visa held was student visa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visa Subclass</th>
<th>2016-17 to 31/12/16</th>
<th>2017-18 to 31/12/17</th>
<th>% Change from 2016-17</th>
<th>2017-18 as % of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>500 Student</td>
<td>33,965</td>
<td>34,070</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>37.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>485 Temporary Graduate</td>
<td>15,009</td>
<td>19,505</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>600 Visitor</td>
<td>9,958</td>
<td>11,101</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>601 Electronic Travel Authority</td>
<td>8,604</td>
<td>8,801</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>457 Temporary Work (Skilled)</td>
<td>6,133</td>
<td>3,048</td>
<td>-50.3%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>820 Partner</td>
<td>3,318</td>
<td>2,767</td>
<td>-16.6%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>651 eVisitor</td>
<td>2,210</td>
<td>2,402</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>189 Skilled - Independent</td>
<td>2,829</td>
<td>2,226</td>
<td>-21.2%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>190 Skilled - Nominated</td>
<td>1,511</td>
<td>1,197</td>
<td>-20.8%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>417 Working Holiday</td>
<td>1,133</td>
<td>1,091</td>
<td>-2.0%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>462 Work and Holiday</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>694</td>
<td>45.5%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>187 Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme</td>
<td>1,194</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>-62.4%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>666 Protection</td>
<td>524</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>-23.5%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>489 Skilled - Regional (Provisional)</td>
<td>347</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>309 Partner (Provisional)</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>-20.5%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other visa subclasses</td>
<td>5,224</td>
<td>1,709</td>
<td>-67.3%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>92,802</td>
<td>90,137</td>
<td>-2.9%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With respect to Temporary Graduate 485 visa grants, Figure 7.1 shows that India was the nationality (28.6%) that received the most in the six-month period up to December 2017, followed by China (23.1%). This was a significant 44.6% growth in 485 visa grants for Indian students, compared with the same time period in the previous year (Department of Home Affairs, 2018). This data verifies the results from the survey of offshore Indian students and their intentions post-graduation in regard to the interest towards the PSW rights.

**Figure 7.1 Nationality share of temporary graduate 485 visa grants**

Among the Temporary Graduate 485 visa holders that applied for a further visa in six months to 31 December 2017, 41% were granted Skilled – Independent Visas, 10.2% Skilled – Nominated Visas, 5.6% Skilled – Regional (Provisional) Visas, and 1.9% Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme Visas (as shown in Table 7.4 above). These results suggest that students are considering and applying for permanent residency, but that it has become a two-step process that begins with the Post-Study Workstream within the Temporary Graduate 485 skilled visa.
To further explore post-graduation work interests within this study, offshore students in China and India were asked to rate the level of importance of PSW rights in Australia. As shown in Table 7.5 below, 43% of all these students considered PSW rights as important, and another 24% deemed it as very important to them.

The almost even split between these offshore Chinese and Indian students for the important ratio (42% and 44% respectively) suggests the same level of importance of PSW rights in Australia applies to both cohorts. Among the Indian cohort, the important rating was highest among young male students (14%), which was similar among the Chinese cohort where the youngest age group across both genders were more likely to deem PSW rights in Australia as important (20%), followed by 25 to 32 year-olds (17%).

Table 7.5 Importance of PSW rights to offshore students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>China</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Important</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 or older</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not so important</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unimportant</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Also shown in the above results is that a smaller proportion of these offshore Chinese students (10%) determined Australia’s PSW rights to be very important, which was in contrast with the much higher result among the Indian students (38%), which largely applied again to the youngest male cohort. Another 10% of these Chinese students considered these rights to be unimportant, whereas all Indian students considered them to have some level of importance.

The final intentions-related question that was asked of this study’s offshore students was whether they were aware of skilled migration policy in Australia including the points system to apply for permanent residency (see Table 7.6 below). The reasoning behind inclusion of this question was to cross reference the intentions of students to apply for permanent residence of Australia as part of continuation of migration.

Table 7.6 Offshore student awareness of skilled migration policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>China</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s analysis of survey responses of Chinese and Indian students
As shown in the above results, there is a clear difference between the two cohorts of offshore students with respect to awareness of skilled migration policy. In particular, Indian student awareness was significantly higher than for the Chinese students (48% and 25% respectively). Furthermore, while the Chinese student awareness was more prevalent among females (16%), this ratio was more evenly split between genders among the Indian students. Although when this Indian student cohort was analysed by age as well as gender, Indian females age group of 25 to 32 years (11%) were most aware of skilled migration policy amongst all females, along with Indian younger males aged 19 to 24 years (16%).

This higher awareness of skilled migration policy among the offshore Indian students possibly stems from the significant influence of international education agents as shown in the results in Table 6.4 Most of these education agents that guide offshore students on which country, university and course to choose are also migration agents with branch offices in Australia. They therefore play a significant role in the continuation of migration, as they sell their services in the form of expertise on migration policy to students and charge fees or commission for these services. This directly links to the Institutional Theory of Migration, with these agents catering to the demand of continuation of migration. The influence of education agents will be further
analysed in the next section based on data collected from the onshore Chinese and Indian students in relation to the continuation of migration in Australia.

7.3 Intentions of onshore students from China and India

As with the offshore student cohort, an extended set of questions was included in the survey for onshore students from China and India in Australia relating to continuation of migration. These responses help to analyse at what stage these students finalised their post-graduation intentions including the factors that influence the decision-making process; in particular, is it different from the original intention when they were still in their home country.

Similar to the offshore cohort, this study’s onshore students were asked about their intentions following the completion of their studies in Australia. As shown in Table 7.7 below, 42% of these students were interested in applying for PSW rights, followed by 27% intending to return to their home country, and 15% planning on applying for permanent residency of Australia.

Table 7.7 Post-graduation intentions of onshore students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>China</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Apply for permanent migration to Australia</strong></td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 or older</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Apply for PSW rights in Australia</strong></td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 years or younger</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 or older</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Apply to study another course in Australia</strong></td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>China</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>Grand Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Female</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Male</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Move to a third country, other than Australia and your home country</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Male</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Return to home country</strong></td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Male</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>11%</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Undecided at the moment</strong></td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Male</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s analysis of survey responses of Chinese and Indian students

As also shown in the above results, onshore student intentions varied based on nationality, with 62% of the Indian students intending to apply for PSW rights, largely driven by males, and only 16% planning to return to their home country post-graduation. In contrast, a large proportion of the Chinese students (40%) indicated the intention of returning to their home country, while only 18% showed interested in applying for PSW rights.
As previously identified among the offshore students, return rates to the home country post-graduation is at an all-time among Chinese students. Despite this, 24% of the onshore Chinese students intended on applying for permanent residency compared with only 8% of the Indian students. However, these results indicate that overall Indian students were more interested than Chinese students in remaining in Australia following completion of their studies in Australia. Furthermore, the small proportion of onshore students undecided on their post-graduate intentions in comparison to the significant proportion of offshore students (5% and 20% respectively) indicates students deciding on continuation of migration while studying in Australia or post completion of studies.

Also, in line with the offshore students, this study’s onshore students were also asked to rate the importance of permanent residency in Australia, as well as the availability of PSW rights (see Table 7.8 below). In addition to striving to understand their preferences better, this was used to compare their perceived levels of importance against offshore students.

### Table 7.8 Importance of permanent residency to onshore students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>China</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Important</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 years or younger</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 or older</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Not so important</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unimportant</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Groups</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>Grand Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very important</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 or older</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s analysis of survey responses of Chinese and Indian students

As confirmed in the above results, the level of importance of permanent residency among onshore Indian students (59% who chose very important or important) was similar to their offshore cohort (56%) (see Tables 7.8 and 7.2). Only 10% of the onshore Indian students regarded permanent residency as unimportant, and another 31% regarded it as not so important, they were more inclined towards choosing PSW rights as important.

From a demographics perspective, 25% of the male onshore Indian students rated permanent residency as important, which was largely driven by the 25 to 32 year-old age group (13%). Moreover, 18% of these male Indian students chose permanent residency as very important, with almost equal proportions among from the 25 to 32 and 33 to 39 year-olds (see Table 7.8).

Unlike Indian students, the permanent residency results for Chinese onshore students were strikingly different to those of Chinese offshore students. For example, 22% of Chinese onshore students viewed permanent residency as very important, compared to only 7% of the offshore students, and among the onshore students this was primarily driven by female students aged 25 to 32 years old (12%). These findings suggest a change in the mindset of Chinese students.
with respect to remaining in Australia during or after the completion of their studies, which will be further explored below.

Interestingly, none of the onshore Chinese female students regarded permanent residency as important, while another 26% across both genders regarded it as not so important. The largest amount of onshore Chinese students rated permanent residency as unimportant (40%), which was evenly split between genders.

This ties in well with the point made earlier in section 6.4.1 in regard to preference towards post-study workstream. Temporary Graduate 485 visa grants were far more prevalent than skilled visa grants in 2017 among international students in Australia, with India and China the two primary nationalities (28.6% and 23.1% respectively) (Department of Home Affairs, 2018). It was not surprising to discover onshore students gave more importance to PSW rights compared to permanent residency, with 32% regarding this as very important and a further 41% as important. As shown in Table 7.10 below, these results were primarily driven by the significant amount of onshore Indian students that considered PSW rights as either important or very important (92%).

Table 7.9 Importance of PSW rights to onshore students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>China</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Important</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Male</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 years or younger</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 or older</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Not so important</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Similar to Indian cohort, 34% of the onshore Chinese students believed that PSW rights were important, with 22% of these being male. However, some of these Chinese students regarded PSW rights as not so important (24%), while a further 26% deemed it unimportant, with these results more evenly split between genders.

Among the onshore students, there were various reasons influencing their decision to remain in Australia post-graduation. As shown in Figure 7.2 below, among these Chinese students good career prospects and better quality of life in Australia were the primary reasons for remaining post-graduation (82% and 72% respectively), followed by the intention to gain work experience (56%). Yet despite this higher preference to gain work experience in Australia, many of these Chinese students did not think Australian salaries were higher than in other countries.
Among the onshore Indian students (see Figure 7.3 below), the intention to gain work experience was the primary reason for remaining in Australia post-graduation, closely followed by good career prospects in Australia (82%) and better quality of life (76%). Despite these similarities with the Chinese students’ reasons, a far larger amount of the Indian students (68%) agreed that salaries were higher in Australia, which was the next highest reason for staying in Australia post-graduation.
As discussed in section 6.3.1, there is an economic rationale behind these reasons to stay back in Australia post-graduation, acting at micro and macro levels. That is, international students give importance to better quality of life, good career prospects, jobs and higher wage rates post-graduation, which aligns with the reasons this study’s students cited for choosing Australia as their destination (see Table 6.4 in section 6.3.1). Australians on average rated life satisfaction as 7.3 out of 10, higher than the OECD average of 6.5, with the average household net-adjusted disposable income per capita in Australia at US$33,417 per year, which is higher than the OECD annual average of US$30,563 (OECD Economic Surveys Australia, 2017).

Other than the economic rationale, family, friends and the diaspora network in Australia have an influence on the international student’s decision to remain in the country post-graduation as well, acting as meso-level factors that contribute to the continuation of migration. In context of this study, family and/or friends being part of this community and based in Australia have a major effect on both onshore Chinese and Indian students surveyed in this research. As shown in Figure 7.2 and 7.3, 48% of Chinese and 56% of Indian students agreed they were influenced by these ties when deciding whether to stay in Australia post-graduation. This was also confirmed by international students interviewed in this research.

“Yes, my friends are doing the same [studying further in Australia after study].” (Indian student)

“My brother has done an IT course already and now settled in Australia.” (Indian student)

“My brother is already here [in Australia] and can support my study.” (Indian student)

The other primary meso-level factor influencing international onshore students’ decision to remain in Australia post-graduation is parents (32% Chinese and 25% Indian; see Figure 7.2 and 7.3 respectively). As discussed earlier in Section 6.3.1 and 6.3.2 of Chapter 6, many Indian parents consider studying abroad as a financial investment, and highly regard the opportunity to work in the host country post-graduation as a return on that investment. This was suggested during the interview phase as well:
“Parents invest a lot in education. They want their kids to settle down, earn money and later on help their siblings and parents.” (Indian education agent)

“...Because going abroad is a big decision or investment to the student and their family, they have clear goals for what to do after completion of studies.” (University representative)

Parents decide to send their children abroad to gain skills and qualifications for better employability prospects, often enabling them to remain in the host country post-graduation to earn the money to not only support themselves but also their families. In some cases, students may be able to invite their families to come to host country as well opening up better opportunities and living for the whole household. As highlighted below in Figure 7.4, when asked if they would invite their family to join them if they were successful in securing permanent residency of Australia, a considerable number of the onshore students responded positively (38% Chinese and 13% Indian).

**Figure 7.4 Onshore students’ intention to invite family to join them permanently in Australia**

![Graph showing the intention of onshore students to invite families to Australia](image)

Source: Author’s analysis of survey responses of Chinese and Indian students

In this study, the onshore students were also asked whether they were aware of the skilled migration policy and/or the points required to apply for permanent residency in Australia. As shown in Table 7.10 below, the Indian student cohort (62%) were more aware than their Chinese counterparts (40%), like the case of offshore students where Indian students (48%)
had better awareness of the skilled migration policy that Chinese students (25%) (see Table 7.6).

**Table 7.10 Onshore students’ awareness of skilled migration policy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>China</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s analysis of survey responses of Chinese and Indian students

As shown in Figure 7.5 below, the main sources of information in relation to Australia’s skilled migration policy among the onshore Chinese and Indian students were meso-level factors, including family or friends (34%) and education and migration agents in Australia (33%). Parents were the other main source of information among the Chinese students (20%) possibly because of the bigger influence of parents on the Chinese students over the decision making process (see Table 6.4), followed by the education institutions and Department of Home Affairs website that applied to both cohorts (12-13% each).

**Figure 7.5 Onshore students’ information sources for skilled migration policy**

Source: Author’s analysis of survey responses of Chinese and Indian students
To further understand the decision-making process of the onshore students, they were also asked whether their continuation of migration intentions had changed during the course of their studies in Australia. As shown in Table 7.11 below, two-thirds of these Indian students admitted changing their intentions, along with one-third of the Chinese students, with most of them (33%) in the 25 to 32 years age group.

### Table 7.11 Change of original intention of onshore students during the studies in Australia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>China</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>No</strong></td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Female</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Male</strong></td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 years or younger</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yes</strong></td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Female</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Male</strong></td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 or older</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s analysis of survey responses of Chinese and Indian students

Furthermore, the onshore students were asked what their original intentions were when they commenced their studies in Australia. As shown below in Table 7.12, in comparison to the 27% of them that were recorded as intending to return home post-graduation (see Table 7.7), this was the original intention among 57% of these students when they commenced their studies in Australia. Such changes in the decision-making process were more prominent among the
onshore Indian students, with the 53% of them originally intending to return home post-graduation dropping to 16% by completion of their studies. In comparison, onshore Chinese student intentions of returning home remained the top priority post-graduation (40%) compared with when they first commenced their studies (62%).

Table 7.12 Original intentions of onshore students at commencement of studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>China</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Return to home country</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 or older</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Apply for permanent residence to stay in Australia</strong></td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Apply for PSW rights</strong></td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 years or younger</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 to 24 years old</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 or older</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Move on to another country for further study or work</strong></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 to 39 years old</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 32 years old</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s analysis of survey responses of Chinese and Indian students
In the continuation of migration intentions among the onshore students, the other most noticeable change was in relation to applying for PSW work rights in Australia that aligns with the change in intentions with respect to returning home, at least among the Indian students. As shown in Table 7.12 above, 26% of these students considered applying for PSW work rights at the commencement of their studies, compared with 42% post-graduation (see Table 7.7). This shift was once again most prevalent among the Indian student cohort, where the 36% that were originally planning to apply for PSW rights when they commenced their studies in Australia had risen to 62% by post-graduation stage. The change was due to the 26% of female students aged 25 to 32 years (Table 7.7) taking up this option following completion of their studies.

**Figure 7.6 Actors that influenced changed intentions of onshore Chinese students**

As shown in Figure 7.6 above, the onshore Chinese students that changed their migration intentions were mainly influenced by actors at the meso level, including family or friends in Australia (39%), other classmates or friends who intended to apply for migration (31%), education or migration agents in Australia (11%), and parents (8%). These results align with the earlier findings that these onshore Chinese students mostly rely on family and friends, and education and migration agents for information on skilled migration policy (see Figure 7.5).
As shown in Figure 7.7 above, while the top three actors among the onshore Indian students were the same as for their Chinese counterparts, the education or migration agents in Australia were more of an influence (23%). The latter result aligns with earlier findings that indicated the reliability of Indian students on education agent recommendations when choosing their host country and the course to study (see Table 6.4), and the top two influencers for changing the intentions of Indian students (see Figure 7.5).

In summary, the results from this section show that while the education and migration policy largely impact on onshore student decisions to come to Australia and with respect to continuation of migration, meso-level factors are more impactful in influencing their decisions to either remain in Australia or return home after completion of their studies.

### 7.4 Summary

Following completion of studies abroad, and in the context of continuation of migration, many international students have the choice to either return to their home countries or to remain for work and to obtain permanent residency in their host country. This chapter has analysed the corresponding data from this study, which has been used to identify the primary factors influencing such decisions.
In this research, offshore students from China and India that were still in their home country and planning to study in Australia were asked about their post-graduation intentions. Returning to the home country was their primary intention (37%), which was primarily driven by the Chinese students, with further analysis highlighting this was driven by younger Chinese aged 19 to 24 and 25 to 32 years (24%). This aligns nicely with the leading reasons to study in Australia as identified in Section 6.3.1, where Chinese respondents chose teaching quality in Australia and better career prospects in their home country as two top choices, as well as the record results reported in 2016 in relation to Chinese students returning to the home country after study abroad (Ministry of Education of China, 2017).

As covered in Section 6.3.1 of Chapter 6, Indian students have shown affinity towards PSW rights as a reason to choose Australia for study abroad. It was unsurprising to uncover large proportion of Indian offshore student respondents (41%) intending to apply for PSW rights post-graduation and only 19% were keen to return home (see Table 7.1).

Furthermore, 43% of all offshore student respondents marked consideration of the post-study work rights as important with the ratio was almost evenly split between Chinese and Indian students (42% and 44% respectively) suggesting the appeal to both the cohorts (see Table 7.5). This was further supported by the secondary data from the Department of Home Affairs (2018) that showed a growth of 21.6% in the Temporary Graduate 485 visa grants in the six-month period from 1 July 2017 to 31 December 2017 (see Table 7.4). where the last visa held was a student visa with a change of 30% over the same time the year before. Indian and Chinese were the leading nationalities (28.6% and 23.1% respectively; see Figure 7.1).

The importance of PSW rights was further highlighted when the offshore students were specifically asked about the importance of obtaining permanent residency in Australia. 38% of total offshore student respondents considered permanent residency as not an important factor with a further 20% even choosing the response as unimportant (see Table 7.1). The migration policy reforms of Australia in 2010 limiting the opportunities for onshore international students to apply for permanent residence directly after graduation (Productivity Commission, 2015), is possibly one of the reason for low interest towards permanent residence. The Department of Home Affairs (2018) also reported on 26.2% decline for the international students directly
applying for permanent residence directly after graduation in the six-month period from 1 July 2017 to 31 December 2017 (see Table 7.3).

However, there seemed to be a clear difference between the two offshore student cohorts with respect to awareness of skilled migration policy as indicated in Table 7.6. The Offshore Indian students seemed to be better aware of the Australian skilled migration policy (48%) as compared to the 25% of the Chinese students. The better awareness of skilled migration policy with Indian students can be linked to the point of significant influence of international education agents on their study abroad plans as identified in Table 6.4. Most of these education agents have branch offices in Australia and may facilitate the process of migration post-study for international students.

Additional continuation of migration questions were included for the onshore students surveyed in this research, to help understand when these students finalised their post-graduation plans. In particular, what factors influenced the decision-making process among those students that intended to remain in Australia post-graduation, and did this decision shift from the original intention prior to commencement of studies.

Responding to the question related to intentions following the completion their study, 42% of onshore students showed interest in applying for post-study work rights followed by 27% opting to return home and further 15% planning to apply for permanent residence of Australia (see Table 7.7). The captured results varied based on the nationality with 62% Indian onshore students intending to apply for PSW and only 16% planning to return home. In contrast, significantly larger proportion of 40% Chinese students intended to return home and only 18% were percent interested in applying for PSW rights.

The results on importance of permanent residency were not so different for onshore Indian students as compared to the results of same nationality cohort of offshore students. 59% onshore Indian students chose permanent residency as important or very important as compared to 56% of offshore Indian students (see Tables 7.8 and 7.2). However, in case of Chinese onshore students, the results were quite different with 22% choosing permanent residence as very important (see Table 7.8) as compared to only 7% of offshore Chinese students (see Table 7.2). These results suggested the change in the mindset of Chinese students on remaining in Australia during or after the completion of their studies.
Other than the permanent residency, the onshore students gave more importance to PSW rights in their responses, like the offshore student cohort. 73% of the total onshore students regarded PSW as either important or very important with majority (92%) made up of Indian onshore students (Table 7.9).

When asked about the reasons influencing their decision to remain in Australia post-graduation, Chinese students considered good career prospects (82%) and better quality of life in Australia (72%) (Figure 7.2). The intention to gain work experience was the top reason for Indian students (83%). (Figure 7.3). As established in section 6.3.1, there is an economic rationale behind these reasons acting at micro and macro level with students giving importance to good career prospects, jobs and higher wage rates after completion of their studies.

Apart from the economic rationale, there two meso level factors of family & friends in Australia, and parents influenced the decision of onshore international students to remain in the country post-graduation. 56% of Indian and 48% of onshore Chinese students (see Figures 7.2 and 7.3) agreed on getting positively influenced by family, friends & diaspora ties suggesting the establishment of social networks in Australia acting as a pull factor for the students to remain in country post completion of studies. The Sections 6.3.1 and 6.3.2 of Chapter 6 suggested that many parents considered studying in Australia as a financial investment and highly regard the opportunity to work after graduation in host country, which is potentially the reason why parents were able to influence 32% of the onshore Chinese and 25% of the onshore Indian students to remain in Australia after their studies (see Figures 7.2 and 7.3).

In line with their decision to remain in Australia and the interest in permanent residency, the international onshore students were also asked about the awareness of Australia’s skilled migration policy. The Indian students (62%) were better informed than the Chinese students (40%) on the points required to apply for the permanent residency of Australia (see Table 7.10). The main sources of information for the skilled migration policy for both onshore Chinese and Indian students were the meso level factors including the family or friends in Australia (34%) and education and migration agents in Australia (33%) (see Figure 7.4).
Further data analysis around the continuation of migration showed that the intentions of onshore students had changed during studies in Australia. Two-thirds of the Indian onshore students admitted changing their intentions as compared to only one-third of the Chinese onshore students (Table 7.11). Such changes in intentions by Indian students was more around the decisions of returning home and applying for PSW rights. 53% of Indian onshore students had originally intended to return home post-graduation but that intention dropped to only 16% by completion of their studies (see Tables 7.12 and 7.7).

Aligned with the changed intention of returning home, there was a bigger proportion of onshore Indian students who planned to apply for PSW rights (62%) post-graduation as compared to 36% who intended at the commencement of studies (see Tables 7.7 and 7.12). The onshore Chinese students had similar directional shifts in their intentions towards returning home and applying for PSW rights, but the percentage change was not that high as onshore Indian students.

Such change in intentions of onshore international students were mainly influenced by the actors at meso level. Family and/or friends in Australia were the top influencer for both onshore Chinese (39%) and Indian students (34%) (see Figure 7.6 and 7.7) with the same meso factor identified as the main source of information on skilled migration policy as well (see Figure 7.5). The education agents in Australia were a much bigger influence on the onshore Indian students (23%) as compared to onshore Chinese students (11%) aligned with the earlier finding of reliability of Indian students on the education agents for choosing Australia as the study abroad destination (see Figure 6.4) and reliance on the education agents for information on skilled migration policy as well (see Figure 7.5).

The data analysis in this chapter highlighted the impact of the meso level factors in influencing the onshore international students towards their decisions around continuation of migration.
8 Summary and discussion

8.1 Introduction

The higher education landscape has been changing over the past few decades, largely influenced by globalisation and internationalisation. International student mobility is at the core of the internationalisation of higher education, and has grown significantly over the past two decades (OECD, 2018). Largely driven by the economic rationale of international students contributing towards the economy of the host or destination country, many universities around the world are now interested in leveraging this mobility for the economic benefits and additional revenue generated from full-fee-paying international students.

Many of the world’s developed countries including Australia are investing in the promotion of higher education including via their education and migration policies, in an attempt to attract international students to acquire the sustainable highly skilled labour to support their economy (Suter and Jandl, 2008; Beine, Noël & Ragot, 2014; Wihlborg & Robson, 2018). There are various push and pull factors that have been identified as influencing the demand for international student mobility, ranging from social, political, cultural to economic (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; Verbik & Lasanowski, 2007; de Wit, 2008; Choudaha & de Wit, 2014; Han & Appelbaum, 2016; Gesing, 2017).

This research has focused on international offshore students from China and India that are considering Australia as a study destination and also the onshore students from China and India considering continuation of migration. It has examined the underlying factors influencing the initiation of migration from the home country, as well as those impacting on the continuation of migration following the completion of their studies in Australia. The findings from this research add to the understanding of international student mobility in the context of migration theories, further exploring the push and pull factors, especially at the meso level, that distinctly affect the different cohorts of international students.

This chapter provides a summary of the research while recapping the key findings and answering the research questions first introduced in Section 1.3 of Chapter 1.
8.2 Rationale for research

International student mobility has been growing remarkably over the past two decades. As per UNESCO and OECD reports (2018), 5 million students were enrolled outside their country of origin in 2016 as compared to 0.8 million in 1975. The USA, UK, Australia, Germany, France and New Zealand are regarded as key destination countries for international education, while China and India are considered primary source countries (OECD Education at a glance, 2018).

The various factors influencing an international student’s choice of host country include social, political, cultural and economic, which are known as push and pull factors that have been well researched by a number of scholars (Agarwal & Winkler, 1985; McMohan, 1992; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; Verbik & Lasanowski, 2007; de Wit, 2008; Macready & Tucker, 2011; OECD, 2012; Choudaha & de Wit, 2012; Han & Appelbaum, 2016; Gesing, 2017). The lack of educational opportunities in the home country has been identified as one of the primary push factor from these earlier studies along with many international students wanting to broaden their cultural and intellectual horizons to improve their career prospects globally.

Furthermore, the previous research suggests that while widely available study opportunities and internationally recognised qualifications are primary pull factors for the destination countries, student-friendly visa arrangements combined with post-graduation career opportunities appear to have more impact on students’ host country preferences (Macready and Tucker, 2011). As international students are often perceived as prospective high skilled workers as well as perfect migrants that are already integrated into the host country’s society, they have been determined as the ideal globalised labour market (Suter and Jandl, 2008; OECD, 2016; Chiou, 2017). These are reasons why many governments are actively adopting migration policies focused on retaining international students following their education in their host country (Chiswick, 2005; Bedford & Spoonley, 2014; Chiou, 2017).

International student mobility is often viewed as a form of temporary migration, with students moving from their home country to another country for a certain period of time. After completion of their studies, these students either return to their home countries with brain circulation skills, or remain in the host country which means a brain drain for the country of origin. These factors connect international student mobility with the various literature on
international migration example Push-Pull Migration Theory, New Economics of Labour Migration theory and others.

In the context of this study, Australia has a long history of providing higher education for international students, and is a key destination that had 7% of the global market share in 2016 (OECD, 2018). International student recruitment is a core element of the country’s government strategy to remain competitive in the globalised world. International education is now one of Australia’s major export industries, generating AU$30.3 billion dollars in 2017 (ABS, 2018), with full-fee-paying international student enrolments expanding from 47,000 in 1990 to 796,190 in 2017 (Department of Education & Training, 2018; see Appendix 15).

Primarily focused on skilled migration since the 1970s, Australia’s migration policies have changed considerably over that time, with a significant shift from family to skilled migration in the 1990s leading to a dramatic increase in the number of skilled migrants (Spinks, 2016). In 2013, Australia introduced PSW rights specifically aimed at retaining international students, which entitled some of them to remain in Australia for 2-4 years post-graduation to explore work opportunities in any field. Those students that managed to find work relevant to their qualification were then in with a strong chance of qualify for permanent migration to Australia (Productivity Commission, 2015).

Looking further afield, while some previous studies on international student mobility and skilled migration have mainly focused on cross-border flow trends and corresponding changes in the migration policies of various host countries (e.g. Gera & Songsakul, 2007; OECD 2012; International Migration Outlook, 2018), others have undertaken more general research in relation to the factors influencing an international student’s choice of host country (e.g. Agarwal & Winkler, 1985; McMohan, 1992; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; Verbik & Lasanowski, 2007; de Wit, 2008; Macready & Tucker, 2011; OECD, 2011). Yet most of these studies have examined international students as a single unit without considering the differences in motivation factors and intentions based on their country of origin (e.g. Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; Suter and Jandl 2006; Macready & Tucker, 2011). In particular, these literature gaps mean that the influence of host country government policy on international student mobility, including its impact over time and how this varies between different source countries, has not previously been examined.
As previously noted, China and India are primary source countries for international student mobility, including within Australia. International education demand in China is mostly fuelled by the country’s Open Door Policy that was introduced in 1978, while many Indian students are seeking international education due to a lack of education prospects in their home country (Jokila, 2015). Interestingly, similar to the international student mobility, India and China are also two of the top three source countries for skilled migrant visas (Department of Home Affairs, 2018; see Appendix 18). Some scholars have previously linked Indian student mobility with Australian migration policy terming it as a two-step migration (Baas, 2006; 2010; Hawthorne; 2010). However, the changes in migration policy since 2010 making most international students ineligible to directly apply for permanent residence post-graduation, have created a gap in the literature on migration policy acting as a pull factor for international students.

This research has aimed to bridge the identified literature gaps by investigating the nexus between international education and the migration policy, with a specific focus on Indian and Chinese students undertaking international education in Australia. This research has subsequently focused on the factors that influence the Indian and Chinese students’ decisions to study abroad and their intentions to remain in Australia or return to their home countries post-graduation. Australian migration policy acting as the macro level pull factor was examined in detail, combined with the influences from meso-level factors such as parents, family and friends, and education agents.

This thesis was structured in nine chapters with Chapter 1 providing the background on this research topic, including the reasoning behind it while framing the relevant primary questions as follows:

- What is the role of the Australian migration policy in attracting Chinese and Indian students to study in Australia?
- What role do meso-level factors play in Chinese and Indian students’ decision on initiation of migration to Australia?
- Which primary factors impact the decision-making of Chinese and Indian students in relation to whether they return to their home country or stay in Australia after completing their studies, and do these factors vary by nationality?
• How relevant are current theoretical migration approaches (e.g. Push-Pull Theory, Dual Labour Market Theory, Neo Economics of Labour Migration Theory, Historical Structuralist Theory, Network Theory and Institutional Theory) for explaining the movements of Chinese and Indian students to Australia?

• How could the migration theory be refined in the light of recent empirical evidence relating to initiation and continuation of migration decisions of Chinese and Indian students?

Chapter 2 provided an overview of globalisation and internationalisation in the context of higher education, with insights into the rationales and approaches towards it. The last section of the chapter focused on Australia’s expansion as an international higher education exporter, shaped by education policies at the national level since the 1990s.

Chapter 3 then discussed the international student mobility trends across different world regions, including examining the common flows of international student mobility via a comprehensive study of major destination and source countries.

The literature review in Chapter 4 examined existing research that has focused on determining the factors influencing the demand for international student mobility, including government policies aimed at retaining these students post-graduation. It also reviewed international student mobility through the lens of various migration theories, and consequently proposed a conceptual framework, which provided guidance on this study’s research design and methodology.

The conceptual framework for this research was founded on Yin’s case study approach (1993, 2003; 2018) by focusing on three different countries where Australia is the host country and China and India are the source countries. It identified various push and pull factors influencing international student mobility and also hypothesised the influence of meso-level factors that complement the macro- and micro-level factors. The framework has also highlighted two main decision stages for international students – initiation and continuation of migration – from which data was collected and analysed to answer the primary research questions.

As discussed in Chapter 5, a mixed-methods research design was adopted as the appropriate methodology for this study, to build on the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative
research. The quantitative data collection was in the form of an online questionnaire for both offshore and onshore Chinese and Indian students, while the student participants for the qualitative or semi-structured interview phase were selected via the survey data. Quantitative data was also collected from primary and secondary sources including international student mobility, education and post-graduation retention policies employed in Australia, while qualitative interviews were also held with education agents and other relevant stakeholders involved in Australia’s international higher education.

This mixed-methods approach for data collection and analysis was adopted and proved to be highly beneficial in answering this study’s research questions. That is, the quantitative phase led to collection of over 300 responses from offshore and onshore students from China and India. Furthermore, the secondary data was in the form of published academic research, education and migration statistics, were either freely available online. The qualitative data further enriched the data based on the more humanised interviews where emotions and reasoning were better shared. In particular, this phase provided deeper understanding of the influence of the meso-level factors on the students’ decisions, including their interdependence on other macro- and micro-level factors.

The next two chapters focused on the data analysis of this study’s main findings. Chapter 6 first focused on the initiation of migration, including studying the factors that influenced the students’ decisions to move from China or India to Australia. Chapter 7 then focused on the continuation of migration, analysing the factors that contributed to the decision-making process among these Chinese and Indian students’ after completing their studies in Australia.

This current chapter provides the summary of this research, the findings and presents the points for discussion that is followed by the conclusion in the Chapter 9.

### 8.3 Summary of the findings

Extensive detail on this study’s analytical findings has been presented in chapters 6 and 7, which is further summarised in this section, including an interpretation of the results that helped answer the main research questions. The analysis was split into the two distinct phases of initiation and continuation of migration, which as per Chapter 4’s theoretical framework have
been defined as the initial decision on where to study abroad while still in the home country, followed by the decisions made after the completion of their studies abroad.

### 8.3.1 Initiation of migration

There appear to be multiple factors that influence the student’s decision to study abroad and to choose a particular country. As observed in this study, this decision-making process is often complex, as it is influenced by a range of push and pull factors at the macro, micro and meso levels. It was also evident from this study’s findings that while there were some commonalities in relation to this decision-making, the two Chinese and Indian student cohorts were influenced differently by such factors.

In the context of this study, at the micro level the findings indicate that most Chinese and Indian students are driven by economic rationale, as they are focused on improving their career prospects and earnings in the home country or in Australia post-graduation. Better career prospects in the home country or in Australia after graduation were two of the primary reasons why these students decided to study in Australia, although Indian students placed more emphasis on better career prospects in Australia. An interpretation of these finding is that most of the Indian students were considering post-graduation opportunities in Australia well before commencing their studies. The interview phase involving education agents and other relevant stakeholders further highlighted that Chinese students are often more keen to return home post-graduation, largely due to the strong Chinese economy, with some education agents suggesting the Indian students are more likely to explore all options available to them post-graduation.

At the macro level, the teaching quality/academic reputation of institutions in Australia was one of the key reasons for it being the preferred study destination among all students. Among the Chinese students it was the highest ranked, while it was one of the top three among the Indian students. Teaching quality and academic reputation are commonly regarded as pull factors for a study destination, as also identified in previous studies (e.g. Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; de Wit, 2008; OECD, 2012; Macready & Tucker, 2011; Han & Appelbaum, 2016). This was further confirmed in this research via the student, education agent and university representative qualitative interviews, where high regard was given to the quality of education, followed by the reputation and rankings of the universities in Australia.
Another primary macro-level factor is the migration policy of Australia that has continued to evolve, from first focusing on attracting a range of migrants to now focusing on attracting specific workers and temporary migrants including international students to meet the skilled labour needs of the economy. The Australian Government has committed to retain the international students post-graduation via key policy changes that encourage them to transition from temporary to permanent settlement via the skilled migration strategy.

It has been argued that the period between 2001 and 2008 led to the development of the nexus between international student mobility and skilled migration in Australia, which is when the ‘two-step migration’ term was coined (Jackling, 2007; Birrell et al., 2006; Hawthorne 2010). Following the announcement of major policy reforms in 2008 by the Australian Government, the direct route to permanent residency was removed in 2009 and international students were rather offered access to the PSW rights. International students who are able to find work in their own field of education may become eligible for permanent migration in future. Such recent migration policy reforms in Australia, aimed at international student mobility, highlighted the need to explore the relevance of this macro-level factor with respect to attracting international students from China and India. Specifically, the aim was to answer this primary research question:

*What is the role of the Australian migration policy in attracting Chinese and Indian students to study in Australia?*

This research has shown that post-graduation PSW rights or permanent residency opportunities are a primary reason for Indian students to choose Australia as a study destination at the initiation of migration stage. However, this does not appear to be as influential among the Chinese counterparts, which was further validated when these students were asked why they did not choose an alternative country as their study destination. The absence or limited availability of PSW work visa and/or permanent residency post-graduation was the main reason why Indian students did not choose other host destinations. Further evidence of this is the UK’s decline in attracting these students since its restrictions of such visas were introduced in 2012 (CABS, 2016; HESA, 2018).

The interview phase in this study also showcased mixed sentiments with respect to the influence of migration policy or PSW rights among the Chinese and Indian students. Some of
the Indian education agents contended that Australia’s migration policy is one of the key reasons for the country’s popularity as a study destination for Indian students. Other Indian education agents referenced the cost factor of studying abroad as a significant financial commitment, but that the option to remain in the host country post-graduation based on Australia’s migration policy helped to justify this. A university representative agreed that the migration policy or PSW rights play an important role in international students choosing their destination country, with most students preferring to stay and work there for at least two years post-graduation. The family perspective of migration policy was also factored in by one of the Chinese agents, who commented that the family as a whole generally consider this, based on the likely benefits when their children graduate.

However, not all of the interviewed stakeholders agreed on migration policy being the positive influence on the choice of study destination. For example, one of the Chinese education agents argued that Australia’s current migration policy does not qualify many students directly after graduation for the permanent residency. One of the Australian Government representatives agreed that the influence of the country’s migration policy has diminished considerably, due to more opportunities available to students in their home country. That is, the number of international students returning home post-graduation is increasing as the economies of home countries are strengthening, based on better career prospects. This sentiment was echoed by other Chinese education agents who agreed that most Chinese students plan to return home post-graduation.

In contrast, many of the Indian education agents suggested that Indian students were still influenced by the migration policy, but more so by the PSW rights option following the completion of their studies. Some also highlighted how these students would like to work for a couple of years in Australia before they return to their home country. It was also highlighted that this is not just a consideration for students but also their parents who are investing in their children by providing access to foreign education. In line with this, one of the university representatives added that study abroad is a huge financial investment for the student and their family and they like to see return on this investment by having the option of students working in the host country following graduation.

This survey’s findings have helped in understanding the influence of Australia’s migration policy as a pull factor for Chinese and Indian students. They have highlighted that while
migration policy seems to have diminished in its influence, the availability of PSW rights has a positive influence. However, it is also evident that these PSW rights have different levels of appeal based on the differing findings among the Chinese and Indian students. This study’s offshore Chinese students appeared less influenced by PSW rights, with most intending to return to their home country post-graduation at the initial stage of migration. This aligned with this cohort prioritising better career options in their home country following graduation as the reason for choosing Australia as their study destination. In contrast, their Indian student counterparts were more likely to be influenced by PSW rights, which was one of the main reasons why they and their families considered study abroad as a beneficial financial investment.

Furthermore, when asked about their post-graduation intentions, most of the offshore Chinese students intended to return home at this initial stage of migration and did not consider PSW rights or permanent residency as important. Furthermore, most of the offshore Chinese students were not aware of Australia’s skilled migration policy, which helps explain their strong intentions of returning to China post-graduation.

In contrast, among the offshore Indian students there were higher intentions to apply for PSW rights in Australia post-graduation rather than returning to the home country. In addition, majority of the Indian students considered PSW rights and permanent residency of Australia as important. Most of the offshore Indian students were also aware of the skilled migration policy or the point system to apply for permanent migration of Australia, possibly because of the significant influence of education agents on their decision to choose the study destination. These findings highlight that PSW rights is a key pull factor among Indian students, as further validated by Australia’s Department of Home Affairs (2018) that recently identified India as the leading nationality for the granting of 485 temporary graduate visas.

These above-mentioned findings indicate that among the offshore students planning to study in Australia there are significantly different post-graduation intentions based on country of origin. The primary difference is that while most of the Chinese students were focused on returning home post-graduation, many of the Indian students were considered remaining in Australia either temporarily or permanently via PSW rights or permanent migration options.
As conceptualised in this study’s theoretical framework (see Section 4.4 of Chapter 4), there are meso-level factors that have a significant influence on an international student’s choice of destination at the initiation of migration stage, as well as later on in the continuation of migration stage. As such factors have not previously been delved into in other relevant studies, this research has focused on them via the following question:

*What role do meso-level factors play in Chinese and Indian students’ decision on initiation of migration to Australia?*

As identified in this study’s theoretical framework, parents and other family plus friends and education agents are the main meso-level actors influencing international students at the initiation of migration stage. They were therefore included in the survey questions to assess their level of influence on these students in relation to their initial decision to study abroad.

It has previously been identified that education agents have a significant influence on shaping expectations with respect to potential international study destinations (Productivity Commission, 2015). That is, they are key players in the international education industry where they advise and assist students in choosing their destination country as well as specific institutions and courses. With Australia commonly regarded as a primary destination within the international education realm, these agents are highly valued by the country’s institutions as well. In 2012, just over half of international students that enrolled in Australian institutions were recruited through agents (Productivity Commission, 2015).

In the context of this study, these research findings have highlighted that education agents have a far stronger influence on Indian rather than Chinese students. This is likely due to the Australian Government’s risk-focused introduction of GTE criteria in 2009 (Spinks, 2016), where India is regarded at a higher country risk level as opposed to China. Thus, Australian universities often seek education agent assistance to check on the relevant documentation provided by students including their level of genuineness to come to Australia for study purposes. This was further validated during the interview phase of this study, where one of the university representatives cited 78% of Indian students being recruited via education agents, with the reliance on these agents increasing since the introduction of the GTE criteria.
In addition to education agents, students’ family and friends are commonly seen as social networks that they rely on for deciding where to study at the initial migration stage. This study’s literature review has uncovered that additional factors including post-colonial ties, language and similar culture can also assist with these migration flows. The family and friends are seen as a support network in the new country by students and parents as per the comments made by Indian education agents. While both offshore student nationalities were positively influenced by this factor, the Chinese students were much more influenced by family and friends in home country as opposed to family and friends in Australia. In comparison, the Indian students were more evenly influenced by recommendations from family and friends in Australia and in their home country.

While both the Chinese and Indian students had friends or family members that have studied or permanently living in Australia, this was more common among the Indian students. India has been the top country of origin for permanent migrants in Australia since 2012 (Department of Home Affairs, 2018), which helps explains this larger Indian diaspora presence and influence. Furthermore, many of the students interviewed in this study were more likely to relate to the experiences of their friends and family, as supported by some of the Chinese education agents who pointed out that students are more likely to trust their friends and relatives than any advertisements or agents. This aligns with the observation in this study that Chinese students are less reliant on education agents when deciding where to study abroad.

In addition to the above meso-level factors, it was observed in this study that parental influence has a strong influence on students’ initiation of migration decisions, more so in the case of Chinese students as opposed to the Indian students. In addition to the obvious impact of the relationship students have with their parents, this study’s interviews highlighted that financial reasons also contribute. That is, a large proportion of both the Chinese and Indian students were dependent on their parents for their international education funding. Some of the students noted they had altered their choice of university after factoring in the financial capacity as suggested by their parents.

It also emerged that in some cases the parents were not only primary influencers of studying abroad, but also the initiators of this concept. This aligned with the HSBC (2017) finding that parents were keen for their children to study abroad and gain better experiences. In this study, many of the education agents that were interviewed also noted the parents’ influence
throughout the decision-making process, starting with the selection of country, institution and course. It was also highlighted that some parents are driven by their own rationale when considering a study destination for their children, including academic reputation, quality and cost, safety, familiarity with the country, as well as having family and friends living in the host country. An Indian education agent added that some Indian parents also consider PSW work options in Australia from the financial perspective.

While Australia is commonly regarded as a primary destination for international education, the student respondents in this research indicated that other countries were also considered. The USA, Canada, the UK and New Zealand were the main four alternative study destinations considered by Chinese students at the initiation of migration stage. Canada was the first choice followed by the USA, New Zealand and UK among the Indian student counterparts. There were various reasons why these students did not end up choosing the alternative destination, with the main one being they did not have any friends or family in the other countries. This aligns with the anecdotal evidence collected during the interview stage, where the students suggested they already had family or friends either studying or working in Australia and preferred to be with them to tap into the support network.

Among the Chinese students in particular, parental influence was also a primary reason why they did not choose the alternative destination – this was almost on par with the influence of family and friends for Chinese students. Another reason was cost, which is somewhat linked to parental influence. Cost is generally a micro-level factor, but can also be a meso-level factor based on students’ dependence on their parents for funding.

At the macro level, the primary reason why a student did not choose an alternative destination country was the absence of sufficient PSW rights or limited options to apply for permanent residency post-graduation. The Indian students were more inclined towards this macro factor that aligned well with the reasons cited earlier on why students chose Australia as a study destination.
8.3.2 Continuation of migration

Following their completion of studies, most international students have the choice to either return to their home countries or remain in the host country on a temporary or permanent basis, which has been defined as the continuation of migration as per this study’s theoretical framework (see Section 4.4 of Chapter 4). It was hypothesised under the framework that similar to the initiation of migration stage, there various factors that contribute to the student’s continuation of migration decisions, which might have a different influence based on the country of origin. The corresponding research question framed in this study was:

Which primary factors impact the decision-making of Chinese and Indian students in relation to whether they return to their home country or stay in Australia after completing their studies, and do these factors vary by nationality?

To help understand the factors contributing to students’ continuation of migration decision-making, it was important to delve into the intentions of this study’s onshore students following the completion of their studies in Australia. This research aimed to identify when students made the relevant decisions, and whether this changed between the initiation and continuation of migration stages.

These research findings found that only one-third of the onshore Chinese students changed their intentions on continuation of migration during the course of studies, in contrast with up to two-thirds of their Indian counterparts. Between the offshore and onshore Chinese students, other than the notable decrease in intentions of onshore Chinese students with respect to returning home post-graduation, there was very little difference including in relation to applying for PSW rights or permanent residency. In contrast, the amount of onshore Indian students that intended to apply for PSW rights post-graduation was double the amount of offshore Indian students. In alignment with this, their intentions of returning to the home country dropped significantly from the initiation to continuation of migration stages.

This study’s findings around the importance of PSW rights to onshore Indian students was in alignment with the Department of Home Affairs (2018) finding that India was the leading nationality for the granting of 485 temporary graduate skilled visas in 2017. Furthermore, while none of the Indian students intended on applying for permanent residency post-graduation,
many were aware of the points system within Australia’s skilled migration policy. The Department of Home Affairs (2018) data highlights that majority of the 485 Graduate Skilled visa holders including onshore Indian students applied further for a skilled migration visa. This suggests that many of these onshore Indian students are choosing the PSW stream within the 485 temporary graduate skilled visa framework to enable them to meet the minimum points required to apply for permanent migration in Australia.

There were a number of factors that influenced Chinese and Indian students’ decision in choosing to stay in Australia after completion of their studies. At the macro level, good career prospects and better quality of life were two main factors that positively influenced both Chinese and Indian students. The intention to gain work experience in Australia was the micro level factor that impacted Indian students much more than the Chinese. This validated the previous finding of better career prospects in Australia as one of the main pull factors for Indian students. Possibly linked to this factor was the consideration of higher salary in Australia by the Indian students at the micro level. This showed that the government policies on the post-study work and migration opportunities are quite relevant in influencing a student’s decision on continuation of migration with Indian students much more impacted by these policies as compared to their Chinese counterparts. The nexus between education and migration remains relevant to certain extent as Indian students prefer to stay back in Australia following the completion of their studies.

At the meso level, the parental influence, family, friends and the diaspora network in Australia played a major role in a student’s decision to stay back in Australia post-graduation with both Chinese and Indian students impacted by this factor. As suggested by Indian education agents, the parents preferred students to stay back in Australia as they considered working in Australia post-graduation as return on study abroad investment. Chinese parents were also identified as one of the main sources of information on Australia’s skilled migration policy by Chinese students. The slightly larger parental influence on Chinese students is in line with the previous findings of Chinese students being influenced by parents when selecting the study abroad destination. The Chinese one-child policy that has been prevalent for long time adds to the parental influence factor as Chinese students look to either return to their parents to look after them or invite them to join the students in Australia.
Around half of all the Chinese and Indian onshore students respondents identified family and friends in Australia as one of the influential meso-level factor for them to considering staying back in Australia after completion of their studies. The established diaspora, family and friends in the host country acts as a support network and the influence was reflected in the interviews of students and the education agents. This meso level group of factors was the biggest influencers in changing intentions of the Chinese and Indian students during their studies in Australia and the main source of information for the Skilled Migration policy of Australia for students.

The third meso level factor was the education agents in Australia that seemed to influence Indian students more than the Chinese cohort. The onshore student groups also relied heavily on the education agents as their source of information for Skilled Migration policy of Australia. These findings are again similar to the influence education agents had on the two cohorts of students while they were in their home country at the stage of initiation of migration.

Based on the above-mentioned findings, it is clear that onshore Indian students’ intentions are more inclined towards staying in Australia after completion of their studies. Some of the onshore international students maintained their earlier initiation of migration intentions, while others changed their intentions while undertaking higher education in Australia. Furthermore, while most of the Chinese students maintained the intention of returning home across the two migration stages, there were many Indian students that considered change of intentions to apply for PSW rights as they moved to continuation of migration stage, which highlights the difference in student decisions and intentions based on country of origin.

### 8.4 Theoretical approaches

This research suggests that international student mobility is a form of temporary migration involving the two distinct stages of initiation and continuation of migration. The research findings also suggest there are micro, macro and meso-level factors involved in student decisions across the two migration stages, which brings different migration theories (e.g. Push-Pull Theory, New Economics of Labour Migration Theory) into relevance in the context of international student mobility. This research therefore aimed to answer the following questions in relation to this study’s theoretical framework:
How relevant are current theoretical migration approaches (e.g. Push-Pull Theory, Dual Labour Market Theory, Neo Economics of Labour Migration Theory, Historical Structuralist Theory, Network Theory and Institutional Theory) for explaining the movements of Chinese and Indian students to Australia?

How could the migration theory be refined in the light of recent empirical evidence relating to initiation and continuation of migration decisions of Chinese and Indian students?

There are various migration theories that apply in the context of this study’s focus on Chinese and Indian students moving to and remaining in Australia.

For example, as per the original, migration-focused Push-Pull Theory (Lee, 1996), both the Chinese and Indian students in this study were impacted by factors in their home country that pushed them to study abroad as well as pull factors from the host country that attracted them. Among these Chinese students, the main pull factor was teaching quality or academic reputation of the Australian institutions, as well as better career prospects at home linked with studying abroad. These factors were similarly important to the Indian student counterparts, except there was another highly regarded macro-level pull factor which was the option of PSW rights or permanent residency. This gives the impression of the relevance of the nexus between the education and migration in the case of Indian students. Thus, while the literature review highlighted the primary push factor for international students as the lack of education opportunities at home, these research findings do not rate this as highly. This is possibly due to recent education reforms in some developing countries, as well as their development of home-based institutions and the rise of transnational education. China has already been recognised as a developing host country that attracts international students (Institute of International Education, 2018).

Furthermore, both the Chinese and Indian students at the initiation of migration stage within this research agreed that a primary reason for them choosing to study in Australia was to better their career prospects. Good career prospects and higher salaries were also highly at the continuation of migration stage, which have direct relevance to the Neo Economics of Labour Migration Theory. That is, Australia appears to offer opportunities for international students to maximise their skills and knowledge, leading to better career prospects at the macro level.
While at the micro level, the students perceive studying abroad as a way to learn better skills in the competitive environment and maximise their income opportunities.

As a primary English-speaking study destination, Australia’s focus on international education and skilled migration has been shaped by various national policy reforms operating at the macro level, which is closely connected to the Dual Labour Market Theory of Migration. For example, due to Australia’s ageing population its government has focused on the import of highly skilled labour to meet economic demands. This includes providing international students with the opportunity to work part-time while studying in Australia, and to also apply for PSW rights post-graduation, with some then eligible to apply for permanent residency. It can therefore be argued that this skills demand in Australia is one of the key reasons for development of it as an international study destination and its contribution towards the nexus between international education and migration.

Another migration theory that operates at the macro level is Historical Structuralist Theory, which is closely linked to the World Systems Theory. In the context of this study, Australia is seen as a developed nation that supplies education via its academic reputation, teaching quality and high-ranking universities, while countries like China and India are seen as developing nations with the demand for education. The theory suggests that such international student mobility leads to ‘brain gain’ for destination countries like Australia and ‘brain drain’ for developing countries like China and India. Yet this research has shown that many Chinese students intend to return home after completing their studies in Australia, unlike their Indian counterparts, which is in contradiction with the rationale behind the Historical Structuralist Theory or the World Systems Theory.

This research has incorporated the influence of meso-level factors on the initiation and continuation of the migration into its theoretical framework, that is unique to this study, based on findings that have highlighted their strong relevance corresponding with the migration theories operating at the meso-level (e.g. Neo Economies of Labour Migration Theory; Institutional Theory). In particular, parents appear to play a significant role in the decision-making process of the students across both stages of initiation and continuation of migration, which was more prevalent among the Chinese versus Indian students. This finding was supported by the interviewed education agents, who also pointed out that the decision to study abroad was generally made not just by the students but also their parents, largely because of
their dependence on their parents for financial support. In the context of the Indian students, the Indian education agents contended that many parents consider the academic reputation, the cost, as well as the prospective work and migration opportunities as beneficial in the long term, including the opportunity for the students to support their families at home. This economic rationale makes it a collective household strategy, meaning it is relatable to the Neo Economies of Labour Migration Theory.

The other two primary meso-level factors identified in this research related to the Network Theory of Migration and the Institutional Theory of Migration were the influence of family and friends, as well as the education agents on decisions made during both the initiation and continuation of migration stages. At least two-thirds of both the Chinese and Indian students knew at least one family member or friend who has previously studied in Australia, and even more knew at least one that was permanently living and/or currently working in Australia. In line with this, the Australian states of New South Wales and Victoria have the largest amounts of international student enrolment, which corresponds with them having the largest Chinese and Indian diaspora communities. These well-established diaspora networks provide the international students with the support and confidence to settle in the host country. Furthermore, one of the main reasons why the surveyed students did not choose another country other than Australia to study was the non-existence of friend or family links. In particular, family or friends already in Australia was the main influence at the continuation of migration stage, and they were also the main source of the information in relation to Australia’s skilled migration policy. All of this validates the relevance of the Network Theory of Migration in the context of international student mobility.

Furthermore, the apparent reliance of this study’s Chinese and Indian students on education agents at both stages of migration is connected to the Institutional Theory of Migration. Among the Indian students, education agents were the primary influence on their decisions with respect to choosing where to study at the initiation of migration phase. This research also shows that education agents play an indispensable role in the international education industry of Australia. Majority of Australian institutions work with education agents to help market and promote their courses to international students, with agents organising various collaborative events such as education fairs where they invite the students and parents to meet with university representatives. Thus, in addition to helping shape student perceptions, they also have an influence on both parents and universities with respect to international student mobility.
These agents not only help the students with their admission to study in Australia, but also with their visa applications. At the same time, they assist the universities in doing the GTE tests on students, which is mandatory under Australia’s current education visa application conditions. Most Australian institutions have well-developed contractual arrangements with education agents to support promotion of their courses to prospective students, and are paid commissions or a percentage fee once the student has enrolled. Most of these education agents have branches in Australia and are also involved in advising students on continuation of migration after the completion of their studies. Among the students surveyed in this research, education agents were one of the top three influencers of their changed intentions at the continuation of migration phase. Although similar to the initiation migration phase, the Indian students were far more influenced by these agents than their Chinese student counterparts. In addition, these agents were the top source of information on Australia’s skilled migration policy for both student cohorts at the continuation of migration phase.

The above-mentioned findings confirm that many migration theories are relevant to international student mobility including students’ migration decisions. This study’s theoretical framework has also helped to identify the actors that contribute towards both the initiation and continuation of migration, which is an extension of the former studies that have used Push-Pull Theory to explain international student mobility (e.g. Altbach et. al., 1985; McMohan, 1992; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; de Wit, 2008; Macready & Tucker, 2011; Gesing, 2017). That is, in former research there has been one general classification of international students, where the different push and pull factors influencing them have been considered as a whole. This research has identified that distinct student cohorts, such as specific nationalities, are influenced differently by the push and pull factors. Furthermore, even within the same nationality there are distinctions based on student age, gender and region, as well as the stage of migration they are at, proving that the hypothesis was correctly formed during the development of the theoretical framework for this research.

Historically, most theoretical approaches have focused on the initial stage of migration based on the impact of macro- and micro-level factors. As shown in this research, there needs to be greater consideration of the other micro-, macro- and meso-level factors (e.g. better career prospects, PSW rights, parents, education agents) that influence the decision-making process of students at the continuation of migration phase. This research has also shown that such
continuation of migration intentions and decisions can be fluid based on what international education stage they are at. In particular, the Indian students surveyed in this research changed their plans and intentions as they progressed through their studies in Australia.

In particular, the findings from this research have highlighted the significant influence of meso-level factors including parents, friends, diaspora and education agents on international student decision-making. These factors have not traditionally been seen as major influencers when these students are deciding on when to study abroad and/or where to work and live after completing their studies; yet this research has shown their role is not only as supporting actors. In the context of this study, the cost of international education is particularly high in developed countries like Australia, which is regarded as one of the most expensive countries to live and study (HSBC, 2017), and this means that parents providing the primary funding for study abroad are lead actors when it comes to students selecting this country, as well as the relevant institution and course.

In addition to parents, the social networks including diaspora, family and friends are the other main actors that have emerged from this research as major influencers of international students’ decision-making. Although the results have also highlighted how the decision on where to study abroad can differ based on the student’s country of origin, with this study showing that the Chinese students prioritised the advice and experiences of friends at home while the Indian students focused on their friends still in Australia. International students appear to attach high value to their existing social networks, often providing successful examples of what to aspire to as well as guaranteeing support for these students planning to settle in a completely new environment. In this study, existing large Indian diaspora in Australia also influenced the Indian students with respect to staying on in the country post-graduation, contributing directly towards continuation of migration. While there have been some subtle references to friends and family as influencers of international student mobility in former studies (Kehm, 2005; Maringe & Carter, 2007; Han & Appelbaum, 2016), this factor, particularly in the context of diaspora needs to be given more importance from a theoretical perspective.

As also shown in this study, education agents play a significant role in shaping the Indian students’ decisions right from the beginning when they are choosing where to study abroad (initiation of migration). The influence of these agents also appears to be expanding, based on most Australian institutions now relying on them to conduct the mandatory GTE tests, which
also strengthens their level of importance among the international students. From the student and skilled visa perspective, many international students see these agents as the experts, meaning they are also their main source of information with respect to skilled migration policy. Thus, it is surprising that education agents have not previously been acknowledged as key international study mobility influences from a theoretical perspective.

This research has brought these meso-level factors to the forefront, including their relevance to international student decision-making at both the initiation and continuation of migration stages. The decision-making process of these students is often complex, and from the theoretical perspective it is a symphony of macro-, micro- and meso-level factors. International student mobility can therefore not be explained or theorised by only referring to one single migration theory alone. There is a need to combine various migration theories to factor in social and cultural rationale along with the more generic focus on the economic and political rationale of international student mobility and potential migration.

8.5 Summary

This chapter has summarised this research’s key findings – it has put these forward for further discussion. It first reflected on the rationale for this research and summarised the corresponding literature review. This chapter also recapped the main research questions centred on the theoretical framework, presented the summary of the key findings to ensure the research questions were answered.

With respect to the first research question in relation to the relevance of Australian migration policy in attracting Chinese and Indian students to study there, the findings have shown that its influence has diminished due to the shifts in migration policy. Most students are no longer eligible to apply for permanent residency post-graduation, and some are instead opting to apply for PSW visas. Unlike the Indian students that were surveyed, the Chinese students’ preference is to return home post-graduation, based on the perception of better career prospects in China. This suggests that that Australia’s migration policy impacts the international students differently based on their country of origin.

This study’s theoretical framework has also hypothesised that meso-level factors have a more significant role in influencing international students, with the corresponding question focused
on their influence on the Chinese and Indian students’ initiation of migration decisions. The parents, family and friends of the students, as well as education agents were identified as the main meso-level actors. Education agents have been identified as influential meso-level factors because they provide guidance to the international student on where to study abroad and also help them to choose the relevant institution and course, and in the process assist them in applying for the right visa. These agents also often work with the institutions to market and promote their courses, subsequently ‘feeding’ the students to the institutions for which they are often paid a commission by the institutions. Although this impact of education agent appears to vary based on the student’s nationality, with the Indian students in this research far more influenced by them than the Chinese students. In the context of this study, this could possibly be linked to the education policy of Australia, where India is seen as a high-risk country which means the country’s students are more dependent on these agents to apply for student visas.

In addition to the education agents, international students’ family and friends have been highlighted in this research as the social networks where they gain recommendations on where to study abroad. In the context of this study, the Chinese students were much more influenced by family and friends in the home country (initiation of migration), while the Indian students were more likely to be influenced by recommendations from family and friends in the host country of Australia (continuation of migration). The preference of Chinese students to return home post-graduation probably strengthens the finding that they are more influenced by friends and family at home.

At the initiation of migration stage, the Chinese students were much more influenced by recommendations from their parents compared with their Indian counterparts. Outside of the obvious relationship that students have with their parents, the interview stage in this research also highlighted how their financial contributions can be the primary reason why they are so influential, which can even result in them initiating the idea of studying abroad. Some of the Indian education agents that were interviewed in this study further highlighted how the parents can be the primary influencer of international students considering their PSW options in the host country post-graduation, given their financial investment.

With respect to the third main research question in this study in relation to the continuation of migration phase, there were various factors highlighted in this research. At the macro level, good career prospects and better quality of life were primary factors that positively influenced
both the Chinese and Indian students in this research, which in particular validated the perception of better career prospects in Australia as one of the main pull factors for Indian students. This perception among the Indian students is possibly linked to their consideration of higher salaries in Australia, which is at the micro level. The relevance of the macro-level government policies with respect to PSW and migration opportunities appeared to impact Indian students a lot more in this study than their Chinese counterparts.

At the meso level, parents, family, friends and the diaspora network in Australia appeared to play a major role in the student’s decision to remain in country or return home post-graduation. As in the initiation migration stage, the Chinese parents were far more influential than their Indian counterparts at continuation of migration stage. These parents were also identified as one of the main sources of information on Australia’s skilled migration policy among the Chinese students. China’s one-child policy is no doubt relevant to these findings, adding to the parental influence factor as Chinese students look to either return to their parents to look after them or invite them to join them in Australia. As suggested by some of the Indian education agents interviewed in this study, Indian parents instead prefer their student children remain in Australia, considering their international education as a financial investment as well as an opportunity to remain and work in the host country post-graduation.

Around half of all the Chinese and Indian onshore students that were surveyed identified family and friends in Australia as one of the main reasons for them considering remaining in the country after completion of their studies. Furthermore, this meso-level group of actors was the biggest influencer with respect to these students changing their post-graduation intentions while completing their studies in Australia. The family and friends in Australia were also their main source of information with respect to Australia’s skilled migration policy.

As shown in this study, the other main meso-level factor consisting of education agents had a more significant influence on the Indian students than the Chinese students with respect to continuation of migration decisions. In particular, these agents were the third strongest influencer of Indian students, often leading to their change of intentions post-graduation. Many of the onshore Chinese and Indian students relied heavily on education agents as their source of the information with respect to Australia’s skilled migration policy.
The last two research questions were focused on the relevance of migration theories with respect to the movements and decisions among the Chinese and Indian students undertaking international education in Australia, including how they could be refined. With respect to the commonly regarded Push-Pull Theory that involves both macro and micro factors, this research identified a range of push and pull factors that validate its relevance, although its limitation is that there is no consideration of meso-level factors.

Furthermore, one of the key reasons identified in this study for both Chinese and Indian students to undertake international education in Australia was to better their career prospects. Even at the continuation of migration stage, the key reasons behind these students’ deciding to stay in Australia were good career prospects and higher salaries, which have direct relevance to the Neoclassical Economic Theory of Migration.

The influence of post-graduation permanent residency and PSW opportunities is linked with the Dual Labour Market Theory of Migration. This is because most international students are able to work part-time while they study in Australia, and can also apply for the PSW visa after completion of their studies. It can therefore also be argued that Australia’s skills demand is one of the key reasons for the country establishing itself as an international study destination contributing towards the nexus between the education and migration.

As per the Historical Structuralist Theory and World Systems Theory which operate at the macro level, Australia is a developed nation that supplies international education to primary source countries like China and India which are commonly seen as developing nations with the demand for such education. While these two theories suggest this leads to brain gain for the developed country and brain drain for the developing countries, some other studies (e.g. Gesing, 2017) have highlighted that international students that remain in the host country often develop diaspora networks with the home country which lead to brain circulation rather than brain drain, and also contribute economically to the home country by sending remittances.

Furthermore, the well-established diaspora of Chinese and Indian nationals in Australia acts as a pull factor and provides support for these incoming international students as they settle into the host country. The students trust these networks more than anyone else, and often look to replicate their positive experiences, which brings the Network Theory of Migration into relevance.
In addition, the heavy reliance of international students especially those from India on education agents, as identified in this study, is connected to the Institutional Theory of Migration. Education agents were ranked in the top three influencers with respect to change of intentions among both the Chinese and Indian students at the continuation of migration phase. Although similar to the initiation of migration phase, the Indian students were far more influenced by these agents compared with their Chinese counterparts, who were also identified as a main source of information on Australia’s skilled migration policy among both student cohorts.

In summary, these research findings confirm that various migration theories are relevant to international student mobility including their initiation and continuation of migration decisions. That is, international student mobility cannot be explained or theorised based on one migration theory alone. Historically, most theoretical approaches have focused on the initial stage of migration involving macro- and micro-level factors. As shown in this research, there needs to be consideration of other factors at the micro, macro and meso levels that are influential towards the decision-making process of students when they arrive at the crossroads of either staying in the country or returning home. There is a need to combine the migration theories to consider the social and cultural rationale along with the generic focus on economic and political rationale of international student mobility and migration.
9 Conclusion

This final chapter provides the concluding remarks with respect to this study, including its contribution to the literature on international student mobility and skilled migration, consideration of the limitations of this research, a discussion on its policy implications, and suggestions on directions for future research.

9.1 Concluding remarks

As a developed nation facing ageing population and skills shortages challenges, international student mobility is one of Australia’s primary investment channels for attracting highly skilled migrants (Suter & Jandl, 2006; 2008; Beine, Noël & Ragot, 2014; Chiou, 2017). Now one of its major export industries, the contribution of international education to the Australian economy is substantial and is therefore something its government continues to focus on. With diminishing research and education funding from the government, Australian universities are focused on the recruitment of international students to stimulate revenue generation from their tuition fees. This highlights economic rationale as a leading reason for Australia’s interest in international student mobility. Australia has also put in place a number of varying policy measures over the years to retain the international students in country following the completion of their studies. Linking this to the literature on internationalisation of higher education, in the developed country context (i.e. Australia) international student mobility can be linked to the skilled migration and revenue generation approach, while in the case of developing countries like China and India the capacity building approach takes priority.

This research has focused on the international student mobility of Chinese and Indian students with respect to undertaking higher education in Australia, which has provided beneficial insights into the influential factors of international student mobility at different stages. This study’s conceptual framework separates such student movements into initiation and continuation of migration stages, and also highlights the relevance of meso-level factors within each decision-making process.

These findings suggest that international student initiation of migration decisions to study abroad are shaped by a variety of motives and expectations – that is, a range of push and pull factors that operate at macro, micro and meso levels. They illustrate that these students are much more influenced by macro-level pull factors such as academic reputation, teaching
quality and better career outcomes as opposed to push factors such as lack of education opportunities in home country. That is, students are essentially driven by the economic rationale when making initiation of migration decisions. The findings also show that other macro-level pull factors such as migration policy, PSW rights and education policy impact differently on international students based on their country of origin, with further variation based on their gender, age and region.

Furthermore, while cost is often the anti-pull factor, in this study it has highlighted the significant influence of parents that generally finance their children’s international education plans. The results also show that family members and friends have an impact as pull factors, bringing in the relevance of social and network factors at the meso-level. In the case of the Indian students surveyed in this research, education agents have also emerged as key meso-level influencers that provide guidance and assistance with choosing the study destination, the admission and visa application process. In addition, the availability of PSW rights was a primary pull factor among the Indian students, and should therefore be a key consideration for host countries wanting to attract and retain international students from India. With respect to Chinese students as the other major source country, a focus on or promotion of teaching quality and the rankings and reputation of the institutions will assist host countries in attracting these international students.

The findings from the research also show that international students’ continuation of migration intentions can change, although this often varies based on their nationality as well as their age and gender. In the context of this study, the Indian students were more prone to changing their intentions than the Chinese students. In addition, the main influencers of international students changing their intentions are meso-level factors such as family or friends in the other host country, as well as other diaspora including classmates and friends, as well as education agents. This meso-level factors influence shows the impact of the social network and diaspora links on international students, including their influence on them changing their continuation of migration intentions. In the case of the Chinese students surveyed in this research, parental influence was a significant meso-level factor with respect to many of them planning to return home post-graduation to look after their parents. It needs to be acknowledged that there is lot of interplay and interdependence between all the micro, macro and meso level factors.
When considering this study’s findings in the theoretical context, at the macro and micro level the Push-Pull Theory of Migration remains most relevant to international student mobility along with Dual Labour Market Theory and World Systems Theory. Although the results also show that the international student’s decision to study abroad and potentially remain in the host country post-graduation, especially in the case of Indian students, is often a collective household decision or strategy to maximise future household income, which links in with the Neo Economies of Labour Migration Theory and Neoclassical Economic Theory. Furthermore, the apparent importance of meso-level factors (e.g. friends & family, parents, education agents) at both the initiation and continuation of migration decision-making stages justifies the relevance of the Network Theory of Migration and the Institutional Theory of Migration.

In summary, this research highlights and addresses the literature gap with respect to the influence of meso-level factors on international student mobility, as well as the relevance of multiple migration theories. It has also deepened the understanding of the differing impact levels of such factors on these students’ post-graduation migration decisions, based on their nationality and where they are at within the continuation of migration stage. These findings also enable a re-evaluation of the nexus between education and migration in Australia, along with the relevance of the Australian migration policy as a pull factor for international students. Lastly, this research has provided rich information on the Chinese and Indian students’ decision-making process that is highly relevant to the policymakers and the Australian institutions.

9.2 Limitations of research

While the results have helped to answer all of the research questions put forward, there are some limitations. In addition, to the limitations in terms of access to respondents and participants, and the candidature time to finish this thesis document, this research concentrated on Chinese and Indian students’ that had chosen Australia as their host destination for international education. While this focus met the context of this research, these two source countries are not enough to represent the international education demand from the other source countries for Australia. There was also no distinction made between the different courses studied or consideration of factors that specifically influence the demand for higher compared with vocational education. Furthermore, the sample’s minimum age was limited to 18 years, so the research did not consider factors that could influence younger international students. The
research also did not take into account the nuances of international education demand based on the different states and/or institutions within Australia.

Furthermore, access to the student respondents and participants was limited based on the general reluctance of education agents, international offices of different universities and other international student bodies to share the survey link with their contacts. Some justified this by responding that they received many similar requests on a weekly basis, which made it hard to cater to everyone. Accessibility and the corresponding sample size were also marred by some of the students not leaving the correct contact details in the survey.

Lastly, due to constraints associated with time to complete the surveys, some additional probing questions such as in relation to the education level of the parents, the student experience during studies including their access to local labour market were omitted. These could have further enriched this study’s data findings.

9.3 Policy implications

In addition to better understanding the complex patterns of international student mobility, one of the primary aims of this research was to contribute towards policy development on not just attracting but also retaining international students in Australia following the completion of their studies.

The findings from this research have direct implications on such policy settings, based on the primary reasons why the surveyed students chose Australia as their study destination. These reasons were academic reputation and the perceived excellence of the institutions, which brings into focus their perceived quality and rankings. It was highlighted in some of the interviews with both the students and the education agents that both students and parents consider the rankings of universities before deciding where to study abroad. This puts the spotlight on the competition that Australian institutions face at the global level, to maintain or better their rankings to attract international students and should consider promoting the rankings in their marketing strategies.

Other than the perception of academic quality, access to better career prospects following the completion of their studies was another thing considered by international students. This
research has shown that most students are focused on career prospects either in Australia or their home country, which again puts the onus on the institutions. That is, international students are no longer content with quality teaching and course completion – they also want to know whether the course offers any work experience or internship opportunities to assist them in preparing for post-graduation employment. This has implications for Australian universities that should consider updating their course content to provide such internship opportunities for international students, while the government needs to consider at the macro level whether the current part-time work opportunities within the student visa framework are enough to facilitate such internships. The government also need to consider how to provide better labour market access and integration for international students.

Historically, while macro-level migration policy including permanent residency opportunities has helped to attract international students to Australia, this research highlights its influence as diminished somewhat given the changes in migration policy since 2010. As identified in this study, most of the Chinese students planned to return home post-graduation, while many of the Indian students were keen to apply for PSW rights in Australia. The corresponding drop in Indian student enrolments in the UK has been linked with the non-availability of such PSW rights, which further highlights how beneficial this has been to Australia within the realm of international education. Thus, the Australian Government should maintain the offer of PSW to international students, and expand on it to enable appropriate work opportunities for these students in Australia including their integration in the labour market.

Furthermore, while many Australian universities have successfully marketed their courses to prospective international students, this research has highlighted the prevalence of meso-level factors such as parents and other family members, as well as friends and diaspora that they should also engage with. In line with this, as language barriers can often make it difficult to engage with parents and other meso-level actors, Australian universities should consider using education agents as the ‘middlemen’ for such engagement. Specific university web pages in targeted countries’ languages could also assist, as well as current students or university alumni that could promote their own positive international education experiences.

In line with the above meso-level engagement recommendations, Australian Government bodies such as Austrade, Victorian business development office, Perth education city and other state industry bodies involved in promotion of international education, should consider
proactively engaging with prospective students and their parents, as more official representatives of the country, such as at universities’ marketing events. Australian universities and government bodies should also consider better engaging with the diaspora in their own country, given their influence on shaping the decisions of international students with respect to where they study abroad and stay post-graduation.

In addition, as the cost of studying abroad is a major consideration for both students and their parents, with Australia often seen as one of the most expensive countries in the world, the opportunity to travel to this country for higher education may not be feasible. Thus, while some Australian universities offer full or partial scholarships to international students, from a policy perspective there is greater scope with respect to transnational and online education. For example, Australian universities could establish a branch campus or work with a local university in the home country to offer home-based education that reduces costs. The Australian Government also need to work with relevant government bodies in the students’ home countries, to ensure the provision of framework on setting up this commercial presence of Australian universities along with quality assurance and recognition of courses in that country.

Within the realm of international education, Australia is often seen as a pioneer with respect to its government and universities collaborating with education agents to recruit international students. This includes official recognition by the Australian Government of some leading education agencies such as on government body websites and by participating in events organised by education agents. This collaboration and reliance on education agents has grown in Australian, particularly among universities that seek their assistance to conduct mandatory risk assessments on the prospective international students. However, from a policy perspective, this can be determined as an over-reliance on these agents which could lead to unethical behaviour as highlighted in the Productivity Commission (2015) report, including the provision of fraudulent documentation and the over-charging of students. Such outcomes could severely impact on Australia’s international education industry, with the government needing to better regulate the work of these education agents.

Lastly, Australia offers PSW rights to international students post-graduation, there is minimal support available from the Australian Government and the institutions with respect to finding relevant work. As per the anecdotal evidence collected during the Indian education agent
interviews, this is causing frustration among international students that often end up with irrelevant or no jobs, and then share this negative feedback with their friends and/or future students. For example, while many of Australia’s state governments offer bonus migration points for international students to study specific courses and work in their regional areas, but there are limited work opportunities in such areas. Stemming from such feedback, prospective international students may select courses with perceived better employment and migration outcomes, moving away from their own interest areas. This can then create an imbalance within Australia’s universities, as they struggle to meet the demand for certain courses while others have limited enrolment numbers and highlights the need for a better balance between the demand and supply of international education via appropriate policy setting within Australia, including offering better employment opportunities to international students.

9.4 Directions for further research

This research has contributed towards the understanding of the complex decision-making process of international students with respect to both the initiation and continuation of migration stages. In addition to answering the specific research questions put forward here, this study’s literature review and research findings have responded to the call for further research in the area of international student mobility and skilled migration.

The theoretical framework developed for this research has focused on the two main international education source countries of China and India, with the research findings showing a variation of the influence of different push and pull factors on these two different nationalities. Further research in this area could adhere to the same theoretical framework, but examine different source countries as well as a different host country other than Australia. Another limitation of this research is that the international student’s studying and living experiences were not considered in too much detail, including how they may vary based on different cities and/or different universities which could also be the premise for future research. A longitudinal study may work better for such research, to factor in the changing decision-making process and students’ experiences along the way.

Furthermore, this study’s literature review and research findings also validated the importance of national and state government bodies in developing strategies and policies to attract and retain international students. It would therefore be beneficial for future research to focus on
how the different government bodies cooperate with each other with respect to the development of these strategies, and whether they complement each other when working towards a common goal.

Australia’s PSW offering has been uncovered in this study as an influential factor with respect to international students’ post-graduation decisions. However, it is not clear whether such students are satisfied with the education they receive from the institutions with respect to preparing them for Australian-based employment, and how potential Australian-based employers rate the skills readiness of such graduates. This should therefore also be considered in future relevant research.

In addition to macro-level PSW rights, this research has highlighted the relevance of meso-level factors, such as parental influence based on students’ financial dependence. It would therefore be beneficial to undertake a comparative analysis on the influence of parents based on students funded by parents and those that have received a scholarship. Another primary meso-level factor is friends and family, which also warrants further examination. For example, this research has highlighted that Chinese students are more influenced by this factor at home, while Indian students are more influenced by them within the host country. Yet this research did not consider how students’ family and friends gather their information on the host country, as well as the institution and/or relevant courses on offer. Future research could therefore provide additional engagement avenues at this meso level to benefit international education institutions.

Lastly, the growing prevalence of transnational and online education is another area that could be explored in future research. Australian universities have been expanding in both areas, and future research could examine student perceptions. Such research could also factor in the different quality assurance practices of relevant universities and government bodies both in Australia and the offshore country. There has been much discussion on brain drain, brain gain and/or brain circulation, so it would be interesting to explore how the transnational and online education impact on these areas.
9.5 Summary

This final chapter has provided the concluding remarks with respect to the key findings of this research. It has highlighted how important international students are to Australia, based on their high economic value as well as their scope to address skills shortages including those stemming from an ageing population. This research has focused on the international student mobility of Chinese and Indian students undertaking higher education in Australia, and provides insights into the influential factors and decision-making process of these students at the different initiation and continuation of migration stages based on various meso-level factors. This has also highlighted some of the key micro-, macro- and meso-level factors affecting the Chinese and Indian students’ decisions, including through the theoretical lens of various migration theories.

These results provide rich information on the Chinese and Indian student decision-making process that is highly relevant to the policymakers and the Australian institutions. In particular, this research has helped to identify and address the knowledge gap with respect to the influence of meso-level factors on international student mobility.

The chapter also highlighted some of the limitations of this research, including the access to relevant respondents and participants, and emphasised that two source countries cannot represent the whole international education demand from other source countries.

Furthermore, this chapter has highlighted how the findings from this research have direct implications towards policy setting at national, state and institutional levels within Australia. Such implications include heavier focus on the reputation and rankings of institutions, employability rates, labour market access and integration, better engagement with meso-level actors such as parents and diaspora, transnational education, as well as the over-dependence on education agents.

The final section of this chapter has discussed potential directions for further research, including researching international students from other source countries, as well as a longitudinal study into international students’ decisions, experiences and their corresponding satisfaction levels. There were also suggestions made to further explore the development and connectedness of international student attraction strategies at the national and state level in
Australia. A deeper dive could also be done into the meso-level actors (i.e. parents, family and friends) with respect to how they collect information on the host country, its institutions and courses, as well as perceptions towards transnational and online education.
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Appendices

Appendix 1 Survey of offshore Chinese and Indian students interested in studying in Australia

Survey of offshore Chinese and Indian students interested in studying in Australia

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary and no information that you may give, could lead to the identification of any individual nor will it be disclosed in this or any other research project without your knowledge and consent. You are not obliged to answer any questions that you consider personal and/or intrusive. Should you not wish to proceed with the survey at any time, you can stop and leave the survey at any time and all collected data will be destroyed.

* Required

Personal characteristics

1. What is your country of birth? *

Mark only one oval.

- China
- India
- Other:

2. What is your gender? *

Mark only one oval.

- Male
- Female
- Other

3. Which category below describes your age? *

Mark only one oval.

- 18 years or younger
- 19 to 24 years old
- 25 to 32 years old
- 33 to 39 years old
- 40 or older

4. Which state or province is your home in your home country? *
5. **What is your current marital status?** *  
*Mark only one oval.*  
- [ ] Single  
- [ ] Married  
- [ ] Divorced/ Separated  
- [ ] Other: __________________________  

6. **How many of your friends or family members have studied in Australia?** *  
*Mark only one oval.*  
- [ ] 0  
- [ ] 1  
- [ ] 2-3  
- [ ] more than 3  

7. **How many of your friends or family members are permanently living or currently working in Australia?** *  
*Mark only one oval.*  
- [ ] 0  
- [ ] 1  
- [ ] 2-3  
- [ ] more than 3  

8. **Are you the only child in family?** *  
*Mark only one oval.*  
- [ ] Yes  
- [ ] No  

9. **If you have siblings (brothers or sisters), are they:** *  
*Mark only one oval.*  
- [ ] Currently staying with parents  
- [ ] Married and/ or living separately in your home country  
- [ ] Studying or living in Australia  
- [ ] Studying or living in another country  
- [ ] Not applicable
Previous qualifications and study abroad

10. What is the highest level of education that you have completed? *
    Mark only one oval.
    - High School or year 12
    - Vocational Education, Technical or skills training
    - Undergraduate or Bachelors Degree
    - Postgraduate or Masters Degree

11. Are you considering Australia for study abroad? *
    Mark only one oval.
    - Yes
    - No

12. What level of study are you interested in? *
    Mark only one oval.
    - Vocational Education Undergraduate or Bachelors Degree
    - Masters Degree Research Degree or PhD

13. What is your broad field of study that you are applying for? *
    Mark only one oval.
    - Medicine Science
    - Engineering
    - Information Technology
    - Mathematics
    - Business or commerce
    - Arts
    - Humanities Social
    - Sciences
    - Accountancy
    - Other

14. Why did you choose Australia as the study destination? *
    Check all that apply.
    - Teaching quality/ Academic reputation of institution in Australia
    - Better career prospects in Australia after graduation
    - Better career prospects in home country after graduation
    - Parent's decision
Recommended by family or friends in home country
Recommended by family or friends in Australia
Recommended by education agent
 Ease of getting a student visa
 Option of post study work visa or permanent residency after graduation
 Course not available in home country

15. Did you consider studying in any other country than Australia? *
Mark only one oval.
     ☐ Yes
     ☐ No

16. If yes, which other country or countries?
Check all that apply.
     ☐ USA
     ☐ UK
     ☐ Canada
     ☐ New Zealand
     ☐ France
     ☐ Germany
     ☐ Singapore
     ☐ Other: ________________________________

17. Why did you decide not to study in these countries other than Australia? (Please tick all that apply)*
Check all that apply.
     ☐ Poor academic quality or reputation of universities
     ☐ Preferred course was not available
     ☐ Parent's decision
     ☐ Student visa was not granted
     ☐ No or limited options of post study work rights or to apply for permanent residency after graduation
     ☐ Did not have any friends or family in these countries
     ☐ More expensive to study in these countries
     ☐ Other: ________________________________
Financing study abroad and future plans

18. How do you plan to finance your tuition fees in Australia? *
   Check all that apply.
   - Parent's funding
   - Scholarship Part
   - part time work Bank
   - loan
   - Loan from family or friends
   - Own funding

19. How do you plan to finance your living expenses in Australia?
   Check all that apply.
   - Parent's funding
   - Scholarship Part
   - part time work Bank
   - loan
   - Loan from family or friends
   - Own funding

20. What is the occupation of your father?

21. What is the occupation of your mother?

22. During your studies in Australia, do your parents plan to: *
   Mark only one oval.
   - Stay in home country
   - Visit you in Australia
   - Migrate permanently to Australia

23. When you finish your studies in Australia, do you intend to: *
   Mark only one oval.
   - Return to home country
   - Apply for post study work rights in Australia
   - Apply for permanent migration to Australia
   - Move to a third country, other than Australia and your home country
   - Apply to study another course in Australia
   - Undecided at the moment
24. How important is obtaining permanent residency in Australia to you? *
   *Mark only one oval.
   - [ ] Very important
   - [ ] Important
   - [ ] Not so important
   - [ ] Unimportant

25. How important are post study work rights to you in Australia after you complete your graduation?
   *Mark only one oval.
   - [ ] Very important
   - [ ] Important
   - [ ] Not so important
   - [ ] Unimportant

26. Are you aware of skilled migration policy or number of points required to apply for permanent residency to Australia? *
   *Mark only one oval.
   - [ ] Yes
   - [ ] No

Thank you!

27. Would you be willing to participate in a short interview about your study plans and factors influencing the plans?
   *Mark only one oval.
   - [ ] Yes
   - [ ] No

28. If yes, please mention your Name, phone number and email for contact. These details will only be used to contact you and will not be recorded for interview or data collection.
Appendix 2 Survey of onshore Chinese and Indian students in Australia

Survey of onshore Chinese and Indian students in Australia

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary and no information that you may give, could lead to the identification of any individual nor will it be disclosed in this or any other research project without your knowledge and consent. You are not obliged to answer any questions that you consider personal and/or intrusive. Should you not wish to proceed with the survey at any time, you can stop and leave the survey at any time and all collected data will be destroyed.

* Required

Personal characteristics

1. What is your country of birth? *
   
   Mark only one oval.
   
   ○ China
   ○ India
   ○ Other:

2. What is your gender? *
   
   Mark only one oval.
   
   ○ Male
   ○ Female
   ○ Other

3. Which category below describes your age? *
   
   Mark only one oval.
   
   ○ 18 years or younger
   ○ 19 to 24 years old
   ○ 25 to 32 years old
   ○ 33 to 39 years old
   ○ 40 or older

4. What is your current marital status? *
   
   Mark only one oval.
   
   ○ Single
   ○ Married
   ○ Divorced/ Separated
   ○ Other:

5. What state or province is your home in your home country? *
6. How many of your friends or family members had studied in Australia before you decided to come here? *
   Mark only one oval.
   - 0
   - 1
   - 2-3
   - more than 3

7. How many of your friends or family members are permanently living or currently working in Australia? *
   Mark only one oval.
   - 0
   - 1
   - 2-3
   - more than 3

8. Are you the only child in family? *
   Mark only one oval.
   - Yes
   - No

9. If you have siblings (brothers or sisters), are they: *
   Mark only one oval.
   - Currently staying with parents
   - Married and/or living separately in your home country
   - Studying or living in Australia
   - Studying or living in another country
   - Not applicable

Previous qualifications and study abroad

10. What is the highest level of education that you have completed in home country? *
    Mark only one oval.
    - High School or year 12
    - Vocational Education, Technical or skills training
    - Undergraduate or Bachelors Degree
    - Postgraduate or Masters Degree
11. What level of study are you doing or have completed in Australia? *
Mark only one oval.
○ Vocational Education
○ Undergraduate or Bachelors Degree
○ Postgraduate or Masters Degree
○ Research Degree or PhD

12. What broad field of study are you enrolled in or have completed in Australia? *
Mark only one oval.
○ Medicine Science
○ Engineering
○ Information Technology
○ Mathematics
○ Business or commerce
○ Arts
○ Humanities Social
○ Sciences
○ Accountancy
○ Other

13. Why did you choose Australia as a study destination? *
Check all that apply.
☐ Teaching quality/ Academic reputation of institution in Australia
☐ Better career prospects in Australia after graduation
☐ Better career prospects in home country after graduation
☐ Parent's decision
☐ Recommended by family or friends in home country
☐ Recommended by family or friends in Australia
☐ Recommended by education agent
☐ Ease of getting a student visa
☐ Option of post study work visa or permanent residency after graduation
☐ Course not available in home country

14. Did you consider studying in any other country than Australia? *
Mark only one oval.
○ Yes
○ No  After the last question in this section, skip to question 17.
15. If yes, which country or countries?

*Check all that apply.*

- □ USA
- □ UK
- □ Canada
- □ New Zealand
- □ France Germany
- □ Singapore
- □ Other:

16. Why did you decide not to study in countries other than Australia? (Please tick all that apply)

*Check all that apply.*

- □ Poor academic quality or reputation of universities
- □ Preferred course was not available
- □ Parent's decision
- □ Student visa was not granted
- □ No or limited options of post study work rights or to apply for permanent residency after graduation
- □ Did not have any friends or family in these countries
- □ More expensive to study in these countries
- □ Other:

Financing study abroad and future plans

17. How did you finance your tuition fees in Australia? *

*Check all that apply.*

- □ Parent's funding
- □ Scholarship Part
- □ time work Bank
- □ loan
- □ Loan from family or friends
- □ Own funding
18. How did you finance your living expenses in Australia? *

Check all that apply.

- Parent's funding
- Scholarship Part
- Part time work
- Bank loan
- Loan from family or friends
- Own funding

19. What is the occupation of your father?

20. What is the occupation of your mother?

21. During your studies in Australia, have your parents: *

Mark only one oval.

- Stayed in home country
- Visited you in Australia
- Migrated permanently to Australia

22. When you finish your studies in Australia or if you already have, do you intend to: *

Mark only one oval.

- Return to home country
- Apply for post study work rights in Australia
- Apply for permanent migration to Australia
- Move to a third country, other than Australia and your home country
- Apply to study another course in Australia
- Undecided at the moment

23. How important is obtaining permanent residency in Australia to you? *

Mark only one oval.

- Very important
- Important
- Not so important
- Unimportant
24. How important are post study work rights to you in Australia after your graduation? *

Mark only one oval.

- Very important
- Important
- Not so important
- Unimportant

25. On a scale of 1-5 with 5 being the most relevant, please rate the main reasons for wanting to stay on in Australia after completion of your studies? *

Mark only one oval per row.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Good career prospects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better quality of life</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Family and/or friends are here</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parent's decision</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intend to gain work experience</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Got married or engaged to Australian citizen or permanent resident</td>
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<td>Unstable political situation in home country</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Higher salary in Australia</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

26. Are you aware of Skilled Migration policy or number of points required to apply for permanent residency for Australia? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No

27. What has been your main source of information on Skilled Migration policy?

Check all that apply.

- Family/ friends in Australia
- Parents
- Education or migration agent in Australia
- Education institution or University where you did your study
- Department of immigration and border protection’s website
- News or other media
- Other: ___________________________________________
28. What was your initial intention when you commenced studies in Australia? *

*Check all that apply.*

- [ ] Return to home country after completion of studies
- [ ] Apply for permanent residence to stay in Australia after completion of studies
- [ ] Apply for post study work rights after graduation to gain work experience
- [ ] Move on to another country for further study or work
- [ ] Other: _______________________________

29. Has the initial intention changed during the course of your studies in Australia? *

*Mark only one oval.*

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

30. If yes, who has influenced this change?

*Check all that apply.*

- [ ] Any migration policy changes since you started study
- [ ] Parents
- [ ] Family or friends in Australia
- [ ] Other classmates or friends who intended to apply for migration
- [ ] Education or migration agent in Australia
- [ ] Other: _______________________________

31. Why did you plan on studying in Australia if original intention was to migrate permanently?

*Check all that apply.*

- [ ] Did not qualify Or not had enough points under skilled visa category
- [ ] Wanted to gain Australian qualifications
- [ ] Skilled visa application to Australia was rejected Skilled visa application to another country was rejected
- [ ] Parents decision
- [ ] Other: _______________________________

32. After completion of studies, do you plan on *

*Mark only one oval.*

- [ ] Applying for post study work rights
- [ ] Applying directly for permanent residence
- [ ] Apply for post study work rights first and then permanent residence
- [ ] Apply for spouse visa
- [ ] Apply for asylum seeker visa
33. After completion of post study work rights, is your intention to *
   Mark only one oval.
   - Apply for permanent migration
   - Move back to home country
   - Move to another country
   - Unsure at this stage

34. If you are successful with migration application, do you later intend to invite your family to join you in Australia? *
   Mark only one oval.
   - Yes
   - No
   - Undecided at this stage

35. If you are successful to obtain permanent residency of Australia, what do you intend to do? *
   Mark only one oval.
   - Stay permanently in Australia
   - Move back to home country
   - Move to another country
   - Unsure at this stage

Thank you!

36. Would you be willing to participate in a short interview about your study plans and factors influencing the plans?
   Mark only one oval.
   - Yes
   - No

37. If yes, please mention your Name, phone number and email for contact. These details will only be used to contact you and will not be recorded for interview or data collection.
Appendix 3 Consent Information Statement for students

Consent Information Statement for students

[Date]

Dear Participant,

My name is Pankaj Arora, and I am currently doing a research study as part of my Doctorate at Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne, under the supervision of the following:

Principal Coordinating Supervisor: Professor Malcolm Abbott  
Coordinating Supervisor: Professor Bruce Calway  
Associate Supervisor: Professor Santina Bertone

The title of the research study is International Student Mobility from China and India – the influence of Australian immigration policy, institutional and family factors on post-graduation destination outcomes

The aim of this research is to explore the correlation between international student mobility, family factors and government policies. This research will investigate the nexus between international education and the migration policy with a specific focus on Indian and Chinese students studying in Australia. This study will also focus on the factors that contribute towards Indian and Chinese students’ decision to study abroad and their intentions to stay in Australia or return to their home countries after completing studies. Some of the key factors including government policy will be examined in detail combined with the influences from other stakeholders such as parents, diaspora, education and migration agents, Austrade and Department of Immigration and Border Protection.

I intend to collect primary data from key stakeholders by conducting interviews as part of my research methodology. I’m delighted to invite you for an interview as part of the research project. The interview will take approximately thirty minutes to one hour and will be conducted online or over the phone at a time nominated by you. Should you not wish to proceed with the interview at any time, it will be terminated upon request and all collected data will be destroyed. Similarly, you are not obliged to answer any questions that you consider personal and/or intrusive.

The link to participate in online questionnaire is available at:

For students who are in home country, yet to start their studies in Australia:  
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1EHuFppGNsV8I5Yp_FrMA_5XHVFRp1NiUXk-IDYW_gig/viewform
For students in Australia, who are in their final year or have just completed their studies:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1NqfueeTJOJR_n7ZXyu96z5V0oz-R8Jpq3Z-PE9XnRqk/viewform

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary and no information that you may give, could lead to the identification of any individual nor will it be disclosed in this or any other research project without your knowledge and consent.

The data will only be accessible by research supervisors and myself. It will be stored in locked filing cabinets for five years post-publication of thesis. All participants involved in the research study will be provided with a copy of the results upon request.

Should you have any inquiries or would like more information on the aggregate research findings, please contact:

| Prof Malcolm Abbott, Faculty of Business and Law, Swinburne University of Technology. | Pankaj Arora Faculty of Business and Law, Swinburne University of Technology. |
| Ph: +61-3-92145727 Email: mabbott@swin.edu.au | Ph: +61-3-9214 5407 Email: parora@swin.edu.au |

This project has been approved by or on behalf of Swinburne’s Human Research Ethics Committee (SUHREC) in line with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research. If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this project, you can contact:

Research Ethics Officer, Swinburne Research (H68), Swinburne University of Technology, P O Box 218, HAWTHORN VIC 3122.
Tel (03) 9214 5218 or +61 3 9214 5218 or resethics@swin.edu.au

Thank you for taking time to participate in this research project. Your assistance is greatly appreciated and the data gained will contribute towards to the literature on international student mobility and migration.

Thank You,

Pankaj Arora
Consent letter for students

Swinburne University of Technology

Project Title: International Student Mobility from China and India – the influence of Australian immigration policy, institutional and family factors on post-graduation destination outcomes

Principal Investigator(s): Pankaj Arora

1. I consent to participate in the project named above. I have been provided a copy of the project consent information statement to which this consent form relates and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

2. In relation to this project, please circle your response to the following:
   - I agree to be interviewed by the researcher
     Yes    No
   - I agree to allow the interview to be recorded by electronic device
     Yes    No
   - I agree to make myself available for further information if required
     Yes    No
   - I agree to complete the questionnaire asking me about International Student Mobility from China and India – the influence of Australian immigration policy, institutional and family factors on post-graduation destination outcomes
     Yes    No

3. I acknowledge that:
   (a) my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without explanation;
   (b) the Swinburne project is for the purpose of research and not for profit;
   (c) any identifiable information about me which is gathered in the course of and as the result of my participating in this project will be (i) collected and retained for the purpose of this project and (ii) accessed and analysed by the researcher(s) for the purpose of conducting this project;
   (d) my anonymity is preserved and I will not be identified in publications or otherwise without my express written consent.

By signing this document I agree to participate in this project.

Name of Participant: ………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Signature & Date: ……………………………………………………………………………………………..
Appendix 4 Consent Information Statement for stakeholders

Consen Information Statement for stakeholders

[Date]

Dear Participant,

My name is Pankaj Arora, and I am currently doing a research study as part of my Doctorate at Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne, under the supervision of the following:

Principal Coordinating Supervisor: Professor Malcolm Abbott
Coordinating Supervisor: Professor Bruce Calway
Associate Supervisor: Professor Santina Bertone

The title of the research study is International Student Mobility from China and India – the influence of Australian immigration policy, institutional and family factors on post-graduation destination outcomes

The aim of this research is to explore the correlation between international student mobility, family factors and government policies. This research will investigate the nexus between international education and the migration policy with a specific focus on Indian and Chinese students studying in Australia. This study will also focus on the factors that contribute towards Indian and Chinese students’ decision to study abroad and their intentions to stay in Australia or return to their home countries after completing studies. Some of the key factors including government policy will be examined in detail combined with the influences from other stakeholders such as parents, diaspora, education and migration agents, Austrade and Department of Immigration and Border Protection.

I intend to collect primary data from key stakeholders by conducting interviews as part of my research methodology. I’m delighted to invite you for an interview as part of the research project. The interview will take approximately thirty minutes to one hour and will be conducted online or over the phone at a time nominated by you. Should you not wish to proceed with the interview at any time, it will be terminated upon request and all collected data will be destroyed. Similarly, you are not obliged to answer any questions that you consider personal and/or intrusive.

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary and no information that you may give, could lead to the identification of any individual nor will it be disclosed in this or any other research project without your knowledge and consent.

The data will only be accessible by research supervisors and myself. It will be stored in locked filing cabinets for five years post-publication of thesis. All participants
involved in the research study will be provided with a copy of the results upon request.

Should you have any inquiries or would like more information on the aggregate research findings, please contact:

| Prof Malcolm Abbott, Faculty of Business and Law, Swinburne University of Technology. Ph: +61-3-92145727 Email: mabbott@swin.edu.au | Pankaj Arora Faculty of Business and Law, Swinburne University of Technology. Ph: +61-3-92145407 Email: parora@swin.edu.au |

This project has been approved by or on behalf of Swinburne’s Human Research Ethics Committee (SUHREC) in line with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research. If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this project, you can contact:

Research Ethics Officer, Swinburne Research (H68), Swinburne University of Technology, P O Box 218, HAWTHORN VIC 3122. Tel (03) 9214 5218 or +61 3 9214 5218 or resethics@swin.edu.au

Thank you for taking time to participate in this research project. Your assistance is greatly appreciated and the data gained will contribute towards to the literature on international student mobility and migration.

Thank You,

Pankaj Arora
Appendix 5 Questions used for interviews

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary and no information that you may give, could lead to the identification of any individual nor will it be disclosed in this or any other research project without your knowledge and consent.

Questions for the offshore students:
- Why did you choose Australia as a study destination?
- How do you view Australia as compared to other study destination countries?
- Why did you not study in your home country?
- Why did you decide not to study in another destination country?
- Have your parents been supportive of your study abroad plans?
- Did your parents influence your decision to study in Australia?
- In your view, what are main factors that help choosing a country for study abroad?
- Which course do you intend to do for your study in Australia?
- How long do you plan to study?
- Any particular reasons for choosing the duration of your course?
- Are you aware of the Australian study requirement to apply for Post Study Work rights or permanent residency?
- Are you aware of Australian Skilled Migration Policy?
- Which state/ city or university did you choose or intend to choose in Australia for study?
- Any particular reasons for choosing that state/ city or University?
- Do you intend to work while studying?
- What is your main source of funding for tuition fees and living expenses?
- What are your plans after completion of studies?
- Do you intend to apply for Post Study Work rights or permanent residency after completion of your studies?
- Is your decision influenced by your friends or parents?

Questions for the onshore students:
- Why did you choose Australia as a study destination?
- How do you view Australia as compared to other main study destination countries?
- Why did you not study in your home country?
- Why did you decide not to study in another destination country?
- Have your parents been supportive of your study abroad plans?
- Did your parents influence your decision to study in Australia?
- In your view, what are main factors that help choosing a country for study abroad?
- Which course did you study in Australia?
- How long did you study?
- Any particular reasons for choosing the duration of your course?
- Are you aware of the Australian study requirement to apply for Post Study Work rights or permanent residency?
- Are you aware of Australian Skilled Migration Policy?
- Which state/ city or university did you choose in Australia for study?
- Any particular reasons for choosing that state/ city or University?
- Did you work while studying?
- What was your main source of funding for tuition fees and living expenses?
- What are your plans after completion of studies?
- Do you intend to apply for Post Study Work rights or permanent residency after completion of your studies?
• Is your decision influenced by your friends or parents?
• Was this decision different to what you intended when you applied for studying in Australia?
• Are there particular reasons for the change in the decision?
• Do you intend to return to home country after completion of studies?
• What are the reasons for returning?
• Do you intend to go to a third country after completion of studies?
• Which country and what are the reasons to go there?

Questions for the education agents and other stakeholders:
• What is your organisation’s business and how is it involved in international student mobility or migration?
• What is your role in the organisation?
• How do you or your organisation promote Australia as a study destination?
• What are the normal characteristics of the students interested in study abroad?
• What are the factors that influence choosing a country for study abroad?
• How do students see Australia as a destination as compared to other countries?
• In your opinion, what role does the family, friends in Australia or home country; or the parents play in deciding on which country to choose for study abroad?
• What role does the education policy play in students choosing a country for study abroad?
• What role does the migration policy or Post Study work rights play in students choosing a country for study abroad?
• Are there particular cities or universities in Australia being preferred for studying abroad and why?
• Are there particular courses preferred by students for study abroad and why?
• While deciding on study abroad, do students consider their intentions after completion of studies?
• In your opinion, is permanent residency a primary objective or outcome upon the completion of studies?
Appendix 6 Top 30 source countries for internationally mobile students

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<th>Outbound internationally mobile tertiary students studying abroad, all countries, both sexes (number)</th>
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Data extracted on 21 Jan 2019 07:19 UTC (GMT) from UIS.Stat

## Appendix 7 Top 30 host countries for internationally mobile students

### Dataset: Education

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Data extracted on 21 Jan 2019 07:22 UTC (GMT) from UIS.Stat

Appendix 8 Population aged 15-24 years old

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### Appendix 9 Enrolment of international students by origin (Major destination and source countries)

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## Appendix 10 Tertiary education enrolments in the world

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## Appendix 11 Gross Enrolment Ratio by level of Education

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Data extracted on 20 Jan 2019 02:12 UTC (GMT) from UIS.Stat

# Appendix 12 Top destinations of outbound Chinese students

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**Dataset: Education**

Indicator: Asia: Students from China, both sexes (number)

Data extracted on 20 Jan 2019 02:19 UTC (GMT) from UIS.Stat

Appendix 13 Top destination countries for outbound students from India

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<td>97613</td>
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<td>6845</td>
<td>10255</td>
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<td>9273</td>
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Appendix 14 Export Income from International education activity as a sector in Australia

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<td>509</td>
<td>534</td>
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<td>705</td>
<td>807</td>
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<td>528</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>487</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>611</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>764</td>
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<td>120</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>131</td>
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<td>282</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>362</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td>11,508</td>
<td>11,355</td>
<td>10,395</td>
<td>9,768</td>
<td>10,165</td>
<td>11,561</td>
<td>13,430</td>
<td>14,989</td>
<td>17,398</td>
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</table>

| **Fees**           |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| Higher Education    | 3,060 | 3,717 | 4,571 | 4,960 | 4,897 | 5,119 | 5,725 | 6,417 | 7,614 | 9,262 |
| Vocational         | 1,366 | 1,872 | 1,454 | 1,137 | 954   | 884   | 1,005 | 1,158 | 1,341 | 1,487 |
| Schools             | 352   | 347   | 335   | 296   | 268   | 266   | 304   | 375   | 445   | 500   |
| SV ELICOS          | 476   | 521   | 425   | 353   | 354   | 427   | 524   | 566   | 566   | 647   |
| New Zealand        | 59    | 72    | 76    | 75    | 70    | 60    | 65    | 74    | 86    | 90    |
| Non-Award          | 326   | 321   | 315   | 285   | 261   | 313   | 406   | 456   | 539   | 680   |
| **Total**          | 5,639 | 6,850 | 7,176 | 7,106 | 6,804 | 7,069 | 8,029 | 9,046 | 10,591| 12,666|

| **Total**          |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| Higher Education    | 9,026 | 10,143| 11,121| 11,323| 11,094| 11,783| 11,479| 13,479| 15,475| 17,593| 20,702|
| Vocational         | 3,775 | 5,188 | 4,656 | 3,729 | 3,167 | 2,938 | 3,191 | 3,726 | 4,405 | 5,227 |
| Schools             | 1,197 | 1,122 | 1,008 | 879   | 786   | 775   | 838   | 998   | 1,150 | 1,307 |
| SV ELICOS          | 988   | 1,109 | 953   | 830   | 841   | 971   | 1,135 | 1,266 | 1,330 | 1,565 |
| New Zealand        | 167   | 193   | 195   | 185   | 170   | 147   | 159   | 183   | 207   | 221   |
| Non-Award          | 635   | 603   | 597   | 555   | 514   | 621   | 788   | 828   | 895   | 1,042 |
| **Total**          | 15,787| 18,358| 18,531| 17,501| 16,572| 17,234| 19,590| 22,476| 25,580| 30,064|

| Ausaid/Defence      | 149   | 144   | 151   | 193   | 225   | 252   | 258   | 262   | 212   | 199   |
| **Total**          | 15,936| 18,502| 18,682| 17,694| 16,797| 17,486| 19,848| 22,738| 25,792| 30,263|

Appendix 15 International Student Enrolments and Commencements in Australia

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<tbody>
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<td>543,869</td>
<td>631,984</td>
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<td>586,780</td>
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Appendix 16 Chinese and Indian student Enrolments in Australia

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<td>12,626</td>
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<td>8,140</td>
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<td>15,478</td>
<td>19,575</td>
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Sum of DATA YTD Enrolments from China

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<td>398</td>
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Appendix 17 Offshore delivery of Australian higher education courses in 2017

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Delivery to</th>
<th>Students 2016</th>
<th>Students 2017</th>
<th>% growth on 2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students at Offshore campuses</td>
<td>40,356</td>
<td>39,262</td>
<td>-2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students in offshore partnerships and/or other programs</td>
<td>64,355</td>
<td>72,697</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students offshore in distance education</td>
<td>7,707</td>
<td>7,392</td>
<td>-4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total of all offshore students</td>
<td>112,418</td>
<td>119,351</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Appendix 18 Australian Skilled Migration visas, 2007–08 to 2016–17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>People's Republic of China</th>
<th>Pakistan</th>
<th>United Kingdom</th>
<th>Philippines</th>
<th>South Africa</th>
<th>Nepal</th>
<th>Malaysia</th>
<th>Sri Lanka</th>
<th>Iran</th>
<th>Bangla-desh</th>
<th>Singapore</th>
<th>Egypt</th>
<th>Vietnam</th>
<th>Ireland</th>
<th>Other*</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007–08</td>
<td>17,031</td>
<td>10,310</td>
<td>1,008</td>
<td>14,293</td>
<td>2,683</td>
<td>3,281</td>
<td>596</td>
<td>3,704</td>
<td>3,333</td>
<td>559</td>
<td>2,112</td>
<td>1,478</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>489</td>
<td>965</td>
<td>15,739</td>
<td>78,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008–09</td>
<td>16,075</td>
<td>6,658</td>
<td>1,105</td>
<td>12,305</td>
<td>2,699</td>
<td>4,495</td>
<td>609</td>
<td>3,126</td>
<td>3,127</td>
<td>1,520</td>
<td>1,378</td>
<td>1,163</td>
<td>516</td>
<td>427</td>
<td>1,063</td>
<td>12,887</td>
<td>69,153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009–10</td>
<td>13,325</td>
<td>5,699</td>
<td>1,014</td>
<td>8,741</td>
<td>2,316</td>
<td>4,492</td>
<td>794</td>
<td>3,411</td>
<td>3,525</td>
<td>1,470</td>
<td>1,458</td>
<td>1,040</td>
<td>678</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>1,111</td>
<td>10,521</td>
<td>59,892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010–11</td>
<td>12,733</td>
<td>12,158</td>
<td>993</td>
<td>8,380</td>
<td>1,747</td>
<td>2,762</td>
<td>1,405</td>
<td>3,032</td>
<td>3,242</td>
<td>1,384</td>
<td>1,239</td>
<td>833</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>693</td>
<td>1,329</td>
<td>9,251</td>
<td>61,459</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011–12</td>
<td>17,025</td>
<td>7,895</td>
<td>2,813</td>
<td>9,822</td>
<td>2,471</td>
<td>3,018</td>
<td>1,265</td>
<td>3,620</td>
<td>3,896</td>
<td>2,386</td>
<td>1,727</td>
<td>1,126</td>
<td>655</td>
<td>596</td>
<td>1,684</td>
<td>11,820</td>
<td>71,819</td>
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<td>24,812</td>
<td>8,034</td>
<td>2,061</td>
<td>6,668</td>
<td>2,072</td>
<td>2,116</td>
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<td>3,164</td>
<td>3,228</td>
<td>1,405</td>
<td>1,833</td>
<td>1,203</td>
<td>698</td>
<td>542</td>
<td>1,562</td>
<td>12,155</td>
<td>74,020</td>
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<td>24,568</td>
<td>8,339</td>
<td>4,263</td>
<td>6,647</td>
<td>2,991</td>
<td>1,929</td>
<td>2,946</td>
<td>2,342</td>
<td>2,528</td>
<td>1,343</td>
<td>1,635</td>
<td>1,171</td>
<td>658</td>
<td>887</td>
<td>1,887</td>
<td>10,606</td>
<td>74,740</td>
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<td>2014–15</td>
<td>20,290</td>
<td>8,584</td>
<td>6,495</td>
<td>5,744</td>
<td>3,478</td>
<td>1,616</td>
<td>2,285</td>
<td>2,032</td>
<td>2,432</td>
<td>2,836</td>
<td>2,455</td>
<td>1,184</td>
<td>746</td>
<td>1,009</td>
<td>1,775</td>
<td>9,879</td>
<td>72,840</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015–16</td>
<td>22,981</td>
<td>8,365</td>
<td>4,874</td>
<td>5,633</td>
<td>3,806</td>
<td>2,193</td>
<td>2,783</td>
<td>2,222</td>
<td>2,155</td>
<td>1,487</td>
<td>1,883</td>
<td>980</td>
<td>836</td>
<td>1,084</td>
<td>1,337</td>
<td>10,221</td>
<td>72,840</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016–17</td>
<td>22,961</td>
<td>8,275</td>
<td>4,579</td>
<td>4,319</td>
<td>3,752</td>
<td>2,625</td>
<td>2,025</td>
<td>1,940</td>
<td>1,677</td>
<td>1,559</td>
<td>1,338</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>901</td>
<td>873</td>
<td>777</td>
<td>9,346</td>
<td>67,857</td>
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</table>

Appendix 19 Subclass 485 Temporary Graduate visas granted

2017-18 - comparison with previous years

<table>
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<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>3,964</td>
<td>4,942</td>
<td>4,397</td>
<td>5,886</td>
<td>7,684</td>
<td>7,006</td>
<td>7,635</td>
<td>9,446</td>
<td>10,901</td>
<td>11,978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>4,269</td>
<td>9,230</td>
<td>9,718</td>
<td>17,160</td>
<td>10,641</td>
<td>3,772</td>
<td>3,960</td>
<td>6,534</td>
<td>10,015</td>
<td>14,026</td>
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<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>14,461</td>
<td>23,390</td>
<td>21,838</td>
<td>40,088</td>
<td>35,495</td>
<td>22,867</td>
<td>22,895</td>
<td>32,436</td>
<td>41,387</td>
<td>51,656</td>
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</table>

Appendix 20 Permanent migration places granted to former international students, 2007–08 to 2016–17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Points tested visas</th>
<th>Employer Sponsored visas</th>
<th>Partner</th>
<th>Other¹</th>
<th>Total permanent migration places granted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skilled Independent</td>
<td>State/Territory Nominated</td>
<td>Skilled Regional</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007–08</td>
<td>17,903</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>3,587</td>
<td>22,903</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008–09</td>
<td>9,791</td>
<td>2,480</td>
<td>2,558</td>
<td>14,829</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009–10</td>
<td>4,848</td>
<td>1,822</td>
<td>786</td>
<td>7,456</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010–11</td>
<td>14,908</td>
<td>2,755</td>
<td>4,597</td>
<td>22,260</td>
<td>1,090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011–12</td>
<td>12,549</td>
<td>2,161</td>
<td>3,405</td>
<td>18,115</td>
<td>2,437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012–13</td>
<td>11,752</td>
<td>2,156</td>
<td>3,900</td>
<td>17,808</td>
<td>3,096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013–14</td>
<td>4,239</td>
<td>1,663</td>
<td>2,039</td>
<td>7,941</td>
<td>2,138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014–15</td>
<td>4,748</td>
<td>2,343</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>7,603</td>
<td>1,954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015–16</td>
<td>4,757</td>
<td>2,602</td>
<td>1,664</td>
<td>9,023</td>
<td>2,438</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016–17</td>
<td>4,527</td>
<td>2,478</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>7,195</td>
<td>1,840</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Appendix 21 Temporary resident skilled visa (457) grants

457 Temporary work (skilled) visas granted pivot table

© Commonwealth of Australia 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>(All)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Client Location</td>
<td>(All)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Year Quarter</td>
<td>(All)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>(All)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominated Occupation (Major Group)</td>
<td>(All)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominated Occupation (Unit Group)</td>
<td>(All)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominated Occupation (Skill Level)</td>
<td>(All)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominated Occupation</td>
<td>(All)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominated Position Location (Statistical Area Level 3)</td>
<td>(All)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominated Position Location (Statistical Area Level 4)</td>
<td>(All)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsor Industry</td>
<td>(All)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Visa Subclass

457 Temporary Work

(Skilled)

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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China, Peoples Republic of (excl SARs)</td>
<td>6653</td>
<td>5616</td>
<td>5472</td>
<td>3152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>25244</td>
<td>22959</td>
<td>21575</td>
<td>14632</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other countries</td>
<td>64187</td>
<td>57036</td>
<td>60533</td>
<td>41116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>96084</td>
<td>85611</td>
<td>87580</td>
<td>58900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Department of Home Affairs 2018, *BP0014 Temporary Work (Skilled) visas granted pivot table*, DHA, viewed 27 December 2018,

254
Appendix 22 State wise enrolments of International Students in
Australia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Dec</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>(All)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationality</td>
<td>(All)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sector</td>
<td>(All)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ProviderType</td>
<td>(All)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad Field Of Education</td>
<td>(All)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrow Field Of Education</td>
<td>(All)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detailed Field Of Education</td>
<td>(All)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level Of Study</td>
<td>(All)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation</td>
<td>(All)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DATA As at 1st Month</td>
<td>(All)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DATA Commencements for Month</td>
<td>(All)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DATA Enrolments for Month</td>
<td>(All)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>218,403</td>
<td>241,251</td>
<td>266,556</td>
<td>303,083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIC</td>
<td>175,296</td>
<td>195,419</td>
<td>219,691</td>
<td>252,079</td>
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<td>97,030</td>
<td>102,681</td>
<td>110,880</td>
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<td>34,040</td>
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<td>WA</td>
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<td>TAS</td>
<td>4,709</td>
<td>5,418</td>
<td>6,528</td>
<td>9,034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT</td>
<td>1,889</td>
<td>2,164</td>
<td>2,330</td>
<td>2,533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT</td>
<td>12,402</td>
<td>12,830</td>
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<td>16,926</td>
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<tr>
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<td>97</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>586,782</td>
<td>642,233</td>
<td>709,343</td>
<td>796,225</td>
</tr>
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</table>

## Appendix 23 Ancestry by Country of Birth of Parents for NSW

**AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS 2016**  
Census of Population and Housing  
New South Wales (1) 800810.8 sq Kms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ancestry</th>
<th>Birthplace born in Australia</th>
<th>Both parents born overseas</th>
<th>Father only born overseas</th>
<th>Mother only born overseas</th>
<th>Both parents born overseas</th>
<th>Birthplace not stated(b)</th>
<th>Total responses(c)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australian</td>
<td>36,106</td>
<td>2,261,062</td>
<td>230,525</td>
<td>70,723</td>
<td>1,757,151</td>
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<td>30,849</td>
<td>691</td>
<td>1,584</td>
<td>15,657</td>
<td>2,544</td>
<td>30,849</td>
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<td>474,485</td>
<td>15,657</td>
<td>2,437</td>
<td>514,594</td>
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<td>29,734</td>
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<td>44,335</td>
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<td>23,389</td>
<td>42,385</td>
<td>14,385</td>
<td>44,335</td>
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<td>166,591</td>
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<td>39,630</td>
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<td>Maltese</td>
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<td>33,159</td>
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<td>54,623</td>
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<td>365</td>
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<td>351</td>
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<td>209</td>
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<td>37,898</td>
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<td>266</td>
<td>2,300</td>
<td>27,502</td>
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<td>1,552</td>
<td>103,201</td>
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<td>1,370</td>
<td>109,588</td>
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<tr>
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<td>377</td>
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<td>42,611</td>
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<td>725,448</td>
<td>816</td>
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<td>908,889</td>
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<tr>
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<td>510,541</td>
<td>39,622</td>
<td>29,644</td>
<td>436,486</td>
<td>3,653</td>
<td>510,541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total persons</strong></td>
<td><strong>532,757</strong></td>
<td><strong>7,480,228</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,399,725</strong></td>
<td><strong>325,182</strong></td>
<td><strong>7,480,228</strong></td>
<td><strong>458,394</strong></td>
<td><strong>7,480,228</strong></td>
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## Appendix 24 Ancestry by Country of Birth of Parents for Victoria

### Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census

of Population and Housing

Victoria (2)

227495.6 sq Kms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Both parents born overseas</th>
<th>Father only born overseas</th>
<th>Mother only born overseas</th>
<th>Both parents born in Australia</th>
<th>Birthplace not stated(b) responses(c)</th>
<th>Total responses(c)</th>
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<td>959</td>
<td>723</td>
</tr>
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<td>1,882</td>
<td>10,966</td>
<td>353</td>
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<td>113,820</td>
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<td>2,599</td>
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<td>464</td>
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<td>601</td>
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<td>2,096</td>
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<td>1,140</td>
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<td>1,342</td>
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<td>1,673</td>
<td>333</td>
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Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2018, Census 2016, Ancestry by Birthplace of Parents (SA2+), ABS, viewed 19 December 2018,

Appendix 25 Full time equivalent jobs supported by international students studying in Australia

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NSW</th>
<th>Vic</th>
<th>Qld</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>WA</th>
<th>Tas</th>
<th>NT</th>
<th>ACT</th>
<th>Australia</th>
<th>% change per year (Australia)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>29,221</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
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<td>60,765</td>
<td>31,699</td>
<td>10,655</td>
<td>16,258</td>
<td>1,910</td>
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<td>3,242</td>
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<td>3,130</td>
<td>215,521</td>
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<td>4,907</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>37,886</td>
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<td>4,853</td>
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<tr>
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<td>37,992</td>
<td>11,784</td>
<td>18,086</td>
<td>1,771</td>
<td>798</td>
<td>5,009</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>18,341</td>
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<td>4,756</td>
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<td>4,895</td>
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<tr>
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<td>808</td>
<td>5,242</td>
<td>241,783</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Appendix 26 Ethics approval for human data collection

From: Keith Wilkins On Behalf Of RES Ethics
Sent: Friday, 4 September 2015 5:04 PM
To: Malcolm Abbott <mabbott@swin.edu.au>; Pankaj Arora <parora@swin.edu.au>
Cc: RES Ethics <resethics@swin.edu.au>; Astrid Nordmann <anordmann@swin.edu.au>
Subject: SHR Project 2015/176 - Ethical Clearance

To: Assoc Prof Malcolm Abbott/Mr Pankaj Arora, FBL

Dear Malcolm and Pankaj

SHR Project 2015/176 – International student mobility from China and India – the influence of Australian immigration policy, institutional and family factors on post-graduate destination outcomes
Assoc Prof Malcolm Abbott, Mr Pankaj Arora (Student), Dr Bruce Calway, Prof Santina Bertone - FBL
Approved Duration: 04/09/2015 to 31/07/2017

I refer to the ethical review of the above project revised protocol by a Subcommittee (SHESC1) of Swinburne’s Human Research Ethics Committee (SUHREC). Your responses to the review, as emailed on 28 August 2015 with attachments, were put to the Subcommittee delegates for consideration and feedback sent to you. Your further responses, as emailed on 3 September 2015 with attachment, were put to a delegate also.

I am pleased to advise that, as submitted to date, the project may proceed in line with standard on-going ethics clearance conditions here outlined.

- All human research activity undertaken under Swinburne auspices must conform to Swinburne and external regulatory standards, including the current National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research and with respect to secure data use, retention and disposal.

- The named Swinburne Chief Investigator/Supervisor remains responsible for any personnel appointed to or associated with the project being made aware of ethics clearance conditions, including research and consent procedures or instruments approved. Any change in chief investigator/ supervisor requires timely notification and SUHREC endorsement.

- The above project has been approved as submitted for ethical review by or on behalf of SUHREC. Amendments to approved procedures or instruments ordinarily require prior ethical appraisal/clearance. SUHREC must be notified immediately or as soon as possible thereafter of (a) any serious or unexpected adverse effects on participants any redress measures; (b) proposed changes in protocols; and (c) unforeseen events which might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project.
At a minimum, an annual report on the progress of the project is required as well as at the conclusion (or abandonment) of the project. Information on project monitoring and variations/modifications, self-audits and progress reports can be found on the Research Intranet pages.

- A duly authorised external or internal audit of the project may be undertaken at any time.

Please contact the Research Ethics Office if you have any queries about on-going ethics clearance. The SHR project number should be quoted in communication. Researchers should retain a copy of this email as part of project recordkeeping.

Best wishes for the project.

Yours sincerely,

Keith Wilkins for
Astrid Nordmann
Secretary, SHESC1

------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
Keith Wilkins
Secretary, SUHREC & Research Ethics Officer
Swinburne Research (H68)
Swinburne University of Technology
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Fax +61 3 9214 526